

V80 - Light bus seating reduction and vehicle category change (MD2 to MD1)

Information Bulletin

Adding or removing seats in motor vehicles (as a modification) may cause a change in the vehicle's Australian Design Rule (ADR) classification. This may affect the vehicle's compliance with ADRs for its vehicle classification.

This bulletin outlines the minimum requirements to classify light buses with reconfigured seating.

Factory new vehicles modified in accordance with the federally approved Second Stage Manufacture process that are fitted with a second vehicle compliance plate are not covered in this bulletin.

Light bus category - Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) up to 3.5 tonne		
Classification	MD1	MD2
Seating capacity	More than 9, up to 12	More than 12

Australian Design Rules

An MD1 category vehicle has additional ADRs that apply which are not applicable to an MD2 vehicle. These include (but are not limited to):

Additional ADRs	Description
ADR 20/...	Safety rims
ADR 22/...	Head restraints
ADR 23/...	Passenger car tyres
ADR 25/...	Anti-theft lock
ADR 34/...	Child restraint anchorages and child restraint fittings

A reference to an Australian Design Rule (ADR) followed by “/...” is a reference to a version of a second or third edition ADR (as defined in Schedule 6 of the *Motor Vehicles (Standards) Regulations 2003*) of that ADR, as amended from time to time.

Modification approval pathways

Seating modifications may be undertaken for operational reasons such as wheelchair access for persons with disabilities or to improve luggage carrying capacity.

When a seating modification affects the vehicle category, validation for compliance with applicable ADRs is necessary. When the modification is approved, the vehicle registration record is updated.

Modification approval offers assurances that the modification has been completed to an acceptable standard for roadworthiness and may satisfy vehicle insurance purposes.

There are 2 pathways for modification approval:

1. Basic modification with engineering certification.
2. Type-approval modifiers.

Certification requirements

A recognised engineering signatory is to assess the modification and provide a report to address the following:

- Details of seating removed
- Details of child restraint anchorage fitment
- Details of all applicable ADRs for the vehicle's proposed ADR category
- Certification that the modified vehicle meets the intent of all ADRs applicable to an MD1 vehicle and that it is fit for purpose.

For a list of NT recognised engineering signatories (V83), refer to web page <https://nt.gov.au/driving/industry/vehicle-information-bulletins-and-forms>

Basic modification

This type of modification can be assessed as a basic modification by presenting the vehicle at a Motor Vehicle Registry (MVR) vehicle inspection facility to validate the modification with the relevant engineering report.

Further information regarding the NT's modified vehicle approval process, including basic modifications, can be found in the department's Information Bulletin V32(lv) Light vehicle modifications, refer to web page <https://nt.gov.au/driving/industry/vehicle-information-bulletins-and-forms>

Type-approval modifiers

Based on assessment of previous modified vehicles, approved modifiers can undertake specific modifications – refer to [More information](#)

Modification reversal

Returning the vehicle to its original seating arrangement and vehicle category is permitted subject to a validating inspection at an MVR vehicle inspection facility or via the type-approval process.

Driver licensing requirements

As at 1 August 2019, the Northern Territory "C" Class driver licensing definition was amended to remove the 12 seat limitation. This licence class now allows the driver to drive a vehicle that is not more than 4.5 tonne Gross Vehicle Mass, regardless of its seating capacity.

Further information regarding driver's licence classes can be found on the department's driver licensing web page – refer to <https://nt.gov.au/driving/driverlicence/get-your-licence/licence-classes-and-conditions>

More information

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