

B-pillar cracks update

Mercedes Benz (Australia/Pacific) have recently advised NZTA of the following:

- After lengthy discussions and analysis with the manufacturer, Mercedes Benz AG Germany's Development and Engineering teams, they have determined that the B-pillar cracking on 906155 and 907155 Mercedes Benz Sprinter is cosmetic.
- For these variants that are still fitted with the factory upper rear roof crossmember, the cracks that appear in the upper B-pillar outer panel have no relevant influence on the structural strength and rigidity of the vehicle.
- For this reason, Mercedes Benz don't consider these cracks to have a negative impact on the structural integrity of the base vehicle. The only potential effects on the base vehicle are related to corrosion, appearance, and possible water ingress.

Inspection regime for minor cracks identified at CoF still applicable

NZTA is awaiting written confirmation on this advice from the manufacturer, Mercedes Benz AG, Germany. Once we have this, we'll be in a position to advise further.

In the meantime, the current CoF regime for B-pillar cracks extended until 1 February 2025 is still applicable.

[CoF regime for B-pillar cracks extended until 1 Feb 2025](#)

Background

In September 2022, NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi (NZTA) became aware of several motorhomes that failed at CoF inspection for cracks in the B-pillar. Discussions started between NZTA, a small group of Heavy Vehicle Specialist Certifiers (HVSCs), some motorhome manufacturers, Mercedes Benz and Volkswagen.

The only repair available at this time from Mercedes was a full replacement of the A/B-pillar frame. This repair is usually used when a significant structural impact accident has occurred. After further discussions, Mercedes Benz produced a localised repair which included the fitment of a plate on the inside of the B-pillar. There was some feedback that this was still cost prohibitive and invasive. NZTA engaged with RepairCertNZ to explore a local alternative repair solution. An alternative was produced, reviewed and accepted by both Mercedes Benz and Volkswagen. This was then made available through RepairCertNZ in November 2023.