

Correct as at 17th May 2026. It may be superseded at any time.

Extract taken from: In-service certification (WoF and CoF) > General trailers > Lighting > Rearward-facing position lamps

4-7 Rearward-facing position lamps

Reasons for rejection

Mandatory and permitted equipment

1. A trailer first registered in New Zealand before 1 January 1978 is not fitted with:
 - a) one single rearward-facing position lamp (Note 1) in the centre or to the right of the centre of the trailer, or
 - b) one pair of rearward-facing position lamps.
2. A trailer first registered in New Zealand on or after 1 January 1978:
 - a) that is less than 1.5m wide is not fitted with one single rearward-facing position lamp in the centre or to the right of the centre of the trailer, or with one pair of rearward-facing position lamps, or
 - b) that is more than 1.5m wide is not fitted with one pair of rearward-facing position lamps.
3. A trailer is fitted with more than:
 - a) one single lamp, or
 - b) two pairs of lamps.
4. A lamp is mounted at a height from the ground exceeding 1.5m (or 2.1m where fitting below 1.5m is not practicable due to the shape of the bodywork of the trailer).
5. A pair of lamps is not:
 - a) symmetrically mounted, or
 - b) mounted as far towards each side of the trailer as is practicable.

Condition

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

Performance

9. When switched on, a mandatory lamp does not operate.
10. When switched on, a lamp emits a light that is:
 - a) not substantially red, or
 - b) not diffuse, or

c) not projected to the rear, or

d) not approximately equal in colour or intensity from the other lamp in a pair, or

e) not steady, or

f) not bright enough to be visible from 200m in normal darkness, eg due to modification, deterioration, dirt or an incorrect light source.

11. A mandatory lamp emits a light that is not visible within (Figure 4-7-1):

a) 15° above and below the horizontal, or

b) 45° inboard or 80° outboard

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

Note 1

Position lamp means a low-intensity lamp that is designed to indicate to road users the presence and dimensions of a vehicle, being:

a) a forward-facing position lamp (front side lamp), or

b) a rearward-facing position lamp (rear side lamp or tail lamp), or

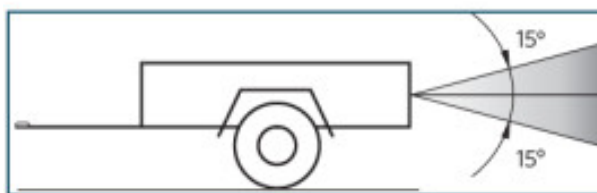
c) a side-marker lamp, or

d) an end-outline marker lamp (including cab roof lamp).

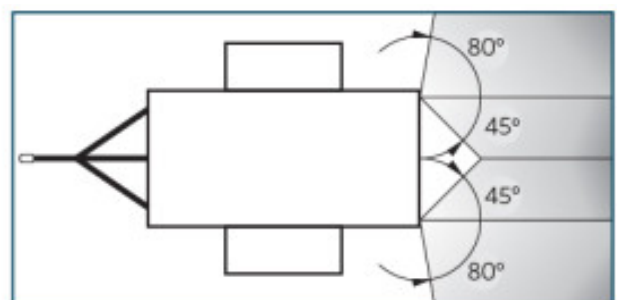
Note 2

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

Figure 4-7-1. Rearward-facing position lamp beam angles



(a) Vertical beam angles



(b) Horizontal beam angles

Summary of legislation

Applicable legislation

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

Mandatory and permitted equipment

1. A trailer first registered in New Zealand on or after 1 January 1978 and that is more than 1.5m wide must be fitted with one or two pairs of rearward-facing position lamps (Note 1).
2. A trailer first registered in New Zealand before 1 January 1978 or that does not exceed 1.5m in width must be fitted with:
 - a) one single rearward-facing position lamp in the centre or on the right side of the trailer, or
 - b) one or two pairs of rearward-facing position lamps.
3. A pair of lamps must be symmetrically mounted as far towards each side of the trailer as is practicable.
4. A lamp must be fitted 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 trailer, not exceeding 2.1m.

Condition

5. A rearward-facing position lamp must:
 - a) be in sound condition, and
 - b) not be obscured (if a mandatory lamp).

Performance

6. A rearward-facing position lamp must operate in a way that is appropriate for the lamp and the vehicle.
7. A lamp must emit a diffuse light that is substantially red.
8. A lamp must emit a steady light.
9. A lamp must provide sufficient light output to indicate to other road users the presence and dimensions of the trailer.
10. A lamp must emit light that is visible from a distance of 200m in normal darkness.
11. A retrofitted mandatory lamp must be visible within angles of 15° above and below the horizontal, and within 45° inboard and 80° outboard.
12. Each lamp in a pair must, when operated, emit a light of approximately equal intensity and colour.
13. Where a lamp comprises an array of light sources (eg LEDs), at least 75% of these must operate.

Page amended **28 April 2013** (see [amendment details](#)).