

WoF news

VEHICLE CERTIFICATION UNIT

March 2007 Issue 10

Inspecting around struts

The picture below is from a 1994 Mitsubishi Lancer and shows how the RH rear suspension strut has broken through the housing structure. This is the result of removing all suspension travel, which caused a hammering of the structure and broke the spot welds and ripped the metal.

Please take care when inspecting the boot area around struts. If you see that the suspension has been modified, you must also check for an LVV plate.

The issue of a WoF being given to this vehicle a few weeks before this photo was taken is being investigated.



Check out the bottom of the seat frame pulling away from the floor, right across to the other side.

Investigation of complaints

Throughout 2006, the following numbers of complaints were found to be justified.

	Received	Upheld	Suspended	Revoked
WoF	129	40	16	4
CoF		13	–	–
Entry		9	2	–
Repair		1	1	–
LVV		1	–	–
HVS		1	–	–
Total		65	19	4

These results do not take into account re-inspection failures or the 'ones that got away', but you can be congratulated for having so few errors in over five million inspections.

New VIRMs

New VIRMs have been distributed to all IOs recently. The new VIRM includes some minor corrections and changes that needed to be made in order to accommodate the requirements that we have just written for vehicles on a certificate of fitness. However, please read the one new requirement for non-specified lamps, commonly called cosmetic lamps.

Adding the unexpired portion to a WoF expiry date

When you are inspecting a vehicle that still has a current WoF, you can add up to 14 days to the expiry date of the new WoF. For details, refer to the introduction (pages 3–20) of the *VIRM: In-service certification*.

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

- after its expiry date, or
- when the vehicle has been issued with a green or pink sticker under section 115 of the *Land Transport Act 1998*, or
- when the WoF has been revoked by an authorised Land Transport NZ person.

This clarification is based on clause 9.7 of the *Compliance Rule* and will be added to the new VIRM at the next opportunity.

Final warning

Windows 98 and ME are no longer supported by Microsoft. If you are using one of these operating systems, you need to start planning an upgrade as soon as possible.

Visible exhaust smoke

As you should know, we have introduced new requirements for checking visible exhaust smoke during vehicle inspections. These requirements include a five-second idle test and a snap acceleration test from idle to 2500 rpm. Generally, a vehicle will fail if it emits clearly visible smoke during these tests, but there are some concessions for pre-1960 vehicles, vehicles with rotary engines and vehicles with an engine that is 'designed' to emit smoke. Despite what you may have heard or read about these tests, you should follow the information included in the VIRM. If you are interested in reading further information about the smoke issue, please visit www.chokethesmoke.govt.nz.

We have also had some enquiries from the Department of Labour (DoL) regarding Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) considerations when carrying out the smoke check in your testing area. Some vehicle inspectors had raised concerns about the dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning. This is just a reminder to take your usual due care around vehicles with their engines running when carrying out the smoke test. For example, ensure that you carry out the smoke check in a well-ventilated area (outside, if necessary). If you require further information on OSH requirements, please contact your local DoL office.

Testing of vehicle ball joints

Please bear in mind when checking vehicle ball joints that play detected in a ball joint may be within the manufacturer's tolerances, especially if it is spring-loaded (see *Infosheet 2.05: Detecting wear in spring-loaded ball joints*). This should help avoid the ball joint being replaced unnecessarily.

If you initially fail the vehicle but the owner can supply information showing that the manufacturer's wear limits are not exceeded, or information from the manufacturer's representative showing that the manufacturer's tests find the joint within safe tolerance of its specification when manufactured, then you should issue the WoF to the vehicle.

Removing pink stickers

The *VIRM: In-service certification* states that a vehicle that has had a pink sticker issued must be inspected by a vehicle inspector employed by a Transport Service Delivery Agent (TSDA) before the sticker can be removed. It also states that the vehicle owner must take evidence of the inspection to the Police to remove the flag from their system.

Pages 2-1-13 and 3-2-1 of the *LATIS agents manual* (used only by TSDAs) outline the process for removing a pink sticker from LANDATA. Please note that this only applies if the pink sticker has been recorded in LANDATA in the first place (ie, it was issued by Land Transport NZ). In this case, the operator does not need to provide evidence to Land Transport NZ unless they are specifically instructed to on the sticker notice. This will be clarified in the *LATIS agents manual* in the next amendment.

Training review

The VCU is starting a review of all the training given by providers in New Zealand that concerns WoF inspectors. This is to enhance the accuracy and consistency of inspections.

Noisy exhaust systems

In July 2006, we introduced an objective noise test, also known as the stationary tailpipe noise test. Currently, it can be used for entry inspections and by the Police, but for legal reasons it cannot be used at in-service inspections.

During the last six months, Land Transport NZ and the Ministry of Transport have been working on legal changes to introduce the objective noise test into the in-service inspection system, allowing a WoF inspector to refer an excessively noisy vehicle to an objective noise tester before the vehicle can be passed for WoF.

The draft legislation is out for consultation until 19 April 2007, and can be viewed on our website on www.landtransport.govt.nz/consultation/vehicle-equipment/index.html, where you can also submit your views, comments and suggestions on this issue.

WoF online help

- XTRA phone 0800 000 533 (for problems with accessing WoF online)
- TRC phone 0800 804 580 / fax 06 354 6931 (for problems after you've accessed WoF online)
- UNISYS phone 0800 243 687 (for problems with user access codes and passwords)
- TRC phone 0800 108 809 (for phone inquiries from members of the public)
- VCU phone 0800 587 287 (for technical assistance and reporting staff movements)

feedback ...?

We welcome your feedback. Please send any comments to:

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