

Vehicle Standards Guide 33 (VSG-33) Implementation of the Road Vehicle Standards Act

This guide provides information for operators, manufacturers, importers, and modifiers of heavy vehicles about the introduction of the *Road Vehicle Standards Act 2018 (Cth)* (RVSA).

Background

All road vehicles are required to meet certain regulatory requirements to ensure, amongst other things, they are safe, secure, and environmentally friendly.

The Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications (the Department of Infrastructure) are responsible for the [road vehicle standards laws](#) that apply to both heavy and light vehicles before they are *provided to a consumer for the first time in Australia* (provided).

Previously, these requirements were administered through the *Motor Vehicle Standards Act 1989 (Cth)* (MVSA). The RVSA replaced the MVSA from 1 July 2021.

While the RVSA has introduced a number of changes, the most significant changes that will impact the heavy vehicle industry include the following:

- the removal of the requirement to fit identification (compliance) plates
- updated vehicle identification requirements under Australian Design Rule (ADR) 61/03 – Vehicle Marking
- changes to the modification rules prior to the vehicle being provided to a consumer for the first time in Australia
- ADR compliance requirements for Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs).

To assist in a smooth change over to the RVSA, transitional arrangements are in place for the next 12 to 24 months.

Note: The transition period has been extended by a further 12 months and will now be in place until 30 June 2024.

Identification (compliance) plates

The RVSA removes the requirements for vehicles to be fitted with an identification plate. The information that would previously have been listed on this plate will now be available digitally on the Register of Approved Vehicles (RAV).

The RAV is a publicly available online database of vehicles that have been approved for delivery to the Australian market.

The database is available online at <https://rav.infrastructure.gov.au> and can be searched using the vehicle identification number (VIN).

Vehicle identification

As an anti-theft and anti-fraud measure heavy vehicles will be required to have a secure vehicle identifier (SVI) fitted.

SVIs are a plate or label affixed to the vehicles that must:

- display the name of the ‘Manufacturer’ or the ‘Vehicle Make’
- the ‘VIN’
- be firmly affixed in a conspicuous and readily accessible position on the vehicle; and
- not be affixed on a part of the vehicle usually subject to replacement in use.

For vehicles such as heavy buses (ME) and trailers (TD) a vehicle plate is also required that has additional information relevant to the vehicle, such as the ADR vehicle category code, the seating capacity, ATM/GTM, or other details as specified in ADR 61/03.

Vehicle manufacturers may choose to combine the SVI and the vehicle plate into a single plate or label provided it has all the information needed on both plates/labels.

More information about SVI and vehicle plates are available in [ADR 61/03](#).

Vehicle modifications

Changes made in the RVSA have simplified what modifications are permitted to new vehicles, who can certify them and when these modifications can be made.

For more information on modifications to new vehicles refer to [Vehicle Standards Guide 7 \(VSG7\)](#).

Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs)

Under the former MVSA many SPVs were not required to be assessed or approved by the Department of Infrastructure, instead accessing State or Territory-based approval systems.

Under the RVSA, road going SPV's will be eligible for a concessional RAV entry approval (which includes import approval). This change will ensure that all vehicles that are used on public roads meet minimum safety standards and can be assessed consistently against these requirements.

The Department of Infrastructure will assess applications for concessional RAV entry approval for SPV's that:

- do not comply with the applicable ADRs;
- would not be able to operate for the purpose for which it was designed if it were modified to comply with those ADRs, or if its original design was in accordance with those ADRs; and
- comply with the applicable ADRs to an extent that makes it suitable for use of a public road in Australia.

As this is a significant change for industry, the Department of Infrastructure is progressively phasing in the number of ADRs that SPVs are required to comply with between 1 July 2021 and 30 June 2024.

For more information about these interim arrangements, please refer to the [RVSA website](#).

Applications and approvals under RVSA

Applications and approvals are now managed by the [Road Vehicle Regulator](#) system ([ROVER](#)), which replaces the Road Vehicle Certification System (RVCS).

Additional information as it relates to a specific vehicle, such as ADR non-compliance and exemptions is available on ROVER or the website of the Department of Infrastructure.

Road Vehicle Recalls

Previously, road vehicle recalls were overseen by the Product Safety Australia arm of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC). With the implementation of the RVSA, all road vehicle recalls will now be administered by the Department of Infrastructure.

Recalls may be issued where a where a vehicle or component either poses a safety issue that may cause injury, or does not comply with applicable standards.

Recalls on heavy vehicles may be issued voluntarily by the vehicle or component supplier or may be issued as a compulsory recall by the responsible Commonwealth Minister.

Where a vehicle or component supplier, identifies a compliance or safety issue, they can alert the Department by using the ROVER portal.

Vehicle recalls are published on the Department of Infrastructure website at: www.vehiclerecalls.gov.au

More information

For more information about the implementation of the RVSA, visit the Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications at:

<https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/vehicles/rvs>

Chain of Responsibility

Under the Chain of Responsibility (CoR) laws, relevant parties in the transport supply chain have a duty to ensure the safety of their transport activities.

Parties in the chain have an obligation to eliminate or minimise potential harm or loss (risk) by doing all that is reasonably practicable in their business to ensure safety.

Implementing a system to ensure you are informed of changes to the vehicle safety standards and apply these to your business can support transport safety.

For more information:

Subscribe: www.nhvr.gov.au/subscribe

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