

Vehicle Standards Information

VSI.03 | Rev. 3 | 1 July 2003

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Windscreens and window tinting

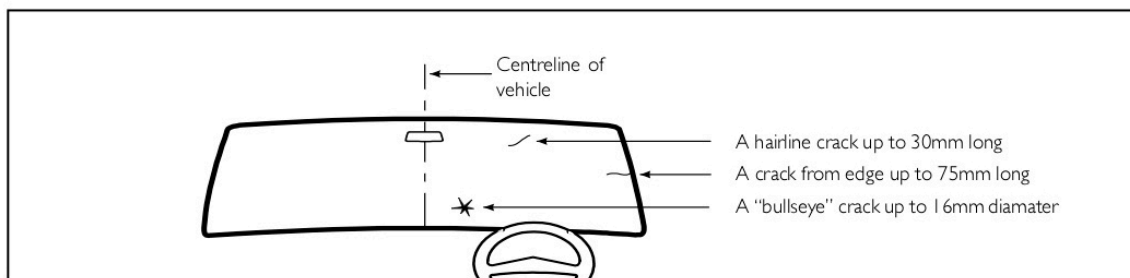
Introduction

One of the important requirements for motor vehicles is that the driver must have the clearest possible view of the road particularly in poor lighting conditions at dusk, night or while driving in rain. Because of this there are requirements concerning the amount of deterioration allowed on windscreens and the use of tinted films on windows.

Is it time to replace that windscreen?

A windscreen should be replaced if it is severely chipped, cracked, abraded, badly scratched, discoloured or cannot be repaired to remove the fault.

The area of the windscreen in front of the driver extending across to the centreline of the vehicle is only allowed to have any two of the following defects:



If the windscreen has more extensive damage than that allowed above, your vehicle is likely to be rejected at the next Safety Check inspection. Note that the same criteria apply to windscreens after they have been repaired with a clear resin.

What types of replacement windscreens can be fitted?

All of the glass used in the passenger compartment of a vehicle must be an approved type of safety glass. Such glass always bears an identification mark indicating the standard to which the glass has been manufactured, for example AS2080, BS AU 178, JISR 3211 etc. One such mark is the approval symbol of the Standards Association of Australia:



or alternatively,



Original glass (or genuine replacement glass) will always have a mark etched or indelibly printed on the glass.

There are two types of glass that are available for motor vehicles. These are classified as tempered or laminated:

- Tempered glass is specially treated so that, when it is broken, instead of forming dangerous jagged splinters, it breaks up into tiny square fragments. When a tempered windscreen is broken, it crazes and is sometimes difficult to see through. Modern vehicles with tempered windscreens have a toughened safety zone in front of the driver. The tempered zone stays relatively clear in the event of a breakage so that you can see sufficiently well to maintain control of the vehicle.
- Laminated glass is a 'sandwich' of glass on the outside surfaces and a clear plastic film in the middle; it is more resistant to breakage than tempered glass and, even when penetrated by an object, such as a stone, it will remain substantially clear.

Windscreens fitted to vehicles manufactured from 1 January 1994 are required by law to be made from laminated glass. Vehicles built prior to this date do not have to meet this requirement but it is strongly recommended that when a replacement windscreen is required, laminated glass is used.

What to remember when tinting vehicle windows

Reflective or mirror like tinted film is not acceptable as it may dazzle other drivers by reflecting sunlight or headlight beams.

Spray on type window tinting or finishes are also not acceptable.

A tinted or opaque band across the top of the windscreen is permitted providing it is no lower than 10% of the height of the windscreen & is above the portion of the windscreen swept by the wipers.

Windscreen manufacturers advise that windscreen glass filters out at least 98% of harmful UV rays. Manufacturers of window tint/film also advise that "medical grade" film (i.e. film used to protect people with skin conditions from UV rays) are clear and do not affect the windscreen's visible light transmission (VLT)¹. For these reasons, tinted film is not generally allowed on the main part of a windscreen.

VLT¹ *Visible Light Transmission (VLT) is the measure of the amount of light that passes through glass 35% VLT means 35% of the visible light passes through the glass and the rest of the light is blocked*

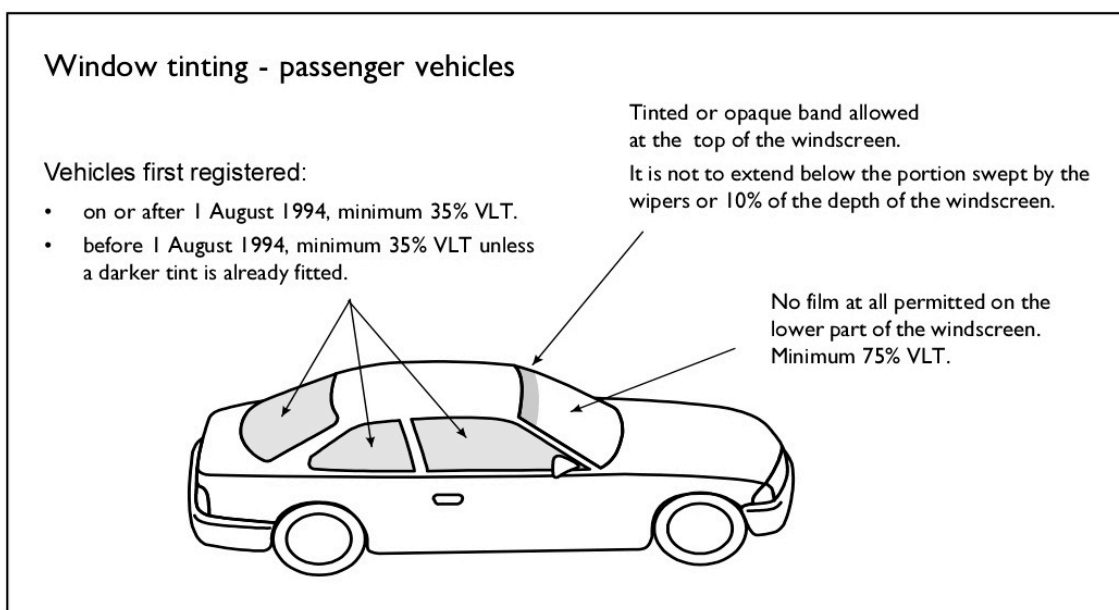
Passenger vehicles

Authorised Examiners at Authorised Inspection Stations (AIS, 'pink slip' stations) are required to check window tinting as part of the annual safety check inspection.

Tinted film that is damaged, bubbled, discoloured or that has deteriorated in any way that adversely affects the drivers view must be removed. Film residue (ie. left-over film adhesive etc.) must also be removed.

Rear vision mirrors must be fitted to both sides of a motor vehicle if the VLT of any side or rear window is less than 70%.

Since 1 August 1994, NSW law has required that newly tinted side and rear windows maintain a VLT of at least 35%. When replacing window tinting which provides less than 35% VLT (ie. tint applied prior to 1 August 1994), the new window tinting must provide at least 35%VLT.



Trucks, commercial vehicles and buses

The windows either side of the driver have the same window tint requirements as those for passenger vehicles.

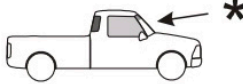
Goods-carrying vehicles such as trucks and utilities are designed to be fitted with bodies to carry a load behind the driver while buses generally have long bodies and high rear windows. The type of vehicle construction reduces the need to see through the rear windows when driving. Therefore there is no minimum VLT for windows rearward of the driver on the following categories of vehicles:


- **Light goods vehicles (NA)**
Gross vehicle mass not exceeding 3.5 tonnes
- **Medium goods vehicle (NB)**
Gross vehicle mass exceeding 3.5 tonnes but not exceeding 12.0 tonnes
- **Heavy goods vehicle (NC)**
Gross vehicle mass exceeding 12.0 tonnes
- **Light omnibus (MD)**
Gross vehicle mass not exceeding 5.0 tonnes, 10 or more seating positions.
- **Heavy omnibus (ME)**
Gross vehicle mass exceeding 5.0 tonnes, 10 or more seating positions.


Note: NA, NB, NC, MD and ME are Australian Design Rules category vehicle codes stamped on the vehicle's compliance plate. The compliance plate is a small aluminium plate normally found in the engine bay or about the front door pillars.

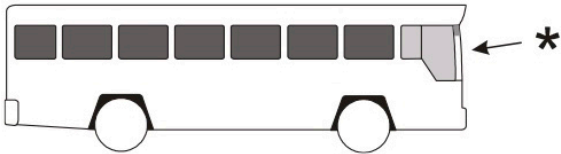
Windows beside the driver must still have at least 35%VLT.

Window tinting - trucks, commercial vehicles and buses

Utilities 


Panel Vans 

Trucks 


Buses - 10 or more seating positions 

*** Windscreen**

- No film at all allowed on the lower part of the windscreen. Minimum 75% VLT.
- Tinted or opaque band allowed at the top of the windscreen. It is not to extend below the portion swept by the wipers or 10% of the depth of the windscreen.

 **Windows either side of driver**
Vehicles first registered:

- on or after 1 August 1994, minimum 35% VLT.
- before 1 August 1994, minimum 35% VLT unless a darker tint is already fitted.

 **Windows rearward of driver**

- No minimum VLT specified for rear windows

Further information

Transport for NSW

for contact details of your nearest Service NSW centre

roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au | T 13 22 13

Transport for NSW Technical Enquiries

PO Box 1120, Parramatta NSW 2124

E technical.enquiries@transport.nsw.gov.au | T 1300 137 302 | F (02) 8837 0037

- Vehicle construction and registration requirements in NSW

Transport for NSW Vehicle Safety Compliance Certification Scheme (VSCCS)

roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au | E vscs@transport.nsw.gov.au | T 1300 336 206

- VSCCS Bulletin No.1 'Licensed certifiers'

NSW Legislation

legislation.nsw.gov.au

- *Road Transport (Vehicle Registration) Regulation 2017*

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications

GPO Box 594 Canberra ACT 2601

infrastructure.gov.au | T 1800 815 272 | F (02) 6274 6013

- VSB No. 4 'Steering conversions for left-hand drive vehicles'
- VSB No.10 'Importing vehicles to Australia'

National Heavy Vehicle Regulator

PO Box 492, Fortitude Valley Q 4006

nhvr.gov.au E info@nhvr.gov.au | T 1300 696 487 | F (07) 3309 8777

- Matters related to vehicles exceeding 4.5 tonnes GVM