Reporting vehicle defects

Purpose

This Vehicle Standards Information (VSI) No. 37 is intended to inform owners and drivers of light vehicles that are fleet vehicles of the process for reporting vehicle defects.

Note:

1. Light vehicles/combinations are those that have a gross vehicle mass (GVM) or aggregate trailer mass (ATM) not exceeding 4.5 tonnes.
2. The term ‘fleet’ can mean one or more vehicles, and applies to any vehicle where a person is employed to drive that vehicle eg buses, taxis, trucks, delivery vehicles, courier vehicles, tow trucks, service vehicles, implements, mobile shops, sales representative vehicles, trades vehicles, etc.

Introduction

All registrable vehicles used on roads or road-related areas must be maintained in a safe and serviceable condition. In the case of fleet vehicles, which are normally used more frequently than privately owned vehicles, and often by a number of different drivers, it is important that any defect affecting the vehicle’s safety is reported as soon as possible.

Under Clause 60 (4) of the Road Transport (Vehicle Registration) Regulation 2017 (the Regulation), any person employed by a registered operator to drive a registrable vehicle that is a light vehicle must record and report any faults found in their vehicle.

In addition, Clause 60 (5) of the Regulation requires that fleet operators provide forms for drivers of their vehicles to record any defects or faults that could make their vehicle unsafe or unserviceable.

Requirements

Fleet operators must:

- Provide report forms, in duplicate, for the driver to use
- Appoint a person with whom these reports can be lodged
- Retain report forms for a period of at least six months
- Produce the report if requested to do so by an authorised Roads and Maritime Services officer, or police.

The report forms must provide for recording (in duplicate):

- The date of the report
- The registration number of the vehicle
- A statement specifying the parts and equipment of the vehicle which in the opinion of the driver need to be repaired, replaced or adjusted to make the vehicle safe and serviceable.
Drivers of fleet vehicles must:
- As soon as practical after a defect is noticed, complete the provided report form in duplicate
- Leave one copy of the report with the fleet operator or the appointed person
- Retain the other copy of the report.

Clauses 52(4) & (5) of the Regulation are there to ensure that fleet vehicles are kept in a safe condition. It is important that fleet managers and drivers know about the requirements and do the right thing.

‘Reporting defects increases safety and reduces the chances of an expensive breakdown’

Defective vehicles must not be used on the road

Operators and drivers of fleet vehicles are reminded that it is an offence to use a registrable vehicle on a road or road-related area unless:
- The vehicle complies with all the applicable vehicle standards, and
- The vehicle and its parts and equipment are suitable for safe use and are in fully serviceable condition, and
- The mandatory equipment required under the Regulation is in working order, and
- The vehicle is registered.

Glossary

**Aggregate trailer mass (ATM)** is the laden mass of a trailer. The ATM is specified by the trailer manufacturer and is shown on the identification plate fitted to the trailer.

**Gross vehicle mass (GVM)** of a vehicle means the maximum loaded mass of the vehicle:
- As specified by the vehicle’s manufacturer, or
- As specified by Roads and Maritime if:
  - the manufacturer has not specified a maximum loaded mass, or
  - the manufacturer cannot be identified, or
  - the vehicle has been modified to the extent that the manufacturer’s specification is no longer appropriate.

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**FURTHER INFORMATION**

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