Correct as at 18th May 2026. It may be superseded at any time.

Extract taken from: Entry certification > Technical bulletins > Inspection of daytime running lamps

12 Inspection of daytime running lamps

Vehicle inspection requirements manual references

This bulletin gives guidance to vehicle inspectors in applying the following requirements in the *VIRM: Entry certification*:

- **Lighting – 4-4 Daytime running lamps: Reasons for rejection 1, 2 and 3**

Application

This bulletin applies to the lighting equipment (daytime running lamps in particular) fitted to vehicles undergoing entry certification in New Zealand.

Identifying daytime running lamps

When trying to identify daytime running lamps, it may help to check out the beam pattern, the light intensity, the wiring and any markings on the lens.

Beam pattern

For comparison, a fog lamp has a spread beam with a sharp horizontal cutoff and must be fitted in a dipped position.

Light intensity

Under UN/ECE and Australian Design Rules (ADR), a daytime running lamp is generally of low intensity (up to 800 cd max, compared with a headlamp high beam around 80,000–100,000 cd max). There is no hotspot but a blur of light that passes as a beam. The lamps are not required to be dipped, but must turn off when the headlamps are switched on.

Under FMVSS, existing forward-facing lamps (except side lamps and fog lamps) may operate as daytime running lamps. This means that daytime running lamps automatically turn on when the vehicle is started, but turn off when the headlamps are activated. Daytime running lamps fitted as separate lamps must have a light intensity between 500 and 3000 cd.

Wiring

Fog lamps are usually wired so they can operate independently of the headlamps, while daytime running lamps are usually wired so they turn off when the headlamps are switched on.

Markings

Some daytime running lamps may be marked in accordance with a standard (eg an ‘RL’ mark on UN/ECE- and some ADR-compliant lamps, and ‘DRL’ on FMVSS-compliant lamps).