

New bus technical specifications

TS142/150 – Signs

Introduction

Transport for NSW, Roads and Maritime Services and the bus industry have worked together to make changes to the specifications for signage and flashing warning 'wigwag' lights on buses to improve safety and the visibility of school bus warning systems. These specifications were published on 08 August 2018 and take effect from 08 February 2019.

Why have these changes been introduced?

These changes will work to improve the safety of school children travelling to and from school in New South Wales.

This will happen by:

- Increasing the visibility of the warning system on school buses by expanding the size and contrast of the regulatory signage and flashing wigwag lights.
- Introducing a boundary of 100mm under the regulatory 'WHEN LIGHTS FLASH' speed limit sign to exclude advertising text or images.

What do the changes mean for operators?

The changes mean there are new technical specifications relating to warning signs and lights for school buses. The new requirements for signage and flashing warning commonly known as 'wigwag' lights on buses are explained in the following two specifications:

Technical Specification 142 (TS142): *'Warning signs and lights for school buses'* (for existing buses) has been updated to introduce a boundary of 100mm under the 'WHEN LIGHTS FLASH' and '40 km/h' speed limit signs to exclude advertising text or images.

This requirement will be introduced 6 months after the release of the updated TS142 (08 August 2018) and therefore apply from 08 February 2019.

Technical Specification 150 (TS150): *'Warning signs and lights for school buses'* (for new buses) is a new specification and:

- Specifies increasing the size and contrast of warning signage;
- Specifies increasing the brightness of the flashing 'wigwag' lights;
- Introduces a boundary of 100mm under the 'WHEN LIGHTS FLASH' and '40 km/h' speed limit signs to exclude advertising text or images; and
- Requires signs to be placed on the bus so that their appearance is not concealed or distorted in any way.

The new requirements of TS150 will apply to all buses first registered 6 months after the release of TS150 (08 August 2018) and therefore apply from 08 February 2019.

What do the changes mean for manufacturers?

Operators may request buses to be constructed to comply with TS150. The Bus Industry Confederation and BusNSW have been consulted and manufacturers are aware of these changes and the need to supply buses to these requirements when requested.

How will these changes improve safety?

These improvements have been introduced to ensure that regulatory signs can be clearly seen by approaching motorists, and provide them with sufficient time to slow down and pass a school bus safely.

How long do I have to comply with the technical specifications?

TS142 and TS150 have been released on the 8 August 2018. To allow sufficient time for buses to comply with these new requirements, the technical specifications take effect from 08 February 2019.

Which technical specification do I need to use?

The new requirements of TS150 will apply to all applicable buses first registered 6 months after the release of TS150 (08 August 2018) and therefore apply from 08 February 2019.

TS142 will apply to existing buses in the fleet from 6 months after its release and will therefore apply from 08 February 2019.

Who can do the work required to get my buses to comply?

Operators should seek advice from their vehicle manufacturer or body builder. Operators seeking to purchase a bus to transport school children should advise their manufacturer or vehicle dealer of their need to comply with the relevant technical specifications. This would facilitate taking possession of a new bus that complies with TS150.

Can my old bus comply with TS150?

Yes. Older buses may be improved to comply with TS150. Complying with TS150 is deemed to satisfy the requirements of complying with TS142.

Can I make my entire fleet the same (TS142 or TS150)?

The warning lights and signs fitted to your bus fleet may be improved to comply with TS150 (08 February 2019). Buses first registered 6 months after the release of TS150 are required to comply with the requirements of TS150.

Are these signs and lights required on school-owned buses or buses chartered to provide school bus services?

These specifications are required for any bus that seats over 12 persons including the driver, which:

- Conveys school children to or from school on weekdays between the hours of 7.00am and 9.30am or 2.30pm and 5.00pm; or
- Is used solely for the purpose of conveying children to or from school.

Are these specifications required on small buses that transport students to and from school under contract to the Department of Education or others?

These specifications are required for any bus that seats over 12 persons including the driver, which:

- Conveys school children to or from school on weekdays between the hours of 7.00am and 9.30am or 2.30pm and 5.00pm; or

- Is used solely for the purpose of conveying children to or from school.

Can I keep existing advertising?

Existing advertising can be kept until 08 February 2019. However, from 08 February 2019, TS142 and TS150 introduce a boundary of 100mm under the 'WHEN LIGHTS FLASH' and '40 km/h' speed limit signs to exclude advertising text or images. Any material added (such as a vinyl wrap) above this boundary must be in either a monochromatic colour scheme or transparent and clear without any colour.

How do I ensure that my vehicle complies with TS150?

Rural and regional operators will need to provide a warranty that the new safety warning lights have been installed and that they comply with the technical specification TS150. They can do this by completing a simple pro forma warranty and sending this through to their contract manager, together with an invoice for the installation costs.

In the event a vehicle, which had been advised by the operator as complying with the technical specification, is found to be non-compliant at the first Heavy Vehicle Inspection Scheme (HVIS) inspection after the specification came in to effect (08 February 2019), a defect notice will be issued to the operator with potential KPI / KPI Credit impacts for Major / Major Grounded Defects.

Metro and outer metro bus operators can demonstrate their vehicle complies with TS150 at their first HVIS inspection which takes place after the specification has come into effect (08 February 2019). Should a Metro or Outer Metro bus operator vehicle not comply with TS150, a defect notice will be issued to the operator with potential KPI / KPI Credit impacts for Major / Major Grounded Defects.

It is the bus operator's responsibility to ensure their vehicles comply with the relevant technical specifications.

For further information

Please contact your Contract Manager, for contract related matters.

If you require more information about technical specifications, please contact Roads and Maritime Technical Enquires on **1300 137 302**.