

Motor Vehicle Registry Information Bulletin

R21 - Special Purpose Vehicles

Since 1 September 2000, the definition of Special Purpose Vehicles, was replaced with three (3) specific categories of Special Purpose Vehicles which makes vehicle identification (for the purpose of registration and charging), more streamlined. The categories are Plant Special Vehicle (PSV), Truck Special Vehicle (TSV) and Overmass Special Vehicle (OSV).

Definition of a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)

A Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) means a vehicle over 4.5 tonnes GVM/ATM, where the primary purpose for which it was built, or permanently modified, was not for the carriage of goods, or passengers.

Vehicle registered as mobile plant and having a gross operating mass over 4.5 tonnes GVM (kerb weight of item fully fuelled with all attachments as per manufacturer specifications) will now be registered as an SPV.

General Principles of Special Purpose Vehicles

Special Purpose Vehicles consist of either plant-based vehicles or truck or trailer based vehicles. They are assessed as being either one or the other on the basis of:

- The area they are designed to operate in, as indicated by their construction. And
- Whether or not they would be significantly restricted in their use of roads.

Neither type is permitted to carry passengers on a commercial or recreational basis, or to carry goods on a road.

Rules for Defining Special Purpose Vehicles

Rule 1 - Primary Purpose Determined by Construction

- (a) The primary purpose of the vehicle is determined by its construction, and not by the intent of use nominated by the operator.
- (b) The vehicle is constructed to perform, as its primary purpose, a specific function unrelated to the carriage of goods or passengers on the general road network.
- (c) The vehicle cannot operate as a load or passenger carrying vehicle if the mechanism to perform the specific function is removed.

RULE 2 - ACCESS TO THE ROAD NETWORK

- (a) A special purpose vehicle which has a load carrying capacity **should be limited by condition of registration** to loaded operation in off-road or specified areas (i.e. construction sites).
- (b) No special purpose vehicle with an allotted load carrying capacity should have unrestricted access to the road system.

The New Categories and What they Mean

TYPE P (PSV) – PLANT = NIL registration charge

Are plant-based (including trailers) Special Purpose Vehicles and includes plant based trailers, built or permanently modified, primarily for:

- Off road use;
- Use on a road related area; or
- Use on an area that is under construction or repair.

Unless overmass, (*meaning the mass on the axles are over the legal limits*) these vehicles **do not** attract a registration charge, but third party insurance, inspection and administrative fees will apply.

Some examples of this kind are bulldozers, backhoes, graders and front-end loaders

TYPE T (TSV) – TRUCK

Are truck-based (including trailers) Special Purpose Vehicles (other than type P) that are:

- (a) Built, or permanently modified, primarily for use on roads; and
- (b) That has no axle group loaded in excess of the mass limits for the purpose of this definition.

Some possible examples of this kind are mobile cranes, truck mounted concrete pumpers and boring plants. These may also fall within the definition of special purpose vehicle (**type O (OSV)** if they **have one axle or axle group** loaded in excess of the mass limits.

TYPE O (OSV) – OVERMASS

May be plant or truck-based Special Purpose Vehicles that are:

- (a) Built, or permanently modified for use on roads; and
- (b) That has at least one axle or axle group loaded in excess of the limits specified in the regulations for the purposes of this definition.

Some possible examples of this kind are mobile cranes, truck mounted concrete pumpers and boring plants. These may also fall within the definition of **special purpose vehicle (type T (TSV))** if they have **no axle or axle group** loaded in excess of the mass limits.

Non-eligible Vehicles

The following are examples of vehicles that **are not** eligible to be registered as SPV's because they have unlimited access to the general road network. If there is any doubt, the SPV assessment rules should be applied.

VEHICLE	REASON FOR EXCLUSION
Police vans	Unrestricted operation. Primary purpose is to carry passengers
Caravan, mobile home, converted bus as mobile home, mobile laboratory	Unrestricted operation. Load carrying capabilities
Desludger, eductor, water tanker or sprayer, bitumen tanker or sprayer, sludge or septic tanker, garbage compactor	Unrestricted operation. All of these vehicles have been constructed for the primary purpose of carrying a load. Other purposes are secondary
Mobile billboard, display bus, mobile library, mobile workshop, mobile kitchen/workshop	Unrestricted operation. Load carrying capability
Pole erectors with provision for carrying poles	Unrestricted operation. Load carrying capability
Tow trucks (including trucks with retractable trays)	Unrestricted operation. All of these vehicles have been constructed for the primary purpose of either directly carrying a load on a retractable platform or via a crane jib
Concrete mixer/agitator	Unrestricted operation. Primary purpose is for on road transport of concrete. Secondary purpose (of agitator) is to keep load liquid.
Primemover used to tow or power circus or entertainment equipment	Unrestricted operation. Construction and primary purpose of primemover is to haul a load carrying semi-trailer. Powering circus equipment is a secondary function
General access vehicles fitted with equipment to lift loads on and off	Unrestricted access. Primary purpose of vehicle is to carry on-road loads. Lifting ability is secondary function

Notes for Guidance

Goods

Does not include fuel, water, lubricants, tools and any other equipment or accessories necessary for the normal operation of the vehicle, eg in the case of a crane, **Goods** would not include any chains on the crane necessary to operate the crane.

Passengers

Does not include the driver, a trainee driver or any other person necessary for the normal operation of the vehicle.

Registration Charges

To determine the amount of registration you will pay, please contact your nearest Motor Vehicle Registry.

Contact Details	
Motor Vehicle Registry	
Telephone	1300 654 628
Facsimile	(08) 8999 3103
Email	mvr@nt.gov.au
Web	www.mvr.nt.gov.au
Postal Address	GPO Box 530 Darwin NT 0801