

Maximum vehicle heights to change on 1st November 2013

Limit changed to 4.65m

The Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport wishes to remind road users that from the 1st of November 2013 the **maximum height of any vehicle** on Irish roads – including HGVs – is **4.65 metres**. The regulations giving effect to this limit were signed into effect by the previous Government and are now being implemented following a substantial ‘washing out’ period, designed to give the haulage industry sufficient time to prepare.

Background:

Up until 2000, there was a general vehicle height limit of 4.25 metres. However, because of European Commission concerns that an incorrect administrative process was followed in setting this limit, it was withdrawn in 2000. Following this there was considerable consideration given to the appropriate height limits for vehicles, in particular HGVs. Therefore, in 2005 a consultation process was launched on this issue and 46 submissions were received from private individuals, residents’ associations, road haulage companies and associations as well as other bodies affected by this including the Gardaí and Iarnród Éireann. Following the conclusion of the consultation process, it was announced in January 2007 that a 4.65m height limit would be introduced. Originally it was proposed that there would be a two year ‘wash-out’ period to allow time for operators of vehicles in excess of that height which were licensed, registered or in use prior to the setting of the 4.65 metre height limit to phase them out in an orderly and planned manner.

The reasons behind the limit are mainly concerned with rail safety and the protection of expensive physical infrastructure (eg bridge strikes by over-height vehicles), road safety, quality of life considerations for residents in urban areas. This last point is because vehicles higher than 4.65 metres cannot use the Jack Lynch, Dublin Port or Limerick Tunnels and therefore must be diverted through urban areas.

Where over height vehicles need to be used in exceptional circumstances on the country’s road network, the existing regime for abnormal loads will be able to deal with such requests. This is not an alternative to complying with the legislation as it is only meant for exceptional circumstances.