

Correct as at 16th May 2026. It may be superseded at any time.

Extract taken from: In-service certification (WoF and CoF) > Unclassified vehicles > Lighting > Direction indicator lamps

4-5 Direction indicator lamps

Reasons for rejection

Mandatory and permitted equipment

1. A self-propelled vehicle first registered in New Zealand before 1 January 2006, that is so constructed that the driver's arm signals cannot be seen from behind the vehicle, is not fitted with one pair of rear direction indicator lamps.
2. A self-propelled vehicle first registered on or after 1 January 2006 is not fitted with one pair of rear direction indicator lamps.
3. A trailer that is so constructed that the driver's arm signals cannot be seen from behind the trailer is not fitted with one pair of lamps at the rear.
4. A self-propelled vehicle is fitted with more than:
 - a) two pairs of lamps at the rear (other than top-mounted lamps), or
 - b) two pairs of lamps at the front, or
 - c) two side-facing lamps on each side of the vehicle.
5. A heavy trailer or a self-propelled vehicle is fitted with more than one pair of top-mounted lamps at the rear.
6. A vehicle is fitted with a lamp that is not in a pair.
7. A pair of top-mounted lamps is not fitted as close as is practicable to the top corners of the bodywork.
8. A retrofitted pair of lamps is not:
 - a) symmetrically mounted, or
 - b) mounted as far towards each side of the vehicle as is practicable.

Condition

9. A lamp is insecure or, if a mandatory lamp, is obscured or contains visible moisture in the form of large droplets, runs or puddles.
10. A lens is missing or has a hole, crack or other damage that allows moisture or dirt to enter.
11. A reflector is damaged or has deteriorated so that light output is reduced.

Performance

12. When switched on, a direction indicator lamp:
 - a) does not operate, or
 - b) does not begin flashing within one second of switching on, or

c) flashes:

- i. faster than two flashes per second, or
- ii. slower than one flash per second, or
- iii. at a different rate from other lamps on the same side.

13. When switched on, a direction indicator lamp emits a light that is:

- a) not substantially amber or red to the rear, or
- b) not substantially white or amber to the front, or
- c) not substantially amber to the side, or
- d) not approximately equal in colour or intensity to the other lamp in a pair, or
- e) not bright enough to be visible from 100m in normal daylight and from 200m in normal darkness, eg due to modification, deterioration, dirt or an incorrect light source, or
- f) too bright causing significant dazzle to other road users, eg due to an incorrect light source, or
- g) altered, eg due to damage or modification.

14. On a vehicle of American origin fitted with combined stop and indicator lamps, the stop lamp function is not overridden by the indicator function.

15. Where a lamp comprises an array of light sources (eg LEDs), fewer than 75% of these operate.

16. A lamp-failure warning device does not operate.

Note 1

Direction indicator lamp means a lamp designed to emit a flashing light to signal the intention of the driver to change the direction of a vehicle to the right or to the left.

Note 2

A permitted (ie non-mandatory) rear- or side-facing direction indicator lamp that does not comply with equipment, condition and performance requirements must be made to comply or disabled so that it does not emit a light.

Note 3

An original equipment (OE) lamp is one that is fitted by the vehicle manufacturer in the original position, or is an equivalent replacement or aftermarket lamp suitable for the position provided by the vehicle manufacturer for that lamp. All other lamps are considered retrofitted (ie non-OE).

Note 4

Vehicles first registered in New Zealand before 27 February 2005 may have rear direction indicator lamps that also function as reversing lamps.

Note 5

A vehicle originally manufactured with a direction-indicator-lamp arrangement that differs from what is required or permitted in this section may retain the original direction indicator lamps provided they remain fitted in their original position and perform as intended by the vehicle manufacturer.

Summary of legislation

Applicable legislation

- [Land Transport Rule: Vehicle Lighting 2004](#)

Mandatory and permitted equipment

1. A self-propelled vehicle, first registered in New Zealand before 1 January 2006, must be fitted with one or two pairs of rearward-facing lamps if the vehicle is so constructed that it prevents an arm signal given by the driver from being seen from behind the vehicle.
2. A self-propelled vehicle first registered anywhere on or after 1 January 2006 must be fitted with one or two pairs of lamps to the rear of the vehicle.
3. A self-propelled vehicle may be fitted with one or two pairs of forward-facing lamps.
4. A trailer must be fitted with one or two pairs of lamps at the rear if the trailer is so constructed that it prevents an arm signal given by the driver from being seen from behind the vehicle combination.
5. A trailer may be fitted with:
 - a) one or two pairs of lamps at the front, and
 - b) one or two pairs of lamps at the rear.
6. A self-propelled vehicle or a heavy trailer may be fitted with an additional pair of lamps at the rear of the vehicle. These must be symmetrically mounted as far towards the top corners of the bodywork of the vehicle as is practicable (top-mounted lamps).
7. A vehicle may be fitted with one or two side-facing lamps on each side.
8. A suitable device may be fitted to a self-propelled vehicle that indicates to the driver the failure of a mandatory lamp.
9. A retrofitted pair of lamps must be mounted:
 - a) symmetrically as far towards each side of the vehicle as is practicable, and
 - b) at a height from the ground not exceeding 1.5m, or if this is not practicable due to the shape of the bodywork of the vehicle, not exceeding 2.1m.
10. On vehicles of American origin the stop lamp and direction indicator lamp function may be combined in one lamp.

Condition

11. A direction indicator lamp must not be obscured (if a mandatory lamp).

Performance

12. A direction indicator lamp must operate in a way that is appropriate for the lamp and the vehicle.

13. A direction indicator lamp must emit a light that is substantially:
 - a) red or amber to the rear, and
 - b) white or amber to the front, and
 - c) amber to the side.
14. A lamp must flash at a fixed frequency in the range of 1 to 2 Hertz.
15. Each lamp in a pair must, when operated, emit a light of approximately equal intensity, colour and frequency.
16. A lamp-failure indicating device, if fitted, must function.
17. A lamp must emit a light that is visible from 100m during normal daylight and 200m in normal darkness.
18. If a vehicle of American origin is fitted with combined stop and indicator lamps, the indicator lamps may override the stop lamps so that the stop lamps operate as direction indicators.
19. Where a lamp comprises an array of light sources (eg LEDs), at least 75% of these must operate.