



October 29, 2019

**SUBJECT: Trial of Length Allowances for Autotarp Systems is Concluded – Allowances Will Continue Pending Further Notice**

Managers, Victoria	Passenger Transportation Board	Commercial Transport Insp.
Regional CVSE Managers	Trucking Industry	(Inspection Stations)
Area Vehicle Inspectors	Carrier Safety Inspectors	ICBC
Deputy Director, CVSE	Government Agents	
ADM, Highways Department	Law Enforcement Agencies	

**PURPOSE OF CIRCULAR**

In response to concerns presented to the Ministry about worker safety, BC allowed length allowance exceptions for the use of 'autotarp' systems for a one-year trial. That trial is now concluded with favorable results.

This amended circular is to notify staff and industry that the length allowances for autotarp systems will be continued pending further notice.

For the purposes of this Circular, an automatic tarping (autotarp) system:

- can be operated remotely from ground level; and
- may extend no more than **30.5 cm** to the front or rear of any one vehicle, and
- must be attached at the very top of the vehicle in such a way that no part of the autotarp system descends to a point less than 1.9 m above the ground; and
- must not be designed or used to carry cargo other than a tarp.

Exceptions to the Commercial Transport Regulations (CTR) that will be allowed are:

1. Section 7.08(2) of the Commercial Transport Regulations (CTR) lists devices that may be attached to a vehicle without being included in measurement of the vehicle's (or vehicle combination's) overall length. In addition to the devices currently listed, effective immediately, we will allow an autotarp system installed at the rear of a truck, trailer or semi-trailer. Allowances in 7.08(2)(c) for 30 cm beyond the front or 10 cm beyond the rear of a vehicle for other auxiliary equipment or devices not designed or used to carry cargo may still be used, in combination with the new autotarp allowance, provided the maximum of 30.5 cm extension from the vehicle is not exceeded.

2. Appendix B of the CTR sets out weight and dimensional allowances for trucks and truck tractors. An autotarp system may be excluded from the measurement of the maximum 4.0 m effective rear overhang.
3. Appendix D of the CTR sets out weight and dimensional allowances for truck tractor and semi-trailer combinations. An autotarp system mounted either to the front or the rear of the box on a semi-trailer may be excluded from the measurement of the maximum 16.2 m semi-trailer length, and from the measurement of the maximum effective rear overhang of 35% of semi-trailer wheelbase.
4. Appendix G of the CTR sets out weight and dimensional allowances for A-, B- and C-Trains. An autotarp system mounted either to the front of the box on the front trailer and/or to the rear of the box on the rear trailer may be excluded from the measurement of the maximum 20.0 m box length (a maximum combined allowance of 61 cm) , and from the measurement of the maximum effective rear overhang of 35% of semi-trailer wheelbase.

Exceptions to current permit policy allowances that will be allowed are:

1. Section 4.5.4, [Chapter 4](#) of the Commercial Transport Procedures Manual provides permit allowances for the transport of wood chips, mill processed wood residuals and pulp bales in walled B-Train configurations on routes listed on Form [CVSE1012](#). An autotarp system mounted either to the front of the box on the front trailer and/or to the rear of the box on the rear trailer may be excluded from the measurement of the maximum 23.0 m box length (a maximum combined allowance of 61 cm).

## **BACKGROUND**

Concerned representatives of BC industry approached the Ministry to make us aware of significant issues with worker safety related to manually tarping loads of loose materials.

It appears that autotarp systems that fit within regulation dimensions are not suitable for all uses, and the Ministry has agreed to provide these limited allowances to assist with improvements to worker safety.

No exceptions to regulation or policy other than those described in this Circular are intended or implied.

Because the equipment will be allowed only at the very top of the vehicles where its potential to interact with other road users is very limited, we do not expect to see detrimental impacts to other road users. However, the on-road safety performance of vehicles operating with these allowances will be assessed after a period of one year, and a determination will be made at that time as to whether to continue the allowances into the future.

Until the allowances are either cancelled or adopted by regulation, the Ministry will allow the increased dimensions by general authority delegated to the Director CVSE in Section 7.02(1) of the Commercial Transport Regulations. No permits are required.

For additional information or questions please contact [Commercial.Transport@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Commercial.Transport@gov.bc.ca).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SE', followed by a horizontal line.

Samantha Eburne  
Director, Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement Branch  
Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure