

## Vehicle Standards Information 12

October 2021

This information sheet supersedes all previous copies of VSI 12.

# Flashing lights, other lights and reflectors

This Vehicle Standards Information sheet outlines the requirements for the fitment of lights and reflectors to a vehicle that are not the standard lights and reflectors required for registration.

Except for the vehicles outlined as requiring conditional registration, this information sheet applies to vehicles 4.5 tonnes GVM or less. For heavy vehicle requirements please refer to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator website at [nhvr.gov.au](http://nhvr.gov.au)

### Introduction

The *Road Safety (Vehicles) Regulations 2021* prohibit fitment of lamps and reflectors not expressly authorised in Australian Design Rules or regulations unless approved by VicRoads.

This document approves the use of certain lighting systems and reflectors under conditions as outlined below.

The regulations provide for the fitment of additional lamps and reflectors to Exempt Vehicles which may be fitted with any lamp or reflector and Special Use Vehicles which may be fitted with a yellow flashing or rotating warning lamp. Flashing or rotating warning lamps may be fitted to other vehicles with VicRoads approval.

### Items covered by this information sheet

#### Flashing or rotating warning lamps

A flashing or rotating warning lamp referred to in this information sheet is a warning lamp, generally dome shaped, designed to be fitted to a vehicle or implement and which when lit projects a flashing light clearly visible in normal daylight in all directions from a distance of not less than 200 metres. These warning lamps are additional to the hazard warning lamps required or permitted to be fitted to vehicles as original equipment.

#### Commercial Passenger Vehicle lighting

Commercial Passenger Vehicle lighting describes lighting that may be fitted for the purpose of identification under the *Commercial Passenger Vehicle Industry Regulations 2018*.

#### Illuminated rooftop signs

Illuminated rooftop signs include 'TAXI'-style signs that may be fitted to the roof of a commercial passenger vehicle and other similar rooftop advertising.

#### Work lights

Work lights are additional lights that may be fitted to a vehicle to assist when working on a vehicle or its load.

#### Additional reflectors

Additional reflectors are those that comply with the Standards for Registration and are fitted to improve the visibility of a vehicle.

#### Other reflectors and reflective tape

Other reflectors and reflective tape describes the use of reflective surfaces or tape made of materials that either

reflect a partial or complete image of a light source, or is constructed of "corner reflectors" such as "prism tape" or similar, typically used for markings on emergency vehicles. Vehicles fitted with reflective tape must have a business need.

### Vehicles exempt from lighting requirements

Exempt Vehicles are defined by the *Road Safety (Vehicles) Regulations 2021* Division 2. Vehicles which are included in the category of "Exempt Vehicles" are listed below.

#### Police vehicles

A Police vehicle is a vehicle driven by a police officer in the course of their duty.

#### Emergency vehicles

Emergency vehicles are defined in the *Road Safety (Vehicles) Regulations 2021* as:

- a a vehicle operated by or on behalf of and under the control of:
  - i an ambulance service created under section 23 of the *Ambulance Services Act 1986* or listed in Schedule 1 to that Act
  - ii an ambulance service created under a law in force in another State or in a Territory of the Commonwealth
- b a vehicle operated as an ambulance by the Australian Defence Force
- c a vehicle operated by or on behalf of and under the control of:
  - i Fire Rescue Victoria established under section 6 of the *Fire Rescue Victoria Act 1958*
  - ii the Country Fire Authority

appointed under section 6 of the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*

- iii. a fire service established under a law in force in another State or in a Territory of the Commonwealth
- d a fire service unit under the control of:
  - i. the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
  - ii. the Australian Defence Force
- e a vehicle under the control of the Emergency Management Commissioner
- f a vehicle under the control of the Victoria State Emergency Service established by section 28 of the *Victoria State Emergency Service Act 2005*
- g a vehicle being used to convey a member of the Australian Army engaged in connection with emergency ordnance disposal procedures
- h a vehicle under the control of the Shepparton Search and Rescue Squad Inc. or the Echuca and Moama Search and Rescue Squad Inc.
- i a vehicle under the control of Airservices Australia.

#### **Transport enforcement vehicles**

A vehicle being used to convey a person employed by the CPVC, an employee of the Department or a member of staff of the Regulator engaged in connection with the enforcement of:

- i. the Road Safety Act 1986
- ii. the Transport (Compliance and Miscellaneous) Act 1983
- iii. the Commercial Passenger Vehicle Industrial Act 2017
- iv. the Heavy Vehicle National Law (Victoria)
- v. the *Road Management Act 2004*
- vi. the Accident Towing Services Act 2007 Other exempt vehicles

Exempt Vehicles may be fitted with any light or reflector.

Vehicles which may be routinely fitted with yellow flashing or rotating warning lamps.

#### **Special Use Vehicles**

These vehicles are defined in the *Road Safety (Vehicles) Regulations 2021* as:

- a a tow truck
- b a vehicle built or fitted to provide a vehicle breakdown service
- c a vehicle built or fitted for use in hazardous situations on a road
- d a vehicle used on a road under a dimension exemption
- e a vehicle built or fitted to accompany a heavy vehicle specified by paragraph (b)
- f a bus fitted, before 1 July 1999, with a sign telling road users that the bus carries children.

Examples include:

Vehicles used by organisations such as power, water and gas supply companies for maintenance and repair work which may involve activities on a road in a hazardous position.

Vehicles used by organisations for road construction, maintenance or repair work which may necessitate the vehicle being in a hazardous position on a road.

Garbage trucks designed and used for the collection of domestic or industrial garbage.

Special purpose vehicles primarily designed for the transport of over-dimensional loads and pilot vehicles used as escorts for over-dimensional loads.

Vehicles such as tow trucks and vehicle breakdown service vehicles which, because of their function, may be required to be placed in a hazardous position on a highway.

#### **Pilot vehicles**

The *Road Safety (Vehicles) Regulations 2021* require pilot vehicles to be fitted with one or more flashing or rotating yellow lamps such that they are visible at a distance of 500m, mounted on the roof of the vehicle, either above or below, or at either side of the warning sign.

#### **Hazardous site vehicles**

Vehicles used in hazardous non-road areas may be fitted with yellow flashing or rotating warning lamps, so long as these lamps are not used on road or road related areas.

### **Vehicles which may be permitted or required to be fitted with yellow flashing or rotating warning lamps due to their design and/or use**

#### **Agricultural machines**

Over dimensional self propelled agricultural machines are required to be fitted with one or two yellow flashing or rotating warning lamps when driven on a highway.

If an over dimensional agricultural implement is towed on a highway, one or two yellow flashing or rotating warning lamps must be fitted as close as practicable to the highest point of the combination.

#### **Tractors**

Tractors intended to be used on a highway at night with the headlamps spaced less than 600mm apart must be fitted with one yellow flashing or rotating warning lamp.

#### **Other vehicles**

In special situations, other vehicles such as over width trailers used in agriculture not included above may need to be fitted with flashing or rotating yellow warning lamps because of their construction or intended use. To legally fit and use such lamps, these vehicles will need to be conditionally registered.

#### **Conditional registration**

Agricultural machines, tractors and other vehicles that may be permitted or required to be fitted with yellow flashing or rotating warning lamps will require conditional registration. Conditional registration will enable the vehicle to be used on a highway in accordance with the conditions imposed.

Information about applying for conditional registration can be found on the VicRoads website, through a VASS Signatory, or from a VicRoads Customer Service Centre.

## Fitting of flashing or rotating warning lamps

At least one lamp of the correct colour must be mounted on top of the vehicle and when lit be visible in normal daylight from any direction at a distance of not less than 200 metres. Additional lamp(s) of the correct colour may be fitted to the vehicle. Where it is not possible to see the one lamp from any direction, additional lamp(s) of the correct colour must be fitted to the vehicle.

No part of the lens of any lamp must be visible either directly or indirectly to the driver when seated in the normal driving position.

If more than one warning lamp is fitted, they must be placed symmetrically about the centre line of the vehicle or combination of vehicles.

## Use of yellow flashing or rotating warning lamps

Generally, yellow flashing or rotating warning lamps may only be illuminated when the vehicle to which the lamp is fitted is stationary. However, the lamp(s) may be lit when the vehicle or implement is moving where the vehicle is:

- performing road maintenance operations, street sweeping or collecting garbage in a manner which requires frequent stopping
- carrying a wide load
- an escort vehicle
- an oversized agricultural machine or implement or oversize trailer used in agriculture
- a tractor used on a highway at night with the headlamps spaced less than 600mm apart as described above.

## Commercial Passenger Vehicle identification lights

Commercial Passenger Vehicles (CPVs) may be fitted with a light or lights for the purpose of identification under Regulation 8 of the *Commercial Passenger Vehicle Industry Regulations 2018*. The light or lights must meet the following criteria:

- the light(s) must emit a steady, non-flashing light of uniform colour that does not distract or dazzle the driver or other road users.

- the light(s) must not emit a red light to the front of the vehicle or a white light to the rear of the vehicle
- to avoid confusion with emergency services, transport enforcement vehicles or traffic lights, the light(s) must not emit a green, red, blue or magenta coloured light
- the light(s) must not be mounted in such a manner that it creates a hazard to vehicle occupants or other road users
- consideration must be given to ensure the light(s) does not become a projectile in a crash and does not interfere with the deployment of vehicle airbag systems. The light(s) must be secured to withstand a horizontal force of at least 20 times its mass
- the field of view requirements of *VSI 29 Drivers field of view requirements and fitment of accessories*.

CPVs providing unbooked services may also be fitted with an illuminated rooftop advertising sign (with or without amber coloured tariff lamps) to indicate the availability of a CPV. Rooftop signs must meet the requirements outlined in Illuminated rooftop signs below.

## Illuminated rooftop signs

Illuminated rooftop signs (including CPV roof signs) may be fitted to a vehicle if the following criteria is met:

- Illumination lights must emit a steady, low-level, nonflashing white coloured light.
- The light must not distract, dazzle or create glare to the driver or other road users.
- The unit must be securely attached to the roof of the vehicle and not be mounted in such a manner that it creates a hazard to other road users.
- The mounting must be able to withstand a horizontal force of at least 20 times its mass.
- Amber coloured tariff lamps indicate the status of a fare calculation device (taximeter). These lights must not flash, distract or dazzle other road users.

## Visual displays

Other than for exempt vehicles or vehicles otherwise allowed in the Standards for Registration, external visual displays with moving text or images, are prohibited.

## Work lights

Work or search lights may be installed on a vehicle for the temporary purpose of reading signs, working on the vehicle or its load. The lights must only be used while the vehicle is stationary and not be used to supplement forward lighting. A maximum of two lights that are white in colour may be fitted to a vehicle. These lights must be able to be manually switched on and off separately from other lights.

Care should be taken to not dazzle other road users when using work lights on a roadside.

## Additional reflectors

Additional reflectors may be applied to a vehicle in order to increase its visibility. Reflectors must be:

- white, if facing towards the front of the vehicle
- yellow or white if on the side of the vehicle towards the front
- yellow if on the central part of the side of the vehicle
- yellow or red if on the side of the vehicle towards the rear
- red, if facing towards the rear of the vehicle.

Forward facing reflectors on a vehicle with four or more wheels must be fitted in pairs positioned symmetrically about the vehicle centreline. For vehicles that are less than 1300mm wide, the reflectors must be greater than 400mm apart. On all other vehicles, the reflectors must be greater than 600mm apart.

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## Other reflectors and reflective tape

Reflective tape may be fitted to cars on the basis that it is used in:

- basic patterns (such as chequer or similar as used by security companies or as part of a taxi livery)
- logos
- clear, large format text, such as taxi, Security or other basic branding may be fitted to vehicles.

Reflective tape must not obscure any light or reflector required by the Standards for Registration.

Vehicles must not be fitted with reflectors or reflective tape that can result in the distraction or dazzling of other road users. Polished metal plates or other high reflectivity surfaces must not be fitted to a vehicle, especially to the rear of the vehicle.

## For further information

Further information is available on the VicRoads website:

**[vicroads.vic.gov.au](http://vicroads.vic.gov.au)** or by calling VicRoads on **13 11 71** (TTY **13 36 77**, Speak and Listen **1300 555 727**).