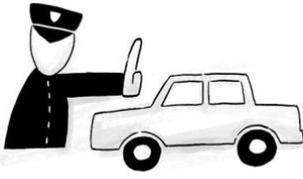
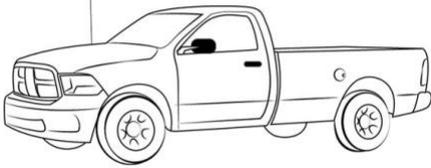


<p>I have no problem to tow a trailer. My dealer told me that the bakkie can tow 3 ½ tons!</p>		<p>My trailer has brakes and it can weigh 3 ½ tons. My car can easily tow it!</p>
	<p>Stop! Your trailer is too heavy. You cannot tow it with your car!</p>	
<p>That is correct. Some car manufacturers allow the towing of trailers with a gross vehicle mass of up to 3500 kg.</p>	<p>That is correct. Most trailers of this category have an an inertia brake system fitted. The tare mass of the towing vehicle determines then what trailer mass can be towed.</p>	<p>That is correct. The trailer can have a gross vehicle mass of 3500 kg if it is fitted with inertia brakes or service brakes.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Why is my trailer then too heavy to be towed?</p> <p>The National Road Traffic Regulations clearly state in Regulation 151 Brakes on trailers: If the trailer has an inertia brake system (run-in or overrun brakes) fitted, then</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The trailer may not have a gross vehicle mass of more than 3500 kg, and b) its gross vehicle mass (GVM) cannot be more than the tare (T) of the towing vehicle. <p>Also, if the trailer has no brakes then it must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Have a gross vehicle mass of not more than 750 kg, and b) Can only be towed by a vehicle whose tare mass is at least twice that of the gross vehicle mass of the trailer 		
<p style="text-align: center;">What must I do to have my bakkie and trailer road-legal?</p> <p>Check the license disc of your towing vehicle and note the tare mass, which is printed on the disc. You can also check the data plate of the vehicle, which gives you a gross combination mass if you have a trailer in tow. Usually you will find this data plate on the doorpost of the right door, under the dashboard or under the bonnet against the cab-wall.</p> <p>Only buy or rent a trailer whose gross vehicle mass is equal or lower than</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Half of the tare mass of the towing vehicle when the trailer has no brakes; or b) Not more than the tare mass of the towing vehicle if the trailer has inertia brakes. <p>It is very unlikely that a trailer will at that stage be fitted with full service brakes. If you have an existing trailer, braked or unbraked which is too heavy to fall within the limitations of Reg 151, then consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Use a towing vehicle with a higher tare mass to be within the specifications. This will however have a limited effect only, since there is no known light motor vehicle currently on the market which has a tare mass higher than around 2500 kg. b) Re-register the trailer with a lower legal gross vehicle mass (V) to match the limitations of Reg 151. <p>Considering changing the inertia brake system of the trailer to a full service brake system may be for cost reasons prohibitive and might cost more than acquiring a new trailer.</p>		

Which trailer and car combinations are most likely affected?

It is universally accepted that the person at the point of sale or rental will know whether such a trailer can be towed legally by the vehicle present when the two vehicles are coupled together, or otherwise advise of possible consequences.

Unbraked trailers below 750 kg gross vehicle mass:

Rental trailers are handed out without consideration of the tare mass of the towing vehicle, the engine size only is relevant.

Although luggage trailers, often distributed by chain stores such as Macro or Builders, are normally plated at a lower gross vehicle mass of e.g. 650 kg, can such trailer be towed away by any vehicle with a tow hitch without consideration of the tare mass of the towing vehicle.

Inertia-braked trailers with a gross vehicle mass between 750 kg and 3500 kg.

Any trailer which displays a gross vehicle mass of around 2000 kg or more will most likely not meet the Reg 151 regulation.

Why 200kg? This is only a comparative value, because the tare mass of most of the heavier LDV's and SUV's is in the range of about 1800 to 2200 kg, some exceptional vehicles can have around 2500 kg. Without any service brake system on the trailer no such trailer can be plated heavier than the tare mass of the towing vehicle.

It is also the rental industry which in most cases considers the engine size only and not the tare mass of the towing vehicle. A client is not informed of the consequences, but is even assisted to connect any illegal vehicle combination.

Many purpose built trailers, such as horse boxes, skip bin carriers, car transporters, mini-furniture removal box trailers and others are built with high gross vehicle mass ratings, in some cases even necessary to meet the load requirements. None of these can be towed legally by a light motor vehicle if their gross vehicle mass is higher than the tare mass of the towing vehicle.

Regulation 151 of the National Road Traffic Regulations

151. Brakes on trailers

- (1) Subject to the provisions of subregulation (4) no person shall operate on a public road a trailer, if—
- (a) the gross vehicle mass of such trailer does not exceed 750 kilograms and the gross vehicle mass—
 - (i) does not exceed half the tare of the drawing vehicle, unless such trailer is equipped with a parking brake or other device to keep such trailer stationary;
 - (ii) exceeds half the tare of the drawing vehicle but does not exceed such tare, unless such trailer is equipped with a parking brake and either a service brake or an overrun brake; or
 - (iii) exceeds the tare of the drawing vehicle, unless such trailer is equipped with a parking brake and a service brake;
 - (b) the gross vehicle mass of such trailer exceeds 750 kilograms but does not exceed 3 500 kilograms and the gross vehicle mass—
 - (i) does not exceed the tare of the drawing vehicle, unless such trailer is equipped with a parking brake and either an overrun brake or a service brake; or
 - (ii) exceeds the tare of the drawing vehicle, unless the trailer is equipped with a parking brake and a service brake;
 - (c) the gross vehicle mass of the trailer exceeds 3 500 kilograms, unless such trailer is equipped with a parking brake and a service brake, and where more than one trailer is drawn by a drawing vehicle, the foregoing requirements shall apply in respect of each such trailer, and in such event the gross vehicle mass shall be construed as the total of the gross vehicle mass of all trailers so drawn.

[Sub-reg. (1) substituted by r. 42, GNR.1341 w.e.f. 25 September 2003.]

- (2) The service brake of a trailer shall be capable of being operated by the driver of the drawing vehicle while such trailer and drawing vehicle are in motion.
- (3) If the service or overrun brake of a trailer is capable of being used as a parking brake, a separate parking brake need not be fitted to such trailer.
- (4) Notwithstanding subregulation (1) (c), if a trailer referred to in that subregulation is drawn by a tractor and such tractor is not designed for or capable of operation at a speed exceeding 40 kilometres per hour on a reasonably level road, such trailer may be equipped with an overrun brake in lieu of a service brake.

[Sub-reg. (4) amended by GNR.2116 of 2001, w.e.f. 5 October 2001 and by GNR.404 of 2007.]