

Repair news

VEHICLE CERTIFICATION UNIT

October 2006

Issue 1

Welcome to the first bi-annual edition of the Repair news!

Yup, once every six months we'll inform and entertain you with a copy of VCU's Repair News.

We will be introducing newsletters in all certification categories. The purpose of the VCU newsletters is to pass on general information. Newsletters will not be used to inform you of inspection requirements, so don't worry if you leave your copy on the coffee table.

If you have any ideas about things you would like to see in the next Repair News, please let us know.

Common issues identified during performance reviews

If you are lucky enough to have a visit with a Land Transport NZ reviewer scheduled soon, here are some frequently identified concerns.

During the period July 2004 to July 2006, the majority of element scores below a 2 were achieved in management, performance improvement, competence and various technical issues. Common problems include:

- no evidence of regular self-assessments
- training, equipment, and delegation records not being completed or kept up-to-date
- gaps in knowledge of PRS requirements
- Incorrect technical decisions (or not maintaining clear records to support technical decisions).

There are a range of technical issues, but particular areas of concern are structure, welding, corrosion protection and wheel alignment/3D measurement reports.

Thanks RCA

VCU would like to give a big thanks to the Repair Certifiers Association for their help with establishing LANDATA access, and with the VIRM revision.

We are building a good relationship with the group, which we trust will strengthen as we continue to work together.

LANDATA

As at September 2006, 33 repair certifiers have applied for access to LANDATA. Twenty have established access and are up and running.

Some had trouble installing the connection, but managed to get through it. Things to be aware of are:

- firewalls and other virus protection that may prevent you from downloading the VPN installation
- two different types of passwords and user IDs are required. You will be given a VPN password and user ID to download the software first. Unisys will then provide you with your LANDATA user ID and password.

Remember, the purpose is to identify vehicles you have inspected and briefly note damage if required. There is limited space on LANDATA so please don't write novels.

Your responsibility as a repair certifier

It has come to our attention that there is a degree of complacency slipping in to the repair certification industry.

Tell tale signs of such behaviour include:

- carrying out poor intermediate inspections (or not carrying them out at all)
- accepting emailed photographs as evidence in lieu of conducting physical inspections.

The aim of the vehicle certification industry is to improve the safety of the New Zealand vehicle fleet. As Land Transport NZ appointed repair certifiers, you have accepted the responsibility to carry out inspection and certification activities according to the standards set out in the Vehicle Inspection Requirements Manual: Light vehicle repair certification, the Performance Review System: Light vehicle repair certification manual and in your deed of appointment. Non-compliance with these requirements increases the risk to road safety and will be treated very seriously by VCU.

The VCU extends appreciation to those who have maintained high standards of certification, and continue to carry out thorough inspection processes.

Scope of the repair rule: in-service repairs

The repair rule applies to all vehicle repairs on all types of vehicle, from pedal cycles to heavy trucks, buses and trailers, regardless of the age and manufacture date of the vehicle. This is to provide general protection for the consumer.

The rule imposes a duty on repairers to comply but makes no provision for ensuring general compliance.

Certification of repairs is only required by the compliance rule for vehicles entering or re-entering the NZ fleet.

A dissatisfied customer can seek redress for poor repairs through the courts but the VCU has no relationship with repairers and probably would not get involved. The VCU only becomes involved when a poor certification is alleged.

Tips for regular self-assessment

Trying to assess yourself and score your own knowledge and skill level can be a difficult thing to get your head around. Here a couple of suggestions to make it a little easier and help you get something out of it.

Treat the self assessment as revision – this can make it more relevant. When revising for trade exams or driving tests you refresh your knowledge of particular subjects.

For example:

- If you are assessing yourself (revising) on the main part of your PRS, you could check that you have all the required records and documents, and that they are up-to-date.
- One way to review or self-assess the technical part is to review a few of your completed vehicle files, and if possible, try to get a range of repairs. Look at them as though they were completed by another certifier who has asked you to review his/her files.
- As you go through each file, compare what you have done according to your records with the corresponding section of the repair VIRM. Have you covered all the requirements? Generally, things that have been overlooked will jump out at you the second time around.
- If you usually only do certain types of repairs, revise a section of the VIRM you don't normally use to refresh yourself. This way, if you get an enquiry about it, you have an understanding of the requirements.

As you proceed, use the score sheets to record and comment on anything you find, much like a 'to-do' list but on the score sheet. Follow this up on your improvement record, and treat it like a job card to fix the things you identified.

Remember, these are few suggestions that may help you carry out a self assessment. You don't have to do it this way. Find a method that works for you.

Introducing one of your friendly reviewers, Mike Lee



Mike has been working in the certification industry since June 1997 (times flies when you're having fun). He began with MotorSafe and became a Land Transport NZ reviewer with the VCU in August 2001. Mike has 3 sons aged 24, 20, 17 and 1 grandson, nearly 1 year old.

Mike's interests outside of work are Toastmasters, woodworking and his wee grandson.

The thing that Mike enjoys most about his job, which has kept him at it for nearly 10 years, is the challenge (and there have been several over the years). Mike's biggest buzz is seeing a site or inspector/certifier accomplish something they thought they could never do, and their confidence rise accordingly.

Mike wanted to work with the repair certifier group because he could see that as a group they are very passionate about what they do. He wanted the chance to help people come to grips with the system and to make a difference in this part of the industry.

In July, Mike moved to Christchurch to add a little variety and challenge, but also to be closer to the bulk of certifiers in the South island and to make travel easier for meeting with the repair certifiers group.

RCA July conference

VCU had the privilege of attending the RCA conference in July. It was informative, interesting and appeared to be enjoyed by all. It is going to be a busy year for the VCU but we're all looking forward to next year!

Contacts

UNISYS	phone 0800 243 687 (for problems with user access codes and passwords)
TRC	phone 0800 108 809 (for phone inquiries from members of the public)
VCU	phone 0800 587 287 (for technical assistance and reporting staff movements)

feedback...?

We welcome your feedback. Please send any comments to:

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