

V78 – Warning signs and lights for buses carrying children

Information Bulletin

Introduction

Warning signs and flashing warning lights on buses carrying children are intended to warn approaching road users when a bus is picking up or dropping off children.

This Information Bulletin is a summary of the requirements of Division 18 “**Warning lights and signs on buses carrying children**” of the Australian Vehicle Standards Rules.

Application

These requirements apply to a bus that is used mainly for carrying children as part of a regular service and does not include a bus on a tour or charter or a bus operating on a timetabled route service.

Buses fitted with Warning Signs and Lights prior to July 1999

Warning signs and lights must be fitted to a school bus (including buses not greater than 4.5t GVM) in accordance with Section 13 of the [“National Inspection Manual for Heavy Vehicles”](#).

Buses fitted with Warning Signs and Lights after June 1999

Warning signs and lights must be fitted to a school bus to comply with the requirements outlined in this Information Bulletin.

Requirements

1. Warning signs

- a. Subject to any exception provision, a warning sign must be fitted to the front and rear of the bus.
- b. **Exception from Warning Sign Requirements**

Refer to [7. Exception Provision](#)



Diagram 1
Font Size for School Bus Sign

2. Front warning sign

A warning sign at the front of the bus must comply with **Option 1** or **Option 2**.

a. Option 1

Display the words 'SCHOOL BUS' in capital letters at least 100 millimetres high (refer **Diagram 1**).

Font colour and background colour of the sign should be in contrasting colours.

b. Option 2

Display an image of 2 children in the same proportions as the children in "**AS 1743 Road Signs – Specifications (Image W6-3)**", with the image of the taller child at least 230 millimetres high (refer **Diagram 2**).

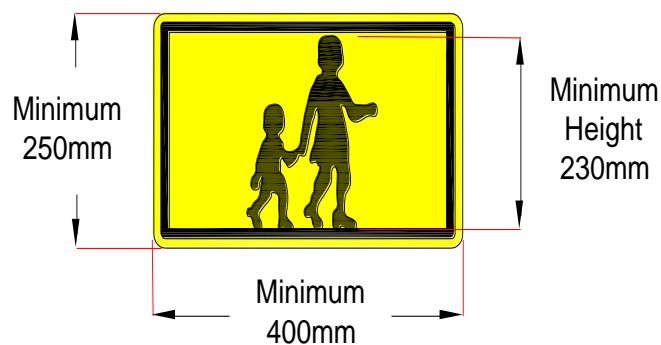


Diagram 2
Warning Sign – (Image W6-3) Dimension without Warning Lights

3. Rear warning sign

- a. A warning sign at the rear of the bus must display an image of 2 children in the same proportions as the children in "**AS 1743 Road Signs – Specifications (Image W6-3)**", with the image of the taller child at least 230 millimetres high (refer **Diagram 2**).

4. Warning sign specifications (image W6-3)

- a. The warning sign must:
- i. be a rectangular shape at least:
 - 1) If warning lights are on the warning sign – 550 millimetres wide and 400 millimetres high (refer **Diagram 3**)
 - 2) In any other case – 400 millimetres wide and 250 millimetres high (refer **Diagram 2**)
 - ii. have a black border (refer **Diagrams 2 & 3**)
 - iii. have a black graphics and be coated with yellow retro reflective material of class 1 or 2 that meets Australian Standard “**AS 1906 Retro-reflective Materials and Devices for Road Traffic Control Purposes**” (refer **Diagrams 2 & 3**).

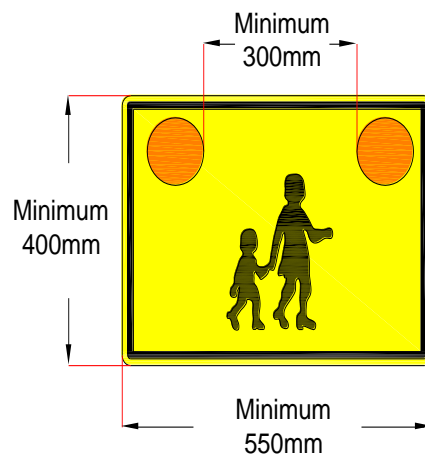


Diagram 3
Warning Sign – (Image W6-3) Dimension with Warning Light

5. Warning lights

- a. Subject to any exception provision, two warning lights must be fitted to the front and rear of the bus (refer **Diagrams 4, 5 & 6**):
- i. on each side of, and the same distance from, the centre of the warning sign
 - ii. with the edge of the warning sign not over 100 millimetres from the nearest point on the lens of the warning lights
 - iii. with the distance between the warning lights at least 300 millimetres at the nearest point
 - iv. so no part of the bus obstructs the light displayed:
 - 1) 30° to the left and right of the centre of each light
 - 2) 10° above and below the centre of each light.

b. Exception from Warning Light Requirements

Refer to [7. Exception Provision.](#)

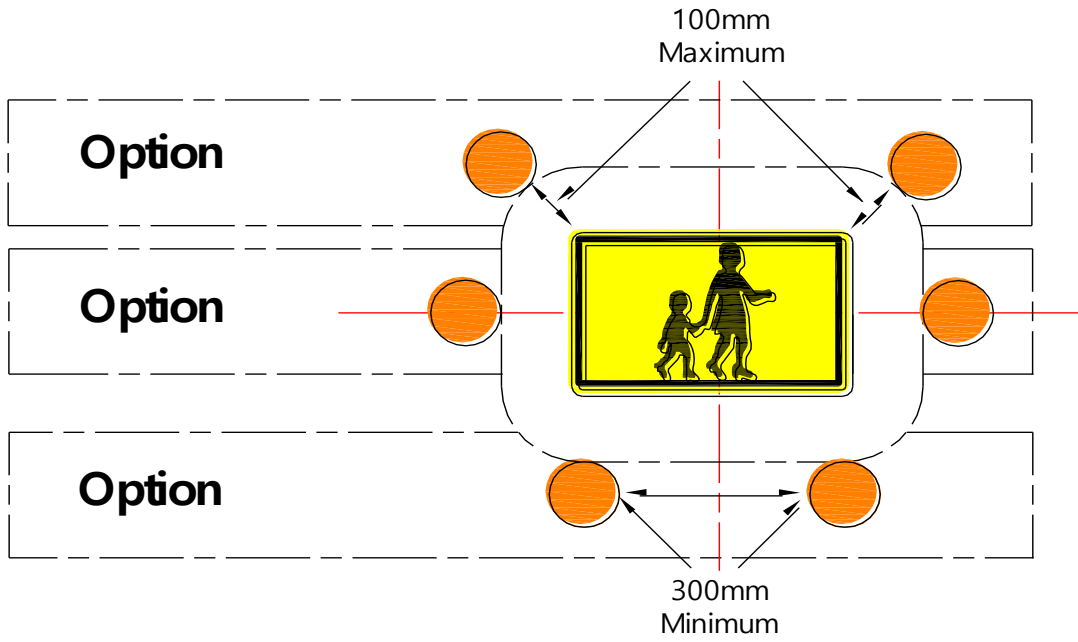


Diagram 4
Options for Warning Light Positions - (Image W6-3)

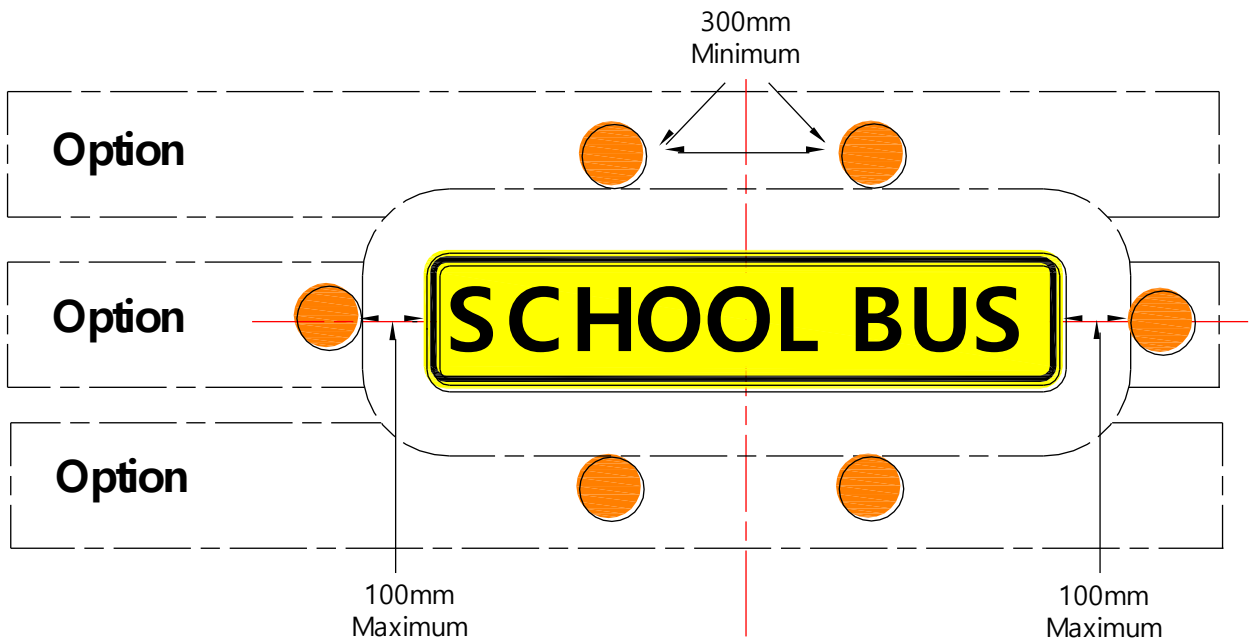


Diagram 5
Options for Warning Light Position - School Bus Sign

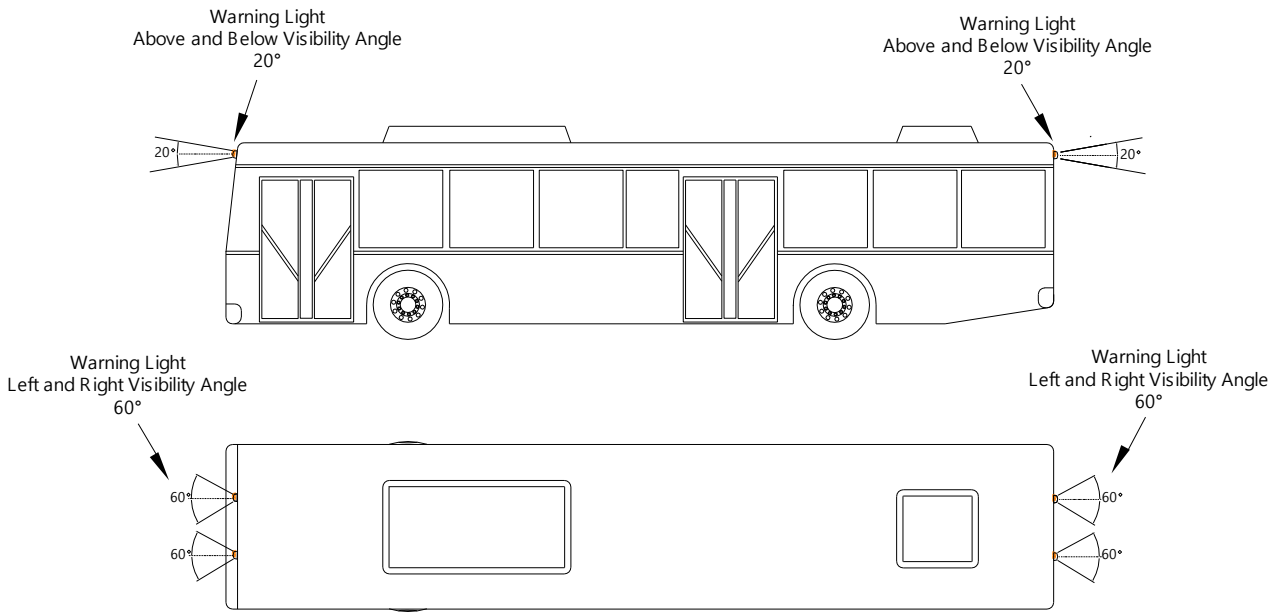


Diagram 6
Warning Light Visibility Angles

- c. The warning lights may be on the warning sign if the words or image on the sign are not obscured (refer to **Diagram 3**).
- d. The warning lights at the same end of the bus must be fitted:
 - a) at the same height
 - b) as high as practicable
 - c) with the lowest point on the lens of each light not lower than midway between the highest and lowest points on the bus body (refer **Diagram 7**).

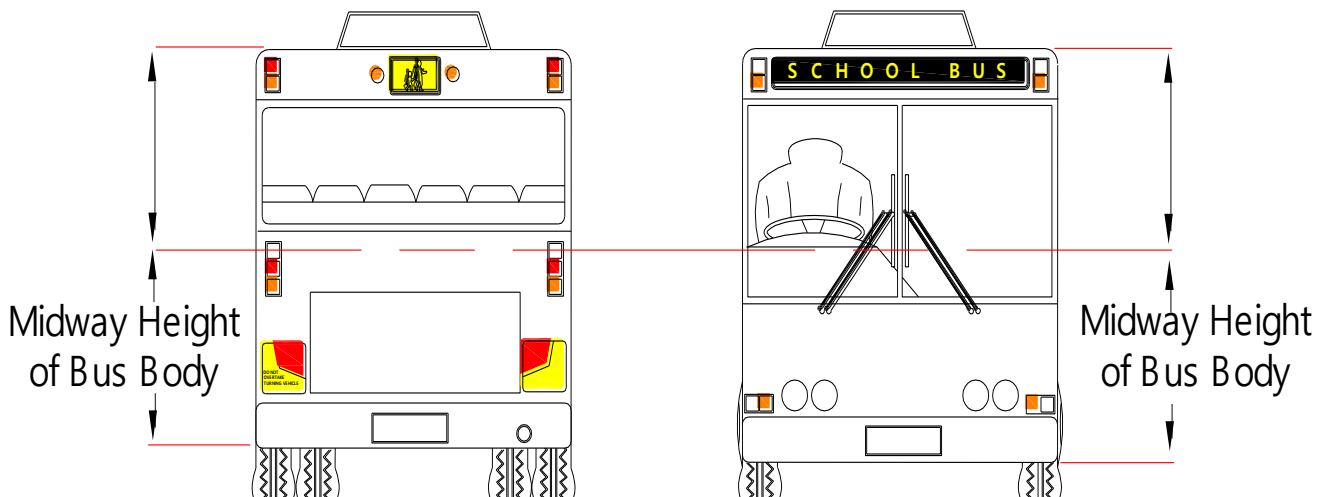


Diagram 7
Position of Warning Lights (above midway bus body height)

- e. If the centres of the warning lights are under 1.8 metres (1800mm) above ground level, no part of the warning lights or warning sign may be on the left of the bus (refer **Diagram 8**).

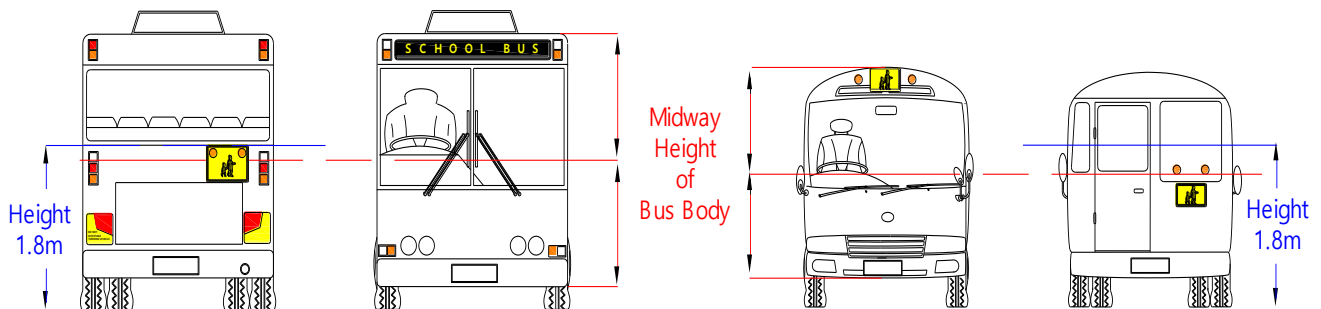


Diagram 8
Right Hand Side Position of Warning Lights (when under 1.8 metres high)

6. Operation and performance of warning lights

- When operating, a warning light must display regular flashes of yellow light at a rate of at least 90, and not over 180, flashes a minute.
- The warning lights at the same end of the bus must flash alternately.
- Unless the driver has turned the warning lights off, they must operate automatically when a door on the bus opens and for at least 10, and not over 20, seconds after all the doors on the bus have closed.
- The bus must have a visible or audible signal that tells the driver when the warning lights are operating.
- The bus must be fitted with a switch that allows the driver to turn the warning lights off.
- A warning light must have:
 - an effective lit lens area of at least 60 square centimetres (e.g. 90mm diameter round lens or 80mm x 80mm square lens)
 - the luminous intensity of the warning light is to be substantially brighter (about six times brighter) than the intensity of a typical turn signal or direction indicator.

7. Exception Provision

- A bus and its driver who is engaged in carrying children as part of a regular timetabled route service is not required to display a warning sign. In this case, destination sign requirements for route services will apply.
- A bus and its driver who is engaged in carrying children as part of a regular timetabled route service is not required to operate flashing warning lights when picking up or dropping off children.

References

- Northern Territory legislation <https://legislation.nt.gov.au/>
 - Australian Vehicle Standards Rules are a schedule of *Motor Vehicle (Standards) Regulations 2003*
 - Australian Road Rules are a schedule on the *Traffic Regulations 1999*
- Division 18 “**Warning lights and signs on buses carrying children**” of the Australian Vehicle Standards Rules
- Division 19 “**Other lights, reflectors, rear marking plates or signals**” of the Australian Vehicle Standards Rules
- Traffic Regulation 83 “**Hazard and warning lights**”
- Australian Road Rule 221 “**Using hazard warning lights**”
- Australian Road Rule 222 “**Using warning lights on buses carrying children**”
- The Northern Territory adopts the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator Inspection Manual as the standard for heavy vehicle roadworthiness

More information

For more information, contact the department on 08 8924 7157 or email vehiclestandards.mvr@nt.gov.au