

## **Are A-Frames Legal?**

The situation is as follows:

Firstly we must address being legal in the UK.

The UK department for transport recognise a towcar on an A-Frame as a trailer.

Therefore a towcar as a trailer must comply with European trailer legislation.

These include: UNECE Regulation 55 for couplings, UNECE Regulation 13 for braking and Statutory Instruments Road Vehicle Lighting Regulation 1989 No. 1796 and its amending directives for lighting requirements.

UNECE Regulation 13 was effective from November 2014, and is the legislation that most traditional A-Frame systems struggle to meet.

There are many small technicalities of which cause many systems to be non compliant but the biggest two requirements are:

You must achieve a minimum of 50% braking efficiency across all four wheels.

If the trailer has power/vacuum assisted brakes then the system must be operable.

If your A-Frame system complies with this legislation, then you are legal in the UK.

## **Are A-Frames Legal in Europe?**

Countries like Spain and Germany have local laws that state you may not tow a motor vehicle with another motor vehicle unless an authorised break down vehicle. To avoid rope towing etc.

However you will not be towing a motor vehicle. You will be towing a car that is converted to a trailer. That complies with all European trailer legislation. That is identified as a trailer by the reflective triangles, the towing vehicles number plate, the brakes operated solely by braking in the towing vehicle, and the lights duplicating that of the towing vehicle.

Their local laws (Not European Laws) Apply if you are a resident and have lived there greater than 6 months, or if your vehicle is registered in that country. In which case A-Frame towing would be illegal.

If you are travelling/holidaying for less than 6 months in that country then:

No state has the power to reclassify a vehicle travelling from another state, as a visitor from another state you are legal under the powers of international traffic as defined in the Vienna convention.

Your local police officer may not be familiar with international traffic and far more familiar with their local laws, and as such it is possible you may get stopped. This is why we provide translated documents explaining what you are towing and its legality, to produce if needed.

The reality is that far fewer people are stopped than is made of by gossip and internet posts. And often these people that are stopped are either not compliant and therefore rightly stopped, or stopped for some other reason.

We do not experience problems or get reports from our customers having any problems with use abroad

Commercial trailers or trailers over 3500Kg have to be registered for use abroad, and are required to display their white 9"x7" trailer number plate on the back of the trailer. A towcar is not a commercial trailer or over 3500Kg so does not need to be registered. However you can voluntarily register your trailer and obtain a white trailer registration plate to be displayed on the rear of your towcar. This clears up any questioning of whether you are a trailer or not, as you are a registered UK trailer, registered for use abroad, and this system is recognised across Europe. This is done simply through the directgov website and costs just £26

We strive to ensure we are fully compliant with all current legislation and laws, but we cannot guarantee what may happen in the future.