
Low volume vehicle certification review (phase 2)

QUESTION AND ANSWERS

December 2015

Why are we conducting the review?

The Low Volume Vehicle (LVV) certification system for scratch-built or modified vehicles has been in place since 1992, and has not been reviewed by the Transport Agency in that time. Recent customer feedback and experiences have prompted us to review the system to ensure it is still fit for purpose, and look for ways it could be improved.

In particular, we want the system to be responsive to innovation, and its running and monitoring to be efficient and transparent. The system must uphold the safety of road users, while also providing a positive user experience for customers of that certification process.

What work has happened to date?

We commissioned Standards NZ to undertake an independent evaluation survey, with a wide range of users of the system, to understand the sector's perspectives on the current LVV system – what elements are working well and what aren't.

We considered the feedback gained through the survey, and analysed this alongside other feedback we have received about the system, to identify a set of actions for implementation. We reported back to survey respondents and are continuing to keep all stakeholders informed as required.

We are working more closely with the Low Volume Vehicle Technical Association (LVVTA), the incorporated society that has a key role in setting and administering the LVV system. We have more thoroughly documented existing processes and roles with them.

What actions are being taken?

We are **increasing Transport Agency oversight of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and ensuring it has good governance processes** to improve transparency and efficiency. The TAC process may be more suitable than the standard LVV process for users proposing innovative approaches or materials when modifying vehicles. We are working closely with the TAC and with the LVVTA to shape any changes. We propose making improvements to the documentation underpinning the TAC (including new terms of reference and a governance manual) and to some of its processes.

We are working to **increase user awareness of the TAC process** as the pathway for those using innovative new approaches or materials and for specialist enquiries. With the LVVTA, we are developing customer-focused online material that clearly shows the process and where to get more information, and will promote this material to users.

We are also working with LVVTA and certifiers to **ensure users experience consistent interpretation and application of standards**.

What changes will users notice in the short term?

Users of the system are unlikely to see major changes in the short term, because it will take time to implement the actions. The short-term changes focus largely on the TAC process, and because most users do not use the TAC pathway, changes to the TAC will not impact them. We are making more information about TAC available online, and by early 2016 users whose applications are declined under the TAC process will receive more information that clearly sets out the basis for the decision and the reconsideration process.

What actions will be taken in 2016?

Work identified as part of the short-term actions will continue into early 2016. Later in 2016, the next phase of work involves:

- **developing and implementing tailored certification processes** that reflect the risks associated with different types of modifications and the contexts of different sector groups
- **reviewing and clarifying the roles, functions and performance metrics** of the LVVTA, LVV certifiers and the Transport Agency in respect of the LVV system.

Additionally, a wider review of technical support for all vehicle technical specialist groups will be undertaken in 2016/17. This could lead to more wide-ranging changes to the LVV system – however, nothing is decided yet and we will consult with all relevant stakeholders.

What changes will users notice in the longer term?

Users should see more transparency and consistency in the LVV process. They will know where to go for information based on the type of modification they're undertaking. We expect the LVV system to be more responsive to the different ways that users modify vehicles, rather than offering a 'one size fits all' approach. Ultimately, we want users to have a positive experience and to feel the system is responsive to innovation while still upholding the safety of road users.

Why aren't major changes happening sooner?

We want to make sustainable changes so taking a collaborative, considered approach is critical. We need to get the roles and governance right before looking at the wider system. A lot of work has gone into the system so we won't be starting from scratch – however, improvements will be made. We will continue to work with stakeholders and technical experts and to report on progress.

How do I stay informed about progress?

We will regularly update the Transport Agency website as the review continues. If you would like to receive an email from us when new information is available, or if you have any questions or comments about the review, please email us at lvreview@nzta.govt.nz
