

The manufacturing date is moulded into the tyre as a 4-number code. e.g. 3211 means the tyre was manufactured in the 32nd week of 2011. It is important to regularly inspect tyres for any damage both the tread and the sidewalls.

It is important to understand the information provided on the Tyre Placard which is included in the VIN Plate. "VIN" means the 17-digit Vehicle Identification Number. If something is not clear, or you question any figure, always ask the manufacturer.

Ensuring that your caravan or camper-trailer is correctly loaded - within the specified ratings, with heavy items placed above the axles, and with the correct ball-loading - and ensuring that it is maintained in good condition - will enable you to enjoy safe and relaxing travel.

There are other items that should be checked on a regular basis, or after you have hit a bad bump. Check the under-side for any damage to the chassis, axles, and suspension. In particular, check all joints and welds for any cracking, and all bolts and nuts. Check all water and gas lines.

To ensure safe and pleasant travelling, all wheel bearings must be checked regularly to ensure they are properly adjusted and greased. All bearing surfaces, and the seals, need to be inspected to be sure that they are in good condition, and will run reliably.

At the same time, the brakes must be checked to ensure they operate correctly on all wheels.

Carefully check all 12-volt wiring and connections/terminals to ensure they are clean, secure and tight, and have not been damaged by roadway stones, or chafing on other components.

The correct operation of all lights needs to be checked. Always carry some spare globes and fuses.

Murphy – we think it's his law number 47 - says you will **never** need spares if you **do** carry them!

Remember: **Your are driving for recreation... not wreck-creation!!!**

RVMAA "Travel with Confidence" Peace-of-mind is a definite must!

RVMAA Caravan Safety Brochure & Check-list

Recreational Vehicle Manufacturers Association of Australia



info@rvmaa.com.au

www.rvmaa.com.au

Please refer to the RVMAA Handbook and website for further information.

Caravans and camper-trailers need regular maintenance to give of their best, and will give long and reliable service if they are properly serviced and looked after. Some servicing, such as inspecting and adjusting brakes, requires an experienced and trained professional technician – but other servicing does not!

Before looking at the critical items involved with servicing and maintaining your caravan or camper-trailer in top condition, first ensure that your combination of tow-vehicle and RV is both safe and legal.

The risk of accidents or instability with your caravan or camper-trailer rises significantly if the vehicle is over-weight or poorly-loaded, plus incorrect loading could compromise your insurance and put you on the wrong side of the law.

It is important to fully understand the **Ratings & Masses** for caravans and camper-trailers, as it is the driver's responsibility to ensure that they do not exceed any of these Ratings.

The **GTM** (gross trailer mass) and **ATM** (aggregate trailer mass) are ratings supplied by the caravan or camper-trailer manufacturer. They are not actual masses.

ATM Rating: The total *permitted mass* of the laden caravan when carrying the maximum load recommended by the manufacturer. This includes the mass imposed on the tow-vehicle.

GTM Rating: The total *permitted mass* of the laden caravan transmitted to the ground by the caravan tyres, when carrying the maximum load recommended by the manufacturer, when coupled to a tow-vehicle.

Tare Mass: The *actual mass* of the caravan with all OEM equipment fitted, with empty water tanks, and without any luggage or personal effects. (LPG cylinders are not included, unless they are supplied as standard equipment.)

Ball-loading: The *actual load* (or force), in kg, that is exerted onto the tow-bar of the tow-vehicle at any time. It is an accepted Australian RV industry “standard” or “recommended practice” that the ball-loading should be 8 -15% of the caravan mass.

Load-carrying Capacity: The *total permitted maximum load* stated by the manufacturer, in kg, that may be legally carried in the caravan or camper-trailer. It is the difference between the **ATM Rating** and the **Tare Mass**. Any options or accessories added by a dealer, or the owner, will reduce the available load-carrying capacity accordingly.

The **GVM** (Gross Vehicle Mass) and **GCM** (Gross Combination Mass) are towing ratings supplied by the tow-vehicle manufacturer. The tow-vehicle and tow-bar must (as an RVMAA Code of Practice item) both have a towing rating that exceeds the **ATM Rating** of the caravan/trailer. The tow-vehicle and tow-bar must both have a **Maximum Ball-load Rating** that exceeds the **actual ball-loading** of the caravan at any time.

Being over-weight is both dangerous and illegal. It is necessary to measure the empty (tare) mass of your vehicle, along with the ball-loading – at a certified weigh-bridge - and then do it again when your vehicle fully-loaded.

Selecting the correct tyres for a caravan or camper-trailer is important for vehicle handling and stability. Inspecting the tyres on a regular basis - and maintaining them - is just as important

Tyres must be marked “Made in Australia” or have an “E-Mark” (which is a capital E in a circle), or (U.S.) DOT (Department of Transport) marking, and the Speed Rating and Load Rating must be sufficient for the vehicle. Correct tyre pressures - as specified by the tyre manufacturer - should be used at all times.

The correct pressure will be different for the unladen and fully-loaded conditions, and will ensure the optimum ride and handling, and the best possible tyre life. It will minimize the vibration of the caravan or camper-trailer and its contents. There is nothing nicer than a smooth ride!

Caravan Inspection Check-list

Make & Model:

VIN: Year:

VIN Plate Information: ATM: GTM:

Tare: Ball-load: (Empty) (Maximum)

Tyre Size: Tyre Pressure(s):

Tow-Vehicle/Bar: Towing Capacity: Max. Ball-load:

Tyre Size: Tyres OK?: Rim Size:

Tyre Pressures: LF: LR: RF: RR: Spare:

OK?: Coupling: Safety Chains: Clevises: Tow-bar:

Lamps & Reflectors OK?:

Wiring, Plug & Socket OK?:

Chassis & Under-side Check OK? Jockey Wheel OK?

Brakes Check OK? Wheel-bearings Check OK?

Tyre Loadings: LF: LR: RF: RR:

Ball-loading: Caravan Loading OK?:

Notes:

.....

.....

.....