

Vehicle Standards Guide 29 (VSG-29)

Rear marking plates and 'DO NOT OVERTAKE TURNING VEHICLE' signs

Revised August 2025

This guide provides information for operators and owners of heavy vehicles about the retroreflective requirements of rear marking plates and Do Not Overtake Turning Vehicle (DNOTV) signs.

Background

The *Heavy Vehicle National Law* (HVNL) requires retroreflective markings to be fitted to the rear of certain heavy vehicles to improve their visibility. One way this can be achieved is by fitting rear marking plates, which comply with the applicable parts of Australian Standard (AS) 4001 *Vehicles - Rear marker plates - Reflective rear marker plates*.

A 2017 review of AS4001 found that Class 2 plates do not perform as well and were not as durable as newer style plates. On these grounds, it was decided that over a three-year period the NHVR would phase out the use of Class 2 plates in favour of the newer, better performing plates.

From 1 January 2021, the fitting of Class 2 rear marking plates to heavy vehicles is prohibited due to their poor performance and durability compared to newer style plates. Operators with Class 2 plates fitted prior to this date are not required to upgrade them until the plates are next due for replacement.

Class 2 plates are no longer available for purchase and all new installations must use plates that meet current standards. While operators may choose to upgrade older plates at any time, replacement is only required when plates no longer meet the required condition or markings. Class 2 plates that remain in good order do not pose a significant safety risk, though upgrading to newer plates is recommended.

Which vehicles require these marking plates?

Rear marking plates can be fitted to any vehicle however, all motor vehicles with a GVM over 12 tonnes and trailers with a GTM over 10 tonnes **must** be fitted with rear marking plates or ADR13/.. conspicuity markings. Buses with a GVM over 12 tonnes must also be fitted with rear marking plates or ADR13/.. conspicuity markings, except those fitted with hand grips (or similar equipment) for use by standing passengers.

Do Not Overtake Turning Vehicle (DNOTV) sign

The obligation to provide the DNOTV warning is a road rule (not HVNL) and applies equally to heavy and light vehicles/combinations that are 7.5m or longer. When fitted, these signs allow the driver of the vehicle/combination to occupy more than a single lane in order to safely navigate an intersection.

Vehicles/combinations less than 7.5m in length **must not** be fitted with DNOTV signs.

Category or Class?

The **category** of a plate refers to the size and design of the plate. Plates are assigned a code on this basis e.g. a 300mm wide x 300mm high plate is designated as Category 33.

The **Class** of plate refers to the type of reflective material used on the plate.

The **Categories** of rear marking plates have not changed.

How do I know what Class my plates are?

The easiest way to tell the difference between the newer style of plates and the old Class 2 plates is that the newer classes of plates have a honeycomb or diamond pattern that sits behind the print (see Figures 1 and 2), whereas Class 2 plates have a flat appearance (see Figure 3).

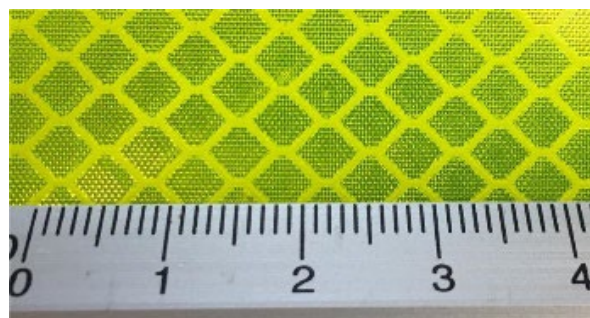


Figure 1: Example of pattern on newer Classes of plates

In addition to the visual differences between the plates, compliant rear marking plates must be printed with certain information. This is limited to:

- the approved text and graphics
- the name of the manufacturer or agent
- letters indicating the correct orientation on the vehicle
- AS4001.1 and the class of retroreflective material (see notes on correct format below).

Class 1A and Class 400 plates

The words printed on the plate must state '**AS 4001.1 Class X**', where 'X' is the class of retroreflective sheeting material used.

UNECE Regulation 70 plates

The words printed on the plate must state '**AS 4001.1 UN R70**' (an approval mark as required by UNECE R70 may also be printed on the plate).

Note: The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) create internationally recognised standards used throughout the world. These standards are recognised in Australia when they are specified in an Australian law, standard or design rule.

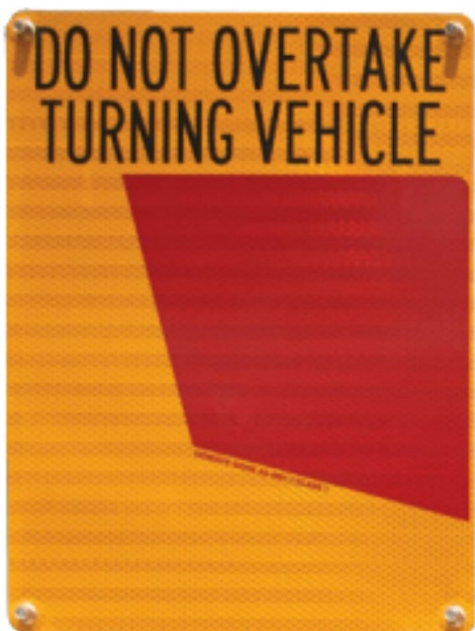


Figure 2: Example of Class 1 rear marking plate (Category 34A)



Figure 3: Example of Class 2 rear marking plate (Category 34A)

Frequently asked questions

When should I replace rear marking plates?

You must replace any rear marking plates that are:

- faded
- damaged
- incorrectly fitted
- no longer clearly marked with all required information.

Note: Do not mix Class 2, Class 1A, Class 400 and UNECE R70 rear marking plates on a vehicle as they have different reflective properties.

Do I need to replace all the plates on the vehicle?

No. These changes mean that you only need to replace marking plates that meet any of the conditions listed above.

It is important to ensure that all rear marking plates on a vehicle are made of the same reflective material. This means that if a trailer currently fitted with Class 2 plates has a plate that is damaged, any matching plate(s) must also be replaced.

Note: These changes **do not** affect Long Vehicle, Road Train or Oversize signs.

Do I need to purchase the Australian Standard?

No. There is no need for operators to purchase the Australian Standard (AS4001) for rear marking plates.

AS4001 is split into two relevant parts. The first part (AS4001.1) details the manufacturing requirements that apply to rear marking plates. Only manufacturers engaged in the production of rear marking plates need purchase this standard.

The second part of the standard (AS4001.2) specifies fitting requirements. Operators do not need to purchase AS4001.2 as the NHVR has published everything you need to know in order to comply with the requirements in [VSB12](#).

These requirements are nationally consistent across all states and territories in Australia.

Where can I get more information?

The [Vehicle Standards Bulletin \(VSB\) 12 – National Code of Practice – Rear marking plates](#) identifies the types of plates that can be used, where they are placed on the vehicle and the methods for installing them.

Chain of Responsibility

The primary duty requires [Chain of Responsibility](#) parties to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that they carry out their transport activities in a way that ensures public safety when heavy vehicles are used on a road.

Keeping up to date with vehicle standards and implementing them in your fleet is one part of your transport activities.

Complying with the national heavy vehicle safety standards

The operator of a heavy vehicle must ensure that their vehicle complies with the relevant *Australian Design Rules* (ADRs) and the *Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulation*. Using or permitting another person to use a defective heavy vehicle on a road is an offence.

A defective heavy vehicle is a vehicle that:

- does not comply with the heavy vehicle safety standards; or
- has a part that does not perform its intended function; or
- has deteriorated to an extent that it cannot be reasonably relied on to perform its intended function.

Penalties can include on-the-spot fines or prosecution. Formal warnings or a defect notice may also be issued. More information can be found at [Heavy vehicle defects | NHVR](#).

For more information:

Visit: www.nhvr.gov.au/vehiclestandards
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