



Camper season

The summer season is almost upon us, and with that, there are countless motorhomes being pulled out of storage end being prepared to hit the road. The VIRM requirements for light motorhomes can be complex to navigate, however, there are a few simple things that WoF Inspectors can keep an eye out for to ensure they are doing their job correctly. With motorhomes it pays not to assume the last WoF was done correctly, or that modifications have not been made over winter.

Certification requirements

Section 3-1 (Structure) of the VIRM Modification Threshold states that LVV Certification is not required if:

- The conversion was completed before 1/3/1999, [must be continually registered] or
- The conversion was completed on or after 1/3/1999, and
 - no modifications were carried out to the vehicle roof or rear wall, and
 - no seats or seatbelt anchorages were retrofitted, or
- There is evidence of certification of the modification from the company that carried out the modification, ie a secondary certification plate or label in the case of a motorhome conversion

The reference to a label refers to second stage compliance, which you can read about in *Technical Bulletin 13*. This can be found in the In-service VIRM under Technical Bulletin (General).

At least one seat per berth after '03

Table 7-5-4 of the VIRM states that:

7. Motorhomes manufactured prior to 1 October 2003 or motor vehicles converted to motorhomes prior to 1 October 2003 must have seatbelts fitted that are appropriate for the class of vehicle in which the vehicle was registered when it was registered as a motorhome.
8. Motorhomes manufactured from 1 October 2003 or motor vehicles converted to motorhomes from 1 October 2003 must be fitted with the following seatbelts and notice:
 - a) front seating positions: seatbelts must be fitted as specified for class MB vehicles in table 7-5-3
 - b) rear seating positions: as many or more lap (type L) or lap-and-diagonal (type R1 or R2) seatbelts as there are sleeping berths minus the number of front seating positions.



c) a notice must be displayed in a prominent location that recommends, on safety grounds, that when the vehicle is travelling, passengers use seats that are fitted with seatbelts, and that advises passengers that it is compulsory to wear fitted seatbelts.

This means they are required to have the same number or more seating positions as the number of berths within them to ensure all occupants are legally seated. Many campers over the years have had additional seats added to them, so LVVTA recommends that WoF Inspectors confirm the number of seating positions matches what's listed on the vehicle's LVV Certification plate.

What to do

The first step when assessing a light motorhome is to ascertain if the vehicle requires LVV Certification, and if so, to locate the LVV Certification Plate and confirm the modifications to the vehicle match those listed on the plate. A walk through of the camper should reveal if any additional seatbelts have been installed – in some instances, these have been found to be concealed by the owner behind cushions.

If you are presented with a vehicle that does not match the LVV Certification Plate, it can not pass, or if you are unsure of any modifications, contact the LVVTA office on 04 238 4343 or tech@lvvta.org.nz before proceeding.