

Moving Abnormal Loads Across Rochester Bridge

Legislation & Notification Requirements

The Legislation

The legislation that covers the movement of abnormal loads is called '**The Road Vehicles (Authorisation of Special Types) (General) Order 2003**'. It is more commonly referred to as the STGO. You can access the full legislation [here](#).

Why is the legislation in place?

Depending on the loaded vehicle weight, width or length, the STGO requires hauliers intending to transport an abnormal load to pre-notify highway, bridge and police authorities of their intention to move. This gives the Rochester Bridge Trust the opportunity to check the movement of an abnormal load will not place undue stress on the structures being crossed and will not be prevented or impeded by lane restrictions or put workers at additional risk during maintenance work.

For Rochester Bridge the relevant authorities are the Rochester Bridge Trust, Medway Council and Kent Police.

What is an abnormal load?

Heavy, wide or long loads are commonly referred to as 'abnormal loads' although the correct term is an 'Abnormal Indivisible Load' (AIL). An abnormal indivisible load is one which cannot be divided into two or more loads for carriage on roads without undue expense or risk of damage.

An abnormal load is a 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 and 11,500kg for a single driving axle.
- A width of more than 2.9 metres.
- A rigid length of more than 18.65 metres.

Mobile cranes, engineering plant and road recovery vehicles are also likely to fall within STGO legislation.

Notification procedures

A notice, usually referred to as an 'abnormal load notification' must be submitted by the haulier moving the abnormal load and must contain the specific detail required within the STGO. This includes:

- A list of all the authorities to which the notice is given.
- Details of the user of the vehicle to include address, telephone number, fax number, email address, users licence number, users reference number.
- Details of the intended journey to include point of departure, point of destination, time, date and route of the journey and details of the load being carried.
- Details of the vehicle or vehicle combination to be used including registration number, type of vehicle (s), loaded vehicle dimensions including length (including front and rear projections), width (including lateral projections), height, gross weight, number of wheels per axle, all axle weights and spacings.

The full requirements can be found [here](#).

Advance notice requirements

Dependent on the loaded vehicle weight, width or length, the abnormal load notification must be provided by hauliers to authorities prior to any movement taking place.

Weight:

- For a gross weight of the loaded vehicle up to 80,000kgs, 2 clear working days' notice must be provided to highway and bridge authorities.
- For a gross weight of the loaded vehicle exceeding 80,000kgs and up to 150,000kgs, 5 clear working days' notice must be provided to highway and bridge authorities and 2 clear working days' notice must be provided to police authorities.
- For a gross weight of the loaded vehicle exceeding 150,000kgs, a Highways England BE16 Special Order form must be submitted with 8 weeks' notice and a notification must also be submitted to highway, bridge and police authorities giving 5 clear working days' notice.

Width:

- For a width of the loaded vehicle exceeding 3m and up to 5m, 2 clear working days' notice must be provided to police authorities.
- For a width of the loaded vehicle exceeding 5m and up to 6.1m, a Highways England VR1 form must be submitted giving 10 days' notice and a notification must also be submitted to police authorities giving 2 clear working days' notice.
- For a width of the loaded vehicle exceeding 6.1m, a Highways England BE16 Special Order form must be submitted with 8 weeks' notice and a notification must also be submitted to highway, bridge and police authorities giving 5 clear working days' notice.

Length:

- For a rigid length exceeding 18.65m up to 27.4m, 2 clear working days' notice must be provided to police authorities.
- For a vehicle combination exceeding 25.9m, 2 clear working days' notice must be provided to police authorities.
- For a rigid length exceeding 30m, a Highways England BE16 Special Order form must be submitted with 8 weeks' notice and a notification must also be submitted to highway, bridge and police authorities giving 5 clear working days' notice.

Notes to remember:

Clear working days do not include weekends or bank holidays.

Indemnity required for highway & bridge authorities

The STGO stipulates that hauliers must provide highway and bridge authorities with an indemnity to cover either a specific movement, added to an abnormal load notification or to cover a period of one year, known as an annual block indemnity and usually submitted from 1st January to 31st December each year.

The STGO also stipulates the wording that the haulier must use within the indemnity. Details can be found [here](#) (at the bottom of the page accessed within this link).

Submitting an abnormal load notification

If you intend to move an abnormal load over Rochester Bridge, you must submit an abnormal load notification to the Rochester Bridge Trust by email to rochester@abloads.com prior to your journey taking place following the notice requirements outlined above.

Contact

Abnormal loads officer

Rochester Bridge Trust, Abnormal Load Service

c/o Cascade Software

Bixbury House

Down Lane

Compton

Surrey

GU3 1DQ

Tel: 01483 811822

9am to 5pm Monday to Thursday

9am to 4pm Friday

Email: rochester@abloads.com

All information is correct as of March 2021.