



Three-wheeled Vehicles (Trikes)

Introduction:

The construction and importation of scratch-built 3-wheeled vehicles (correctly termed 'motor tri-cycles' but generally referred to as 'trikes') is becoming more common, and there is often confusion as to how they should be correctly identified for LVV certification purposes.

LVVTA has been promoting to Land Transport New Zealand its view that ideally, the same set of technical requirements should be applied to all 3-wheeled vehicles, regardless of a 3-wheeled vehicle's Table-A class, or what the 3-wheeled vehicle is registered as, or what type of license is required in order to operate the 3-wheeled vehicle.

In the interim, this Information Sheet has been developed in order to assist in the establishment of a trike's class (which is dependant on the trike's controls and tare), and the application of the correct LVV certification requirements.

Definitions:

- An LE-1 Motor tri-cycle is a motor vehicle that has one wheel at the front and two wheels at the rear.
- An LE-2 Motor tri-cycle is a motor vehicle that has two wheels at the front and one wheel at the rear.

Classification:

Any vehicle that has 3 wheels is legally defined by New Zealand transport legislation as a motor-car, unless it is declared a motor-cycle by the Director of Land Transport New Zealand.

To follow is what determines whether or not a 3-wheeled vehicle can be declared a motor-cycle by the Director of Land Transport New Zealand:

- An LE-1 or LE-2 motor tri-cycle which has motor-cycle controls, and has a tare of 1000 kg or less, may be declared a motor-cycle by the Director of Land Transport New Zealand, if the owner so chooses.
- Any LE-1 or LE-2 motor tri-cycle which has a steering wheel cannot be declared a motor-cycle, therefore can only be a motor-car.
- Any LE-1 or LE-2 motor tri-cycle which has a tare of more than 1000 kg, whether it has motor-cycle controls or steering wheel, cannot be declared a motor-cycle, therefore can only be a motor-car.

Requirements:Motor-cycle requirements

If declared a motor-cycle, a 3-wheeled vehicle must comply with all of the safety standards required for an LE-class vehicle. In particular, these include:

- no requirement for seatbelts to be fitted; and
- must be ridden by a person who holds either a motor-car driver's license or a motor-cycle rider's licence; and
- helmets must be worn by the rider and any passengers.

Motor-car requirements

A 3-wheeled vehicle that is a motor-car must comply with all of the safety standards required for an MA-class vehicle. In particular, these include;

- seatbelts must be fitted; and
- must be driven by a person who holds a motor-car driver's licence; and
- helmets are not required to be worn.

LVV Certifier category required:

When an LVV Certifier is presented with a scratch-built 3-wheeled vehicle, his first priority is to establish whether or not he holds the correct LVV Certifier category, on the following basis:

- If the vehicle has motor-cycle controls, the LVV Certifier will need to be authorised for *Category 2C Trikes – Modified Production & Scratch-built*.
- If the vehicle has a steering wheel, the LVV Certifier will need to be authorised for *Category 1D Modified Production – Advanced & Scratch-built*.

LVV Certification process:

The LVV certification process differs, depending on the type of steering controls the vehicle has:

- If the vehicle has motor-cycle controls, the LVV Certifier will need to certify the vehicle to LVV Standard 198-00 (Trikes with Motorcycle Controls) and any relevant Land Transport New Zealand motor-cycle requirements. (Note that in the absence of the completed LVV Standard 198-00, the LVV Form-set FS015 is to be used).
- If the vehicle has a steering wheel, the LVV Certifier will need to certify the vehicle to the same standards and NZ Hobby Car Technical Manual requirements as for normal scratch-built motor-cars.

If you have any queries or require any further clarification relating to this Information Sheet, please feel free to contact Kendall Bradley at the Wellington LVVTA office on (04) 477 4372.

Tony Johnson
Chief Executive Officer
Low Volume Vehicle Technical Association, Inc