

# D Shackle Regulations

*Caravan Industry Association of Australia along with the State Associations have recently had an influx of enquiries about the requirements for D-Shackles when connecting a trailer to a tow vehicle.*

## Background

Rumours about specific requirements for D-Shackles being enforced by police have been circulating around the country. These rumours claim police were issuing infringement notices for non-load rated D-Shackles used to tow caravan, boats and trailers. This information has spread throughout caravan parks and camping grounds and is now coming to the attention of dealers, manufacturers and state associations.

From our research we have identified that police and state departments have denied these rumours, and advised that there is no specific requirement for D-Shackles.

The current standard applying to shackles is AS 2741-2002, however this standard does not specifically cover the use of rated shackles in an application such as attaching a trailer to a tow bar. This standard covers the use of shackles for lifting purposes.

Our understanding is that there are currently no regulations requiring shackles used on trailer safety chains to comply with the Australian Standard. However, some state authorities provide guidelines or advise for selecting suitable shackles. For example, the Northern Territory have a Vehicle Inspectors Bulletin with guidance for selecting a suitable shackle. This, and other state authority guidelines, is attached below under 'State Resources'. Caravan Industry Association of Australia has conducted research with shackle manufacturers to develop an appropriate specification.

## Industry Recommendation

Caravan Industry Association of Australia along with the state associations aims to ensure the interests of the industry are fully represented and in turn have developed an industry recommendation for D-Shackles. Our recommendation is that a shackle meeting the requirements of AS 2741-2002 be used to secure rated safety chains up to 3500kg capacity.

### Suitable shackles have the following specifications:

- Meet the requirements of AS 2741-2002
- Shackle grade is "S" or "6"
- Working load limit (WLL) is 1000kg
- Shackle diameter is 10mm
- Either "Bow" or "Dee" shackle design is suitable, although it is noted that the "Bow" design provides a greater angular displacement.

A significant detail to understand is that the breaking load of a shackle is generally 6 times the working load limit.

