

Agenda Item	19
Report No	ECI/25/2024

The Highland Council

Committee: Economy and Infrastructure

Date: 2 May 2024

Report Title: Abnormal Load Policy

Report By: Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy

1 Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report presents a new Abnormal Load Policy for Members to approve.

2 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to **approve** the Abnormal Load Policy as contained in Appendix 1.

3 Implications

3.1 **Resource** - There is currently no change to the existing resource allocation for dealing with Abnormal Load movements.

3.2 **Legal** - Highland will adhere to relevant regulations and guidance.

3.3 **Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island)** - There are no direct implications arising from these proposals.

3.4 **Climate Change / Carbon Clever** - There are no additional climate or carbon implications as a result of this policy.

3.5 **Risk** - The new policy will define how The Highland Council will manage the risk to the road network (including road structures) posed by the transit of Abnormal Loads.

3.6 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** – There are no known health and safety risks arising from this Policy.

3.7 **Gaelic** - There are no implications arising from these proposals.

4 Introduction

4.1 This new policy will bring Highland in line with current regulations and guidance for the management of abnormal loads.

- 4.2 The proposed policy sets out how the Roads Service will provide a statutory abnormal load routing and co-ordination service to hauliers and companies using Highland Council adopted roads.
- 4.3 The regulations are detailed within Section 1.4 of the policy and guidance within Section 3.2 of the policy.

5 Policy Details

- 5.1 Abnormal Loads are defined as any vehicle that has any of the following:-
- a weight of more than 44,000kg;
 - an axle load of more than 10,000kg for a single non-driving axle or 11,500kg for a single driving axle;
 - a width of more than 2.9 metres; or
 - a rigid length of more than 18.65 metres
- 5.2 The aim of the policy is to provide clear and consistent direction on the movement of abnormal loads within Highland.

6 Roads Improvement Project

- 6.1 The introduction of this policy supports one of the aims of the Roads Improvement Project, to compile a programme of policy renewal. Further policies will be brought to this committee for approval, as they are finalised.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy

Date: 26 March 2024

Author: Simon Farrow, Principal Engineer (Structures Section)

Background Papers: None

Appendices: Appendix 1 – Proposed Abnormal Load Draft Policy 2024

Abnormal Load Policy

Roads and Infrastructure

Infrastructure, Environment and Economy

Approval

	Name	Date
Prepared By:	E Maciver / S Farrow	26/03/24
Approved By:	T Urry	

Responsible Officer:	Head of Roads and Infrastructure
Committee:	Economy and Infrastructure
Approval Date:	TBC

Document Control

Version Number	Date	Comments
1.0	March 2024	

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1. The Highland Council has a duty as the local roads authority to provide a statutory abnormal indivisible load (AIL) routing and coordination service to hauliers and companies using Highland Council adopted roads.
- 1.2. This is required in order to carefully manage the movement of AILs so that they only use those parts of the road network that can safely accommodate them.
- 1.3. This Policy outlines how Highland Council will manage the movement of AILs.
- 1.4. The Regulations that govern this process are stated below.
Movement of AILs is regulated and controlled by:
 - (i) **The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986** (SI 1986 No 1078),
 - (ii) **The Road Vehicles (Authorised Weight) Regulations 1998** (SI 1998 No 3111),
 - (iii) **The Road Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) General Order 2003** (SI 2003 No 1998) hereinafter referred to as Special Types General Order 2003,
 - (iv) Section 44 of the **Road Traffic Act 1998**, and
any statutory amendment or re-enactment thereof.

2.0 Scope

- 2.1. This policy shall apply to all adopted and prospectively adoptable roads for which The Highland Council is the local roads authority.
- 2.2. Where roads are not on the adopted list but are managed/ maintained by The Highland Council under other Services such as Property, Housing, Planning and Education, then approval shall be sought from the appropriate Head of Service for any AIL movement.
- 2.3. Where structures on an adopted or prospectively adopted road are owned by an outside party (e.g. Network Rail, Transport Scotland, Scottish Canals), the haulier is responsible for obtaining AIL clearance from the relevant outside party.

3.0 Policy

- 3.1. The Highland Council has a duty to protect its road assets from damage, while acknowledging the need for hauliers and companies to operate profitably and without unnecessary delays.
- 3.2. We will:
- Take cognisance of the guidance in the following documents:
 - Well-managed Highway Infrastructure: A Code of Practice
 - CS 458 The Assessment of Highway Bridges and Structures for the Effects of Special Type General Order (STGO) and Special Order (SO) Vehicles.
 - On receipt of notifications from hauliers within the timescales specified in the Regulations as listed in 1.4, our response time for unacceptable movements will be:
 - 2 clear days' notice (1) for loads not exceeding 80,000 kg, and;
 - within 5 clear days' notice for loads exceeding 80,000 kg and all Special Order loads.
 - Reject notifications that do not meet these timescales.
 - Provide clear advice to hauliers and companies on the routing for AILs.
 - Provide clear advice to hauliers and companies when it is identified that a route cannot or does not have the capacity to carry the AIL with the initial vehicle configuration. Alternative vehicle configurations will be reviewed if required.
 - Provide clear advice to hauliers and companies when a structural assessment is required.

4.0 Implementation and Compliance

- 4.1. Hauliers and companies must contact The Highland Council to notify all AIL movements or to request information relating to them.
- 4.2. Hauliers and companies must provide indemnity details or ensure they are up to date prior to requesting the AIL movement.
- 4.3. The Highland Council will facilitate the route assessment of the proposed route (including both structural and road suitability).

¹ "Clear days' notice" excludes Saturdays, Sundays, Bank Holidays, Christmas Day and Good Friday.

- 4.4. The Highland Council's Structures Section (acting as the Council's Technical Approval Authority) will:
- be responsible for indicating whether the structure(s) on the route is suitable for AILs. This may include size limits (length, width, height) and any weight limits that relate to the structures.
 - supervise the undertaking of structural assessments where required in relation to the movement of AILs via the Technical Approval process set out in CG 300 Technical approval of highway structures.
- 4.5. Road Operations Managers shall be responsible for providing any relevant information required in relation to the movement of AILs. This may include size limits (length, width, height) and any weight limits that relate to the road itself (not structures).
- 4.6. The haulier will be notified if the proposed movement is approved or rejected.
- 4.7. The default response will be a rejection unless confirmation of the suitability of the route is obtained within the required timescale.
- 4.8. The haulier may then discuss with The Highland Council options for rerouting, reconfiguring the load, structural assessments, structural strengthening, structural improvements, or any required road improvements to allow the load to pass. Where any of these are required, the haulier will be expected to fully fund them.
- 4.9. The Highland Council's Technical Approval Authority will be responsible for keeping up to date with any changes in legislation and guidance in relation to abnormal loads.