

Re-issue of LVV Certification Threshold Schedule

Introduction:

This information sheet introduces the revised LVV Certification Threshold Schedule and provides background information and some specific detail on common modifications.

Background information:

All modifications to light vehicles must meet warrant of fitness or certificate of fitness requirements, however not every modification requires low volume vehicle (LVV) certification.

If a vehicle is modified, it may or may not be required to undergo LVV certification, depending on the level of modification. There are three groups of modifications:

- those higher level modifications that will always require LVV certification; and
- those that require LVV certification if they exceed a certain level; and
- those lower levels of modification that are never required to be LVV certified.

The threshold tables list modifications that are commonly made to vehicle components and systems, and confirm whether or not LVV certification is required for these modifications. Where modifications exceed those listed in the table, a WoF or CoF provider must not issue a warrant of fitness or certificate of fitness for the vehicle until an LVV certification has been issued.

Common items that always require certification:

- The following common modifications always require LVV certification:
 - Suspension that has adjustable geometry, (commonly threaded height adjustment)
 - Suspension lowered such that ground clearance is less than 100mm
 - Brake upgrades - larger size discs or aftermarket calipers
 - Conversion to a larger capacity engine
 - Petrol to diesel (or vice versa) conversion
 - Addition or modification of a turbo or supercharger, wastegate modification
 - Seats and seatbelts added, commonly into vans
 - Camper conversions with cab structure modifications or added seats
 - Bikes converted to trikes
 - 4x4 with a body lift kit
 - Disability hand control adaptations to brakes.

Introduction dates and Modification Declarations:

- For most modifications, the introduction date for the requirement for LVV certification is 1 March 1999. In addition, LVV certification was required for some items prior to that date. In particular LVV certification is required for a modification:
 - after 1 January 1992 that affected compliance with a brake standard on a class MA vehicle, or after 1 January 1993 on a vehicle of class MB, MC or NA, and
 - after 1 January 1992 that affected a seatbelt anchorage standard on a passenger vehicle with up to nine seats, that is class MA, MB or MC, and
 - after 1 January 1992 that affected compliance with a standard for door locks and hinges, steering column impact, or interior impact on a class MA vehicle.
- If a modification was carried out prior to LVV certification coming into force, either:
 - a valid modification declaration must be produced, or
 - a vehicle inspector may also accept other authentic evidence to verify that the modifications were carried out prior to LVV certification coming into force. Examples are:
 - an invoice from the company that carried out the modification, or
 - insurance policy cover notes and motoring magazine features provided they record the vehicle's registration number or VIN, the modification details and a date, or
 - other information verifying when the modifications were carried out. Documents such as statements from previous owners are not acceptable.
- Modification declaration certificates give a specific exemption for that modification and they ceased to be issued after January 1999. Copies are available from LVVTA.
- A modified production or scratch-built low volume vehicle that has not been LVV certified, and for which a Modification Declaration Certificate has been issued, must be LVV certified if either:
 - the vehicle has been modified further after 1 January 1992; or
 - the vehicle's registration lapses or the vehicle is de-registered.

LVV certification plate:

- Modifications can be confirmed as certified under the LVV Code by the following means:
 - LVV authority card, linking listed vehicle modifications to the special requirements of one person, or:
 - LVV certification plate riveted and glued to the vehicle within the engine compartment in a clearly visible position, or where there is insufficient available space within the engine compartment to enable the LVV certification plate to be fitted and remain clearly visible, in any one of the following positions:
 - within the passenger compartment on the vehicle's A-pillar or B-pillar, or
 - in the case of a sedan, on the rear bulkhead or other prominent position in the boot area, or
 - in the case of a van with an engine cover in the passenger compartment, on a non-removable panel steel part of the engine cover or seat frame, or

- in the case of a vehicle with a raised floor, on the vertical area of a step behind a door, or
 - in the case of a hatchback or station wagon, in the spare wheel well which is accessible without the use of tools.
- It is not possible to list all modifications on the certification plate, such as engine modifications. In this case, the LVV certification plate will list “MOD” in the engine field to signify engine modifications. A statement of compliance is also produced by the LVV certifier which lists the modifications in more detail.
 - A vehicle that is already LVV certified and that has undergone further modification will require re-certification for items over the threshold or where any details on the LVV certification plate, apart from the registration number, have become incorrect.

Abbreviation ‘OE’:

- Where the abbreviation ‘OE’ is used, this refers to the specification of a vehicle at the time it was built and certified by its manufacturer.

Law enforcement vehicles:

- Any modification on a law enforcement or emergency service vehicle *that relates to the specialised law enforcement or emergency service functions of the vehicle*, does not require LVV certification.

Structures and Frontal Impact:

- The structure of a vehicle may incorporate crumple zones that form part of a frontal impact occupant protection system. Modification of the vehicle front end may alter the effectiveness of the occupant protection system, which must be maintained within a safe tolerance of original, even if the vehicle does not have to meet a frontal impact standard.
- The following vehicles with a GVM of 2500kg or less must comply with a frontal impact occupant protection standard:
 - Class MA motor vehicles manufactured on or after 1 March 1999
 - Class MA motor vehicles that were less than 20 years old when they were first registered in New Zealand on or after 1 April 2002
 - Class MB and MC motor vehicles manufactured on or after 1 October 2003.
- A body lift on a body/chassis vehicle (commonly a 4x4) always requires LVV certification.
- LVV certification is required for the following items on a PSV:
 - Fitting of components to the roof, eg a roof rack or an air conditioning unit
 - Changes in floor height or geometry, eg due to changes to suspension, wheel or tyre size

Vision and Glazing:

- Change of glazing from glass to plastic requires certification and must be an abrasion resistant type.

Seats and seatbelts:

- A seat with a side airbag can be replaced with an alternative seat, but must be certified to ensure that the remainder of the occupant protection system still functions properly.

Suspension

- A vehicle suspension can be lowered as long as a minimum of 100mm ground clearance exists below the vehicle structure. A vehicle can be certified with less than 100mm clearance as the certifier ensures that sufficient suspension travel exists.

Brakes:

- Anti-lock braking systems (ABS) can be removed, but must be replaced by all components from a non-ABS variant. This modification always requires LVV certification.

Tyres and Wheels:

- Fitting of wheel spacers or wheel adapters always requires certification.

Exhaust noise:

- The exhaust Objective Noise Test is carried out by an LVV specialist certifier but it is technically not LVV certification. The exhaust is fitted with a certification label; the vehicle does not get an LVV certification plate.
- LVV certification is always required for the fitting of a turbocharger as a modification, or the upgrading of a turbo or waste-gate.
- Externally venting waste-gates (screamer pipes) are not permitted as they are not adequately muffled and the exhaust gases passing through the wastegate are not directed through the vehicle's exhaust system. However, waste-gates that have their own exhaust system or exhaust pipe exiting behind the passenger compartment are permitted.

Engine and drivetrain conversions:

- All engine conversions require LVV certification, except for same-size or less direct replacements. Any increase in engine size requires certification – it is a popular misconception that an increase of less than 20% is ok; - this is not true and it must be certified.
- An OE engine that is modified and where the power or torque increase is less than 20% does not require certification, unless a turbocharger or supercharger has been fitted or modified.
- A bolt-in conversion such as a Commodore V8 into a Commodore V6, always requires certification despite it being available as OE in another variant.
- A gearbox substitution that requires modification or replacement of the brake pedal requires certification. For example, it is common to replace the original brake pedal with a brake and clutch assembly when changing from an auto to a manual gearbox.

Finally:

All technical enquiries, enquiries about the LVV process, LVV certifier locations, and the issuing of Low Volume Vehicle Certification Plates or re-issue of Modification Declaration certificates, should be directed to a Technical Team Member at the Low Volume Vehicle Technical Association Inc, on [04] 238 4343.

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