

Vehicle Standards Bulletin 14

**NATIONAL CODE OF PRACTICE
for
LIGHT VEHICLE CONSTRUCTION
and
MODIFICATION**

PREFACE

1st February 2006

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PREFACE

BACKGROUND

This *National Code of Practice for Light Vehicle Construction and Modification* (NCOP) has been prepared in consultation with industry, user groups and government agencies with an interest in light vehicle construction and modification.

The NCOP has been subsequently endorsed by all Australian State and Territory Authorities responsible for vehicle standards and the registration of vehicles for road use.

The NCOP applies to both the modification of production vehicles and the construction of Individually Constructed Vehicles (ICVs).

INTENT

The aim of the NCOP is to provide a nationally acceptable set of technical specifications that ensure that the manufacture of ICVs or the modification of production vehicles comply with the applicable requirements of the Australian Design Rules and the *Australian Vehicle Standards Rules 1999* (AVSR).

The NCOP does not cover vehicle registration policies or procedures, nor does it cover the technical requirements for vehicles that are manufactured in “low” or “high volume”. “Volume” manufacturers need to have their vehicles certified under the appropriate schemes administered by the Australian Government under the *Motor Vehicle Standards Act*.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LAWS OF AUSTRALIAN JURISDICTIONS

Subject to Federal laws and the laws of the States and Territories of Australia, this NCOP defines standards of practice for the design and manufacture of ICVs and the modification of production vehicles. Other procedures may be acceptable subject to adequate technical justification.

NOTE: Nothing in the NCOP is to be regarded as in any way limiting the powers and duties of the Chief Executive Officer or Road Transport Authority of the jurisdiction in question, or any agent or employee of that Officer, under the appropriate Act/s of that jurisdiction, or subsidiary legislation made there under.

Where any Australian Design Rule (ADR), any Rule of the AVSR or any Australian Standard is referred to in the NCOP, the appropriate ADR, Rule or Australian Standard should be read in full to avoid misinterpretation.

It is also important to note that each jurisdiction has a different title for its adopted version of the AVSR and that it is likely that there may also be a difference in Rule or Clause numbers.

It is important that vehicle owners or builders seek advice from the appropriate jurisdiction if in doubt about any of the above issues.

ADMINISTRATION

The NCOP provides a consistent set of technical specifications for the construction of ICVs and the modification of production vehicles. Individual jurisdictions have their own administrative procedures and requirements for the registration of new vehicles and for the approval of modifications. Owners must familiarise themselves with the provisions of the jurisdiction in which the vehicle is to be garaged and registered.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

It is recognised that a code of practice that covers all eventualities is not feasible. This document needs to be recognised as being a “live document” and hence will need to be revised from time to time to include future developments arising from regulatory changes, improvements in technology and the development of alternative designs.

The document may also be revised to improve its editorial content.

FUTURE REVISIONS

Future revisions are the responsibility of the Australian Motor Vehicle Certification Board Working Party. Revisions, other than those of a legal or editorial nature, will be processed in consultation with relevant user groups.

The Working Party may consider applications from individuals concerning recommended revisions to the NCOP. However, it is preferable that these are submitted after consideration by the appropriate user groups. In any event, the Working Party will consult widely before making a final decision on any proposed amendments to the NCOP.

DOCUMENT FORMAT

This document is available in electronic format and is available for download from the Department of Transport and Regional Services website. < www.dotars.gov.au >

Please note that whilst the NCOP may be downloaded in sections for the convenience of persons who may have a specific issue to address, it is vital that any other referenced sections applicable to the specific work being undertaken are downloaded also. “Lack of information” resulting from insufficient downloads will not be accepted by jurisdictions as an excuse for non-compliance. In all cases the Section titled *Introduction* should be downloaded and read for a complete understanding of the NCOP structure.

DATE AT WHICH THE DOCUMENTS TAKES EFFECT

Each document takes effect at the date of issue shown on the cover page of each Section.

REVISION HISTORY

Revision	Comments
First Published	This document was approved in principle at the AMVCB Working Party meeting held on the 28 th November 2005 and finally accepted, subject to a number of corrections, at a teleconference held on the 17 th January 2006.

NOTE: Builders, modifiers and owners of vehicles need to be aware that compliance with this NCOP does not guarantee that a vehicle will be acceptable for registration in the case of an ICV or for continued registration in the case of a modified registered production vehicle. If, for example, an ICV submitted for approval does not handle or brake satisfactorily or has any other feature that renders the vehicle unsafe or not roadworthy, it is most unlikely that it will be accepted for registration.

It is also important that builders and owners keep abreast of changes to legislation and vehicle registration policy in their jurisdiction, particularly in cases where a project is expected to take some years to complete. Changes to legislation before a vehicle is completed may mean that certain vehicles cannot be registered without appropriate modifications. Similarly, regulations pertaining to vehicle modifications, vehicle standards or registration policy may change causing certain vehicle modifications to become unacceptable in the future.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The NCOP has been prepared and developed in consultation with a large number of individuals, industry groups, user groups and government agencies with an interest in light vehicle construction and modification.

To this end, the members of the Australian Motor Vehicle Certification Board Working Party wish to thank all the organisations, user groups and individuals across Australia who assisted in the development of this National Code of Practice. The assistance offered in accomplishing this task has been greatly appreciated.

Members of the AMVCB WP also wish to acknowledge the key role played by:

Project Consultant	Mr Richard Larsen, Loadsafe Australia P/L
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