

Correct as at 26th April 2026. It may be superseded at any time.

Extract taken from: In-service certification (WoF and CoF) > General vehicles > Exhaust

11 Exhaust

11-1 Exhaust system

Reasons for rejection

Mandatory equipment

1. A vehicle is not fitted with an exhaust system that includes a means of sound reduction (Note 1) (Note 6).
2. A light vehicle is presented for a WoF or CoF because it has been ordered off the road (pink- or green-stickered) by an enforcement officer for non-compliant exhaust noise, and there is no evidence that the vehicle has passed an LVVTA objective noise test since the vehicle was ordered off the road (Note 4), ie:
 - a) the owner cannot produce a valid objective exhaust noise emissions test certificate (Figure 11-1-1) issued after the vehicle was ordered off the road (Note 5), and
 - b) the exhaust system tail pipe is not fitted with a valid LVVTA noise test label (Figure 11-1-2) or an appropriate LVV data plate (Figure 11-1-3).

Condition

3. An exhaust system is not securely mounted.
4. The exhaust system has been constructed or modified that its operation or effectiveness can be readily interfered with (Note 8) .
5. The exhaust system is so constructed that emitted heat or fumes:
 - are not directed away from, and prevented from entering, the vehicle's passenger compartment (Note 7), or
 - are likely to harm vehicle occupants.

See also (Note 6) regarding screamer pipes.

Performance

6. There is a leak of exhaust fumes from the exhaust system.
7. The exhaust noise output from a class LE, MA, MB, MC, MD1, MD2 or NA vehicle (other than a class MA or MC motorsport vehicle with a valid motorsport authority card) is not less than or similar to the noise output the vehicle (or a vehicle of a similar type (Note 2)) would have had when it was manufactured with its original exhaust system, and:
 - a) the increased noise output exceeds the relevant noise limit in Table 11-1-1 when assessed by the vehicle inspector:
 - i. using their own experience, or
 - ii. using the Noise Quick Check specified in [Technical bulletin 1](#), or

b) there is no evidence that the vehicle has passed an LVVTA objective noise test, ie:

- i. the owner cannot produce a valid objective exhaust noise emission test certificate (Figure 11-1-1), and
- ii. the exhaust system tailpipe is not fitted with a valid LVVTA noise test label (Figure 11-1-2).

Note 1

Exhaust system means a pipe assembly through which the engine exhaust gases pass to the atmosphere and includes some means of sound reduction such as a silencer or resonator.

Note 2

For the purpose of Reason for rejection, a vehicle of a similar type means a vehicle of similar age, vehicle size, body type, engine size and power output, and may be of a different make and model.

Note 3

The noise limits in Table 11-1-1 are lower than the noise limits specified in legislation, and considered to be 'clearly below' the legal noise limits. Vehicles with an exhaust noise output clearly below the legal limits do not require an Objective Noise Test.

Note 4

A new objective noise test is required every time the vehicle is ordered off the road for non-compliant exhaust noise, even if the vehicle is presented for WoF or CoF with a quieter or original exhaust system.

Note 5

Sight the ordering off the road notice or phone the NZ Police to find out when the ordering off the notice was issued.

Note 6

Externally venting wastegates (screamer pipes) are not permitted and cannot be certified as they are not adequately muffled and the exhaust gasses do not exit behind the passenger compartment. However, wastegates that feed gasses into their own muffled exhaust system exiting behind the passenger compartment, or feed gasses back into the vehicle's exhaust system, are permitted.

Note 7

Exhaust systems that direct exhaust fumes away from the perimeter of the vehicle's passenger compartment will comply with this requirement, and an OE fitment (or direct OE replacement) where the exhaust system terminates directly below the vehicle's floorpan is also permissible.

Note 8

The vehicle owner or operator is able to interfere with or modify the exhaust system by the use of a device fitted to the exhaust system that alters the noise output easily.

For example:

- a manually switched non-factory valve
- a flame thrower kit that could harm a person
- any other device intended to increase noise levels above allowable limits
- a removable blanking plate is fitted that can be removed without the use of hand tools.

Table 11-1-1. Noise limits for the Noise Quick Check

(see Note 3)

Vehicle	Noise limit (decibels) (Note 3)
Class LE with an engine capacity of 125 cc or less	93 dBA
Class LE with an engine capacity of more than 125 cc	97 dBA
Class MA, MB, MC, MD1, MD2, NA first registered in New Zealand before 1 June 2008	92 dBA
Class MA, MB, MC, MD1, MD2, NA first registered in New Zealand on or after 1 June 2008 and: – manufactured before 1 January 1985 – manufactured on or after 1 January 1985	92 dBA 87 dBA

Figure 11-1-1. Objective exhaust noise emission test certificate



Objective Exhaust Noise Emission Test Certificate

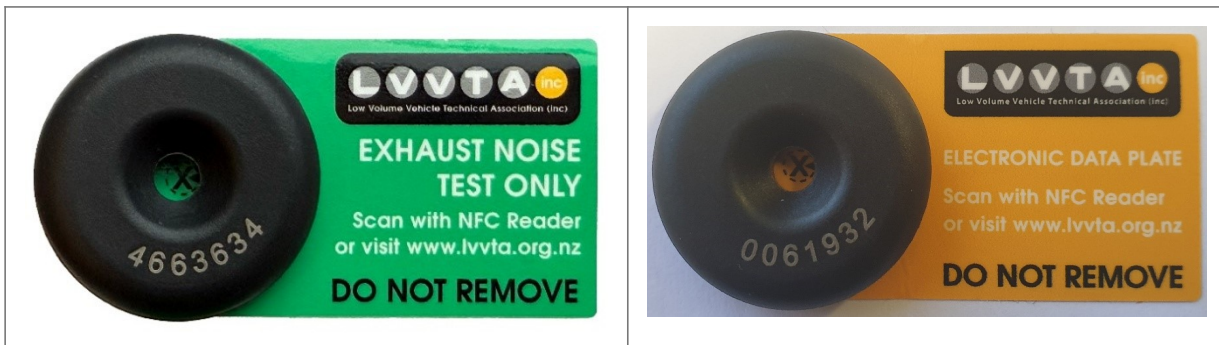
Vehicle and owner details: (white copy for vehicle owner)			
Owner: (Name)		(Contact Ph #) ()	
Vehicle: (Make)		(Model)	(Sub-model)
(Year)	(Colour)	(VIN)	
Engine: (Make)		(Code if known)	(Modified?)
(Cylinder configuration & #)		(Camshaft & valve arrangement)	
Exhaust system description & details:			
(a) Exhaust manifold(s): (make/type)			
(b) Front pipe(s): (OD/material/length)			
(c) Muffler(s)/resonator(s) #1: (make/material/length/OD)			
(d) Intermediate pipe(s): (OD/material/length)			
(e) Muffler(s)/resonator(s) #2: (make/material/length/OD)			
(f) Tail-pipe(s): (OD/material/length)			
(g) Other exhaust system details: (catalytic convertor(s)/balance pipe/additional mufflers/other)			
Low Volume Vehicle Certifier's declaration:			
LVV Certifier: (Name)		(ID)	(Contact Ph #) ()
<input type="checkbox"/> PASS:	Approval label: (Number)	(Location of label)	
I, the above-named Low Volume Vehicle Certifier appointed by the Low Volume Vehicle Technical Association (Inc) for the purpose of Objective Exhaust Noise Emission Testing, declare that, I carried out an objective exhaust noise emission test on the above-described vehicle in accordance with the procedures specified by Low Volume Vehicle Standard 90-20, and confirm that at the time of testing the vehicle complied with all requirements of, and emitted exhaust noise emissions not exceeding that specified by, Low Volume Vehicle Standard 90-20. (Signed)..... (Date).....			LVV certifier's authentication (only if pass is recorded): <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> [Authenticity sticker with hologram security feature] </div>
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIL:	Recommendations to vehicle owner on bringing the exhaust system into compliance (expert advice is offered without any guarantees of a pass as a result of the advice given or implied):		
Vehicle exhaust system schematic:			

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Figure 11-1-2. Objective noise test label



Figure 11-1-3. Green objective noise test electronic data plate and orange electronic data plate



From September 2025 a vehicle that passes an objective noise test (ONT) will be fitted with an electronic data plate (EDP), which will include either a green or orange label.

The green label indicates the EDP only contains ONT information, however the vehicle may also have an older style LVV engraved certification plate.

The orange label will be used when the vehicle has been LVV certified for modifications and may only cover modifications, but where an ONT is required and passed the EDP will cover both the ONT data and the LVV certified modifications.

Figure 11-1-4. Sample of objective noise test data

OBJECTIVE NOISE TEST (ONT) CERTIFICATION DETAILS	
ONT Date	04 Jun 2025
Manifold	
Front Pipe(s)	60mm OD Steel 550mm long
Muffler/Resonator	N/A
Intermediate Pipe(s)	2 x 50mm OD Steel 750mm long into Y pipe
2nd Muffler/Resonator	2 x 400mm x 100mm
Tail Pipe(s)	2 x 600mm x 45 OD into 2 x 500mm x 63 OD stainless, aftermarket rear sections
Other Exhaust System Details	Silencer plugs fitted to exhaust tips
Certifier	
Certifier ID	
Note	

Summary of legislation

Applicable legislation

- [Land Transport Rule: Vehicle Equipment 2004](#)
- [Land Transport Act 1998, section 115](#).

Mandatory equipment

1. A vehicle with an internal combustion engine must be fitted with an exhaust system (Note 1) (Note 6).
2. A vehicle that is presented for a WoF or CoF because it has been ordered off the road by an enforcement officer for non-compliant exhaust noise must pass an LVVTA objective noise test before the vehicle may be issued with a WoF or CoF (Note 4).

Condition

3. An exhaust system must not be constructed or modified in a way that allows a person to interfere readily with its operation or reduce its effectiveness.
4. An exhaust system must be designed, constructed, positioned and maintained in a way that minimises the risk of heat or fumes emitted from the system harming the vehicle's occupants.

Performance

5. An exhaust system must be effective and in good working order.
6. The noise output from the exhaust system of a class LE, MA, MB, MC, MD1, MD2 or NA vehicle (other than a class MA or MC motorsport vehicle with a valid motorsport authority card):
 - a) must be less than or similar to the noise output from the vehicle's original exhaust system at the time of the vehicle's manufacture, or
 - b) must not, if the noise output of the vehicle's original exhaust system at the time of the vehicle's manufacture is not known, exceed the applicable maximum decibel level when tested and certified by an LVV specialist certifier

in accordance with the LVVTA objective noise test.

Modification

7. A class LE, MA, MB, MC, MD1, MD2 or NA vehicle that has been modified so as to increase its exhaust noise output must have the exhaust system inspected, tested and certified by an LVV specialist certifier as having passed the LVVTA objective noise test, unless:

- a) the increased noise output is clearly below (Note 3) the applicable noise limits, and
- b) the vehicle has been inspected in accordance with the requirements in this manual, including those for equipment, condition and performance.

8. When a vehicle has been certified by an LVV specialist certifier as having passed the LVVTA objective noise test:

- a) the owner must produce a valid objective exhaust noise emissions test certificate (Figure 11-1-1), and
- b) the exhaust system tailpipe must be fitted with a valid LVVTA noise test label (Figure 11-1-2).

Page amended **30 July 2025** (see [amendment details](#)).

Page updated 1 October (see [details](#))

11-2 Exhaust emissions

Reasons for rejection

Performance

1. A vehicle with the engine at normal operating temperature (Note 1) emits clearly visible smoke ([Technical bulletin 8](#)) from the exhaust tailpipe (Note 2):

- a) for a continuous period of five seconds when the engine is idling and does not meet the additional requirements in Table 11-2-1, or
- b) as the engine is being rapidly accelerated to approximately 2500rpm or approximately half the maximum engine speed (whichever is lower) and does not meet the additional requirements in Table 11-2-1.

2. A vehicle (other than group L vehicle or a class MA or MC motorsport vehicle with a valid motorsport authority card) that was first registered in New Zealand on or after 1 May 2010 and manufactured from 1 January 1990 has a catalytic converter (or diesel particulate filter (DPF) in the case of diesel powered vehicles) removed where there is evidence that one was originally fitted, and there is no written evidence issued by an entry certifier that the vehicle passed a prescribed metered emissions test in this condition (Note 5) (Note 6) (Figure 11-2-1).

Note 1 Test procedure:

- a) Carry out the idling and acceleration tests in Reason for rejection 1. A vehicle that passes both tests with the engine below normal operating temperature is deemed to have passed with the engine at normal operating temperature.
- b) If the vehicle has failed either test, ensure the engine is at normal operating temperature. Then purge the system by increasing the engine speed to 2500 rpm (or half the maximum engine speed if this is lower) and holding it there for about 5 seconds. Repeat the idling and acceleration tests in Reasons for rejection 1.

Note 2

Visible emissions caused by the condensation of water vapour do not count as smoke.

Note 3

Acceptable evidence is:

- a) a letter on the letterhead of the manufacturer or manufacturer's representative, or
- b) a letter on the letterhead of an appropriate automobile club, or
- c) evidence of equal authority to (a) or (b) above, eg from an appropriate expert.

Note 4

The vehicle inspector may need to take into account further information about unusual or older vehicles, eg from an appropriate expert such as an office holder in a vintage car club.

Note 5

This reason for rejection does not apply if the vehicle operator can provide evidence that the vehicle was first certified for entry before 1 May 2008.

Note 6

The metered emissions test can only be carried out at entry certifier sites ([VTNZ](#), [VINZ](#), [NZAA](#)) where entry inspections are carried out. The entry certifiers will issue a document (Figure 11-2-1) that identifies the vehicle, whether or not the vehicle has passed the test, and whether or not the vehicle was tested with any OE catalytic converters removed. A metered emissions test is not required if a catalytic converter is refitted, or if there is evidence that the vehicle was not originally fitted with a catalytic converter.

Table 11-2-1. Additional requirements

Type of vehicle	Additional requirements
<p>First registered on or after 1 January 1960 with four-stroke engine, or</p> <p>First registered before 1 January 1960 with four-stroke engine manufactured on or after 1 January 1960.</p>	<p>1. Document produced by the vehicle operator that proves that (Note 3):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the engine is original equipment for the vehicle, and b) its design means that the vehicle cannot reasonably comply with the visible smoke emission requirements. <p>Note No evidence is required if, during the acceleration test, a diesel-powered vehicle emits moderate smoke caused by turbo lag.</p> <p>2. The smoke produced is not noticeably and significantly more visible than it would have been when the vehicle was manufactured and supplied with the fuel recommended by the manufacturer.</p>
<p>First registered before 1 January 1960 with four-stroke engine manufactured before 1 January 1960, or</p> <p>Vehicle with two-stroke engine or rotary engine.</p>	<p>The smoke produced is not noticeably and significantly more visible than it would have been when the vehicle was manufactured and supplied with the fuel recommended by the manufacturer (Note 4).</p>

Figure 11-2-1. Exhaust emissions test certificate



Metered exhaust emissions test

Vehicle details

Make/model																			
VIN/chassis number																			
Registration plate number																			

Metered emissions test results

Engine/fuel type	Permitted maximum	Test result	
Petrol 4-stroke or rotary	1% CO 300ppm HC	% CO	ppm HC
Petrol 2-stroke	4.5% CO 7800ppm HC	% CO	ppm HC
Diesel	0.64 OAC or 0.8 OAC average	OAC value	Tick if OAC average value <input type="checkbox"/>

Test result printout attached: **YES / NO** (please circle)

Was the vehicle tested with the catalytic converter(s) fitted? **YES / NO** (please circle)

Test result: **PASS / FAIL** (please circle)

<i>I confirm that I have tested the above vehicle in accordance with the NZTA-prescribed metered emissions test.</i>		
Location	Site ID	TSDA stamp
Inspector ID	Date	
Inspector's signature		

Note to the vehicle operator: This document, or a copy of this document, must be kept in the vehicle and produced to a vehicle inspector or enforcement officer on request.

- Download a copy of the [Exhaust emissions test certificate](#)

Summary of legislation

Applicable legislation

- [Land Transport Rule: Vehicle Exhaust Emissions 2007](#).

Performance

1. A motor vehicle must not emit clearly visible smoke (Note 2) when the vehicle's engine is running at its normal operating temperature, under either of the following conditions:

- a) for a continuous period of five seconds when the engine is idling
- b) as the engine is being accelerated rapidly to approximately 2500 revolutions per minute or approximately half the maximum engine speed (whichever is lower).

2. Requirement 1 above does not apply if the driver of the vehicle produces documentation that proves that the engine is original equipment for the vehicle and the engine's design means the vehicle cannot reasonably comply (Note 3).

3. The exhaust emissions system or exhaust control equipment of a vehicle (other than a group L vehicle or a class MA or MC motorsport vehicle) first certified for entry into service on or after 1 May 2008 and manufactured on or after 1 January 1990 must not be modified so as to prevent the vehicle from being able to pass a prescribed metered emissions test.

Technical Information

- www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/vehicle-failed-smoky-exhaust/smoky-exhaust-test.html
- Download a copy of the [Exhaust emissions test certificate](#)

Page amended **2 December 2019** (see [amendment details](#)).