

# CoF news

CERTIFICATE OF FITNESS

DRIVER AND VEHICLE CERTIFICATION UNIT

October 2007

Issue 1

## Welcome to the first issue of CoF news!

Firstly, the VCU has become the DVCU - driver licensing standards and vehicle certification share some similar processes so the two areas have been combined.

So, about three times a year, the DVCU will inform and entertain you with a copy of the *CoF news*.

We will be introducing newsletters in all certification categories. The purpose of DVCU newsletters is to pass on general information; they won't be used to inform you of inspection requirements, so don't worry if you leave your copy in the smoko room.

If you have any ideas about things you would like to see in the next *CoF news*, please let us know.

## Servicing and inspection of 5th wheels

Reviewers have noted a tendency for CoF inspectors to accept an Operator Statement of Compliance (4085A) without inspecting the 5th wheel. A 4085A is not a substitute for a physical inspection. Both the 5th wheel and any documentation (eg, a 4085A) must comply with the requirements specified in the *VIRM: In-service certification (WoF and CoF)*.

In a recent case, a semi-trailer decoupled due to a defective 5th wheel coupling. While the servicing of the 5th wheel was grossly inadequate, the vehicle inspector accepted an incomplete 4085A. This is a reminder about your responsibility as a vehicle inspector to adequately inspect 5th wheels and king pins, and ensure that documentation is correct.

## RUC vehicle type and axle/tyre configuration

Any change to axle/tyre configurations on a heavy vehicle may have a bearing on the RUC vehicle type.

If such changes are made, please fax the details to the Economic Compliance Unit on (06) 9536203, so the necessary amendment can be made to the RUC vehicle type to ensure the correct road user charges are being paid.

## Introducing your CoF reviewer liaison, Pat Towers

Pat has been with Land Transport NZ for six years now. Before this, he was a vehicle inspector at VTNZ Wanganui.

Pat likes his job because he gets out and about with the industry; for Pat, it's the industry and its people who really make the job challenging and rewarding.

The liaison position is an extension to the reviewer role, which Pat enjoys. It sees him auditing the other CoF reviewers to make sure reviews are consistent across the country. He also delves into all sorts of queries from within Land Transport NZ and our customers, which he finds interesting because they challenge the boundaries of the vehicle rules.



## Couplings fitted with an air release valve to raise the drop pin

Some European vehicles are fitted with drawbar trailer couplings that require the driver to raise the drop pin by operating an air release valve incorporated in the coupling. This is a safety feature developed for European vehicles that typically have the coupling fitted much further under the rear of the truck than in New Zealand vehicles. Engagement is still mechanical, but this device allows air operated disengagement via a control box, which can't be located inside the cab of the truck.

There aren't too many couplings with this feature in New Zealand at the moment but they may become more widely used. Known manufacturers are V. Orlandi and Ringfeder. It may be fitted as original equipment, or as an after-market part.

These types of couplings meet EC/94/20 (Mechanical couplings) and are permitted in New Zealand if fitted at the time the drawbeam is certified. If a 'standard' coupling is modified by fitting one of these devices or the device itself is modified, the drawbeam needs to be re-certified.

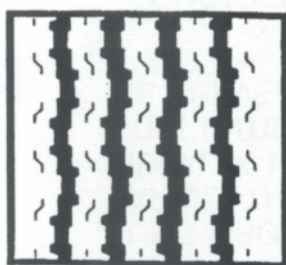
## Tread carefully

Tyres on the same axle must be of the same size designation, construction and tread pattern type. However, some vehicles fitted with tyres of a different tread pattern design are being rejected. An example of a vehicle that was recently incorrectly failed for this reason is shown below.

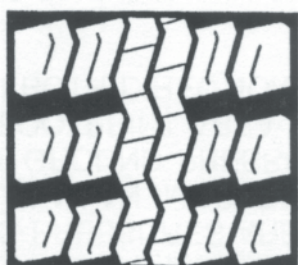


*Incorrectly failed tyres: Both have highway rib pattern type*

Truck tyres come in four main tread pattern types:



Highway rib



Highway block



Mixed service rib/lug  
(On/off-highway)



Off highway lug

There are many design variations of these basic pattern types on the market. In order to correctly pass or reject tyres, you need to be able to recognise basic tread pattern types.

Tyres on the same axle must be of the same tread pattern type (rib with rib, block with block etc), but may have a different tread pattern.

## Temporary (28 day) permits and transport service licences

A temporary permit ('28 day permit') may be issued by an inspecting organisation if a vehicle does not comply with all applicable requirements, but is safe to be operated subject to specified conditions. For details, refer to the *VIRM: In-service certification*, Introduction page 3-23.

The operator of a transport service may be granted a temporary permit to allow the vehicle operator to obtain a valid transport service licence (TSL). However, some vehicles are being issued with successive temporary permits, allowing operators to delay their application for a TSL because they mistakenly believe they can continue to operate a transport service under a temporary permit.

A vehicle cannot operate as part of a transport service if it is not operating under a valid TSL. The latest temporary permit document includes a note highlighting this point at the bottom of it. If you are issuing a temporary permit to allow the vehicle operator to obtain a TSL, please use the latest version of the temporary permit document and bring this note to the attention of the operator.

## Adding the unexpired portion to a CoF expiry date

When you are inspecting a vehicle that still has a current CoF, you can add up to 28 days to the expiry date of the new CoF. For details, refer to the *VIRM: In-service certification*, Introduction page 3-20.

However, you cannot add any unexpired portion to the new CoF if the existing CoF is not current. A CoF ceases to be current:

1. After its expiry date, or
2. When the vehicle has been issued with a green or pink sticker under section 115 of the Land Transport Act 1998, or
3. When the CoF has been revoked by an authorised Land Transport NZ person.

## Unimog brake adjustments

NZ Army unimogs that have had the load sensing valve on the rear axle adjusted to increase the pressure threshold to 50 bar do not require an LT400 for this adjustment.

## Contacts

UNISYS 0800 243 687 (for problems with user access codes and passwords)  
TRC 0800 108 809 (for phone inquiries from members of the public)  
DVCU 0800 587 287 (for technical assistance and reporting staff movements)

## feedback...?

We welcome your feedback. Please send any comments to:

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PO Box 2840, Wellington  
Email: [DVCUfeedback@landtransport.govt.nz](mailto:DVCUfeedback@landtransport.govt.nz)