

Table of Speed-restrictions.—Heavy Motor-vehicles all Tires of which are Pneumatic.

Maximum Gross Weight and Class of Heavy Motor-vehicle.	Speed-limits.			
	Passenger-vehicles.		Goods-vehicles.	
	Restrictions under Motor-lorry Regulations, 1927.	Restrictions under Present Regulations.	Restrictions under Motor-lorry Regulations, 1927.	Restrictions under Present Regulations.
	M.p.h.	M.p.h.	M.p.h.	M.p.h.
2½ tons, Class A	30	35	24·0	25
3½ tons, Classes B and C ..	27	35	21·6	25
4½ tons, Classes D and E ..	24	35	19·2	25
5 tons, Class F	24	25	19·2	20
6½ tons, Classes G, H, I ..	21	25	16·8	20
7 tons, Class J	21	20	16·8	15
15 tons, Classes K to Q ..	18	20	14·4	15

For heavy motor-vehicles any tire of which was solid rubber the Motor-lorry Regulations, 1927, provided for speeds ranging from twenty miles per hour to twelve miles per hour, according to gross weight, while the present Heavy Motor-vehicle Regulations provide for a maximum speed of twelve miles per hour for all solid-tired motor-lorries.

Table of Load-limits.

Classification of Road.	Heavy Motor-vehicles other than Multi-axled Heavy Motor-vehicles.		Multi-axled Heavy Motor-vehicles.	
	Gross Weight.	Axle Weight.	Gross Weight.	Axle Weight.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
Unclassified	10·0	8·0	15·0	6·0
Class II	8·0	6·4	12·0	4·8
Class III	6·5	5·2	10·0	4·0
Class IV	4·5	3·6	6·5	2·6
Class V	3·0	2·4	4·5	1·8

CLASSIFICATION OF ROADS.

The classification of roads in New Zealand is based on restriction of the maximum gross loads of motor-vehicles in accordance with the suitability of the road, and under the Heavy Motor-vehicle Regulations all road-controlling authorities have the power to classify the roads under their control.

When the Transport Department was set up in 1929, only 27 per cent. of the rural roads of the Dominion were classified. A number of road-controlling authorities were actually not aware of their powers in this direction, and even where road-classification had been effected the restrictions were, in many cases, not enforced.

The importance of road-classification in relation to road transport costs cannot be over emphasized, and the following finding made by the American Road-builders' Association stresses this fact :—

“Vast sums of money could be saved each year by a system of highway classification. Over-designing for light-traffic routes is just as uneconomical as under-designing for heavy-traffic routes. Traffic studies readily indicate the roads on which heavy truck loads occur infrequently, and such loads can be prohibited without inconvenience. The soundness and economy of street and highway classification on the basis of volume and type of traffic and maximum loads are obvious.”

During the past year considerable progress has been made in bringing about definite action by the various road-controlling authorities in regard to road-classification, and the majority of County Councils are now fully alive to the importance of their powers in this direction.

In the Department's annual report for the year 1931 the general principles of road-classification were fully dealt with, and it was pointed out that Class III roads available for gross loads of 6½ tons on two-axled motor-vehicles should be adequate to meet all the requirements of road transport on the rural roads of the Dominion. This view was unanimously endorsed by the conference of experts convened to consider the Heavy Motor-vehicle Regulations, and many road-controlling authorities are now adopting Class III as the maximum standard for the rural roads under their control.

The general adoption of this standard as a maximum for rural roads will have a most important and far-reaching effect on road transport costs, and the following facts give some indication of the effect on the costs of road-construction alone.