

Coupling

Legislation

EC Directive 94/20/EC

UN Regulation: R55

Objective

To ensure mechanical coupling devices are mutually compatible with towing vehicle

Requirement

- Ensure coupling devices are “e” or “E” marked
- Ensure that coupling devices are installed in accordance with manufacturer’s instructions

Coupling heads

-Class B coupling heads are permitted for trailers with a maximum mass of 3.5 tonnes. The coupling head shall be fitted so that the centre line of the spherical area into which the coupling ball fits is 430 ± 35 mm (trailer laden). It shall be possible for the coupling heads to operate freely within the free space of the coupling ball –see figure 1 below

Drawbar/Drawbar eyes

-Drawbars for centre axle trailers shall have a support device which is adjustable in height if vertical bearing load at the drawbar eye on the trailer exceeds 50 kg, when the trailer is uniformly loaded to its technically permissible maximum mass.

When attaching drawbar eyes and drawbar to centre-axle trailers with a maximum mass, C, of more than 3.5 tonnes and more than one axle, the trailers shall be equipped with device for axle load sharing.

Hinged drawbars shall be clear of the ground. They shall not fall below a height of 200 mm from the ground when released from the horizontal position.

Fifth wheel couplings

Class G50 fifth wheel couplings shall not be mounted directly on the vehicle frame unless permitted by the vehicle manufacturer. They shall be fixed to the frame by means of a mounting plate and the installation instructions provided by the vehicle manufacturer and coupling manufacturer shall be followed.

Semitrailers shall be equipped with landing gear or any other equipment which allows uncoupling and parking of the semitrailer. If semitrailers are equipped so that the connection of the coupling devices, the electrical systems and braking systems can be effected automatically, the trailer shall have landing gear which retracts from the ground automatically after the semitrailer has been coupled up.

The fixing of the fifth wheel coupling pin to the mounting plate on the semitrailer shall be as instructed by the vehicle manufacturer or the manufacturer of the fifth wheel coupling pin.

Figure 1

