

The regulations for the use of B-doubles in Argentina have finally been officially published!



Hi everybody,

I am still jumping up and down of joy –which given the allegedly spring temperatures we are experiencing in Buenos Aires, is not a bad idea.

This past Thursday, October 8th, we woke up to the big news. Two regulations, (918/2015 and 2/2015), will regulate the use of bi-trains nationally, their active and passive safety technical features, and their circulation on national roads.

I can assure you it was a surprise, since it has been 18 months after the presidential decree (April 2014) which allowed the High Capacity Vehicles to circulate, and just 2 weeks before the presidential election.

The regulations have come out with all the safety features the group I coordinate have been aiming for, so the endless meetings and discussions among the diverse stakeholders have paid off. I attended the meetings and lobbying against some features such as stability control was strong. By the way, thanks to all of you who answered my email last year, asking for current power to weight ratios in your respective countries, it helped keep the original 6.45cv/ton in the regulation.

So, the presidential Decree 574/2014 allowed configurations with up to 30.25metres long, and 75tons of gross weight. A bi-train is defined in the decree as "*a vehicle formed by a tractor unit and two semitrailers bi-articulated by a B-couple (or fifth wheel)*".

I would like to mention some of the items in the new regulation, mostly related to **SAFETY**: The B-double configurations shall:

1. Circulate on previously authorised corridors
2. Be driven by drivers who have a B-double Training Certificate, besides an articulated truck driver's license for more than five years. The training is of 16 hours, theory and practice.
3. *Have pneumatic suspension
4. Have the possibility of interchanging any of the three elements –tractor and two semitrailers- as long as they have a *Technical Certificate showing compatibility among the different models, and in accordance to the weights and dimensions of the configuration the transport company was authorised.
5. Not circulate in convoy, especially on bridges.
6. *Have a GPS that registers speed and compliance with the corridor
7. Not have simple axles, except the tractor's directional one
8. *Have Anti-locking Braking System (ABS), Electronic Braking System (EBS) and Stability Control Systems (ESC), in **both the tractor and the semitrailers**.
9. *Utilise Engine Braking System, auxiliary braking system

10. *Have Electronic limitation of maximum speed. The bi-train is permitted to circulate at a maximum speed of 80km/h, with a limiter maximum of 90km/h
11. Utilise a minimum *Power to weight ratio* of 6.75CV/ton
12. *Have weighting device system, with digital readings of the weight per tandem of axles.
13. *Utilise LED lighting
14. *Have spraying protectors in the tires of the last axle

All of the features with a * cannot be added to existing elements, they have to come out originally from the manufacturer.

There is a lot more to the regulation but for now, I think it is very good news and sets precedent as legislation, indicating that with today's technology, road freight can be more competitive without compromising communities' safety.

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