

# Caravan 2-Part "Buyer-Assist" - *Evaluation & Comparison*

## Information when considering the Purchase of a new Caravan:

You are making a **major** investment... Make **sure** you do *not* finish up with any regrets.

Do **not** be pushed! Do **not** assume anything! Take your time to be **sure** you understand fully!

If in *any* doubt, or if a sixth-sense tells you to... walk away.

Ensure you have at least a basic understanding of the *Australian Consumer Law*.

**Remember:** Sales personnel are professionally trained to **sell**.

Do **not** rush. Unless you are professionally trained to **buy**, take an independent person - who is experienced, especially with all of the technical requirements for caravans - with you. They will be "level-headed", with no *emotional* involvement in your new *pride-and-joy*, and able to best-ensure that you make sound evaluations and decisions.

### This document has 2 Parts:

- 1: **Evaluation** - Considerations when Purchasing a New Caravan  
*Requirements and Preferences for a New Caravan*
- 2: **Comparison** of Various Makes & Models (Use one sheet for each possible Caravan)  
Judge with your Requirements & Preferences with Inspected Caravans

## Evaluation – Your Considerations when Purchasing a new Caravan

Part 1 of 2

### Intended Tow-Vehicle:

Make: ..... Model: .....

Year: ..... **Maximum Tow Rating:** ..... kg **Maximum Ball-Load Rating:** ..... kg

**Ratings:** **GVM:** ..... kg **GCM:** ..... kg **Rear Axle:** ..... kg

### Requirements & Preferences for a New Caravan:

What is your Budget: \$ .....

*When* do you need it: .....

Number of Sleeping Berths: .....

**Required Load-Carrying Capacity:** ..... kg (L-CC = ATM Rating – Tare Mass)

(Do you *really* need to carry this much equipment and water??? Remember, water is included in the "Load", and *not* in the "Tare Mass".)

Maximum Overall Dimensions (m): Length: ..... Width: ..... Height: .....

Maximum Ball-Loading (when the caravan is *fully-loaded* in a typical manner) (kg): .....

**ATM Rating:** ..... kg

**GTM Rating:** ..... kg

Axles: Single or Tandem: .....

Suspension: Solid Axle or Independent: .....

Springs: Leaf or Coil: .....

Shock-absorbers Required: YES / NO (*Essential* for coil-spring suspensions)

Wheels: Brand: Model: Material: Size Details: .....

Tyres: Brand: Model: Size Details: .....

Chassis & A-Frame Construction: Materials: Grade: Dimensions: Corrosion-Protection: .....

.....

Water Tanks: Number: Capacities: Location: Clearance & Protection: .....

LPG Cylinders: Number: Capacities: Location: .....

Styling: .....

Layout Details: Dimensioned drawing showing location of: Beds; Table; Chairs/Benches;

Kitchen; all appliances, storage facilities, and fitments: .....

Features: Shower; Toilet; Other: .....

Appliances: Stove; Refrigerator; Microwave; Hot-water system; TV/Audio; Air-conditioner; Other:

.....

Protection: Fire extinguisher; Alarms - Smoke-detector; CO-detector; Burglar; GPS: .....

Awnings: Brand; material; size: .....

Colours: External; Internal (walls, ceiling & timber); Curtains; Upholstery: .....

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Is an Electronic Brake Controller Required: YES / NO

Are Extended Mirrors Required: YES / NO

Is a "Weight-Distribution System" and/or other Towing Aids Required: YES / NO

.....

Spare Wheel(s) & Tyre(s): Number: Location: .....

Suitable Approved Jack - with *legal jacking points* - *must* be provided:

Batteries: Number: Type: Size: Capacity: Location: .....

Solar Panels & Controller: .....

Battery Charger: .....

Other Specific **Requirements**: .....

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Other **Preferences**: .....

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Compare with your *Requirements & Preferences* Use the two sheets for *each* different Caravan that you are considering.

Make: ..... Model: .....

Dealer: .....

Price: \$ ..... Loan Details (if you require a loan): .....

ATM Rating: ..... kg GTM Rating: ..... kg Tare Mass: ..... kg

Is the Tare Mass the *actual measured mass* of the empty caravan as it leaves the *Supplier...* fitted with *everything* that was stated on the *Sales Contract*. YES / NO

Load-Carrying Capacity: ..... kg Ball-loading at Tare Mass Condition: ..... kg

Overall Length: ..... m Width: ..... m Height: ..... m

Number of Sleeping Berths: .....

Axles: Single or Tandem: .....

Suspension: Solid Axle or Independent: .....

If tandem-axle, is the suspension system *load-sharing*?

(If *non-loading*, ask to see written "Proof of the 120% Safety Factor Compliance")

Springs: Leaf or Coil: .....

Shock-absorbers: YES / NO

Wheels: Brand: Model: Material: Size Details: .....

Tyres: Brand: Model: Size Details: .....

Chassis & A-Frame Construction: Materials: Grade: Dimensions: Corrosion-Protection: .....

(Is written "Proof of ADR 62 / VSB1 Compliance" available?)

Water Tanks: Number: Capacities: Location: Clearance & Protection: .....

LPG Cylinders: Number: Capacities: Location: .....

Styling: Rating: 1 (Low) to 10 (High) .....

Layout: Rating: 1 (Low) to 10 (High) .....

Features: Shower: YES / NO Toilet: YES / NO Other: .....

Appliances: Stove; refrigerator; microwave; hot-water system; TV/Audio; air-conditioner; other:

.....

Protection: Fire extinguisher: YES / NO      Smoke-detector/alarm: YES / NO  
CO-detector/alarm: YES / NO      Burglar alarm: YES / NO

Awning: YES / NO Brand: ..... Material: ..... Size: .....

Colours: External; Internal (walls, ceiling & timber); Curtains; Upholstery: .....

Is a **Weight-distribution System** and/or other Towing Aids Required: YES / NO .....

Spare Wheel(s) & Tyre(s): YES / NO Number: 1 / 2 Location: .....

Suitable **Approved** Jack - with legal jacking points - provided: YES / NO

Batteries: YES NO      Number: .....      Type: .....      Size: .....

Capacity: .....      Location: .....

Solar Panels & Controller: YES / NO      Capacity: .....

Battery Charger: YES / NO Details: .....

Other Equipment & Appliances Fitted: .....

.....

.....

**Component Rating:** 1 (Poor) to 10 (Excellent)

Size: .....

Mechanical Design: .....

Construction: .....

Styling: .....

Internal Layout: .....

Features: .....

Appliances: .....

Accessories: .....

Colours: .....

“X Factor”:

Trust in Dealer: .....

Price: .....

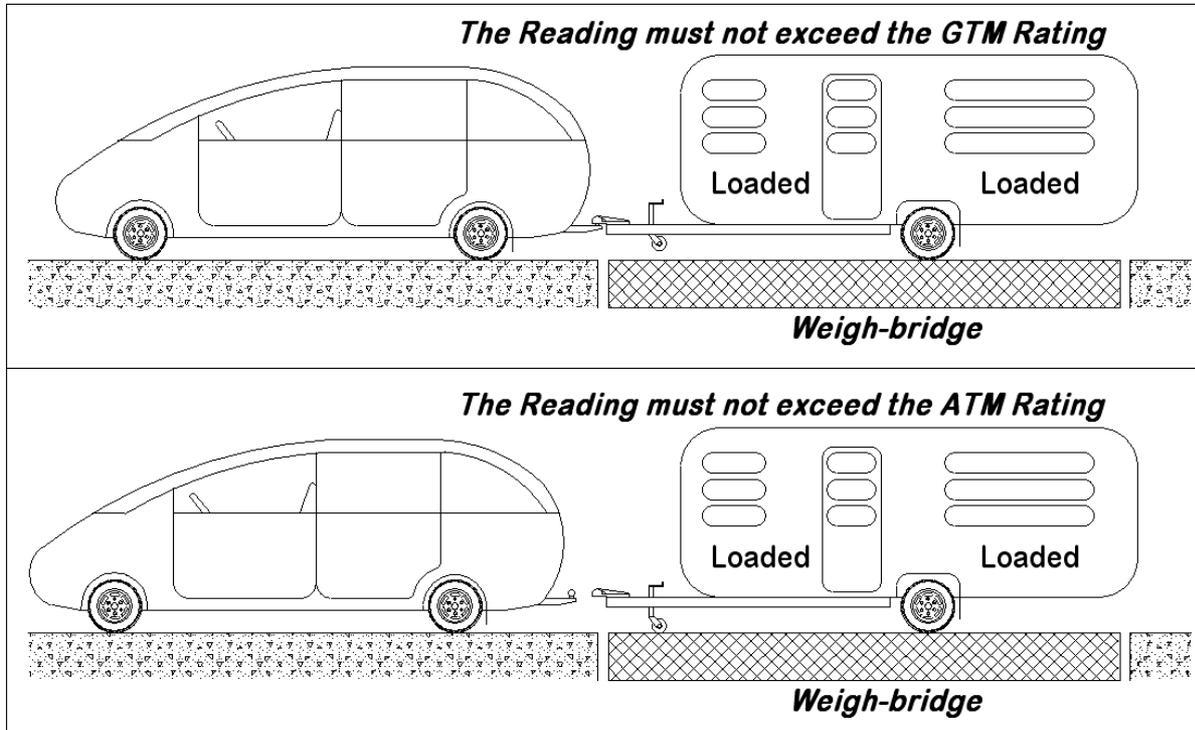
**Overall Rating:** .....

## Caravan Ratings & Masses

The ATM & GTM are Ratings... allocated by the Manufacturer

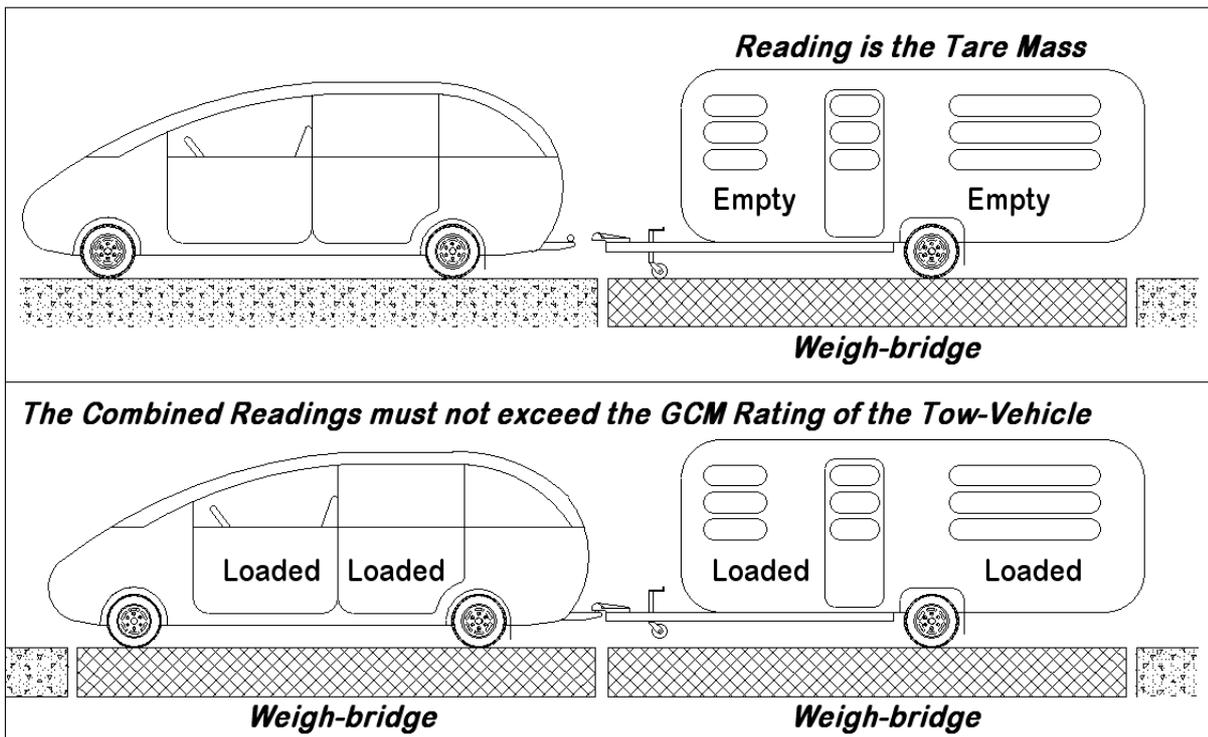
The Tare Mass and Ball-Loading are Actual Masses... that must be measured

The Tare Mass is the *actual measured mass* of the caravan as it leaves the *Supplier*.  
The caravan is fitted with everything that was stated on the *Sales Contract*.  
The caravan is empty. The gas cylinder(s) and the water tank(s) must be empty.

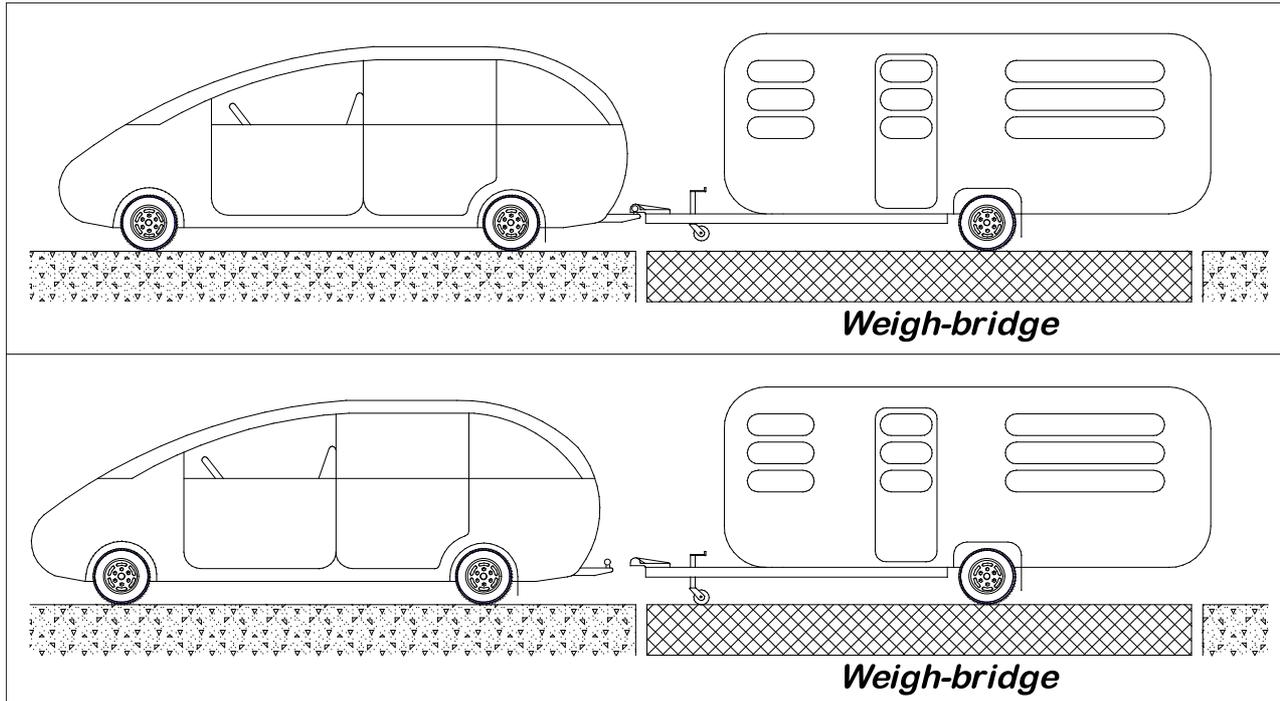


Drawing 1 shows measuring the “**Axle-Loading**” Must not exceed the **GTM** Rating

Drawing 2 shows measuring the “**All-Up Mass**” Must not exceed the **ATM** Rating



**Legal Load-Carrying Capacity = ATM Rating – Tare Mass**



**The Ball-Loading is the *difference* between the two readings**

**ATM: Aggregate Trailer Mass (Rating)**

**GTM: Gross Trailer Mass (Rating)**

**The GTM Rating must *not* exceed the *lowest* of the “Axle-Group” Ratings.**

**The “Axle-Group” comprises the:**

- **Wheels & Tyres**
- **Suspension Structure**
- **Springs**
- **Axles & Wheel-Bearings**

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**Tow-Vehicles:**

- **GVM: Gross Vehicle Mass (Rating)**
- **GCM: Gross Combination Mass (Rating)**
- **RAC: Rear Axle Capacity (Rating)**
- **Maximum Permitted Towing Capacity: (Rating)**
- **Maximum Permitted Coupling Down-load Capacity: (Rating)**

**Tow-Bar: Maximum Permitted Towing & Down-load Limits: (Ratings)**