

# Vehicles for people with disabilities

This information bulletin aims to outline the process for fitting a vehicle with adaptive controls and modifications for the use and carriage of people with a disability.

Having a physical disability does not mean you can't drive!

The majority of people with a physical disability can obtain or continue to hold a licence as long as they are assessed as being safe to drive and the fitting of any specialist equipment, modifications or restrictions to do this are recorded as a condition(s) of driving on their licence.

If you have a medical condition that could impact your ability to drive safely, you need to notify the Department of State Growth. [Complete form here.](#)

It is highly recommended you seek the advice of an Occupational Therapist who is suitably qualified in driver assessment and training before fitting any specialist equipment or undertaking modifications to any vehicle.

The level of disability will determine the complexity of any modifications required to the vehicle driver controls and or vehicle body and or seating.

## Vehicles modified for people with a disability;

When a vehicle is modified, the owner is responsible for the vehicle's continued compliance with the regulatory requirements, vehicle standards, safety and roadworthiness.

Vehicles that have specialist equipment or adaptive controls fitted are required to have the modifications certified by an [http://www.transport.tas.gov.au/vehicles/vehicle\\_inspections/avcais](http://www.transport.tas.gov.au/vehicles/vehicle_inspections/avcais) (AVC) approved to certify for adaptive controls.

Some of the modifications that require certification include the fitment of steering wheel spinner knobs, steering wheel accelerator rings, hand controls for foot and or brake, fitting alternate accelerator or brake pedals, alternate light wiper or operational controls, removing seats, fitting wheelchair tracking and restraint systems, hoists, ramps modifying the floor, roof, suspension, exhaust, fuel tank location etc.

If the vehicle is to be replaced or the adaptive controls are no longer required they must be removed from the vehicle and the vehicle returned to standard.

## Adaptive driver controls;

Where possible the type of adaptive controls fitted to a vehicle should meet the requirements of the [Australian Standards](#) AS3954 parts 1 and 2.

There are some electronic adaptive controls available that do not meet the above standard. Subject to the certification mentioned above the registrar will allow the fitment of proprietary adaptive controls from reputable companies that have tested their controls and provided evidence as being acceptable for use. Homemade controls are not acceptable unless tested and certified by an appropriate engineer as meeting the requirements of AS3954 parts 1 & 2.

The fitment of adaptive controls must not interfere with any vehicle safety system fitted to the vehicle Eg: SRS airbags.

There are some systems available that when fitted interfere with knee airbags. These systems are not approved for use. Adaptive controls that interfere with the deployment of the knee airbag may only be fitted if the system disables the knee airbag ONLY when fitted and when the adaptive control is removed reinstates the knee airbag operation.

Adaptive controls are to be used only by those with a disability that requires their use. A person with no disability or a disability that is not suited to the modifications should not drive the vehicle.

# Vehicles for people with disabilities

## Vehicle modifications for passengers;

Some passengers may require the vehicle to be modified for them to be transported in the vehicle.

Examples may include wheelchair spaces requiring the removal or modification of existing seats, modified doors to accommodate the fitment of hoists or ramps. These and other modifications to the vehicle, roof, floor, suspension Etc. are required to be certified by an AVC.

Wheelchair occupant restraint systems can provide protection in most crashes if they are correctly installed and adjusted for the occupant. In general wheelchairs are not well suited to the requirements for vehicle seating and the occupants are, where possible better seated in the factory fitted seats, wearing the approved seat belts. All wheelchairs are required to be restrained securely.

Wheelchair restraints and wheelchair occupant restraints must be designed, constructed and installed in accordance with the requirements of the [Australian Standards](#) AS/NZS 10542.1, this also includes the space required for the occupied wheelchair.

Vehicle mounted ramps and hoist must be designed, constructed and installed in accordance with the requirements of [Australian Standards](#) AS 3856 parts 1 & 2.

Where an additional or modified door has been fitted it must be compliant with [Australian Design Rule](#) (ADR) 29 for strength and ADR 2 for door latches and hinges.

The location of hoist or ramps should not block any fitted emergency exit, alternate emergency exits may need to be fitted and require AVC certification.

## Web Links;

AVC's can be located at the following link; [http://www.transport.tas.gov.au/vehicles/vehicle\\_inspections/avcais](http://www.transport.tas.gov.au/vehicles/vehicle_inspections/avcais)

Third Party self-notification form

[www.transport.tas.gov.au/\\_data/assets/word\\_doc/0018/114048/MR138\\_10\\_14\\_Third\\_Party\\_Notification.docx](http://www.transport.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/word_doc/0018/114048/MR138_10_14_Third_Party_Notification.docx)

The [Australian Standards](#) can be purchased from; [infostore.saiglobal.com/](http://infostore.saiglobal.com/)

The [ADRs](#) can be accessed at the following; [www.infrastructure.gov.au/roads/motor/design/adr\\_online.aspx](http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/roads/motor/design/adr_online.aspx)

### For more information contact:

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