



Vehicle Safety Branch Information Bulletin

Tradesmen's Roof Racks

Cab racks, roof racks with forward upright supports fitted to tradesman utilities and panel vans are permitted provided: -

- The vertical uprights do not obstruct the driver's vision.
- The rack is constructed and positioned to minimise the risk of injury to pedestrians. Aluminium tubing is the preferred material for construction as it is lighter and more ductile than steel.
- The diameter of uprights is not greater than 40mm.
- The rack is structurally sound, adequately secured and appropriately designed for its intended load.
- There are no sharp corners or jagged edges on the rack or uprights.
- The uprights do not obstruct any lamps.

Loading capacity of a roof rack

Carrying material on a roof mounted load rack is dependent upon a number of factors. Generally a load with a mass exceeding 50kg should not be loaded on a roof rack.

However, where a roof rack manufacturer has had strength tests performed on a specific type rack, a mass heavier than 50kg may be carried providing it does not exceed the rack manufacturer's recommended capacity. Where the vehicle manufacturer specifies maximum roof rack loads, this capacity should never be exceeded regardless of the rating of the roof rack.

Projecting loads

Projecting loads are permitted to extend 1.2m in front of the headlamps. Similarly, the rearward load projection is limited to 1.2m. In no case must the rearward projection beyond the vehicle's rear axle exceed 60% of the vehicle's wheelbase.

The load is also permitted to extend outwards by 150mm each side of the vehicle, providing the overall width does not exceed 2.5m.

A projecting load must not constitute a dangerous projection. Where a projecting load is not readily visible, a conspicuous flag at least 300mm square is required to be affixed to the projecting load. At night a red light must be attached to the load extremity at the rear.



Loading Guidelines

A load fitted to a roof rack must be correctly secured and comply with the requirements of the "Load Restraint Guide". The Road Traffic Code 2000 and the Road Traffic (Vehicle Standards) Regulations 2002 have provisions for the placement, location and restraint of loads based on the performance requirements specified in the "Load Restraint Guide". The "Load Restraint Guide" can be downloaded for free from the National Transport Commission web site and can also available be purchased from the Department of Transport Vehicle Safety Branch, 21 Murray Road South, Welshpool.

General Safety Issues

When carrying any load or equipment on a roof rack it is important to be aware that the centre of gravity of the vehicle is raised. This may adversely affect the handling and stability characteristics of the vehicle and care should be taken whilst driving.

Wheelbarrows or trolleys, carried on the front or rear of the vehicle constitute dangerous projections and are not permitted.

