

Heavy Vehicle Modifications

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For further information please write to the Manager – Vehicle Safety & Policy
60 Denmark Street, Kew, 3101 or contact your local Customer Service Centre.

1. Introduction

Regulation 257 of the Road Safety (Vehicles) Regulations 2009 requires all modifications to a vehicle to either have specific approval from VicRoads or to be carried out in accordance with guidelines published by VicRoads.

For the purposes of Regulation 257 modifications must be carried out in accordance with the guidelines published in this document.

Additionally, Regulation 21 (3) states that:

- (3) A person who modifies, or adds components to, a vehicle must ensure that—
- (a) if the vehicle complied with the standards for registration immediately before the modification or addition, the vehicle continues to comply with those standards; and
 - (b) for a heavy vehicle—
 - (i) The modification or addition is certified by a person appointed as an authorised officer under regulation 7 as complying with the National Code of Practice for Heavy Vehicle Modification published by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government as Vehicle Standards Bulletin No. 6; or
 - (ii) the modification or addition is otherwise acceptable to the Corporation.

2. Definitions

Approval Certificate

An Approval Certificate is a technical assessment certificate issued by a participant in the Vehicle Assessment Signatory Scheme (VASS). The certificate is evidence that the modified vehicle has been inspected and that all modifications have been carried out and completed in accordance with recognised standards and codes of practice and that the vehicle in its modified form

continues to comply with the Standards for Registration. A list of VASS signatories is available from any VicRoads Customer Service Centre, the VicRoads internet site or by contacting VicRoads on 1300 360 745.

Approved Modification Plate

A Modification Plate fitted to a heavy vehicle by a VASS Signatory.

Authorised Person

For the purposes of this document an Authorised Person referred to in Regulation 21(3) is a participant in the Vehicle Assessment Signatory Scheme (VASS).

Heavy Vehicle

For the purposes of this document a Heavy Vehicle is:

- A motor vehicle with a GVM greater than 4.5 tonnes
- A trailer with an ATM greater than 4.5 tonnes.

Vehicle Standards Bulletin 6

Vehicle Standards Bulletin (VSB) 6 is a document published by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government (DITRDLG) and relates to the:

- Demonstration of compliance with the Australian Design Rules for heavy vehicles which have been modified prior to first registration
- Acceptance by registration authorities of heavy vehicles which have been modified in service.

VSB 6 can be viewed or downloaded from the DITRDLG web site at www.infrastructure.gov.au

3. Modifications to New Vehicles Prior to First Registration

Modifications to new vehicles prior to first registration are considered to be part of the manufacture of the vehicle. Most new heavy vehicles are modified prior to supply to the market (e.g. the fitting of a body, chassis extension, additional axle etc) by a second manufacturer. These modifications will affect the vehicle's compliance with the ADRs. Therefore, in order for these vehicles to be accepted for registration, all modifications must have been carried out in accordance with VSB 6. It is important to note that any modifications to a new vehicle not covered by VSB 6 will require the fitting of a Second Stage of Manufacture Compliance Plate (e.g. conversion to a motor home).

4. Modifications to In Service Vehicles

Many heavy vehicles are modified during their service life to make the vehicle suitable for a particular transport purpose.

This practice is acceptable provided the guidelines in this information sheet and in VSB 6 are complied with.

Modified vehicles must continue to comply with the Standards for Registration, which include the applicable ADRs.

Unless otherwise approved, an Approval Certificate is required for a modification to any part of a vehicle that is covered by an Australian Design Rule (ADR) or that affects the structural integrity of the vehicle. Vehicles modified in accordance with VSB 6 must be issued with an Approval Certificate and the vehicle fitted with an Approved Modification plate.

Tow trucks must be supplied with an Approval Certificate or fitted with a second stage of manufacturer compliance plate before they can be registered.

5. Examples of Common Modifications

The following modifications are examples of the type of modifications that require an Approval Certificate unless the vehicle has been fitted with an appropriate second stage of manufacturer compliance plate:

- Additional axle or axles
- Drive line modifications
- Chassis extensions
- Wheelbase alterations
- Fitting of tow bars and associated equipment
- Increase in GVM or GCM
- Brake modifications, including trailer brake connections.
- Change of vehicle type, e.g. from a prime mover to a goods carrying vehicle or vice versa
- Engine changes where the engine is of a type not supplied as an option by the vehicle manufacturer.

6. Registration

If the modified vehicle is not a new vehicle and is to be registered or the registration transferred to a new owner then in addition to any other documents required, a current Certificate of Roadworthiness issued by a Licensed Vehicle Tester must be supplied together with the Approval Certificate.