

This bulletin is a guideline only. At all times the appropriate legislation currently in force takes precedence.

## INTRODUCTION:

This bulletin provides guidelines for the approval of vehicles, which are to be permanently modified for use as a motorhome.

Conversion of a motor vehicle to a motorhome is a modification. All modifications require prior approval from the Department of Infrastructure Energy and Resources (DIER) and must be carried out in accordance with the guidelines from DIER.

This bulletin applies to vehicles that have been previously registered in, or imported into Australia.

In addition to items covered in this bulletin motorhomes must continue to comply with all applicable standards and Australian Design Rules (ADR's) including the requirements of ADR 42 and 44 that apply to motorhomes.

If the modification is intended on a vehicle not previously registered, the vehicle is subject to the Motor Vehicles Standards Act and requires to be certified as complying with all applicable ADR's.

This bulletin does not cover vehicles that do not meet the ADRs, please seek further advice from DIER about these vehicles.

## WHAT IS A MOTORHOME?

A motorhome is a motor vehicle that has been constructed or permanently modified for human occupation when stationary and includes a permanently fitted sink, cooking and sleeping facilities. In this bulletin the terms motorhome and campervan have the same meaning.

This bulletin is not intended to apply to vehicles that are fitted with a removable or "slide on" camping or accommodation unit, or caravans which are towed, although many of the requirements such as vehicle suitability, load carrying capacity, dimensions and protrusions still apply.

## VEHICLE SUITABILITY:

A vehicle selected for modification must be of a type that is well suited for conversion to a motorhome.

Prior to purchasing or converting a vehicle consideration should be given to;

- The vehicle's general mechanical and structural condition,
- Whether the manufacturer's specified load carrying capacity is sufficient to accommodate the additional weight of items such as full water/waste tanks, fridge, cupboards, beds, fittings, equipment, passengers and luggage.
- If the Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) exceeds 4.5 tonnes what category of drivers licence is required.
- All light motor vehicles less than 30 years old must be right hand drive.
- All heavy vehicles (GVM greater than 4.5 Tonnes) must be right hand drive.

**VEHICLE MASS AND CARRYING CAPACITY:**

The carrying capacity of a vehicle is the GVM as specified by the manufacturer, less its empty (or tare) weight.

The tare mass of a vehicle includes all fittings, fluid reservoirs and fuel and water tanks filled to normal operating capacity.

Any increase to a vehicle's GVM almost always requires a suspension and or brake upgrade, is a modification and is not covered by this bulletin. An increase in GVM requires prior approval from DIER and Engineering Signatory approval. The GVM of a vehicle will not be downgraded.

**ADR COMPLIANCE:**

All vehicles must comply with the applicable ADR's for the category of vehicle, including the sections of ADR 42 and 44 that apply to motorhomes.

**CONVERSION OF BUSES:**

Registration fees for motorhomes are calculated on the number of cylinders rather than the GVM. To be eligible for motorhome registration a vehicle must have at least 70% of the total available internal space permanently modified for use as living quarters.

**VEHICLE DIMENSIONS:**

The following dimensions must not be exceeded:

- Length 12.5 metres
- Width 2.5 metres
- Height 4.3 metres
- Rear over hang the lesser of 3.7 metres or 60% of the wheelbase (the distance between the centres of the front and rear axles) measured from the centre of the rear axle.

**NOTE:** All fittings such as awnings, toolboxes, spare wheels, bicycle racks, towbars, bullbars and any other external fittings must be fully contained within the above measurements.

When fitting items at the rear, care must be taken to prevent obscuring any lights.

**GENERAL SAFETY:**

The vehicle must not be modified or fitted with any object, fitting or appliance unless it is fitted in a manner that minimises the risk of bodily injury to any person.

Interior fittings must be designed and fitted so as to prevent injury to an occupant. Hazardous projections, sharp edges and corners are not permitted.

All fittings including cupboards must be securely fastened and be able to withstand a substantial amount of vibration (eg being driven over corrugated roads) without becoming detached or losing their contents.

A vehicle must not have any object or fitting protruding from any part of the vehicle that is not technically essential to operate the vehicle or is fitted in a manner that may increase the risk of injury.

**SEATS:**

Motorhomes are often configured to provide several different seating positions that may be occupied while the vehicle is moving. Seats may be used for several purposes, eg; for dining and or conversion to beds. Some seats are capable of swivelling, whereby in their forward facing position they are used whilst the vehicle is travelling and in their rearward position they are intended for dining or relaxing when the vehicle is parked.

The term “designated seating position” is used to describe a seat which is intended or is able to be occupied when the vehicle is being driven.

There must be a designated seating position for each sleeping berth provided in the motorhome.

For example, a motorhome that has four sleeping berths must have at least four designated seating positions. It is preferred that the designated seating positions are forward facing and are the positions that are most likely to be occupied when travelling.

Other seating positions may be provided either as fixed seats, or seats that may be converted to another use, such as a bed.

If swivelling seats are used as a designated seating position, they must be capable of being securely locked in the position used for travelling.

No seat may be fitted in a manner that allows it to be in front of the drivers seating position.

**SEAT BELTS:**

All seat belts and seat belt anchorages must comply with the Australian Standards and Australian Design Rules (ADRs).

Seatbelts must be fitted to all designated seating positions. A lap-sash type belt is required for the driver and outboard passenger positions and a lap belt is required for any centre seating position. Side facing seats may only have lap belts fitted.

**DOORS:**

Every motor motorhome or caravan equipped with a fuel burning (cooking) facilities or living or sleeping accommodation must have outward opening or sliding doors only. At least one such door must be located on the left-hand side or at the rear.

**Advisory Note:**

A campervan, motorhome or caravan, whether imported, personally imported or locally manufactured, is only acceptable if it has at least one door on the left hand side, or at the rear, that:

- Is full sized – able to be used by people of average height and width without stooping, twisting, crawling or jumping;
- Is readily accessible from the living quarters, without climbing over seats, engine covers or goods normally stored near the proposed door;
- Actually provides access between the inside and outside;
- Can easily be used without multiple steps (i.e. a single slide out step, as often found on caravans is acceptable, or steps that automatically deploy when the door is opened);
- Temporary portable steps of any kind are not permitted.

**GLASS:**

All windscreen and window glass must meet Australian Standards, and be so marked on the glass.

Interior household type light fittings and cupboard fronts, made of non-safety glass should not be used. Those that are not safety glass must be adequately enclosed or otherwise protected to minimise the risk of injury caused by broken glass in an accident. Perspex or plastic are recommended alternatives to glass for internal fittings.

**FIRE EXTINGUISHERS:**

At least one fire extinguisher with a minimum rating of 5B must be fitted in accordance with AS 2444.

Extinguishers must have a hose fitted so it may be directed to inaccessible places such as engine bays.

Extinguishers must be located in a conspicuous and readily accessible position and mounted no higher than 1.2 metres from the floor. The mounting bracket must be securely fitted so the extinguisher does not dislodge due to vibration when travelling.

**LIQUEFIED PETROLEUM GAS (LPG):**

The installation of LPG appliances must comply with the applicable requirements of the Australian Standard AS5601 *Gas installations*. The installation must be certified as complying by a suitably qualified and recognised household gas appliance fitter.

The vehicle must have a compliance plate/certificate fitted indicating that the installation meets the required Australian Standard.

The vehicle's petrol or diesel fuel tank filler point must be on the opposite side of the vehicle to the refrigerator vent and any pilot lights that may create a source of ignition.

Gas appliances used in motorhomes must not be connected to or derive fuel from the vehicle's LPG fuel system (if fitted).

**MAINS WIRING ELECTRICAL CONNECTIONS AND INSTALLATIONS:**

Electrical installations intended for connection to a domestic power system, are required to comply with the requirements of Australian Standard AS3001 - *"Electrical installations - Relocatable premises (including caravans and tents) and their site installations"*.

Inspection and approval by an electrical contractor or Aurora Energy is a pre-requisite to registration and a certification plate *"Movable Premises Electrical Compliance Certificate"* must be affixed to the vehicle. The plate is supplied and fitted by Aurora Energy Pty Ltd after inspection and satisfactory testing.

Alternatively an electrical contractor may fit a *"Movable Premises Electrical Compliance Certificate"* after inspection and satisfactory testing.

These certificates are available to electrical contractors from Electricity Standards and Safety, 30 Gordons Hill Road, Rosny, phone 6233 7831.

**TELEVISION AND VISUAL DISPLAY UNITS:**

Any television receiver or visual display units and their associated equipment must be securely mounted in a position which:

- Does not obscure the driver's vision;
- Does not impede driver or passenger movement in the vehicle;
- Is not likely to increase the risk of occupant injury.

Unless used as a driver's aid, all television receivers or visual display units must be installed so that no part of the image on the screen is visible to the driver from the normal driving position.

**TOILETS, SINKS AND SHOWERS:**

A motorhome must not be equipped with a closet or urinal that can be discharged directly onto the road.

Waste from any closet, urinal, sink or shower must be plumbed to drain into a holding tank or tanks. Holding tanks must be vented outside the vehicle to the atmosphere.

No sink or shower drains are to be connected to any closet or urinal or to the same holding tank as the closet or urinal.