



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT MEMO

2005 Wisconsin Act 363
[2005 Assembly Bill 315]

**Operating Certain Two-Vehicle
Combinations on Certain Highways**

Current law specifies that, with certain exceptions, no person may operate on a highway any single vehicle with an overall length in excess of 40 feet or any combination of two vehicles with an overall length in excess of 65 feet, *unless the person has a permit* to exceed these lengths. *Exceptions* include:

1. Allowing a semitrailer or trailer *up to 48 feet in overall length* to be operated, without a permit, as part of a two-vehicle combination on any highway.
2. Allowing a semitrailer up to 53 feet in overall length and having a kingpin-to-axle length not exceeding 43 feet to be operated, without a permit, as part of a two-vehicle combination on certain highways designated by the Department of Transportation (DOT).
3. Allowing a tractor-semitrailer combination to be operated on designated highways without limitation on length.
4. Allowing specified vehicles to operate on highways not designated by DOT for a distance of five miles or less in order to access a highway designated by DOT or to reach certain services or destinations. [s. 348.07 (2) and (4), Stats.]

2005 Wisconsin Act 363

2005 Wisconsin Act 363 does the following:

1. *Creates exceptions* that allow the following to be operated, without a permit, on all state trunk highways (including interstate highways) except those that have been identified by DOT by rule as not suitable to accommodate such vehicle lengths:
 - a. A tractor-semitrailer combination *up to 75 feet in overall length*.

This memo provides a brief description of the Act. For more detailed information, consult the text of the law and related legislative documents at the Legislature's Web site at: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/>.

- b. A semitrailer *up to 53 feet in overall length* and having a *kingpin-to-axle length* not exceeding 43 feet that is operated as part of a two-vehicle combination.

The Act does not affect existing law relating to permissible length of these tractor-semitrailer combinations and semitrailers operated on highways presently designated by DOT. The Act requires the Secretary of DOT, by rule, to designate those parts of the state trunk highway system to which the new exceptions do not apply. For each part of the system so designated, the Secretary must specify the factors that resulted in the determination to designate the part as not suitable to accommodate the vehicle lengths in the new exceptions.

2. Increases, from 5 miles to 15 miles, the distance that specified vehicles may operate on highways not designated by DOT in order to access a highway designated by DOT or to reach certain services or destinations.
3. Requires DOT, by August 1, 2006, to: (a) submit proposed rules to administer the provisions of the Act to the Legislative Council Staff; and (b) promulgate emergency rules to administer the provisions of the Act until the proposed rules submitted to the Legislative Council Staff become final.

Effective Date: Other than the rule-making related provisions, the Act takes effect on August 1, 2006. The authority for the rule-making process (described in item 3, above) begins on May 4, 2006.

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DLS:jal