



Information Item	Communication crucial to obtaining permits
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It is a common misconception that acquiring NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) overweight permits are all that is required to manoeuvre a crane through Auckland's roading network.

However, to assume so is putting yourself at risk of a fine from Police, Auckland Transport's (AT) Bridge Engineer Deepan Kumar says.

"Currently, Auckland Transport issues separate continuous Overweight permit to travel within Auckland region which is valid for two years. But there is common misconception that if crane operators get a permit from NZTA, that will cover them for travel within the Auckland region and its roading network. That isn't the case.

"To travel within the Auckland region – except the bypass routes – people need an AT overweight permit. An NZTA permit isn't enough, you'll be considered as travelling illegal and may be issued a fine should the police pull you over."

Having been with AT for the past eight years, Deepan is one of the foremost experts on the *Land Transport Rule: Vehicle Dimensions and Mass 2016* (the Rule), and amendments.

And while crane operators and owners have special considerations for permits, communication with local councils is crucial to ensuring a smooth (and fine-less) process.

"Safety wise, travelling isn't the only hazards – as many crane operators and owners know – to be aware of.

"As travelling within Auckland City isn't the easiest at the best of times – there's lots of traffic, construction and cranes moving throughout the city – so, that's why communication is absolutely crucial as all issues can be managed appropriately.

"For example, if there are any new crane models going to be deployed, it is always good to check with the local authorities or NZTA whether it is feasible to travel on the roading network. Otherwise you could be spending money on a crane before knowing whether or not you'll have issues acquiring permits.

The Rule is designed to create a reasonable balance between the efficient operation of the heavy motor vehicle fleet, within the constraints imposed by the road network, and ensuring that heavy motor vehicles are operated safely.

The Ministry of Transport's objective for the Rule defines it as creating limits to the permitted configurations, dimensions and mass of vehicles, with particular emphasis on large combination vehicles.

Additionally, it clarifies and rationalises the existing requirements for vehicle dimension and mass limits. It also includes some limited increases in axle and gross mass limits from the limits in the 2002 Rule.

However, the Rule does not prescribe every situation; every driver and operator have a responsibility to exercise good judgement.

The issue of a permit under this Rule does not displace those general responsibilities. The Rule also does not displace a restriction imposed by other legislation.

For example, general access limits do not allow a heavy vehicle to cross a bridge with a posted limit (fixed by a road controlling authority) that is lower than the vehicle's actual gross mass.

So, consult with your local council when obtaining a permit – it's in your best interest, Deepan says.

Deepan Kumar
Auckland Transport's (AT) Bridge Engineer

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