

## 4-Part “*Buyer Assist*” Evaluation, Comparison, Contract & Inspection

### Information when considering Purchase of a new Caravan, or Camper-Trailer:

You are making a *major* investment... Make sure you do *not* finish up with any regrets.

There are highly-professional, highly-respected Caravan manufacturers and dealers, who build and sell fully-compliant, high-quality Caravans.

There are also some people and products that are **not** of the same calibre.

Do **not** be pushed! Do **not** assume anything! Take your time to be **sure** you understand fully!

If in doubt, or if a sixth-sense tells you to... walk away.

Ensure you have at least a basic understanding of the *Australian Consumer Law*.

Remember: Sales personnel are trained to *sell*.

Do **not** rush. Take a respected independent person - who is experienced, especially with legal and technical requirements, in caravans - with you. They will be level-headed, with no emotional involvement in your new *pride-and-joy*, and able to ensure you make sound evaluations and decisions.

Confirm *all* items in the *Sales Contract* thoroughly. Do **not** accept anything that is **not** as you want.

Expect - *Demand* - the Dealer to take 4 - 6 hours to fully inspect, test and explain all items.

### This document has 4 Parts... In Order:

- 1: **Evaluation** - Considerations when Purchasing a new Caravan  
Requirements & Preferences for a New Caravan
- 2: **Comparison** of Various Makes & Models (Use one sheet for each Caravan)  
Judge with your Requirements & Preferences with Inspected Caravans
- 3: **Contract** - Items that *MUST* be included in the Sales Contract
- 4: **Pre-Delivery Inspection** - Items that *MUST* be Inspected & Accepted before taking Delivery

Your Details: Name: .....

Address: .....

Tel: ..... email: .....

Intended Tow-Vehicle: Make: ..... Model: ..... Year: .....

Maximum Tow Rating: ..... Maximum Ball-Load Rating: .....

Tow-Bar: Brand: ..... Approval: ..... Maximum Tow Rating: .....

Maximum Ball-Load Rating: ..... Safety Chains Mount OK?: .....

Tow-Ball: Brand: Size: ..... Approval: .....

Has the vehicle been serviced, and made suitable for towing:

Brakes; cooling system; transmission; tyres;

Requirements & Preferences for a New Caravan:

What is your Budget: \$ .....

When do you need it: .....

Number of Sleeping Berths: .....

Required Load-Carrying Capacity (kg): ..... (LCC = ATM Rating – Tare Mass)

(Do you really need to carry this much equipment and water??? Remember, water is included in the "Load", and not the "Tare Mass".)

Maximum Overall Dimensions (m): Length: ..... Width: ..... Height: .....

Maximum Ball-Loading (when the caravan is fully-loaded in a typical manner) (kg): .....

ATM Rating (kg): .....

Axles: Single or Tandem: .....

Suspension: Solid Axle or Independent: .....

Springs: Leaf or Coil: .....

Shock-absorbers Required: YES / NO (Essential for coil-spring suspensions)

Wheels: Brand: Model: Material: Size Details: .....

Tyres: Brand: Model: Size Details: .....

Chassis & A-Frame Construction: Materials: Grade: Dimensions: Corrosion-Protection: .....

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(Demand Proof of ADR 62 / VSB-1 Compliance) .....

Water Tanks: Number: Capacities: Location: Clearance & Protection: .....

LPG Cylinders: Number: Capacities: Location: .....

Styling: .....

Layout Details: Dimensioned drawing showing location of: Beds; Table; Chairs/Benches; Kitchen; all appliances, storage facilities, and fitments: .....

Features: Shower; Toilet; Other: .....

Appliances: Stove; Refrigerator; Microwave; Hot-water system; TV/Audio; Air-conditioner; Other: .....

Protection: Fire extinguisher; Alarms - Smoke-detector; CO-detector; Burglar; GPS: .....

Awnings: Brand; material; size: .....

Colours: External; Internal (walls, ceiling & timber); Curtains; Upholstery: .....

Is an Electronic Brake Controller Required: YES / NO

Are Extended Mirrors Required: YES / NO

Is a Weight-distribution System and/or other Towing Aids Required: YES / NO

Spare Wheel(s) & Tyre(s): Number: Location: .....

Suitable Approved Jack - with *legal jacking points* - must be provided:

Batteries: Number: Type: Size: Capacity: Location: .....

Solar Panels & Controller: .....

Battery Charger: .....

Other Specific **Requirements**: .....

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Other **Preferences**: .....

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Compare with your Requirements & Preferences

Use one sheet for each Caravan

Make: .....

Model: .....

Dealer: .....

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Price: \$ ..... Loan Details (if you require a loan): .....

ATM Rating: ..... kg Tare Mass: ..... kg

Load-Carrying Capacity: ..... kg Ball-loading at Tare Mass Condition: ..... kg

Overall Length: ..... m Width: ..... m Height: ..... m

Number of Sleeping Berths: .....

Axles: Single or Tandem: .....

Suspension: Solid Axle or Independent: .....

Springs: Leaf or Coil: .....

Shock-absorbers: YES / NO

Wheels: Brand: Model: Material: Size Details: .....

Tyres: Brand: Model: Size Details: .....

Chassis & A-Frame Construction: Materials: Grade: Dimensions: Corrosion-Protection: .....

(Proof of ADR 62 / VSB-1 Compliance available or provided?)

Water Tanks: Number: Capacities: Location: Clearance & Protection: .....

LPG Cylinders: Number: Capacities: Location: .....

Styling: Rating: 1 (Low) to 10 (High) .....

Layout: Rating: 1 (Low) to 10 (High) .....

Features: Shower: YES / NO Toilet: YES / NO Other: .....

Appliances: Stove; refrigerator; microwave; hot-water system; TV/Audio; air-conditioner; other: .....

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Protection: Fire extinguisher: YES / NO Smoke-detector/alarm: YES / NO  
CO-detector/alarm: YES / NO Burglar alarm: YES / NO

Awning: YES / NO Brand: ..... Material: ..... Size: .....

Colours: External; Internal (walls, ceiling & timber); Curtains; Upholstery: .....

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Is a Weight-distribution System and/or other Towing Aids Required: YES / NO .....

Spare Wheel(s) & Tyre(s): YES / NO Number: 1 / 2 Location: .....

Suitable Approved Jack - with legal jacking points - provided: YES / NO

Batteries: YES NO Number: ..... Type: ..... Size: .....

Capacity: ..... Location: .....

Solar Panels & Controller: YES / NO Capacity: .....

Battery Charger: YES / NO Details: .....

Other Equipment & Appliances Fitted: .....

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**Component Rating:** 1 (Poor) to 10 (Excellent)

Size: .....

Mechanical Design: .....

Construction: .....

Styling: .....

Internal Layout: .....

Features: .....

Appliances: .....

Accessories: .....

Colours: .....

“X Factor”:

Trust in Dealer: .....

Price: .....

**Overall Rating:** .....

## Contract - Items that *MUST* be included in the Sales Contract Part 3 of 4

Product warranties *must now* include, word for word, the following statement:

"Our goods come with guarantees that cannot be excluded under the Australian Consumer Law. You are entitled to a replacement or refund for a major failure and compensation for any other reasonably foreseeable loss or damage. You are also entitled to have the goods repaired or replaced if the goods fail to be of acceptable quality and the failure does not amount to a major failure."

Ensure all requirements are *clearly stated in writing* and signed by yourself and the Dealer.

**Your Details:** Name: .....  
Address: .....  
Tel: ..... email: .....

**Intended Tow-Vehicle:** Make: ..... Model: ..... Year: .....  
Maximum Tow Rating: ..... Maximum Ball-Load Rating: .....

Tow-Bar: Brand: ..... Approval: ..... Maximum Tow Rating: .....  
Maximum Ball-Load Rating: ..... Safety Chains Mount OK?: .....

Tow-Ball: Brand: ..... Size: ..... Approval: .....

**Dealer Details:** Name: .....  
Address: .....  
Tel: ..... email: .....

**Brand:** .....

**Model:** .....

Overall Dimensions: Length: ..... Width: ..... Height: .....

Load-Carrying Capacity: ..... kg (Legal LCC = ATM Rating – Tare Mass)

Tare Mass: .....

Recommended Ball-Loading (% of mass, or other factors): .....

Ball-loading at Tare Mass Condition: .....

Maximum Ball-loading (when fully loaded in a typical manner): .....

Maximum Ball-loading variations, depending on contents of the water tank(s): .....

ATM Rating: .....

GTM Rating: .....

Axle-Group Rating: .....

Axle Size: .....

Wheels: Number: ..... Brand: ..... Model: ..... Material: .....

Size Details: ..... Off-set: ..... Approval Details: .....

Tyres: Brand: ..... Model: ..... Size Details: .....

Approval Details: .....

Suspension: Type: ..... Brand: ..... Rating: .....

Engineering Details: .....

Springs: Type: ..... Brand: ..... Rating: .....

Shock-absorbers: .....

Tyre Loading at Tare Mass: .....

Tyre Loading when fully loaded: .....

Recommended Tyre Pressure at Tare Mass: .....

Recommended Tyre Pressure when fully loaded: .....

Chassis Construction: Material: ..... Grade: ..... Dimensions: .....

A-Frame Construction: Material: ..... Grade: ..... Dimensions: .....

Proof of ADR 62 / VSB-1 Compliance?: .....

Water Tanks: Number; Capacities; Location; Clearance & Protection: .....

LPG Cylinders: Number; Capacities; Location; Securing & Protection; Approval Details; Date: .....

Lines & Wiring: Supported and protected; All joins visible; Neatly installed: .....

Body: External length: ..... Construction method: ..... Materials used: .....

Colours: External: ..... Internal (walls, ceiling & timber): .....

Curtains: ..... Upholstery: .....

Layout Details: Dimensioned drawing of all appliances, storage facilities, and fitments: .....

Features: Sleeping berths: ..... Shower: ..... Toilet: ..... Other: .....

Appliances: Stove: ..... Refrigerator: ..... Microwave: .....

Hot-water system: ..... TV/Audio: ..... Air-conditioner: .....

Other: .....

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Appliances Details: Make; Model; Serial No.; Colour; etc. (To be itemised) .....

Protection: Fire extinguisher: ..... Smoke-detector/alarm: .....

CO-detector/alarm: ..... Burglar alarm: .....

Awnings: Brand: ..... Material: ..... Size: .....

Electronic Brake Controller: Brand: ..... Model: ..... Installed correctly: .....

Extended Mirrors: Required? .....

Weight-distribution System and other Towing Aids: .....

Spare Wheel(s) & Tyre(s): .....

Suitable Approved Jack - with legal jacking points - provided: .....

Batteries: Number: ..... Type: ..... Size: ..... Capacity: ..... Location: .....

Solar Panels & Controller: .....

Battery Charger: .....

Other Specific Requirements: .....

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RCD & Circuit-breaker: .....

Does the manufacturer have a recognised professional *Quality Assurance* program in place: .....

Water-leakage test to be conducted. ....

Acceptance *must* be declined if the handling is *not* considered satisfactory.

- Certificates:** Licensed Gas-fitter  
 Licensed Electrician  
 Licensed Plumber  
 Weigh-bridge (Certified or Declaration)

**Declaration:** "The vehicle fully complies with all VSB-1 legal requirements".

**Disclaimer:** The information provided in this document is given in good faith.

However, it is *not* legal advice, and there is *no* responsibility accepted for reliance on its use.

A solicitor *must* be contacted if you have any questions regarding the *Sales Contract*.



### Items that **MUST** be *Inspected* - and *Accepted* - before taking Delivery:

You are making a *major* investment... Make sure you do *not* finish up with any regrets.

Expect - *Demand* - the Dealer to take 4 - 6 hours to fully inspect, test and explain all items.

Do *not* be pushed! Do *not* assume anything! Take your time to be *sure* you understand fully!

Ensure you have at least a basic understanding of the *Australian Consumer Law*.

The Dealer has significant "*Duty of Care*" responsibilities.

The caravan *must* be of "*Acceptable Quality*" and "*Fit For Purchase*".

Confirm *all* items in the *Contract* thoroughly. Do *not* accept anything that is not as you want.

Ensure professional detailed *Handbooks* are provided for all appliances and systems.

The Dealer *must* provide you with "all information that you may reasonably be expected to know".

Test *all* appliances and systems properly... on gas, 230 volt AC, and 12 volt DC. Don't rush!

Allow sufficient time to ensure everything works correctly.

Inspect wiring size (gauge) and type of connectors.

Check dc voltage available at appliances.

Inspect *all* exterior and interior surfaces for damage or imperfections.

Inspect *underneath*, for damage or unprofessional wiring and tubing/hoses.

Inspect *all* doors for correct and neat fitment, and operation of latches and locks.

Check all windows.

Inspect *all* upholstery, fly-screens and soft surfaces for any damage.

Check the awning for correct and easy operation.

Fill the water tank(s) using a hose at full tap pressure. Check all lines and connections for leaks.

Check water pumps for correct operation.

Flush the toilet a few times. Is the cassette easy to remove and install?

Conduct a reasonable water-leakage test with a hose, to simulate a heavy rain-fall on the roof and windows, and inspect inside for any water leaks. Declined acceptance if there are leaks.

Connect the combination. Are the vehicles level? Are the safety-chains, jockey-wheel and coupling working properly?

Check all lamps for correct operation.

Check the brake break-away system for correct operation.

Is a battery-condition warning device required for your state/territory?

Does the jack work correctly?            Are there prescribed jacking-points on each side?

Ensure you have **insurance** for the new purchase.

With the Dealer on board, test-drive the vehicle combination at reasonable speeds on various roads, to ensure handling and stability seem OK.

Ensure the brakes are working correctly... effectively and evenly.

Thoroughly inspect the *Sales Contract* and other documentation supplied by the Dealer. If you have any reservations on any item, do *not* sign anything, but have a solicitor inspect the document. Decline acceptance if this is refused by the Dealer.

Ensure you understand all conditions regarding operating your purchase, especially those relating to servicing/maintenance.

Are there any special limitations on what road surfaces you can drive on, or operate appliances for continuous periods, etc.?

## ***Caravan Council of Australia***

**[www.caravancouncil.com.au](http://www.caravancouncil.com.au)**

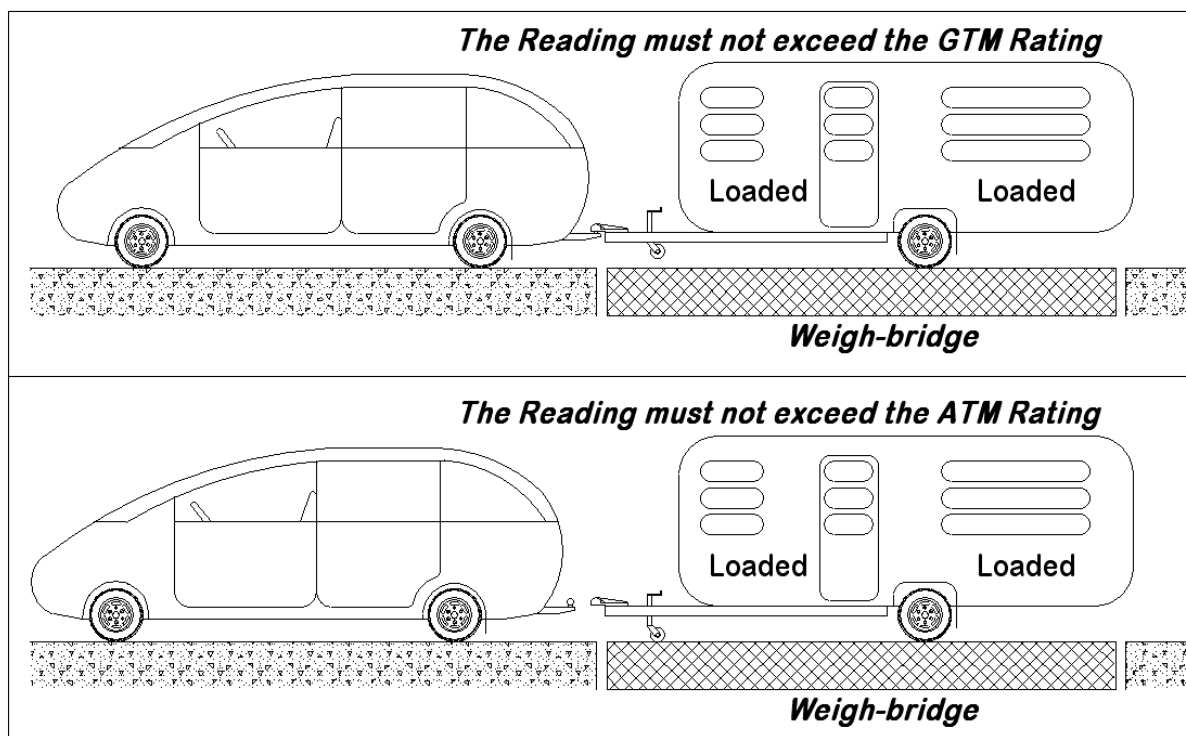
***“Enhancing the Image of the Australian RV Industry”***

## Caravan Ratings & Masses

The GTM & ATM are Ratings... allocated by the Manufacturer

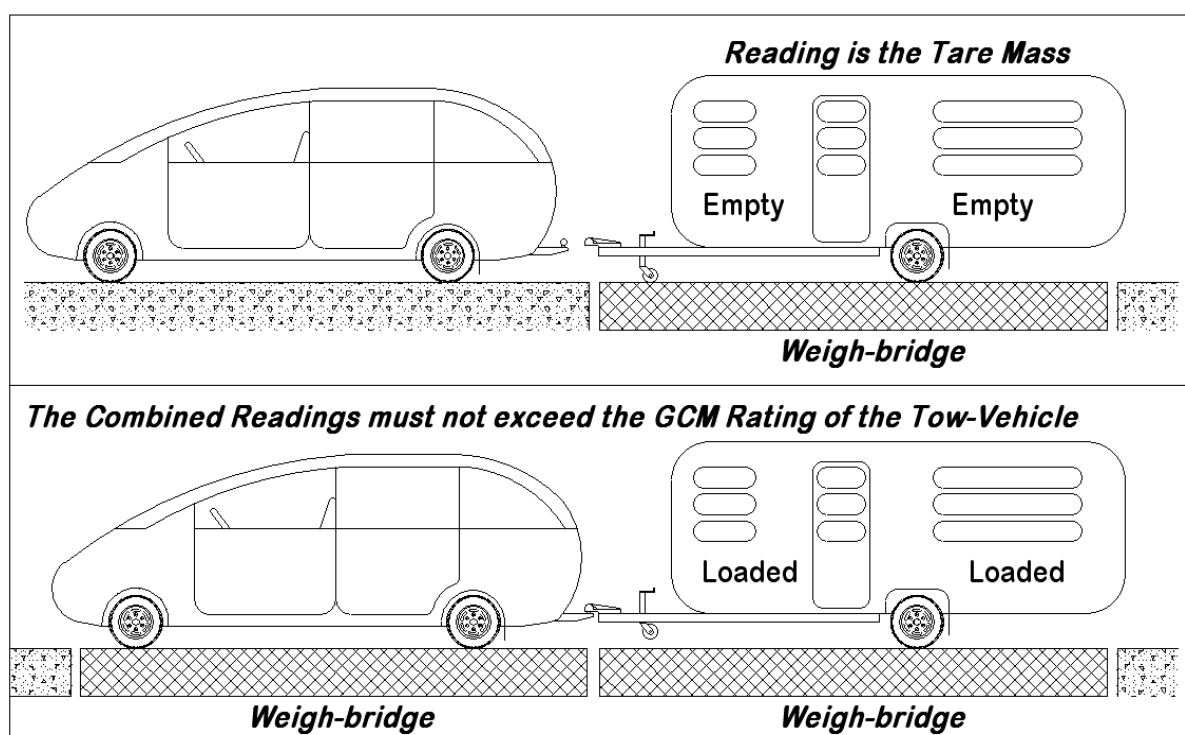
The Tare Mass and Ball-Loading are Actual Masses... that must be measured

The Tare Mass is the *actual measured mass* of the vehicle as it leaves the Supplier. The vehicle is fitted with everything that was stated on the *Purchase Contract*. The vehicle is empty. The gas cylinder(s) and the water tank(s) must be empty.

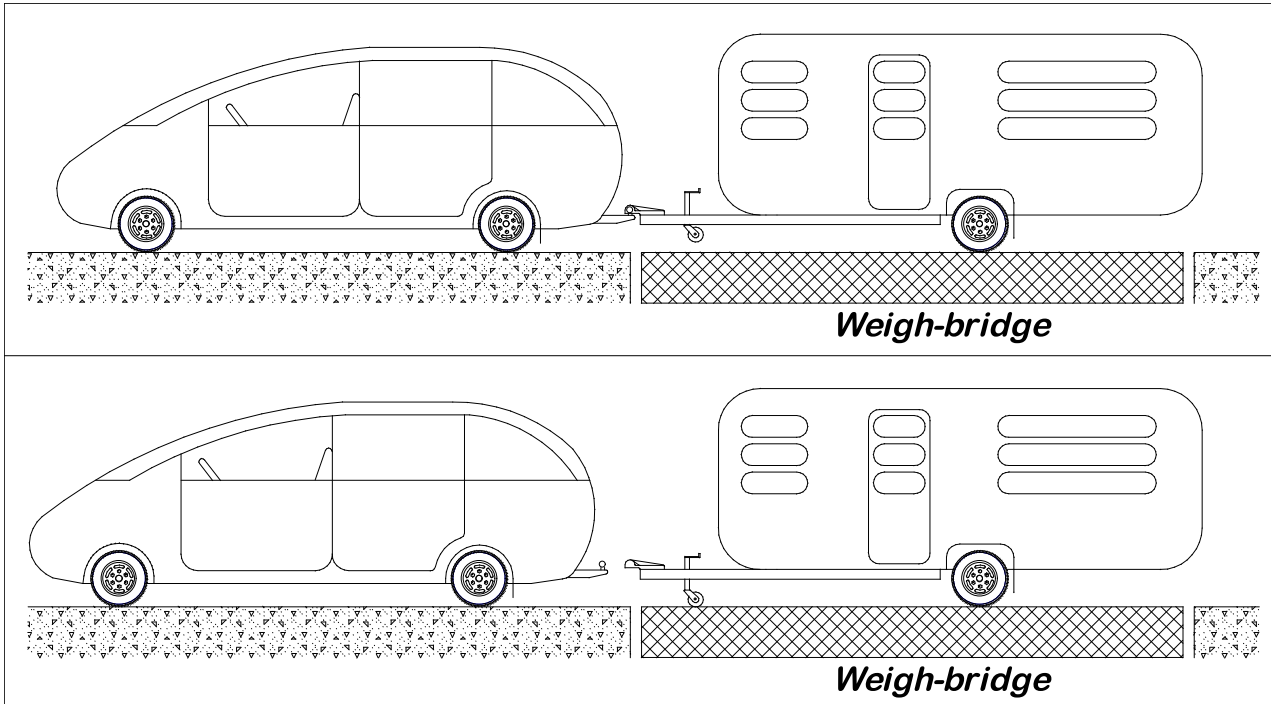


Drawing 1 shows measuring the “**Axle-Loading**” Must not exceed the **GTM** Rating

Drawing 2 shows measuring the “**All-Up Mass**” Must not exceed the **ATM** Rating



**Legal Load-Carrying Capacity = ATM Rating – Tare Mass**



**The Ball-Loading is the *difference* between the two readings**

**ATM: Aggregate Trailer Mass (Rating)**

**GTM: Gross Trailer Mass (Rating)**

**The GTM Rating must *not* exceed the *lowest* of the “Axle-Group” Ratings.**

**The “Axle-Group” comprises the:**

- **Wheels & Tyres**
- **Suspension Structure**
- **Springs**
- **Axles & Wheel-Bearings**

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**Tow-Vehicles:**

- **GVM: Gross Vehicle Mass (Rating)**
- **GCM: Gross Combination Mass (Rating)**
- **RAC: Rear Axle Capacity (Rating)**
- **Maximum Permitted Towing Capacity: (Rating)**
- **Maximum Permitted Coupling Down-load Capacity: (Rating)**

**Tow-Bar: Maximum Permitted Towing & Down-load Limits: (Ratings)**