

Brake Requirements

- (A) Braked trailers manufactured pre Oct. 1982 may be fitted with a spring damped coupling as a replacement item.
- (B) Braked trailers manufactured after Oct. 1982 must be fitted with a coupling that incorporates a hydraulic damper.
- (C) Braked trailers manufactured after Oct. 1982 require brakes that comply with EC Directives. If brakes are required, all wheels must be braked. (if manufactured in or after 1968)
- (D) Any braked trailers manufactured after April 1989 must be fitted with a hydraulically damped coupling and auto reverse brakes to give braking efficiencies required by EEC Directive 71/320 (ECE13).
- (E) The size of the ball coupling on braked and unbraked trailers must be 50mm to ISO and BSI Standards. The use of old 2-inch unit is not recommended.
- (F) Unbraked trailers manufactured after 1 Jan 1997 must be fitted with a secondary coupling that will provide some residual steering in the event of an unplanned uncoupling. This device should also prevent the ball coupling hitting the ground in similar circumstances. It must be connected to the towing vehicle when the trailer is being towed.
- (G) Braked trailers must be fitted with a parking brake that operates on at least two road wheels on the same axle. At all times it must be capable of being maintained in operation by direct mechanical action without the use of hydraulic, electric or pneumatic systems – i.e. Operated by rod or cable action. The efficiency of the handbrake must also comply with EEC Directive 71/320/EEC; i.e. It must be capable of holding a stationary trailer on a gradient of at least 16% (1 in 6.25)
- (H) An emergency breakaway cable must be fitted to the parking brake linkage and the other end clipped or fixed round some fixture on the towing vehicle so that, in the event of the trailer becoming detached from the towing vehicle, the cable will apply the parking brake automatically, before snapping itself. It is not recommended to loop the cable round the towball. (But do so if there is no alternative attachment point.) It is a separate offence not to use the breakaway cable provided.
- (I) A secondary coupling as per (F) must be fitted to a braked trailer manufactured before 1982 that has a manual handbrake arrangement . (A secondary coupling can also be fitted to a braked trailer with hydraulic damping, manufactured after 1982. In such cases, great care should be taken to ensure that the secondary coupling is appropriate in terms of the weight of the trailer (esp. If it is over 1000kg.). Also the operation of the breakaway cable is likely to be prejudiced.)