

Correct as at 1st May 2026. It may be superseded at any time.

Extract taken from: Light vehicle repair certification > Technical bulletins > Salvaged airbags

2 Salvaged airbags

Replaces Repair Certification Information Memorandum #17

VIRM references

This bulletin gives guidance to vehicle inspectors in applying the following requirements in the VIRM: Light vehicle repair certification:

- [5-6 Airbags: Reason for rejection 9.](#)

Application

This document applies to light vehicles being certified for entry into New Zealand that require repair certification which involves salvaged airbags.

Safety concerns

An airbag is an explosive device; it must be packaged, transported and labeled appropriately. Damage or deterioration to an airbag may result in the airbag failing to deploy, or deploying incorrectly. This increases the risk of injury to vehicle occupants. The primary concern regarding salvaged airbags is that there is no visual or non-destructive way to determine whether a salvaged airbag will deploy as it is designed to.

Establishing a salvaged airbag's suitability for use in a repair

1. Inspect the donor vehicle and airbag

Oversee the removal of the airbag from the donor vehicle (photographs are required). Inspect the donor vehicle and the airbag for evidence of damage that may have affected the performance of the airbag, including water damage. If there is anything about the condition of the vehicle or the airbag that casts doubt over the serviceability of the airbag, reject it.

2. Prepare a signed statement

If you determine to the best of your knowledge that the airbag is suitable for use in a repair, you must prepare a signed statement to that effect. The statement must also record the identity of the donor vehicle (including chassis number) and the salvaged airbag part number.

3. Oversee packaging of the airbag

If the airbag is not going to be installed immediately, you must ensure that it is packaged appropriately. Packaging must be robust, absorb shock, offer suitable protection for transportation and have regard to the potential build-up of static electrical charges. The signed statement must be stored with the airbag.

Inspection and certification

1. Check that the airbag is suitable for use in the repair

- Check that there is a signed statement from a repair certifier declaring that the airbag is suitable for use in a repair. This document must be retained. If there is no signed statement with the airbag, you must reject it.
- Check that the airbag part number is recorded (correctly) on the statement and has the correct part number for the recipient vehicle. Reject the airbag if it does not.
- Visually inspect the packaging before removing the airbag. Inspect the airbag once it has been removed from the packaging. If there is anything about the condition of the packaging or the airbag that casts doubt over the serviceability of the airbag, reject it.

2. Confirm the integrity of the vehicle's SRS system

Check vehicle manufacturer requirements and verify that the remaining airbag system components (eg the clockspring connector, the steering column and the control module) are fit for further service and have not been damaged by the deployment of the original airbag. The vehicle must not be certified if there is evidence that any of these components are not fit for further service.

3. Operational checks

Do not certify the vehicle if the dash light test indicates that the electronic aspects of the airbag system are not functioning correctly.