

Specification for

# Tow rope assemblies for towing passenger cars and light vans

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## Committees responsible for this British Standard

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Automobile Association  
Consumer Standards Advisory Committee of BSI  
Cordage Manufacturers' Institute  
Department of Transport  
Royal Automobile Club  
Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders Limited

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## Foreword

This British Standard has been prepared, under the direction of the Automobile Standards Committee, at the request of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders.

The purpose of this standard is to establish the minimum requirements for tow rope assemblies (i.e. the ropes and the fittings, if any) which may be used for towing passenger cars and light vans in an emergency (e.g. after a breakdown).

The strength of the assembly is covered by a requirement for resistance to a snatch load to ensure that the assembly will survive specified take-up shocks.

The materials to be used are not specified as it is considered that these should be left to the discretion of the manufacturer, but requirements relating to the shape and size are included to take account of ISO 5422 "*Road vehicles — Anchorages for towing ropes, cables or bars*" prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 22, Road vehicles, of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

A British Standard does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users of British Standards are responsible for their correct application.

**Compliance with a British Standard does not of itself confer immunity from legal obligations.**

### Summary of pages

This document comprises a front cover, an inside front cover, pages i and ii, pages 1 and 2 and a back cover.

This standard has been updated (see copyright date) and may have had amendments incorporated. This will be indicated in the amendment table on the inside front cover.

## 1 Scope

This British Standard specifies requirements, including those for certain dimensions, performance and packaging for flexible tow rope assemblies for towing motor vehicles having a maximum gross weight of 2 tonnes.

## 2 Definitions

For the purposes of this British Standard the following definitions apply.

### 2.1

#### **tow rope assembly**

the complete article used for towing motor vehicles, consisting of a rope and fittings, if any

### 2.2

#### **fittings**

a component, of metal, plastics or other suitable material, incorporated in the tow rope assembly

### 2.3

#### **rope**

the rope, cord, webbing, strap or other similar flexible material used in the tow rope assembly

## 3 Length

The overall length of the made-up tow rope assembly, from attachment point to attachment point shall be not less than 3.5 m nor more than 4.5 m. The measurement shall be made with the assembly under hand tension and made up in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions or, where this information is not given, with a loop of length 300 mm formed at each end.

## 4 Shape and size

The shapes and sizes of the fittings and rope shall be such that it shall be possible to attach each end of the tow rope assembly to a fitting having a hole not more than 30 mm in diameter.

NOTE The shapes and sizes of the fittings and rope are left to the discretion of the manufacturer.

## 5 Finish

**5.1** All surfaces of the tow rope assembly shall be such that no damage is caused to the unprotected hand of the person handling it.

**5.2** The ends of the rope shall be treated or otherwise protected in a manner intended to prevent fraying.

## 6 Resistance to snatch load

The tow rope assembly shall be tested for resistance to snatch load in accordance with Appendix A. When tested, the tow rope assembly shall comply with the following requirements:

- a) the assembly shall still be capable of supporting the 100 kg weight;
- b) with the tension released from the assembly it shall be possible to disconnect the assembly from the points of attachment without the use of tools or other implements;
- c) the surfaces of the assembly shall comply with the requirements of 5.1.

## 7 Warning device

A flag or similar warning device shall be attached at the middle of the length of the tow rope assembly.

## 8 Type test

All designs shall be examined and tested for compliance with clauses 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10.

NOTE *Quality assurance sampling and tests.*

Recommendations for sampling and testing to verify that the quality of tow rope assemblies is maintained in production are given in Appendix B.

## 9 Packaging

The tow rope assembly shall be in a package which shall be suitable for storing the assembly in and which shall incorporate the following:

- a) instructions on the method of attachment to vehicles;
- b) weight of vehicle which may be towed;
- c) recommendations on the care and maintenance of the assembly;
- d) advice on the principles of towing.

## 10 Marking

Each tow rope assembly purporting to comply with the requirements of this British Standard shall be permanently and legibly marked with the following information:

- a) a registered trade name, trade mark or other means of identification of the manufacturer;
- b) number and date of this British Standard, i.e. "BS AU 187:1983".<sup>1)</sup>

<sup>1)</sup> Marking BS AU 187 on or in relation to a product is a claim by the manufacturer that the product has been manufactured to the requirements of the standard. The accuracy of such a claim is therefore solely the manufacturer's responsibility. Enquiries as to the availability of third party certification to support such claims should be addressed to the Director, Quality Assurance Division, BSI, Maylands Avenue, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP2 4SQ for certification marks administered by BSI or to the appropriate authority for other certification marks.