

4 July 2011

342-352 Lambton Quay
Wellington
New Zealand
PO Box 1
Wellington
New Zealand

Omnibus Amendment 2011
Rules Team
NZ Transport Agency
Private Bag 6995
WELLINGTON 6141
Email: info@nzta.govt.nz

T. +64 4 931 9999
F. +64 4 931 9960

Dear Sir/Madam

OMNIBUS AMENDMENT 2011 (Rule 10007)

Introduction

The New Zealand Automobile Association (NZAA) welcomes the opportunity to provide comment on the Omnibus Amendment Rule 2011.

The NZAA is an incorporated society with 1.3 million Members. It represents the interests of road users who collectively pay over \$2 billion in taxes each year through fuel excise, road user charges, registration fees, ACC levies, and GST. The NZAA's advocacy and policy work mainly focuses on protecting the freedom of choice and rights of motorists, keeping the cost of motoring fair and reasonable, and enhancing the safety of all road users.

Comments on the relevant proposals for which we have feedback are provided below:

Proposal 13: Driver Licensing

The NZAA supports the proposal to improve the integrity of the driver license system by reducing the ability for people to obtain more than one driver licence by using different names.

Proposal 16: Driver Licensing

We support the proposal to clarify the intention in the Rule that any driver renewing their licence beyond their 75th birthday must provide a medical certificate, even if they renew the licence before they turn 75.

Proposal 18: Frontal Impact

The proposal to amend the Special Interest Vehicle criterion under the Frontal Impact Rule relating to annual production volumes to include *sub-model* in addition to *make* and *model* is supported, as it is consistent with the SIV criteria under the Steering Systems Rule, and will be more equitable for people wishing to import non-frontal impact compliant specialist *sub-models*.

Proposal 21 & 22: Light-vehicle Brakes

The NZAA supports the proposal to remove the requirement for a safety chain to be fitted to a light trailer if a compliant breakaway brake is fitted instead. We have been in communication with the Motor Caravan Association, who raised this issue, and consider the proposal will enhance light trailer safety. We commend the Ministry of Transport and NZTA for addressing this issue promptly after it was raised by the MCA.

The present requirement in the Rule to require chains to be fitted to all TA or TB class trailers under 2000kg laden weight, meaning breakaway brakes should be removed if they were fitted by the manufacturer, actually reduces the safety standard of these light trailers and caravans. Anecdotally, we understand that in some cases chains were retrofitted as required, yet the breakaway brakes were not removed, and as the two systems are incompatible this could further compromise safety in the event of a tow coupling failure. It may be necessary to issue an advisory to ensure such vehicles are identified (and rectified) at the WoF check.

On the subject of tow couplings, the NZAA is aware of issues regarding the safety of tow bars, and are concerned that aftermarket tow bars are not required to meet any design standard. We have seen evidence of new tow bars failing moderate load tests and yet they pass a visual WoF inspection. Additionally, a coroner has recently issued a warning about the safety of Auckland's A1 Bars 1994 Ltd. We consider tow bar safety needs to be investigated by the MoT with a view to amending the Vehicle Equipment Rule so that all new tow bars must meet a minimum standard (including installation), and that manufacturer compliance with these standards is audited. This matter should be addressed with similar speed as the above amendment to the Light-Vehicle Brakes Rule, as we consider the number of vehicles with unsafe tow bars may be far greater than the number of light trailers fitted with both chains and breakaway brakes. Some consideration will also need to be given to assessing the safety of in-service of tow bars beyond a simple WoF inspection for visual faults.

We also support Proposal 22 to amend the definition of a 'direct trailer service brake'.

Proposal 27: Traffic Control Devices

The NZAA supports this proposal as per our submission on the Road User Amendment Rule 2011, and we restate our proviso that the amount of time the school bus sign lights remain flashing should be controlled by some mechanism so the lights are not inadvertently left on, thus confusing motorists and diluting compliance with the Rule.

Proposal 30: Vehicle Standards Compliance

The NZAA *opposes* this proposal. We do not consider that vehicles imported under the Geneva Convention, irrespective of however temporary, should only need to meet a lower safety standard than New Zealand's WoF regime. We consider the current requirement in the Rule is satisfactory because it does not provide for vehicles imported under the Geneva Convention, and therefore all imported vehicles operating on NZ roads must comply with NZ vehicle safety requirements.

We also consider inspecting vehicles to a different standard under the Convention could add an unnecessary level of confusion to the inspection process.

We would be interested to understand how many vehicles are temporarily imported every year, that would meet the criteria under the Convention, and what additional cost or inconvenience this adds to owners that would be avoided if this proposal were adopted.

Yours sincerely



Mike Noon
General Manager Motoring Affairs