

Motor Vehicle Registry Information Bulletin

V25 - Child Restraints

Introduction

Child restraints are designed to provide a high level of occupant protection for children travelling in vehicles. Restraints used in vehicles must comply with Australian Standards and anchorages must meet relevant Australian Design Rule requirements.

For the child restraints to provide the protection they are designed for, they must be correctly installed, fastened and adjusted in the vehicle.

Installation of Child Restraint

Child restraints must be correctly installed by carefully following the manufacturer's instructions supplied with the restraint and the vehicle manufacturer's instructions. All infant restraints, child seats and child harnesses must have the tether strap attached to an anchor point. This anchor point will be either an anchor bolt or an anchor fitting.

Assistance with the installation of child restraints can be obtained from automotive trade's persons and organisations with relevant experience. A list of Authorised Roadworthy Inspection Stations that are available to provide assistance can be found on the Department's internet website at:

<https://nt.gov.au/driving/rego/vehicle-inspections/authorised-vehicle-inspectors>

Note: An adult seating position with a lap type seat belt and an approved anchorage point is the minimum requirement for securing all child restraint devices.

Anchorage Points for Child Restraint Devices

Anchorage points are usually found under a flat upholstery button behind the midpoint of a passenger vehicle's rear seat. There is usually one anchorage point for each rear seating position. They may be fitted to the rear parcel shelf, behind the rear seat or in the roof of a vehicle.

Note: The number of anchorage points in vehicles and their location varies. Consult the vehicle manufacturers owner's manual for the exact location of anchorage points.

All passenger vehicles fitted with forward facing rear seats, manufactured on or after the dates listed below, will have child restraint anchorage points already installed in the vehicle at the time of production.

- Sedans – July 1976
- Station wagons – January 1977
- Hatchbacks – January 1977
- Light passenger vans (up to 12 seats) – January 1986
- Four wheel drive vehicles – July 1990

Generally, sports cars, utilities, panel vans and vehicles fitted with side facing rear seats do not have child restraint anchorage points.

Modifications

Vehicles that do not have child restraint anchorage points can be modified to provide one or more anchorage points. The modification will need to ensure that the vehicle's seat is not unduly loaded by the child restraints in the event of a vehicle accident.

This will generally involve the fitting of a commercially available restraint system that has been manufactured in line with relevant Australian Design Rules, Australian Standards and/or the requirements developed by the NSW Traffic Authority Crashlab.

Where commercially made products are not available (such as vehicles fitted with side facing rear seats), a suitably qualified engineer may be required to design a suitable restraint system.

It is very important that these anchorage point accessories are fitted strictly in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions by suitably qualified persons, and only to the types of vehicles they are designed for.

Alternately, child restraint anchorage points may be installed in accordance with the requirements detailed in Section LK of the National Vehicle Standards Bulletin (VSB) # 14. VSB 14 can be viewed at the following link:

https://infrastructure.gov.au/vehicles/vehicle_regulation/bulletin/vsb_ncop.aspx

Vehicle modifications require approval by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles and are assessed through the Department's modified vehicle scheme. Further information regarding this scheme, and an application form, can be found in the Department's Information Bulletins V32(lv) or V32(hv) for light and heavy vehicle modifications – refer to link: <https://nt.gov.au/driving/industry/vehicle-information-bulletins-and-forms>

Additional enquiries relating to the installation of child restraint devices may be directed to your nearest MVR office.