



Show some restraint

Often when we are driving we might see a pallet or tools on the side of the road. These have more than likely fallen off a vehicle due to lack of load restraint securing these items. Even with large fines for inadequate load restraint it is quite common to see loads poorly restrained on Western Australian roads.

Dangerous goods (DG) are no exception. Often when a vehicle is stopped for a routine compliance check dangerous goods officers find inadequate or non-existent load restraint. Examples of load restraint of gas cylinders were shown in the January/February 2016 issue of WATM. This article will provide an overview of load restraint for dangerous goods transport in general.

Packaged DG must be restrained by suitable means to prevent any movement during transport which would change the orientation of the packages or cause them to be damaged. In addition the vehicle transporting the DG must be fitted with rigid sides or gates of sufficient height for the load*. The competent authorities panel (CAP) has granted an exemption to use a load restraint curtain system (CA2012/185) instead of gates or rigid sides. The only alternate systems that can be used to meet the compliance requirements of the Dangerous Goods Safety (Road and Rail Transport of Non-explosives) Regulations 2007 are those approved by the competent authorities.

Placardable units, multiple element gas containers (MEGCs), segregation devices and pressure drums can all be transported without rigid sides or gates. However, they must be restrained by suitable means (such as fastening straps, sliding slatboards, adjustable brackets, chains) in accordance with the Load Restraint Guide. Any packaging or placardable unit that is fitted with a vented closure (e.g. a pressure release valve) must be stowed and restrained so that the closure can function as intended.

Portable tanks and freight containers should be restrained using twist locks or an equally effective method. Drivers can easily comply with the regulations by ensuring that a suitable trailer is selected and that twist locks are functional.

An easy guide to understanding restraint requirements is given in Table 1.

When dangerous goods are transported without sufficient load restraint then the following penalties may be issued under dangerous goods legislation:

- \$5,000 to the consignor
- \$3,000 to the loader
- \$5,000 to the prime contractor
- \$3,000 to the driver.

Further penalties could also be issued as part of the chain of responsibility under the Western Australian Road Traffic legislation.

If you require further information, see the current edition of the *Australian Code for the Transport of Dangerous Goods by Road and Rail* and the current edition of the *Load Restraint Guide*. Both are freely available from the National Transport Commission website www.ntc.gov.au

Table 1 Load restraint requirements depending on goods transported.

	Suitable lashings and restrained in accordance with <i>Load Restraint Guide</i>	Rigid sides or gates	Twist locks or equally effective method for securing
Placardable unit (IBC etc.)	✓		
Packaged DG (receptacles smaller than 500 L or kg)	✓	✓	
MEGC	✓		
Segregation device	✓		
Pressure drum	✓		
Portable tanks and freight containers			✓



Packaged dangerous goods behind gates and restrained with straps

No dangerous article or package may protrude above the sides or gates by more than 30% of the height of the article or package (ADG Code 7th Edition).