

Victorian franchise dealerships, and independent used vehicle traders, should check a vehicle's body fitment and installation credentials.

Please see an important bulletin from the Victorian Automobile Dealer Association (VADA) 'Parts and Service Group' (PSG). The PSG is a sub-committee of VADA and feeds policy regarding the service and supply of parts from Licensed Motor Car Traders (LMCT) dealership service departments to the VADA Executive Committee.

For dealer members who also operate as a Licensed Vehicle Tester (LVT), it is important to forward this message to those conducting Roadworthy Certificate (RWC) inspections for your dealership.

What is the issue?

Members of VACC's vehicle dealer divisions were provided with advice on 1 August 2023 regarding important outcomes of meetings between the VADA PSG and the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP). The advice forwarded to VADA members referred to the installation of tray and bodies to cab chassis at franchise dealerships and if those installations required certification by a signatory under the Vehicle Assessment Signatory Scheme (VASS).

It is important that this information is passed to your dealership service and repair department.

For dealer members who also operate as a Licensed Vehicle Tester (LVT), it is important to forward this message to those conducting Roadworthy Certificate (RWC) inspections for your dealership.

Where the dealer must be clear on new or used vehicle modification

Victorian dealers must understand the difference between typical Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) or to OEM spec body fitments, as well as bespoke or special purpose body fitments to vehicles.

The requirement to obtain a VASS certificate, is important when a modification is undertaken that is not to OEM specifications. LMCTs should be cognisant when accepting a trade in vehicle to ascertain whether a modification has been through a VASS or if it requires a VASS.

To be clear, this does not apply to vehicles fitted with tray bodies that have been supplied to the dealer direct from the OEM.

Where can dealers see examples of OEM and bespoke (non-OEM) fitment, installations and modification to cab chassis vehicles?

Examples of typical OEM, to OEM spec, bespoke and special purpose body fitments to cab-chassis vehicles that are not OEM option or per OEM specs are available [here](#).

Queries generated by LMCTs to the DTP after the 1 August 2023 communication from VACC.

As part of continuing dialogue with the PSG and commitment to ensuring consumer and industry best outcomes, the DTP has provided the following advice (in blue text) to VACC regarding three common themes of queries raised by VACC LMCT divisions regarding these modifications.

1. **How can a Victorian LMCT verify the VASS status of a vehicle being traded in with a bespoke modification?**

For brand new vehicles

- i. Dealers should be able to differentiate between a factory option and non-factory option tray or body fitted on a brand new cab-chassis vehicle.
- ii. A modification such as a bespoke tray or body fitted under the Second Stage of Manufacture (SSM) option will be identified through a SSM plate or additional entry on the [Commonwealth Register of Approved Vehicles \(RAV\)](#).

For used vehicles

- i. Dealers should check for a VASS/Approved Vehicle Examiner (AVE) modification plate or a Second-Stage Manufacturer's plate for evidence the bespoke tray or body has been certified, or alternatively for late model vehicles, check the RAV certification system.
- ii. Dealers should establish the pathway of registration and check with VicRoads or the relevant interstate authority to identify if an engineering certificate or approval has been issued to the vehicle.
- iii. Dealers are advised to request for registration papers or if this is not available, a PPSR check may provide information pertaining to the vehicle's body type and how it has been registered.

VACC advises dealers to verify with the trading consumer if a VASS has been completed previously and if there is copy of such a VASS certificate to provide to you.

2. **What is a LMCT do if they cannot verify the status of a vehicle with a bespoke modification? Can they solely rely on the structural obligation(s) of VSI 26 only?**

- i. A roadworthy check should be utilised to establish the compliance of a vehicle with VSI 26 requirements.

A LVT testing approach will be consistent with the above-mentioned method.

- ii. If the vehicle fails a RWC test because the LVT has reason to believe the bespoke modification is not compliant or certified, then certification by a VASS will be required.

3 **Can a system be introduced that makes this a smooth reference point for LMCTs, particularly for franchise dealers who are on the Dealer Certification Scheme to verify the vehicle history on modifications and their status as per the VASS?**

- i. At this stage the only tools available to verify the body type and compliance of a vehicle are a physical modification plate or certificate from a VASS Signatory/AVE, a SSM plate, an entry on the RAV or a PPSR check.

VACC thanks the LMCTs who have provided information to help inform this bulletin. A special note of thanks to the VADA Parts and Service Group Committee.

VACC acknowledges the team at the DTP for its willingness to enter into constructive dialogue with industry.

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