

HIGH RISK WORK LICENSING FOR VEHICLE LOADING CRANES

INFORMATION SHEET

Overview

This Information Sheet provides advice on high risk work (HRW) licensing requirements for vehicle loading cranes. Further information on vehicle loading cranes is in the:

- [General guide for cranes](#), and
- [Information Sheet: Vehicle loading cranes](#).

What is a vehicle loading crane?

A **vehicle loading crane** is a crane mounted on a vehicle for the purpose of loading and unloading items on or off the vehicle.

With the introduction of larger capacity vehicle loading cranes and proportional control (the ability to operate multiple crane functions simultaneously), vehicle loading cranes may also be used for more traditional crane operations where the load is lifted:

- from the vehicle to an elevated area at a workplace e.g. lifting packs of timber from the vehicle directly to a building floor
- both to and from locations remote from the vehicle on which the crane is mounted, and
- into place and held while it is connected to a structure e.g. installing a sign.

Note: Where a vehicle loading crane is used for a purpose other than loading and unloading the vehicle on which it is mounted, a slewing mobile crane HRW licence may be required to operate the vehicle loading crane for that purpose.

Unless a vehicle loading crane has been designed for pick-and-carry operations it must not be used in this way.

When do you need a HRW licence to operate a vehicle loading crane?

You need a Vehicle Loading Crane HRW Licence or one of the four slewing mobile crane HRW licences¹ to operate a vehicle loading crane with a capacity of 10 metre tonnes or more.

¹ The four slewing mobile crane HRW licences are:
Slewing Mobile Crane - capacity up to 20 tonnes, Slewing Mobile Crane - capacity up to 60 tonnes, Slewing Mobile Crane - capacity up to 100 tonnes and Slewing Mobile Crane - capacity over 100 tonnes.

Table 1 lists examples of typical operations carried out by vehicle loading cranes and the HRW licensing requirements for that work.

Can a slewing mobile crane operator operate a vehicle loading crane?

The four slewing mobile crane HRW licences include the skills and knowledge required to safely operate a vehicle loading crane. This means the holder of a slewing mobile crane HRW licence can legally operate a vehicle loading crane.

However, the holder of a Vehicle Loading Crane HRW Licence cannot legally operate other classes of crane.

Note: The holder of a slewing mobile crane HRW licence cannot sling a load unless they also hold a Dogging HRW Licence. The application of load estimation and slinging techniques in the Vehicle Loading Crane HRW Licence are not part of the slewing mobile crane HRW licences.

When can you operate a vehicle loading crane without a HRW licence?

Training

A vehicle loading crane that requires a licence to operate it can be used by someone who does not have a Vehicle Loading Crane HRW Licence if:

- the work is carried out while the operator is enrolled in a training course to get a Vehicle Loading Crane HRW Licence or one of the slewing mobile crane HRW licences, and
- the operator is under the supervision of a licensed vehicle loading crane operator.

Other circumstances

A worker who carries out work with a vehicle loading crane does not need to have a Vehicle Loading Crane HRW Licence if the work is carried out solely for the purpose of the manufacture, testing, trialling, installation, commissioning, maintenance, servicing, repair, alteration, demolition or disposal of the crane or moving the crane within a workplace.

In these situations the vehicle loading crane must be operated or used without a load except when standard weight loads with predetermined fixing points are used for calibration of the crane.

Are doggers required when using a vehicle loading crane?

A Dogging HRW Licence or one of the three rigging HRW licences² is required by:

- any person, other than a licensed vehicle loading crane operator, who exercises judgement in the estimation of a load or selection of the slinging method and lifting gear when slinging a load on any vehicle loading crane, or
- any person who directs any vehicle loading crane operator in the movement of the load when the load is out of view of the crane operator.

What does 'exercise judgement' mean?

To exercise judgement means making decisions when:

- selecting the slinging method by considering the size and shape of the load
- selecting the lifting gear by determining the weight (its mass) and centre of gravity of the load, and
- inspecting the lifting gear to ensure it is not defective by considering its condition.

The Vehicle Loading Crane HRW Licence includes the application of load estimation and slinging techniques to move a load competently.

Holders of a Vehicle Loading Crane HRW Licence can exercise judgement on the load and slinging method and select and inspect the lifting equipment when operating a vehicle loading crane.

Holders of a Vehicle Loading Crane HRW Licence cannot exercise judgement or inspect lifting gear for any other class of crane unless they hold the relevant HRW licence.

They also cannot:

- operate the vehicle loading crane if the load is out of the operator's view, and
- direct another vehicle loading crane operator in the movement of a load when the load is out of the operator's view.

In these circumstances, a dogger is required to direct the crane operator.

Table 1 lists examples of whether a dogger is required for vehicle loading crane operations.

Further information on dogging work is in the [Information Sheet: High risk work licensing for dogging](#).

Using pre-determined slinging methods

The selection of the slinging method and the lifting gear can be pre-determined by a competent person and set out in a safe work lifting procedure, for example where high volume repetitive lifting occurs. A competent person includes a dogger, rigger or an engineer experienced in designing safe work lifting procedures.

A safe work lifting procedure is a documented procedure that defines the details of a lift including the:

- weight of the load
- lifting points
- equipment and resources used
- procedures relating to differing weather and site conditions, and
- system for regular inspection of the lifting gear.

If unlicensed workers are to use pre-determined slinging techniques they must receive training, instruction and information to correctly follow the specific safe work lifting procedures.

Table 1 lists examples of who is able to sling the load for vehicle loading crane operations.

Are there driver's licence requirements when operating a vehicle loading crane?

Vehicle loading cranes are normally a registered motor vehicle under state and territory road laws. A vehicle loading crane operator must hold the appropriate driver's licence for the vehicle loading crane's class of road vehicle before driving it on a public road.

Further information

For further information see the Safe Work Australia website (www.swa.gov.au).

² There are three rigging HRW licences. They are the Basic Rigging HRW Licence, Intermediate Rigging HRW Licence and the Advanced Rigging HRW Licence. Licensed riggers must have completed the Dogging Unit of Competency to get their rigging HRW licence. They are therefore able to legally carry out dogging work. In this Information Sheet the term dogger is taken to include rigger.

Table 1 Examples of vehicle loading crane operation, operator licensing and dogging requirements

Operation and crane licence	Dogging, slinging and directing requirements
<p>A small vehicle loading crane with a maximum capacity of 5 metre tonnes is used to unload crated truck parts.</p> <p>Loads are repetitive, lifting points are identified, safe work lifting procedures have been developed and training provided.</p> <p>Loads can be seen by the operator throughout the lift for all lifts.</p> <p>Is a Vehicle Loading Crane HRW Licence required?</p> <p>No, the crane has a maximum capacity less than 10 metre tonnes.</p>	<p>Who can sling the load?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers with a Vehicle Loading Crane HRW Licence. A dogger. Other workers who have been trained and assessed in the safe work lifting procedures. <p>Who cannot sling the load?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other workers who have not been trained in the safe work lifting procedures. Other crane operators—mobile crane and other crane operators cannot sling loads unless they have a Dogging HRW Licence or have been trained and assessed in the safe work lifting procedures. <p>Is a dogger required to direct the crane operator?</p> <p>A dogger is not required because the crane operator can see the load throughout the lift.</p>
<p>A vehicle loading crane with a maximum capacity of 10 metre tonnes or more is used to unload but not install roof trusses onto the second level of a building.</p> <p>Loads are repetitive, lifting points are identified, safe work lifting procedures have been developed and training provided.</p> <p>Loads cannot be seen by the operator throughout the lift for all lifts.</p> <p>Is a Vehicle Loading Crane HRW Licence required?</p> <p>Yes, the crane has a maximum capacity on or over 10 metre tonnes.</p>	<p>Who can sling the load?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers with a Vehicle Loading Crane HRW Licence. A dogger. Other workers who have been trained and assessed in the safe work lifting procedures. <p>Who cannot sling the load?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers who have not been trained in the safe work lifting procedures. Other crane operators—mobile crane and other crane operators cannot sling loads unless they have a Dogging HRW Licence or have been trained and assessed in the safe work lifting procedures. <p>Is a dogger required to direct the crane operator?</p> <p>A dogger is required because the crane operator cannot see the load throughout the lift.</p>
<p>A vehicle loading crane with a maximum capacity of 10 metre tonnes or more is used to transport light poles to the roadside.</p> <p>The slings have been selected by a dogger off-site. The loads vary and no safe work lifting procedures have been prepared.</p> <p>Loads can be seen by the operator throughout the lift for all lifts.</p> <p>Is a Vehicle Loading Crane HRW Licence required?</p> <p>Yes, the crane has a maximum capacity on or over 10 metre tonnes.</p>	<p>Who is able to sling the load?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers with a Vehicle Loading Crane HRW Licence. A dogger. <p>Who is not able to sling the load?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other workers because judgement in slinging techniques is required. Other crane operators – mobile crane and other crane operators cannot sling loads unless they have a Dogging HRW Licence. <p>Is a dogger required to direct the crane operator?</p> <p>A dogger is not required because the crane operator can see the load throughout the lift.</p>