

1. Introducing the VSCCS

The Vehicle Safety Compliance Certification Scheme (VSCCS) licenses competent individuals to inspect non-standard vehicles and certify compliance with the relevant vehicle safety standards.

Non-standard vehicles that may require certification include significantly modified vehicles, individually constructed vehicles, and certain imported vehicles.

The VSCCS replaced the Engineering Certification Scheme.

1.1 Working as a VSCCS licensed certifier

The work of a VSCCS licensed certifier includes:

- Inspecting and testing vehicles
- Assessing the compliance of vehicles with the applicable standards
- Deciding whether to certify a vehicle

The VSCCS does not prescribe how certifiers go about these activities. It relies on the training, experience and professionalism of its certifiers to determine how best to do this. Similarly, the VSCCS does not specify which tests must be carried out or what equipment should be used: it is up to the certifier to decide how to assess a vehicle's compliance with the applicable standards.

However, to ensure the integrity of the scheme, the VSCCS does expect a certifier to:

- Abide by a code of conduct
- Follow VSCCS procedures
- Use the VSCCS IT system to issue certificate

A certifier is also expected to maintain the currency of their knowledge and competence.

From 10 February 2014 a VSCCS licensed certifier is also an 'approved vehicle examiner' under the Heavy Vehicle National Law and can approve modifications under the conditions prescribed by the Heavy Vehicle National Law.

1.2 Code of conduct

As a VSCCS licensed certifier, you will be working as a business partner with Transport for NSW; this means you'll be held to the same standards of behaviour and conduct expected of a Transport for NSW employee.

To request a copy of the VSCCS code of conduct, send an email to vscs@transport.nsw.gov.au

1.3 Record keeping

Among the requirements defined in the VSCCS Procedures document are those relating to record-keeping and documentation of the decision to certify. The VSCCS places considerable weight on the integrity of these records and they will be regularly audited to ensure compliance.

1.4 VSCCS IT system

The VSCCS IT system is a web-based application that is accessed via the internet (it's called 'VSCCS online'). Certifiers must use it to issue VSCCS certificates.

Licensed certifiers must maintain a secure, up-to-date internet browser for accessing the IT system and a current email address.

1.5 Certification and inspection fees

Transport for NSW sets a fee for issuing a certificate and collects this fee via the IT system at the time of issuing the certificate. The fees are posted on the VSCCS page on the Transport for NSW website.

Transport for NSW does not regulate the fees for a vehicle inspection under the VSCCS. These fees for service are a matter for negotiation between you and your customers.

1.6 Licence categories

VSCCS licences are issued with a condition that the certifier assesses only those vehicles covered by the categories specified on their licence. These licence categories are based on vehicle categories and fields of competence, both of which rely on the classification of vehicles and modifications defined in the Australian Design Rules (ADRs).

1.7 Vehicle categories

The VSCCS groups the Australian Design Rules (ADR) categories as follows:

VSCCS Vehicle Category	ADR Vehicle Category	ADR 2 nd Edition	ADR 3 rd Edition
Motorcycles (aka L-group)	Two wheeled and three wheeled vehicles	CY, motor bike, moped, motor tricycle	LA, LB1, LB1, LC, LD, LE, LEM, LEP, LEG
Passenger Vehicles (including omnibuses <= 4.5 tonnes)	Passenger vehicles and light omnibuses	PC, FC, PD, PM, LG, OM1, OM2, OM3, PM	MA, MB, MC, MD1, MD2, MD3, TA, TB, TC1
Omnibuses (GVM > 4.5 tonnes)	Heavy omnibus	OM4	MD4, ME
Light Commercial Vehicles	Light goods vehicle	LG (up to 4.5t), PM	NA, NB1
Medium and Heavy Vehicles and Trailers	Medium and heavy goods vehicles, and trailers	HG	NB2, NC, TC2, TD

Certifiers can work on any ADR vehicle type within the VSCCS vehicle category.

1.8 Fields of competency

The ADRs classify modifications by vehicle system. The VSCCS groups these vehicle systems into five 'fields of competence' for certifiers assessing modified vehicles.

Imported vehicles and individually constructed vehicles are treated as separate fields of competence because they require competence in all vehicle systems as well as specialised knowledge.

The result is the following seven fields of competency:

VSCCS Field of competency	Vehicle systems included
Modified vehicles – C1	Braking systems
Modified vehicles – C2	Driving controls or aids
Modified vehicles – C3	Seating or occupant protection
Modified vehicles – C4	Engine, fuel systems or intake/exhaust systems
Modified vehicles – C5	Body, chassis or frame, suspension, steering, transmission or driveline, wheels, tyres or axles or lighting systems
Whole vehicles – IP	Imported vehicles
Whole vehicles – AOV	All other vehicles, including individually constructed vehicles (ICVs)

1.9 Licence categories

For the purposes of issuing licences, VSCCS combines the five vehicle categories and the seven fields of competence into 'licence categories', these licence categories become the basis for licence applications and assessments of certifier competency.

VSCCS licence categories are as follows:

Vehicle category	Field of competency (vehicle systems)						
	Modified vehicles					Whole vehicles	
	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	IP	AOV
Motorcycles (M)	MC1	MC2	MC3	MC4	MC5	MIP	MAOV
Passenger vehicles (including omnibuses <= 4.5 tonnes) (P)	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC5	PIP	PAOV
Omnibuses GVM > 4.5 tonnes (B)	BC1	N/A	BC3	BC4	BC5	BIP	BAOV
Light commercial (L)	LC1	LC2	LC3	LC4	LC5	LIP	LAOV
Medium and heavy vehicles and trailers (H)	HC1	HC2	HC3	HC4	HC5	HIP	HAOV

1.10 Applying for a certifier's licence

The process for applying to become a certifier is a lengthy and detailed process. It may take in excess of 3 months to finalise the process.

The steps for registering your application can be summarised as follows:

1. Start by reading this guide and assess your eligibility and competence.
2. Complete an Application for a Certifier's Licence form, carefully following the instructions on the form and attaching any required documents.
3. Submit your application and application fee payment to Transport for NSW by following the instructions on the form. *Note: Application fee is non-refundable*
4. After receiving your application and application fee payment, Transport for NSW will assess your eligibility, competence, qualifications and experience.
5. If your initial application is favourable, you will be asked to complete an online questionnaire and be issued with several tasks which will be assessed.
6. Once both activities have been assessed favourably, you may be invited to attend an interview to validate the information you provided and further assess your competence to hold a certifier's licence. *Note: Interviews are held four times a year, in February, May, August and November.*

Transport for NSW will keep you informed throughout the process of assessing your application. Expect to receive emails, letters, and if required, telephone calls. You may be asked to provide additional information if needed.

1.11 Assessing your eligibility

To be eligible to hold a certifier's licence, you must be a fit and proper person. To assess this, Transport for NSW will:

- Check your criminal history
- Check the currency of your driver's licence
- Verify your qualifications and experience as reported on the application form
- Check if you are subject to any sanctions or restrictions enforced by Transport for NSW or other agencies.

1.12 Assessing your competence

As part of the process of assessing your application, you will be asked to demonstrate your competence to work in the licence categories indicated on your application. This may include:

- An assessment of your qualifications and experience
- Completion and assessment of an online questionnaire and emailed task/s
- An interview.

1.13 Initial assessment

Following the submission of your application, Transport for NSW will make an initial assessment of your qualifications and experience using a point system. Points are assigned as follows.

Qualification or experience (relevant disciplines = automotive, mechanical or a related discipline)	Points assigned
degree in a relevant discipline	80
diploma in a relevant discipline	70
relevant Certificate IV trade qualification	60
recent and relevant experience working in the industry	5 for each year

For your application to proceed, you will need to score 100 or more points.

Your qualifications must be relevant to the business of inspecting and assessing vehicles against applicable standards. NB Most trade certificates are an Australian Qualification Framework level 3 (certificate III), therefore would not meet the minimum entry requirement for qualifications.

Relevant experience doesn't have to involve the actual certifying of modifications. For example, working on heavy vehicles as a mechanic or engineer may count toward heavy vehicle competency. You must have both qualifications and experience.

1.14 Online activities

Once your initial application has been assessed and accepted, you will be sent a link to complete the online questionnaire.

The questionnaire will ask you questions about yourself, your business and some basic general knowledge questions about vehicle standards. Once the questionnaire has been assessed, you may be asked to complete the second activity which is a portfolio submission.

The portfolio submission aims to gain an understanding about your knowledge and understanding of the categories you have selected. You may use any manuals and information available to you to complete the task/s. Once you have completed and submitted the portfolio, this will be assessed. If the assessment is successful, you will be asked to attend an interview.

1.15 Interview

Subject to eligibility, you will be invited to an interview, where your competence to assess & certify vehicles in your nominated licence categories will be considered. Questions will be asked about the information you provided in your portfolio and other information specifically related to your nominated VSCCS License Categories.

To be successful, it is important that you have a good working knowledge of how the specific vehicle standards & ADRs relate to the certification work within your chosen categories. You must have a thorough understanding of how the modification process impacts on vehicle safety itself and the associated certification from a certifier's perspective, not from a repairer or modifier's viewpoint.

Please bring the portfolio and your CV/resume detailing your work experience in the vehicle categories you have elected to the interview. The portfolio would typically include photographs of the relevant vehicles and modifications that you have worked on, details of any testing performed and documentation showing applicable vehicle standards and how their requirements were assessed. These should relate to the portfolio that you submitted on the second activity, as well as any assessments you would like to highlight that demonstrate your competence in your chosen categories.

It is important to note that as a VSCCS License is issued to an individual, not a company, it is imperative that you consider what it is that you have relevant and recent experience in (generally two years' experience in a specific category is recommended) before you elect your areas for the interview process. Appropriate experience, skills and knowledge are critical to enable you to comply with your legal obligations as a VSCCS Licensed Certifier. It is also important to note that a VSCCS Licensed Certifier acts as a **Public Official** as defined under the **Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988**.

As **Public Officials**, VSSCS Licensed Certifier occupy positions of public trust, the public has a right to be assured that each VSSCS Licensed Certifier will operate in an open and honest way and make decisions based on high ethical standards.

1.16 Professional Insurance

As a licensed certifier, it will be a condition of your licence that you (or the business you work for) maintains:

- \$20 million public liability insurance
- \$5 million professional indemnity insurance.

1.17 Transport for NSW principal arranged insurance

Transport for NSW can provide principal arranged insurance (PAI), and a policy can be made available to you if you receive an offer to join the scheme.

If you choose to adopt PAI, you will be responsible for excesses of \$25,000 for professional indemnity and \$10,000 for public liability if a claim is made against you.

1.18 Using your own insurance

If you wish to use your own insurance cover rather than operate under PAI, Transport for NSW will review your insurance to make sure it meets required criteria. You will need to provide VSCCS with:

- A copy of your certificate of currency or policy quote slip

- A copy of your full policy
- The basis upon which professional indemnity insurance will be maintained for a seven year run-off period after you exit the VSCCS.

You may be eligible for a dispensation from taking out Transport for NSW's PAI cover if your insurance meets the following criteria:

- The policy includes the name, address and contact details of the person insured and, if appropriate, the company insured (including the ABN)
- If the policy is held in a company name, the person seeking a VSCCS licence must be named insured
- The insurance cover is provided by an Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA) approved insurer
- The business description and coverage for each person includes vehicle certification activities, including vehicle inspection, testing, operation, and certification that the vehicle complies with the applicable vehicle standards and any other related work in accordance with Part 5 of the Road Transport (Vehicle Registration) Regulation 2017 and the VSCCS licence conditions.

Part 5 of the Regulation establishes the VSCCS for the purposes of certifying non-standard vehicles.

- The insurance coverage period is for a minimum of 12 months
- The minimum limits of liability are:
 - Combined liability with \$20 million public liability for any one claim or series of claims arising from one occurrence and
 - \$5 million professional indemnity for any one claim or series of claims arising from one event and in the annual aggregate for all claims combined during the period of insurance.
- Transport for NSW is a named insured or otherwise indemnified under the policy for public liability
- It includes any other requirements specified by Transport for NSW.

If you apply to join the scheme when it commences, you will need to arrange this insurance before your licence is issued.

1.19 Application fees

Transport for NSW will set a fee for applying for a certifier's licence and an annual fee for holding a certifier's licence. For your application to be assessed the application fee is payable. If your application is successful, you will need to pay the licence fee (annual fee) and insurance and then your licence will be issued.

The fees are posted on the VSCCS page on the Transport for NSW website: transport.nsw.gov.au/vscs

1.20 Working from outside NSW

Any Australian resident may express interest in a certifier's licence.

Interstate residents will undergo the same eligibility and competency assessments as NSW residents, even if they are currently authorised or licensed in a similar interstate scheme. However, work in a similar scheme is relevant when assessing competence.

Interstate residents will be expected to travel at their own expense to interviews and other compulsory events in NSW.