

TESTING TIMES

Roadworthiness Section, Road Safety, VicRoads

May 1997 ♦ Issue 4

WELCOME

We made it! Edition four! We have had positive feedback from our previous efforts so here we go again. It would be appreciated however if you could send in articles or ideas so we can pass on the things which concern you.

The only real criticism we have heard is from mechanics who don't see a copy because the person who handles the mail doesn't pass it on to the workshop. Because we are using this forum to answer common queries it is important that all the relevant staff get a chance to read it.

ROADWORTHY ISSUES

Dual Fuel

Question: Does a vehicle fitted with petrol and LPG fuel systems have to operate on both fuels?

Answer: Yes!

Why? Because a roadworthy test requires that there not be any fuel leaks, and the exhaust must not emit visible smoke for more than 10 seconds under any normal driving conditions. Therefore, both systems need to be checked and you can only do this by running the engine on each fuel type. This is particularly so for recent LPG installations which have a valve that cuts off the LPG supply right at the tank whenever the engine is not running. Therefore, to properly test for leaks in the LPG supply lines the engine must be running on LPG. Also many modern petrol systems have fuel pumps in or near the petrol tank. These may not work when the engine is running on LPG.

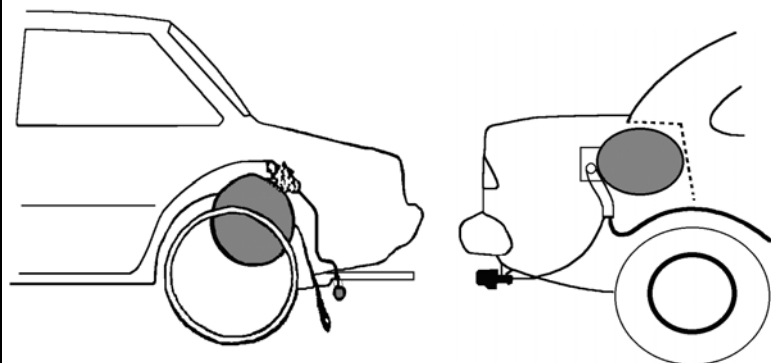
LPG Fill Points

The Australian Liquefied Petroleum Gas Association (ALPGA) issued a technical information sheet in May 1991. That sheet covered unsatisfactory fill point locations for LPG and as such restated the position which exists in Victoria.

The Standard effectively requires that the filler must be securely mounted and recessed into the body or in another location that provides equivalent protection. In general terms this means that the filler must not be the lowest point on a body panel, sill panel, chassis rail or mounted underneath a towbar.

In the case of recent vehicles with "plastic" bumper/body fittings, the filler must also be attached to the structural panels behind the bumper and not just to the bumper itself.

If the above conditions are not met on a vehicle presented for a roadworthy inspection then it must be rejected. The vehicle should then be referred to an approved LPG installer for rectification.



Not Acceptable

LPG Training

For all the testers out there who have doubts about what your obligations are when roadworthy testing LPG powered vehicles Box Hill TAFE have created a one day course. The \$110 course which should answer all the questions you were too embarrassed to ask may become a requirement for all testers in the future. This is the next best option to attending a full gas fitting course. Information on course dates and locations can be obtained from TAFE on 03 92869200 or 03 92869201.

Air Bags (Supplementary restraint system)

Current Policy

If a vehicle model is fitted with an air bag system and the system is an option on that vehicle model then it is not necessary for it to be complete or operational at the time of a roadworthiness test.

If an air bag system is standard fitment to that vehicle model then it must appear to be fitted and appear to be operational at the time of a roadworthiness test.

The system test should be by visual examination only. This will include any self diagnosis warning lights or similar.

CAUTION! No attempt should be made to activate any part of the system.

Dashboard lighting

Question: When is an instrument light not an instrument light?

Answer: When it is a telltale warning light.

The ADRs require a telltale for the front and rear position lights (park and tail lights) for vehicles made from 1 October 1991 but allow the use of the instrument lights for this purpose. If there is no special telltale in these vehicles, then at least one globe of the instrument lighting must operate. This does not mean that you have to be able to read the instruments by it, only that it is obvious that it is on at night. There is no special requirement to illuminate the speedometer of a vehicle but most owners won't thank you if they get a speeding ticket because they could not see the speedo.

Vehicle lighting

Work Lamps

In the ADRs a work lamp is called a 'Search Lamp'. It is a lamp which due to its orientation, is suitable for examining or making adjustments or repairs to

the vehicle or its load, and/or reading any sign posts or notice boards.

To assist in deciding if the lamp you are looking at is a search lamp or an additional headlamp (driving light) the following guide is provided.

Search Lamp

1. Maximum two fitted.
2. Readily adjustable without tools to allow aiming

OR

Fixed to illuminate an area not normally illuminated by the other vehicle lighting.

WARNING! It is an offence to use search lamps:-

- (a) if the vehicle is mobile and they illuminate any part of the vehicle which might cause discomfort to the driver; **or,**
- (b) if they reflect directly or indirectly into the drivers eyes; **or,**
- (c) in a manner which causes glare to any other motorist.

It is therefore recommended (but not mandatory) that a warning light clearly visible to the driver is fitted to indicate when the lamp is alight.

Driving Lights

1. Maximum six lights on high beam
2. Arranged in pairs (except for motorcycles & trikes)
3. Wired through dipping device to operate only as high beam.
4. Aimed as per the high beam requirements.
5. Not capable of causing glare to the driver directly or indirectly by illuminating the vehicle or reflecting off mirrors or other surfaces.

NB All lamps if fitted (except motorcycle "conspicuity lamps") must operate and comply with legal requirements.

Motorcycle Lighting

ADR 19/01 required all new motorcycles made from 1 March 1992 to be equipped with two "conspicuity" lamps showing white light to the front (often called daytime running lamps) which must come on whenever the engine is started. The ADR allowed that if the low beam headlamp(s) was "hard wired" so that it was always on whenever the engine was running this would be deemed to comply. This

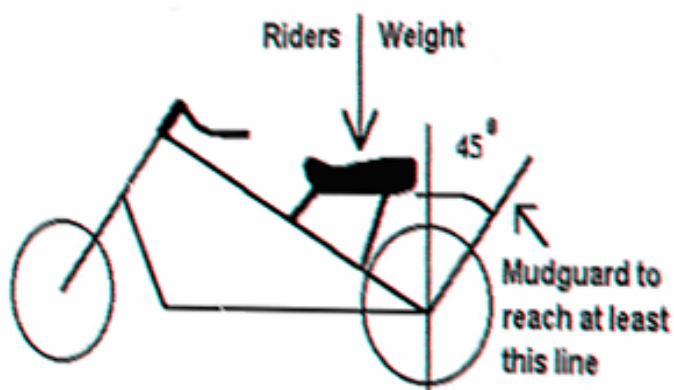
“hard wiring” was adopted by virtually all manufacturers.

ADR 19/02 which was recently introduced no longer requires “conspicuity” lamps. As the Standards for Registration allow any vehicle to be modified to meet a later ADR, motorcycles which were made with conspicuity lamps or a “hard wired” headlamp may have the “hard wiring” disconnected or the conspicuity lamps disconnected or removed.

What does all this really mean to you when checking the roadworthiness of motorcycle lighting? Quite simply - **there is now no longer any legal requirement for daytime running lights on motorcycles** no matter when they were made.

Motor Cycle rear mudguards

The rear wheel coverage by the mudguard is measured with a riders weight on the bike seat. The mudguard must come down at least as far as a line angled up at 45 degrees from the horizontal, starting from the centre of the rear axle and pointing backwards.



Identifying vehicles

If a vehicle is presented to you which does not have a VIN or chassis number, then it will need a number issued by VicRoads. The problem is how do you issue a roadworthy certificate to a vehicle you can't identify (especially as VicRoads usually won't issue numbers until the vehicle is presented for registration). Well this way might help:-

1. **Get permission from the owner** to stamp an ID number on the vehicle.
2. Select a location near where the original number should have been but do not stamp anything in the original spot.
3. Stamp in your EX number followed by the serial number of the roadworthy certificate you are writing for the vehicle.

E.g. If your licence number is 1234 and the certificate serial number is 567891 you can create a unique ID number 1234567891 which you can relate to your documents and identify the vehicle you inspected.

When the vehicle is presented to VicRoads the office staff will also know that they have the vehicle the Roadworthiness Certificate relates to so they can register it and issue a special replacement number.

Vertical Exhausts

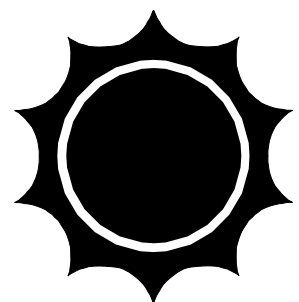
A vertical exhaust is not required on any diesel engined vehicle to comply with Victoria's registration standards - i.e the ADRs. These are also the roadworthy requirements and a tester should not fail a vehicle for not having a vertical exhaust. However, under Environment Protection Authority legislation a vertical exhaust is required for diesel engined vehicles over 4.5 tonne GVM and manufactured after 1976 but not on buses and some other special vehicles.

Where a LVT notices that a vehicle doesn't have a vertical exhaust but should under EPA legislation, this should be brought to the attention of the owner.

Window Tinting

Window tint is applied to vehicles for several reasons. People believe it looks good and that it cuts down heat and UV transmission. Well, forget “looking good” as it ain't part of the roadworthy test.

The heat issue is interesting because a lot of the heat doesn't come in through the windows and tinting can help to keep it in the car. In a dark colored parked car, it could end up hotter than one without tinting. The tint films do cut down the UV transmission but plain glass cuts out most of the dangerous stuff anyway. The real issue for testers is the quantity of light transmitted through a window. Most films seem to be rated before they are applied to the glass. A film which lets enough light through by itself becomes illegal when attached to glass as the glass itself knocks off another 10% or more of light. The other difficulty is that some films tell you how much they stop, not how much gets through. There doesn't appear to be a consistent industry standard in this area.



What does it all mean? Because most testers have not yet got a tint meter they are guessing the tint level. Random checks indicate that testers are passing windows which are too dark. The result is vehicles are not being registered or having canaries issued even though they have a roadworthy. This may result in action being taken against the LVT who issued the RWC.

Testers should familiarise themselves with the appearance of legal tints. Where this is causing problems the only option may be the purchase of a tint meter.

EQUIPMENT

Light Transmission Meter

Vipac Engineers and Scientists have developed and manufactured a testing device for window tint that is easy to use, tamper proof and cost effective. The device, known as the VLM 102, measures the light transmitted through windows. The measurements taken can be used to verify that any tinting applied to the glass complies with the tint requirements in Vehicle Standards Information sheet No 2. The unit features a large digital display, is simple to use and permits an instant and accurate reading. The unit is reportedly, robust, portable and powered by a 9V battery.

This light transmissibility meter is approved by VicRoads and is being used by many licensed roadworthy testers all over Australia.



Vipac also manufacture the VBT101 decelerometer which is covered by the brochure we have enclosed.

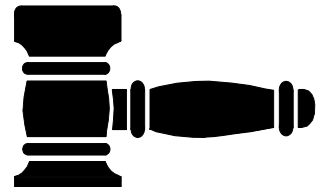
Further information on this equipment can be obtained by contacting Richard Keown at Vipac Engineers & Scientists, (03) 96479786

RWC COMPLAINTS

Customer complaints

From time to time Testers are asked to perform an 'independent' roadworthy check for customers who have bought a vehicle they are not happy with. If this happens to you, please remember that all the customer needs is a normal roadworthy inspection, not a comprehensive vehicle test. We receive too many customer complaints about bodgy roadworthies where the independent tester has included irrelevant items or where we can't find the

faults they found. Because some of these matters end up in court the credibility of the independent tester is damaged if they haven't tested by the book.



OFFICE CONTACT

The correct address for the office is:

Roadworthiness Section

VicRoads

4th floor

60 Denmark Street KEW 3101

Toll free phone number: **1800 816 727**

Fax number: **(03) 98542668**

SUPPLIES

If you need a new book of certificates, a register or the latest VSI's and guidelines contact the VicRoads bookshop.

If you want to buy a new book of RWC's over the counter then all you need is:

- * the proforma from your old RWC book, correctly completed (signed by the Director/owner of the licence),
- * positive identification of yourself, or your representative (photograph on a drivers licence or passport would be ideal), and
- * cash, cheque or credit card.

The bookshop's address is:

VicRoads Bookshop

Ground Floor

60 Denmark Street

Kew Vic 3101

Phone **(03) 9854 2782**

Fax **(03) 9854 2468**

between 8.30 am and 4.30 pm Monday to Friday.

The Bookshop also supplies a courier service and your purchases will be delivered to you at no extra cost. Not only does this give you prompt delivery but ensures their security.