



CI-118C

Vehicle Safety and Standards Circular to Industry

Imported Vehicles Pre 1989 - Guidelines for Engineers

Introduction

The Department of Transport (DoT) has revised procedures to ensure that imported vehicles, built prior to 1989, comply with relevant Australian Design Rules (ADRs) for the vehicle category and year of manufacture before they can be licensed (registered) in Western Australia (WA). In some cases where it is not feasible to demonstrate compliance with ADRs it may be acceptable to demonstrate compliance with the intent of the ADRs.

This Circular to Industry describes the procedures and the technical requirements that apply before a vehicle importer can license (register) a vehicle.

The Vehicle Importers have the responsibility to ensure that a vehicle complies with the relevant ADRs prior to it being released to the market place or sold to a client. The Engineer is expected to give advice on the modifications required to ensure each vehicle meet the required standards and to also make the client aware that they could become complex or costly.

Vehicle compliance

Imported motor vehicles built overseas are generally built to different specifications to those required for the Australian market. When a vehicle is imported the DoT will initially require that certain information be submitted before it can be considered for licensing.

A "Vehicle Compliance Inspection Report for Pre 1989 Imported Vehicles" is to be completed and endorsed by a DoT approved Consulting Engineer or Organisation.

Where modifications are necessary they must comply with the relevant ADRs. Only an Approved Organisation and/or Consulting Engineer can approve them. (The DoT may insist that only an Engineer can approve certain modifications.)

Where minor modifications are necessary to comply with the relevant ADRs, then only an Approved Organisation and/or Consulting Engineer can approve them. The DoT may insist that an Engineer approve certain modifications.

Where more complex modifications are necessary to comply with the relevant ADRs, then a comprehensive Engineer's report may be required.

In some cases where it is not feasible to demonstrate compliance with ADRs it may be acceptable to demonstrate compliance with the intent of the ADRs.

Vehicle importer requirements

Vehicle Importers have the primary responsibility to carry out whatever modifications are needed to meet the requirements of the ADRs.

The “Vehicle Compliance Inspection Report” should be used as a checklist. However the items listed on this form may not be comprehensive, and the Importers should familiarise themselves with all technical requirements contained in the ADRs applicable to the vehicles category and year of manufacture.

The Consulting Engineer or Approved Organisation should identify all modifications that are required and advise the importers as to how these should be executed to ensure compliance.

Audits

An Importer must keep comprehensive records of all vehicles imported and details of modifications performed. A copy of the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development’s Import Approval document and Vehicle Compliance Inspection Report for each vehicle must be kept for auditing purposes.

Audits may be conducted from time to time as determined by the DoT.

Future reports may not be accepted from any individual or organisation that has been found to have inadequate audit facilities or fails to satisfy audit requirements.

Continued compliance with ADRs

The Consulting Engineer should advise the Vehicle Importer of the responsibility to ensure that any modifications are performed in accordance with sound engineering practice, in a manner ensuring that the vehicle’s structural integrity will be maintained, and so that the vehicle continues to comply with the ADRs.

The Engineer should not approve modifications unless they have been performed in accordance with sound engineering practice, and it can be demonstrated that the vehicle will maintain its structural integrity and will continue to comply with the ADRs.

Approved engineers or organisations

An approved organisation is one that has been accepted by the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development as a “Registered Automotive Workshop” (RAW). A list of these businesses can be obtained by contacting that DoT.

An Approved Engineer is one who has been approved by the DoT to compile Vehicle Compliance Inspection Reports. A list of these engineers can be on the DoT website Information Bulletin IB-102.

Other business entities could also be considered as approved organisations if they have the same level of certification as is required of a “Registered Automotive Workshop”.

Consulting Engineers or approved organisations should not take on consultancy work unless they are aware of the DoT requirements in relation to imported motor vehicles. Consulting Engineers must be able to provide professional advice to an owner, undertake technical assessments and produce competent engineering reports.

Dispute resolution

The DoT can be approached for adjudication if a dispute arises over technical matters concerning the ADRs or WA vehicle standards. Issues such as payments for consultancy fees, quality of work and other commercial considerations will need to be resolved by the parties involved.

Vehicle dimensions

Vehicle Importers must ensure that each vehicle meets the dimensional requirements of the Road Traffic (Vehicles) Regulations 2014. This is particularly important in the case of commercial vehicles and vehicles such as campervans and caravans. Many of these vehicles have been imported with excessive rear overhang (max 3.7m), width (2.5m), length (12.5m) or doors on the wrong side of the vehicle resulting in extremely costly modifications.

Related documents and links

Documents

- Information Bulletin IB-114: Guidelines for Importers (pre 1989 imported vehicles) is available on the DoT's website www.transport.wa.gov.au/dvs

Links

- Australian Design Rules are available on the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development's website (www.infrastructure.gov.au)
- Road Traffic (Vehicles) Regulations 2014 can be accessed on State Law Publisher website (www.slp.wa.gov.au)

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