

## Trailing a boat in France

By Jonathan Davies (*Merriwinds* 21/36) (March 2026)

From last August the regulations have changed for British drivers towing a trailer in most European countries. This will affect Shrimper owners hoping to take their boat to St Malo for ISW 2027.

All trailers over 750 kilos will now need an extra registration plate as well as their normal copy of the towing vehicle number plate. You have to register the trailer with the DVLA giving all the details on its manufacturer's VIN plate. Registration costs £26. You then receive a certificate which you will need in order to obtain your new number plate. The trailer plate has black letters on white and consists of one letter and seven numbers. It measures 9 inches by 7 (the size of a motorcycle rear number plate). The new plate must be attached to the rear of the trailer (or if this isn't possible, one plate to either side of the trailer).

I recently did this for our caravan. The process using the DVLA website was simple, although it didn't recognize the makers name but eventually proceeded anyway. I paid the £26 and immediately got a temporary certificate by email, followed by a letter in the post.

They say that the number plate can only be made by a certified trader once they have received originals of your certificate and driving licence (just like a car). A couple of number plate suppliers I contacted (including Halfords) had never heard of a trailer number plate and couldn't help. However, Western Towing Attachments, trailer specialists, were able to supply me with the correct plate (for £18 including postage) by return and simply by receiving a copy of the certificate by email. The extra plate will be temporarily attached on the caravan when we are abroad.

When it comes to our boat trailer, I shall do the same but attach the new plate to the lighting board next to the existing number. (They say the new plate doesn't have to be lit so can go anywhere on the rear.)

A link to a useful description of the new regulations:

<https://www.caravanguard.co.uk/news/new-trailer-registration-rules-for-caravanners-and-motorhomers-travelling-in-europe-39452/>. *Note: If this link will not open, copy and paste the link into your browser.*

A link to WTA:

<https://westerntowing.co.uk/product/trailer-registration-number-plate/>

A link to the DVLA trailer registration site:

<https://www.gov.uk/register-trailer-to-take-abroad>.