



Testing Times

Welcome to the new look Testing Times

Everything changes over time. Sometimes this can be frustrating but more often than not change gives you a chance to try something new. As you can see, the style of the newsletter has changed and hopefully this will make it easier for you get the information from it that you need.

The new look of *Testing Times* is the first change. The second, and more important are the new vehicle regulations – in fact 2 separate sets of regulations which came into effect in May this year. While much remains unchanged - “if it ain’t broke don’t fix it!” - there are some major changes which affect the way you work. This edition of *Testing Times* will focus on the most important areas of those changes that might have an immediate impact on you.

New regulations may affect the way you work

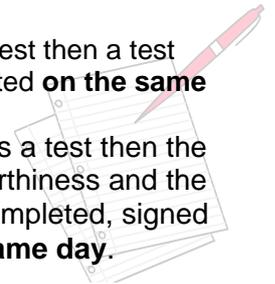
On 1st May 1999 the old vehicle regulations were replaced by the Road Safety (Vehicles) Regulations 1999.

These new regulations change some of the rules for the Licensed Vehicle Tester’s scheme. The changes to the Regulations that might affect you or the way you work are:

- you will now have to pay a fee (currently \$78.00) if you change your testing premises or wish to have an additional premise included on your licence.
- VicRoads can now require a tester to complete any training that it considers reasonable.
- a mechanic who is prohibited from testing or assisting in testing vehicles for a RWC because of sub-standard work now has one month to appeal the decision.

The new regulations now also make it quite clear that:

- if a vehicle fails a first test then a test report must be completed **on the same day** as that test; and
- when a vehicle passes a test then the Certificate of Roadworthiness and the test report must be completed, signed and issued **on that same day**.



LVT Signs

As a condition of your LVT licence you are required to display a sign fixed to your premises in a clearly visible location. This is to assist the public in locating businesses that can provide a roadworthiness inspection and to identify who they are dealing with by the licence number.

The signs must have a specific layout, letter size and colour and must carry the VicRoads logo. If you wish to make the sign yourself, details can be provided by your area supervisor. You will also need special written permission to reproduce the VicRoads logo.

By far the easiest and quickest way to get a sign is to purchase one through the VicRoads Bookshop. They are available for \$100 each and will be couriered to you for free. What better deal could you ask for? This is also probably the cheapest way as VicRoads purchases in bulk.

A sign or other painting or signwriting that could be misleading or confused with that used at VicRoads Offices is not permitted.

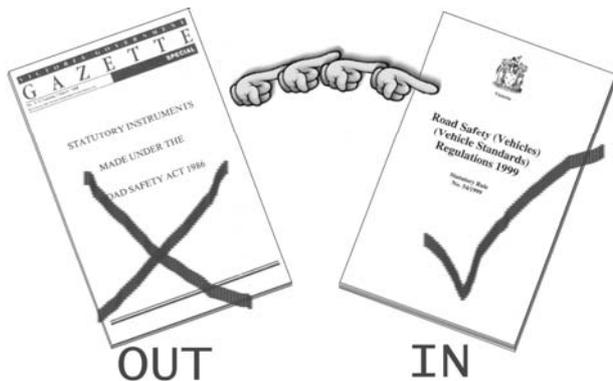
In this issue:

New Regulations	1
LVT Signs	1
New Standards for Registration	2
Tyre Speed Ratings	2
Seatbelts, Windscreen Wipers/Washers & Mirrors	3
Vertical Exhaust Requirements	3
Low Bowmonk Readings	3
Moving Batteries	4
Mixing Tyres	4
Fee changes	4

New Standards for Registration

A major change in the new regulations is the replacement of one of your principal references, the *Government Gazette Notice S15* of 1 March 1988.

Gazette Notice S15 contained the Standards for Registration and these are now set out in the *Road Safety (Vehicles) (Vehicle Standards) Regulations 1999*.



The Standards for Registration have also changed in some areas to fully align with the national standards.

The most important changes are:

- the speed rating of tyres applicable to all vehicles
- new vertical exhaust pipe requirements aligning with the EPA's requirements
- the requirement for seatbelts in pre ADR vehicles has been dropped.

While these and other changes are covered in more detail later, you should obtain a copy of the *Road Safety (Vehicles) (Vehicle Standards) Regulations 1999* for your own reference as soon as possible. A copy of these new regulations can be obtained from the VicRoads' Bookshop.

Changed Tyre Speed Ratings

The new Standards for Registration set the minimum speed rating of the original tyre casing that may be fitted to different types of vehicles. This solves the problem of passenger car tyres retreaded to Australian Standard AS 1973 having a speed rating of 140 km/h although the casing may have a much higher speed rating.

The new requirements are:



- for vehicles with a GVM over 4.5 tonne the speed rating of the original tyre casing must be at least 100km/h or the vehicle's top speed, whichever is the lesser.
- for other vehicles with four or more wheels and built after 1972, the lesser of:
 - 140km/h for cars with special features for off road use (eg. 4WD);
 - 180km/h for other cars;
 - 120km/h for other motor vehicles; and
 - the vehicle's top speed.
- for all other vehicles, the lesser of:
 - the maximum speed limit applying in Victoria; and
 - the vehicle's top speed.

Despite the above, tyres of a lower speed rating can be fitted if they are recommended by the original vehicle manufacturer for limited use in special circumstances and they are fitted to all road wheels.

See the article on page 4 about mixing different tyre casing types on the one vehicle.

The Standards for Roadworthiness Testing Remain Unchanged!

The standards to which you test a vehicle, that is the roadworthiness testing standards that are described in Vehicle Standards Information sheet (VSI) No 26, have not changed.

Although there is a new version of VSI 26 (as well as many other VSIs) the changes to VSI 26 are only those necessary to align with the changes to the Standards for Registration.

It is recommended that you obtain a complete new set of the VSIs and throw away the old set to make sure referring to the old set doesn't catch you out. The VicRoads Bookshop can provide you with replacement VSIs to insert into your folder or, you can buy a complete folder of the latest VSIs.

Changed Seatbelt Requirements

Seatbelts are no longer a registration requirement for any vehicle built before 1969. The new seatbelt requirements are restricted to those contained in the ADRs. However, owners of pre 1969 vehicles should still be encouraged to replace any damaged seatbelts but this is no longer a mandatory roadworthiness requirement.

Windscreen Wipers and Washers

The date of manufacture for vehicles allowed to have only a windscreen wiper on the driver's side has been changed. Now, all motor vehicles made after 1959 must have a windscreen wiper system that clears water from both the driver and passenger's side of the windscreen.

The date of manufacture for vehicles requiring windscreen washers has also changed. Previously all motor vehicles built after August 1966 (and required to have windscreen wipers) were required to have windscreen washers. Now, some motor vehicles built after August 1966 are not required to have windscreen washers until ADR 16 applies to them. However, vehicles with a GVM over 4.5 tonne built after 1982 are required to have windscreen washers even though ADR 16 did not apply to them until July 1988.

Rear Vision Mirrors

The new Standards for Registration now make it clear that all vehicles regardless of their age must have at least one rear vision mirror which gives a clear view of following and overtaking traffic from the normal driving position.

Further, any pre ADR vehicle with a GVM over 3.5 tonne and pre ADR motorcycles and motor trikes with one front wheel built after June 1975 must have external rear vision mirrors on both sides.

Other pre ADR vehicles (except cars built before 1972, motor trikes with two front wheels, and motor cycles and motor trikes with one front wheel and built before July 1975) must have an external mirror on the right hand side and either an internal mirror or an external mirror on the left-hand side.

The requirement for rear vision mirrors to give a clear view of following and overtaking traffic from the normal driving position means that they must be adjustable to a range of positions to suit the range of possible seating positions. However, there is no requirement for this adjustment to be

possible when sitting in the driver's seat. Remote adjusters for external mirrors did not become the norm on base model cars until the early 1990s and there are still a lot of pre 1990 vehicles on the road. Therefore, while it is desirable for remote adjusters to work, a mirror with a remote adjuster that does not work is still acceptable provided that the mirror can be adjusted by hand through the whole range necessary for adequate rear vision.

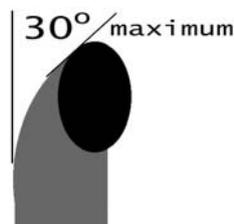
New vertical exhaust requirements

Most diesel engine vehicles built after 1976 that have a GVM over 4.5 tonne must have the exhaust outlet(s) at least 3.0m above the ground.



The discharge of the exhaust gases must be either:

- vertically upwards, or
- within 30° of vertical and rearwards within 45° to either side.



Any rain cap must be fitted so that the hinge is at 90° ±10° to the centreline of the vehicle.

Buses and some special purpose vehicles are exempt from these exhaust pipe requirements.

Artificially Low Bowmonk Readings

Bowmonk decelerometers have a "bug" that can produce artificially low readings under heavy braking!

When the vehicle comes to a sudden stop the indicator needle can swing back past zero pushing the telltale needle down. If you consistently get 65-70% readings despite what appear to be very good brakes this may be the problem. Easing off the brakes just before the

vehicle stops and then pulling up gently can prevent this. After all, good brake readings should be obtainable well before the vehicle stops.



Some repaired units have also been found to be assembled with the indicator set in the wrong place causing the mechanism to run out of travel before the maximum reading is obtained. Check for this by setting the unit to zero and then tilting it slowly to make sure the needle can swing through more than 90°.

Battery Acid, Hydrogen Gas and Short Circuits

One of the stranger modifications encountered is relocating the battery from the engine bay to the boot. Apparently, this helps fill up some of that empty space which normally gets clogged up with luggage. It does help the battery stay cooler but it also increases the length of cable to the starter motor increasing the chances of critical voltage drop. Can you move the battery to the boot? Yes, if you want to but there are a few things to consider – battery acid, hydrogen gas and short circuits. To overcome these potential safety risks you will need to:

- place the battery in a sturdy container that can withstand knocks from luggage etc.
- mount the battery and container as securely as the battery was mounted in the engine bay
- ensure the battery terminals are protected from anything that could cause a short circuit
- seal the container to prevent gas or liquid leaking into the boot and/or passenger compartment
- vent the container to the outside of the vehicle to prevent the build up potentially explosive gases
- ensure the longer battery cable is supported at least every 600mm, fully insulated and protected from chafing on any vehicle parts.

These same requirements apply when relocating the battery into the load areas of vans, utes or wagons or into the passenger's compartment of any vehicle.

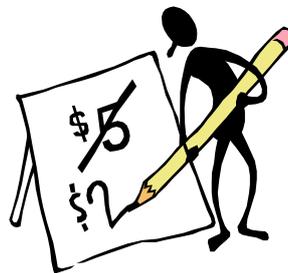
Mixing Tyre Types

Conventional or cross ply tyres! Are you old enough to remember them? They used to be almost the only type of tyre fitted until radial ply tyres became standard on most cars about 30 years ago. Well, it seems that some people still use them (one wonders why) but unfortunately they are also often misused. Incorrectly mixing them with radial ply tyres on a vehicle can be dangerous. Therefore, here are some tips for the safe and legal mixing of conventional and radial tyres:

- Conventionals and radials must not be mixed on the one axle (even if one is the spare tyre).
- The radials should always go on the rear.
- The tyres on the one axle should be the same size.
- The tread patterns do not have to match.
- On cars built after 1972 it is illegal to mix conventionals and radials.

Fee Changes

The following fees have changed:



- Annual renewal of licence **\$15.50**
- Additional or changed premise (new item) **\$78.00**
- Licence application **\$78.00**

Please remember, the price of a book of roadworthiness certificates has been \$105.00 for some time now. Books of certificates will not be supplied until the correct amount of money is provided.

Note:

*All supplies can be obtained from
VicRoads' Bookshop
Ground Floor
60 Denmark Street
KEW VIC 3101*

Phone (03) 9854 2782 or Fax (03) 9854 2468

Open weekdays between 8.30am and 4.30pm.