

Correct as at 15th May 2026. It may be superseded at any time.

Extract taken from: In-service certification (WoF and CoF) > Heavy vehicles > Brakes > Heavy vehicle brake code

8-2 Heavy vehicle brake code

See also [Heavy vehicle brake testing: CoF and entry certification brake test protocol and procedure](#)

Reasons for rejection

Mandatory requirement

1. A vehicle that has been certified to the Heavy Vehicle Brake Code does not have a label stating that the vehicle complies with either NZHVBC first or second edition.
2. An NZHVBC label:
 - a) is missing, or
 - b) is illegible, or
 - c) does not match the vehicle, or
 - d) has obvious signs of tampering, or
 - e) is not affixed as close as practicable to the vehicle manufacturer's identification plate.

Mandatory equipment

Service brake

3. Refer to heavy vehicles, [section 8-1](#).

Parking brake

4. A heavy vehicle does not have a parking brake.
5. A vehicle that was first registered in New Zealand on or after 1 November 1990 does not have a park brake that acts on at least half of the wheels.

Emergency brake

6. A vehicle does not have an emergency brake combined with either:
 - a) the parking brake, or
 - b) the service brake.
7. A vehicle that was first registered in New Zealand on or after 1 November 1990 does not have an emergency brake that acts on at least half of the wheels.

8. The emergency brake is not operable from the driving seat while keeping at least one hand on the steering control.

Hoses or other flexible tubing

9. Refer to heavy vehicles, [section 8-1](#).

Compressed air brake systems

10. Refer to heavy vehicles, [section 8-1](#).

11. The vehicle is not fitted with air pressure gauges which indicate the pressure in each independent service brake air reservoir.

12. A vehicle equipped with compressed air operated service brakes is not equipped with an audible low pressure warning device.

13. A vehicle does not have a tractor protection valve.

14. Air connections between all towing vehicles and trailers are not of the two line system using a one piece coupling, eg:

a) a duomatic coupling, or

b) a triomatic coupling where an auxiliary air supply (separate from the braking system) is required for a trailer.

15. The coupling housing (eg duomatic or triomatic) is not situated close to the centre line (preferably to the right hand side of the centre, ie driver's side).

16. The air lines are not installed so that when facing the cover of the female section of the coupling housing:

a) the control (service) line is not on the left side of the housing, and coloured blue or black within 150mm of the coupling or junction, and

b) the supply (emergency) line is not on the right side of the housing, and coloured red or yellow within 150mm of the coupling or junction.

17. A service brake or parking brake reservoir, including any wet tank in an air brake system:

a) is not fitted with a condensate drain valve at the lowest point, or

b) is fitted with an automatic condensate valve that does not have provision for manual operation.

Note Operation of drain valves must not require the use of tools.

Permitted equipment

18. Refer to heavy vehicles, [section 8-1](#).

19. A manually operated push/pull valve that is used to apply the park brakes on the towing vehicle or trailer separately is not adequately guarded to prevent accidental operation during an emergency.

20. A manually operated push/pull valve that is used to apply the combination's park brakes is not coloured yellow.

Prohibited equipment

21. Refer to heavy vehicles, [section 8-1](#).

Condition

22. Refer to heavy vehicles, [section 8-1](#).

23. A brake lining or brake pad:

a) has been replaced without all the linings or pads on the axle being replaced at the same time, or

b) does not comply with the NZHVBC (Note 1)

24. A service brake reservoir air pressure gauge is not readily visible to the driver (day and night) from the driver's normal driving position.

Performance

Service brake

25. Refer to heavy vehicles, [section 8-1](#).

Parking brake

26. Refer to heavy vehicles, [section 8-1](#).

Compressed air brake systems

27. Refer to heavy vehicles, [section 8-1](#).

28. An air pressure gauge does not operate correctly.

29. A low pressure warning device does not give a continuous audible signal that clearly indicates to the driver when the pressure in any of the service brake circuits is below the minimum safe operating pressure recommended by the manufacturer unless the park brake is fully applied and the automatic transmission is in the 'park' position.

30. A tractor protection valve does not operate.

31. A drain valve is not able to be operated manually.

Note Operation of drain valves must not require the use of tools.

32. The individual brake forces of the service brake and spring parking brake are able to be compounded.

Modification and certification (Note 1)

33. Refer to heavy vehicles, [section 8-1](#).

Note 1

If there is reason to believe that a component does not meet the requirements of the NZHVBC then the vehicle inspector must require the brake maintenance records to be produced.

Summary of legislation

Applicable legislation

- [Land Transport Rule: Heavy-vehicle Brakes 2006](#), including:
- [Heavy Vehicle Brake Code, first edition \(1991\)](#)
- [Heavy Vehicle Brake Code, second edition \(June 1997\)](#).

Mandatory requirement

1. A vehicle that has been certified to the Heavy Vehicle Brake Code (first edition) prior to 31 August 1997 must have a label affixed to the vehicle, adjacent to the vehicle manufacturer's identification plate stating that the vehicle complies with "NZHVBC, dated 1991"
2. A vehicle that has been certified to the Heavy Vehicle Brake Code (second edition) on or after 31 August 1997 and before 1 July 2008 must have a label of permanent material affixed to the vehicle, as close as practicable to the vehicle manufacturer's identification plate. The label must include the words "NZHVBC Edition No. 2".

Mandatory equipment

Service brake

3. Refer to heavy vehicles, [section 8-1](#).

Parking brake

4. A vehicle must have a parking brake.
5. A vehicle that was first registered in New Zealand on or after 1 November 1990 must have a park brake that acts on at least half of the wheels.

Note Spring brakes are the preferred type of park brake.

6. A parking brake must be able to be applied by the driver from the normal driving position.

Emergency brake

7. A vehicle must have an emergency brake which may be combined with the parking brake or the service brake.
8. A vehicle that was first registered in New Zealand on or after 1 November 1990 must have an emergency brake that acts on at least half of the wheels.
9. The emergency brake must be operable from the driving seat while keeping at least one hand on the steering control.

Hoses or other flexible tubing

10. Refer to heavy vehicles, [section 8-1](#).

Compressed air brake systems

11. Refer to heavy vehicles, [section 8-1](#).

12. The service brake air system of vehicles first registered in New Zealand on or after 1 November 1990 must have at least two completely independent brake actuating circuits, each with its own air reservoir.

13. Gauges must be fitted to indicate to the driver the pressure in each independent service brake air reservoir and be visible to the driver from the normal driving position .

14. Every vehicle equipped with compressed air operated service brakes and where the prescribed emergency braking performance cannot be achieved without the use of the compressed air, the air reservoirs must be equipped with a low pressure alarm device. The low pressure alarm may be rendered inoperative while the parking brake is applied and the selector is in the park position in vehicles fitted with an automatic transmission.

15. The service brake system of the towing vehicle must incorporate a tractor protection valve to preserve the integrity of the brake system should the trailer's brake system fail.

16. A pressure test connection must be fitted to the air inlet of the least favourably placed brake chamber (or pneumatic device in the case of part pneumatic brake systems) on each independent circuit of the braking system.

17. Air connections between all towing vehicles and trailers must be of the two line system using a one piece coupling, eg a duomatic coupling, or when an auxiliary air supply (separate from the braking system) is required for a trailer, a triomatic coupling .

18. The coupling housing (eg duomatic or triomatic) must be situated close to the centre line, preferably to the right hand side (ie driver's side) of centre.

19. The control (service) and supply (emergency) air lines must be installed so that when facing the cover of the female section of the coupling housing:

a) the control (service) line must be on the left side of the housing, and coloured blue or black within 150mm of the coupling or junction, and

b) the supply (emergency) line must be on the right side of the housing, and coloured red or yellow within 150mm of the coupling or junction.

20. Each reservoir in an air brake system must be fitted with a condensate drain valve at the lowest point.

21. Where an automatic condensate valve is fitted, it must have a provision for manual operation.

Permitted equipment

22. Refer to heavy vehicles, [section 8-1](#).

23. A vehicle may be fitted with additional manually operated push/pull valves that are used to apply the park brakes on the towing vehicle or trailer separately provided these valves are adequately guarded to prevent accidental operation during an emergency.

24. A vehicle may be fitted with an additional manually operated push/pull valve that is used to apply the combination's park brakes provided it is coloured yellow.

Prohibited equipment

24. Refer to heavy vehicles, [section 8-1](#).

Condition

25. Refer to heavy vehicles, [section 8-1](#).

26. Brake linings or brake pads must be replaced as axle sets.

Performance

27. Refer to heavy vehicles, [section 8-1](#).

Service brake

28. Refer to heavy vehicles, [section 8-1](#).

Parking brake

29. Refer to heavy vehicles, [section 8-1](#).

Compressed air brake systems

30. Refer to heavy vehicles, [section 8-1](#).

31. A low pressure alarm device must sound loudly when the brake air reservoir pressures fall below the minimum safe operating pressure recommended by the manufacturer.

32. The low pressure alarm may be rendered inoperative while:

- a) the park brake is applied, and
- b) the selector is in the park position in vehicles fitted with an automatic transmission.

33. The brake systems must not compound their individual brake forces.

Modification and certification

34. Refer to heavy vehicles, [section 8-1](#).

Page amended **1 November 2019** (see [amendment details](#)).