

Category: Information Bulletin

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Importing Vehicles to Australia

Motor Vehicle Standards

Australian Compliance Plates

Type Approvals

Letter of Compliance

Ordering a Vehicle

Personal Imports

Personal Import Plates

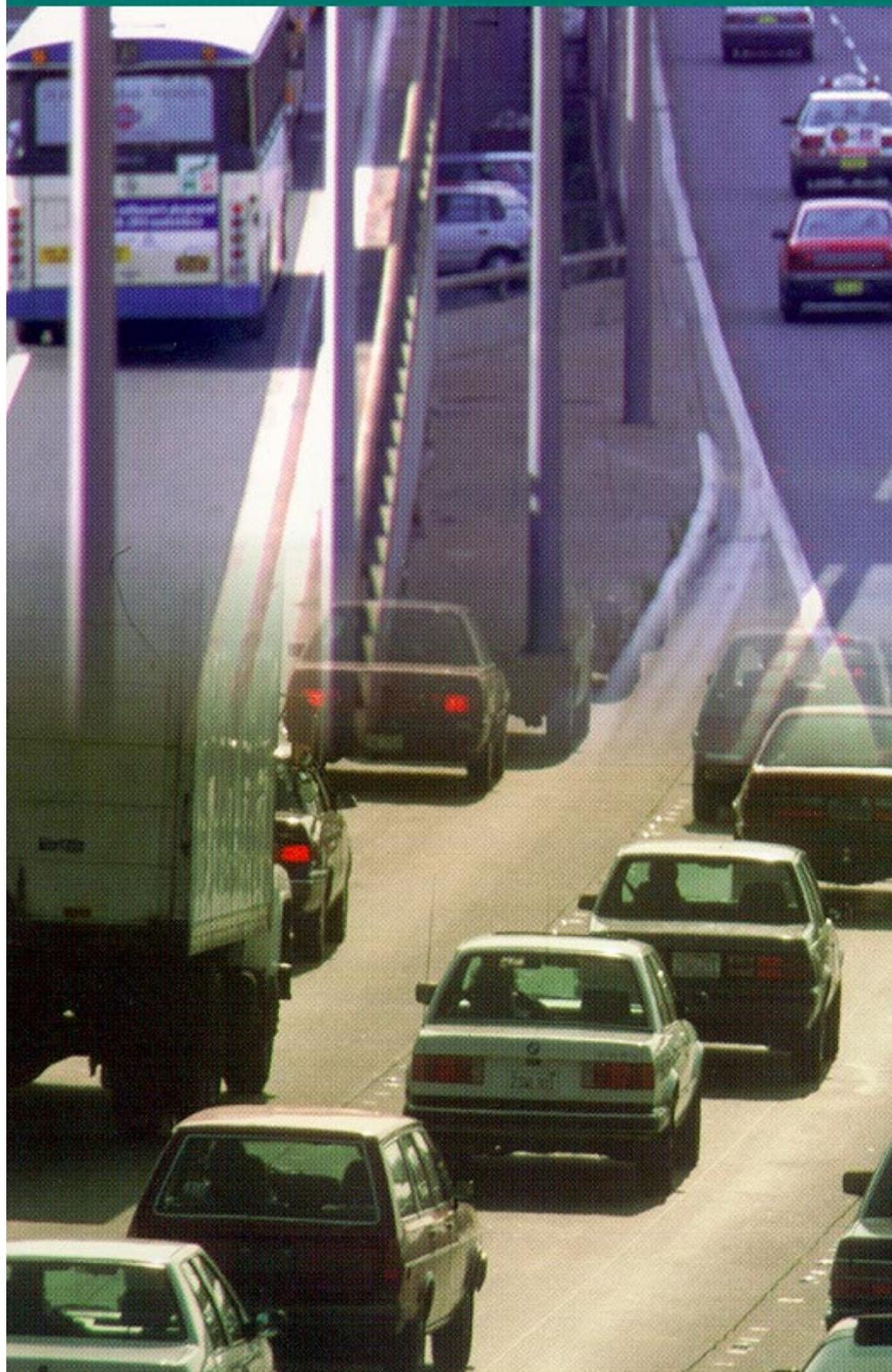
Application for Import

Selling an Imported Vehicle

Overseas Visitors to Australia



Federal Office of Road Safety



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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Federal Office of Road Safety

GPO Box 1553

CANBERRA ACT 2602

Tel: (06) 274 7506

Fax: (06) 274 6013

Email: Vimports@email.dot.gov.au

*PLEASE READ THIS BROCHURE AND THE
APPLICATION FORM CAREFULLY*

INTRODUCTION

The Motor Vehicle Standards Act 1989 (the Act) came into force 1 August 1989. Any vehicle being imported into Australia from that date must obtain an Import Approval to gain clearance at its point of entry.

Under the Act it is an offence to import a new or secondhand vehicle unless it meets the safety, emissions and anti-theft standards applying to vehicles for use on Australian roads (the Australian Design Rules) and has a valid Australian compliance plate fitted.

IMPORTING VEHICLES TO AUSTRALIA

Overseas vehicles are generally built to different specifications to those required for the Australian market;

Do not assume that a vehicle which seems to be similar in appearance is identical to a model already available in Australia

An importer needs to obtain from FORS an Application for Vehicle Import Approval. You are required to complete this application in full and return it to FORS to obtain your Import Approval Document. This document allows you to clear your vehicle at its point of entry to Australia.

The vehicle will not be handed over to you without this approval, and any delays may prove costly.

Import approval will be granted if one of the following requirements are met:

- a number of firms in Australia have approval to fit compliance plates to a limited number of imported models. Some of these firms will modify individual vehicles for you, and fit a compliance plate. This is known as the Low Volume Certification Scheme. If you wish to import under this category, you must obtain a written agreement from one of these firms stating that the vehicle will be modified to meet the requirements of the National Standards (Australian Design Rules) and a Compliance Plate fitted. Vehicles Standards Bulletin No 8 available from FORS lists those firms who have approval; or*
- the vehicle is a Standard Vehicle, ie the vehicle is already fitted with an Australian Compliance Plate; or*
- a Letter of Compliance has been issued by the Australian manufacturer eg BMW, Mercedes Benz etc, who holds full volume compliance plate approval, ie those who import or*

manufacture vehicles for the Australian Market in large numbers. Vehicle manufacturers or distributors have no obligation to fit an Australian Compliance Plate or issue a Letter of Compliance for vehicles built overseas (for further information see Page 5); or

- you have owned and used the vehicle overseas for a period of not less than three continuous calendar months, you are of driving age and are an Australian citizen or a migrant holding permanent residency in Australia (for further information see Page 5): or
- the vehicle is 15 or more years old on the date it lands in Australia, or, for small trailers (less than 4.5 tonnes laden Vehicle) was manufactured before 1 July 1988.

Note:

Concessions apply and a waiver of some conditions can occur where a person with a disability imports a motor vehicle adapted to their particular circumstances. Contact the Administrator of Vehicle Standards, (06) 274 7506.

Vehicles for use on public roads in Australia are required to be Right Hand Drive (RHD).

Addresses for State and Territory Registration Authorities are on the back cover of this brochure.

Before importing a vehicle, you should check with the Federal Office of Road Safety that it will be allowed into Australia, or you may have to export the vehicle, scrap it, or face a fine of up to \$12,000 per vehicle.

There are some vehicles which may not be subject to many of the requirements of the Motor Vehicle Standards Act. Full details are available from FORS.

The Australian Customs Service will also advise you of taxes and duties to be paid, and quarantine requirements. Addresses for the Australian Customs Service are on the back cover of this brochure

APPLICATION FOR IMPORT

The application form in this brochure should be completed and sent to FORS before the vehicle arrives in Australia. Extra application forms are available on request.

You should allow up to 21 days for processing of your application and all documents

APPLICATION FOR IMPORT (contd)

AUSTRALIAN COMPLIANCE PLATES

PART 6 on the
application form

Approval will only be issued to you if the vehicle meets the eligibility criteria.

It is important that applications are fully completed and that copies of all supporting documents be securely attached to your application. Any documents in a language other than English must be accompanied by a translation. Incomplete applications will cause delays which can be costly and inconvenient to you.

At the time of first registration in Australia, road vehicles must be fitted with an Australian compliance plate which indicates that they comply with the National Standards (ADRS). The only exceptions are personally imported vehicles (discussed later in this brochure), some categories of exempt vehicles such as graders, tractors, racing cars, generally motor vehicles more than 15 years old and trailers manufactured before 1 July 1988.

Compliance Plates are only fitted to vehicles the manufacturer markets in Australia. While the shape and style of compliance plates varies from manufacturer to manufacturer all can be recognised because they bear the words "This vehicle was manufactured to comply with the Motor Vehicle Standards Act 1989". On passenger cars the Australian Compliance Plate is usually on the firewall.

Compliance plates can only be fitted with the approval of FORS. Approval is held by the vehicle manufacturer or approved modifier, and is granted when the manufacturer or modifier provides evidence that the vehicle has been tested and meets all the necessary requirements

Testing is complex and expensive, and generally requires specialist laboratories and facilities.

TYPE APPROVALS

FULL VOLUME

The compliance plate approval process is known as a type approval. Tests are made on a representative vehicle or a batch of vehicles. The results of these tests are then used to demonstrate that all vehicles of that type meet the standards.

For this reason it is seldom practical to obtain approval to fit a compliance plate to one or a few vehicles, particularly as some of the tests involve crashing the vehicle.

FULL VOLUME

If you are thinking of importing small quantities of new or secondhand vehicles of a particular model not already sold in Australia in full volume, there is a low volume scheme which may prove commercially viable for up to 25 vehicles a year

For further information on the Low Volume Certification Scheme, contact the Federal Office of Road Safety on
(06) 274 7505 or (For technical/engineering enquires)
(Off) 274 7500

LETTER OF COMPLIANCE

PART 7 on the application form

A Letter of Compliance is a written statement that the vehicle complies with the National Standards (ADRs) applicable at the time of the vehicle's manufacture. A Letter of Compliance can only be issued by an authorised Australian representative of the manufacturer or the organisation holding Compliance Plate Approval for that vehicle and will only be provided by the manufacturer when the vehicle can be brought up to the Australian specifications for the particular model. In the great majority of cases this cannot be achieved. It is therefore only in exceptional circumstances that a Letter of Compliance can be obtained. Dealers and distributors do not have authority to sign a Letter of Compliance.

If your vehicle is covered by a Letter of Compliance you must enclose the original with your application form from this brochure. An approval clearing your vehicle from its point of entry to Australia will then be sent to you. As well, arrangements will be made by FORS to forward a compliance plate to you for affixing to the vehicle before you register it in your state or territory.

PERSONAL IMPORTS

PART 8 on the application form

Visitors, temporary residents, foreign diplomatic personnel, companies and corporations are not eligible to import a vehicle under the personal import scheme.

The Personal Imported Vehicle Scheme is a special category available only to Australian citizens and migrants holding Australian permanent residency.

This means that a vehicle can be imported as a personal import without proof that it meets the ADRs but the vehicle is expected to provide a level of safety similar to Australian vehicles.

PERSONAL IMPORTS (contd)

To be eligible for a personal import you must satisfy all of the following conditions:

- be of driving age; and
- an Australian citizen or a migrant holding permanent residency in Australia; and
- have owned and used the vehicle while overseas for a period of not less than three consecutive calendar months (this period is not accumulative); and
- have not imported another vehicle into Australia under this category in the previous 12 months.

You will be required to provide the following documents to establish ownership and use of the vehicle overseas for three consecutive months, or more:

- copy of passport ID page, showing citizenship
- copy of permanent resident visa
- passport stamps (full copies)
- statement of travel
- purchase documents
- overseas registration documents in your name

A family is not restricted to one vehicle under the Personal Import Scheme but may import as many vehicles as there are members of driving age.

Under the personal import scheme, modifications to bring the vehicle up to minimum safety standards can be deferred until you wish to register it.

For Australian registration purposes a vehicle imported under this category must:

- be roadworthy; and
- meet minimum safety standards; and
- be right-hand drive.

If you are eligible, a Personal Import Approval will be issued. The approval papers comprise four sheets. One copy clears the vehicle from its point of entry to Australia, one allows you to obtain a Personal Import Plate, one is for the registering authority and the fourth is for your own records and should be kept with the vehicle.

OVERSEAS VISITORS TO AUSTRALIA

PART 9 on the application form

PERSONAL IMPORT PLATES

A Personal Import Plate is evidence that the vehicle is an approved vehicle import and allows it to be registered.

Before applying for a Personal Import Plate, the vehicle must be brought to acceptable standards.

Some registering authorities will inspect your vehicle and sign a statement of compliance. Others will refer you to an authorised signatory for inspection.

The statement of compliance must be signed on the appropriate three approval documents by an authorised person.

Most modern cars built with RHD do not require expensive modifications to bring them up to standard. Contact your State or Territory Registration Authority for details about how to have your vehicle inspected and the statement of authority signed. The addresses are on the back cover of this brochure.

In accordance with the provisions of certain international conventions on road traffic, the Federal Office of Road Safety recognises the temporary import of vehicles for a period of less than 12 months by visiting foreign nationals of signatory countries who hold a visitors visa

In this category vehicles may be allowed entry in one of two ways:

- (a) By submitting an application to import a vehicle accompanied by a copy of current overseas registration document valid for the period of the visit and passport pages showing nationality, personal details and valid Australian visitor's visa.
- (b) By presenting a valid Carnet de Passage en Duane at port of entry to Australia, in which case no Vehicle Import Approval is required from the Federal Office of Road Safety.

People holding temporary resident visas must meet the requirements of the Motor Vehicle Standards Act 1989.

Neither visitors nor temporary residents are eligible under the Personally Imported Vehicle Scheme described in this brochure.

SELLING AN IMPORTED VEHICLE

If you have followed the procedures outlined in this brochure and the vehicle has met the requirements for import approval and initial registration, there is then no restriction under the Motor Vehicle Standards Act preventing the subsequent sale of an imported vehicle.

Check with the Registration Authority in your State or Territory for its requirements regarding the sale of an imported vehicle. Addresses are on the back cover of this brochure.

It is an offence to sell a vehicle which does not meet the National Standards (ADRs) or which is not fitted with a compliance plate or Personal Import plate and such action may attract a penalty of up to \$12,000 per vehicle.

Vehicles 15 or more years old are exempt from fitting a Compliance Plate under the Motor Vehicles Standards Act 1989. However you should consult your State or Territory Registering Authority for their requirements.

GENERAL

Make sure that all necessary documents and the processing fee are sent with your application.

Please provide an Australian address to which your approval can be sent. Original Vehicle Import Approvals will be sent to the importer, except in exceptional circumstances

If you wish, a copy of your Vehicle Import Approval may be sent to your agent to enable clearance of the vehicle into Australia.

Any matters regarding Taxes/duties should be directed to the Australian Customs Services. Addresses are on the back cover of this brochure.

Office Use Only

Receipt No.

--

Date & Amount

	\$
--	----

Application for Vehicle Import Approval



- Read carefully the brochure *Importing Vehicles to Australia* published by the Federal Office of Road Safety before completing this application.
- You will need an Import Approval to take delivery of your vehicle from the Australian port of entry. Any delay will be costly and inconvenient.
- You should allow up to 21 days from receipt of your application and all documentation for processing and issue of an approval.
- A fee of \$50.00 must accompany this application. Cheques are to be in Australian dollars and payable to the Receiver of Public Monies.

**Please fill in all information, tear off application
and send to address on the back.**

Mode of payment

Please debit my credit card or
Enclosed is my cheque/money order for \$ _____

Credit card details

□□□□ □□□□ □□□□ □□□□

Bankcard

Mastercard

Visa

Cardholder's Name

Expiry date

Cardholder's Signature

Part 1 - Application

Is this your first application? Yes No

Name of owner (to whom the approval is to be issued).
Please complete ONE of the following:

A - Surname

□□□□□□□□□□

First and other given names

□□□□□□□□□□

Title

Mr Mrs Miss Ms Other (specify)

Date of birth

□ / □ / □

OR

B - Company

□□□□□□□□□□

Company representative name/Title eg Mr J Smith Manager

□□□□□□□□□□

Company ACN No.

□□□□□□□□□□

ADDRESS

□□□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□□□

Telephone Number

() □□□□□□

Facsimile Number

() □□□□□□

Part 2 - Agent

You may nominate a Freight Forwarding agent or other Agent to act on your behalf.

Contact name

□□□□□□□□□□

Company

□□□□□□□□□□

Telephone number

() □□□□□□

Facsimile number

() □□□□□□

Part 3 - Vehicle Details

Please attach a copy of the purchase document to verify ownership of the vehicle. If there is more than one vehicle, attach a clear list of all vehicle details Copy attached

Year of manufacture

□□□□

Make

□□□□□□□□□□

Model

□□□□□□□□□□

Vehicle Identification Number or Chassis Number

□□□□□□□□□□

If you are using a customs agent please supply the Australian Customs Service owner code

□□□□□□□□□□

Vehicle type (please tick one of the boxes)

- Car
 - Small truck or van
 - Motorcycle
- Go to Part 4 Go to Part 4

- Truck over 12 tonnes GVM
 - Bus of more than 12 seats; or
 - Trailer of or over 4.5t ATM
 - Trailer under 4.5t ATM
- specify weight

Go to Part 4

If one of the following, attach a signed statement of use to the application form:

- Racing vehicle (closed circuit)
- Rally vehicle
- Wrecking (attach signed statement that you will dismantle vehicle before any part of it is supplied to the market as vehicle components)

□□□□□□□□ Other (specify)

Go to part 11

Part 4 - Date of Manufacture

Was the vehicle manufactured:

- 15 or more years ago? or

Yes Go to Part 11

No Go to Part 6

- before 30/6/88 for trailer under 4.5t ATM?

Yes Go to Part 11

No Go to Part 5

Part 5 - Trailers/trucks/buses

Trailers less than 4.5 Tonnes ATM & built after 1 July 1988

Go to Part II

Trailers of an ATM greater than 4.5 tonnes
Trucks GVM less than 12 tonnes and buses less than 12 seating positions

Trucks over 12 tonnes GVM and buses greater than 12 seating positions

Go to Part 6

Part 6 - Australian Compliance Plate/Previously registered in Australia

Does the vehicle have an Australian Compliance Plate fitted?
Was the vehicle previously registered in Australia?

Yes
 Yes

No
 No

Attach copy of previous registration document

Go to Part 11

Go to Part 7

A compliance plate is a metal plate fitted to a vehicle, in the engine compartment, indicating that the vehicle meets the Motor Vehicle Standards ACT

Note: Returning Australian vehicles no longer require an import permit

Part 7 - Letter of Compliance

Do you have a letter of Compliance?

Yes

No

A "Letter of Compliance may be issued by the holder of Australian Compliance Plate Approval (usually the Australian manufacturer) for a vehicle manufactured or modified by them.

Attach original Letter of Compliance

Go to Part 8

Go to Part 11

Part 8 - Overseas ownership and use (Australian citizens/permanent residents only)

Do you have evidence of not less than three continuous months overseas ownership and use of the vehicle?

If yes, and you are of driving age, please forward the following documents:

- Copy of **all** pages in passport - stamps to verify your three months overseas.
- Permanent Australian Residency visa.
- Passport identification page/showing citizenship
- Signed statement of all overseas travel since registration of vehicle
- Overseas registration in your name.
- Purchase/receipt/certificate of title.

Yes

No

Complete Part 8 in full then go to Part 11

Go to Part 8

Date of your arrival in overseas country where vehicle was first registered

Date of first overseas registration of vehicle in your name

Date you stopped using the vehicle overseas

Only one vehicle per person may be imported in any one year period. **Temporary residents, companies and corporations are not eligible.**

Part 9 - Visiting foreign national

Are you visiting Australia and travelling on visitors Visa?

Yes

No

If you ticked Yes please forward the following documents:

- Passport identification page and Australian visitor's visa
- Arrival stamp to Australia from passport or expected date of arrival
- Overseas registration document to be valid for duration of stay in Australia.

Go to Part 11

Go to Part 10

Part 10 - Conversion to standard

Is the vehicle going to be converted to meet the requirements of the Australian Design Rules and a compliance plate fitted?

Yes

No

Attach original of agreement issued by approved vehicle converter. Original MUST be signed by CPA holder and owner.

Go to Part 11

Go to Part 11

If you have answered no to the above questions, your vehicle may not be eligible for import approval. Please contact the Federal Office of Road Safety for advice.

Vehicles are not exempt from State or Territory registration requirements. You should determine such requirements from the motor registration authority in the State or Territory where you intend to register the vehicle.

Please contact the Australian Customs Service for information regarding taxes, duty payments and quarantine requirements.

Part 11 - Declaration

I declare that the information provided is true and correct

Signature

Date

WARNING

Applicants may be penalised for the provision of false or misleading information. Import of a non-standard vehicle without approval is an offence and may incur a penalty or a fine of up to \$12,000.

Note:

Have you included all necessary documentation in support of your application? Delays can be costly and inconvenient. Remember - a vehicle must have an import approval to allow you to take delivery of it from the port of entry.

ADDRESS APPLICATIONS AND ENQUIRIES TO:

The Administrator of Vehicle Standards
Federal Office of Road Safety
GPO Box 1553
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Phone: (06) 274 7506 (24hr service) Fax: (06) 274 6013 Email: Vimport@email.dot.gov.au
If paying by credit card fax to: (06) 274 7057, or post to the above address.