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IMPORTING MOTOR VEHICLES TO AUSTRALIA

In order to import a motor vehicle or bike for intended road use into Australia, the owner must have owned and used the vehicle overseas for twelve months continuously.

If the vehicle owner has an Australian passport or holds a permanent Australian Resident Visa, the vehicle can be imported. **However there will be duty on the purchase value of the vehicle of 15% plus a further 10% GST on the CIF value (cost, insurance, freight & duty) of the vehicle. If the CIF value of the vehicle is more than A\$55,000.00, the owner will pay have to pay an additional 25% luxury tax on the portion of the value that is above A\$55,000.00.**

In order to import the vehicle, an application permit must be lodged with the "Vehicle Safety Standards Department", along with a A\$50.00 fee. The permit takes approximately four weeks to be issued and MUST be received by Move Management Australia prior to the vehicle arriving in Australia – otherwise it cannot be cleared by Customs and will incur bond storage and warehouse handling charges.

In order to obtain a duty and tax estimate: please advise the following details for each vehicle:

- Year vehicle purchased
- Month vehicle purchased
- Amount vehicle purchased for (in foreign currency)
- Vehicle make/model

If the vehicle owner is not an Australian citizen or is entering Australia on a temporary visa status: they have two options.

Option 1: If they are only coming to Australia for 1-2 years, a Carnet can be applied for in their country of origin. In doing this modifications and duty/GST will be avoided, however, the vehicle MUST be re-exported from Australia prior to the expiry date of the Carnet.

Option 2: If the owner intends staying longer in Australia and cannot obtain a Carnet, the motor vehicle will need to be made compliant. In order to do this, a letter of intent is required from an authorised dealer, which is then forwarded to Customs. Customs will then issue a "Lock Specification" (letter), which will enable the vehicle to be released and sent to an authorised dealer upon arrival in Australia for inspection. Assuming no modifications are required, compliance plates will be issued by the Vehicle Safety Standards office. Customs are then advised of the vehicle's compliance and they will issue a "vehicle import permit".

PERSONALLY IMPORTED VEHICLES

The "personally imported vehicle" scheme is a concession that permits a personally imported vehicle to be used in the State of New South Wales without the need to show that it meets Australian Design Rule standards. This is as long as the vehicle provides a level of safety similar to that of other Australian manufactured vehicles. This concession is only available to a person of driving age who are either migrants taking up permanent residency in Australia for the first time or Australian citizens returning to Australia after a long term overseas stay. Visitors, temporary residents, companies and corporations are not eligible. A limit of 2 x vehicles is permitted per family unless the vehicles have been registered/insured under a dependents name for 12 months prior to export.

Vehicle import approval documentation

This is required from the "Federal Office of Road Safety" when presenting a vehicle for registration. This document identifies the owner of the vehicle as the importer.

Personal import plates

A vehicle imported under this concession must have a personal import plate in order to be registered. A personal import plate is a metal plate, which is obtained after the vehicle, is modified or inspected to be of an acceptable standard for NSW registration, after it is inspected by an Authorised Examiner from an Authorised Unregistered Vehicle Inspection Station (AUVIS).

When the vehicle is physically inspected, the "Federal Office of Road Safety Vehicle Import Approval" document will be signed and forwarded by the Authorised Examiner to an approved plate manufacturer who will then manufacture and issue the personal import plate. The plate will then be sent to the owner of the vehicle, usually within one to two weeks. The plate must be attached to the vehicle in accordance with the fitting instructions supplied with the plate and the vehicle must then be re-inspected by AUVIS to finalise the registration process.

Construction requirements for personally imported vehicles

Seat belt markings

Driver's and outer front passenger's seat: Lap/sash seat belts must be fitted in all passenger cars, station sedan/wagons, utilities and panel vans manufactured in 1965 or later. Lap/sash seat belts must be fitted in all other vehicles such as light trucks, four wheel drive vehicles manufactured in 1969 or later.

Centre front passenger's seat belt (if fitted): A lap belt must be fitted in all vehicles manufactured in 1969 or later.

Centre rear passenger's seat (if fitted): Lap belt must be fitted in all vehicles manufactured in 1971 or later.

Outer rear passenger's seats: Lap/sash seat belts must be fitted in all vehicles manufactured in 1971 or later.

Also, all fitted seat belts must have approved "markings". For example; the certification mark of the "Standards Association of Australia", the "British Standards Institution", a mark in accordance with "ECE Regulation No. 16/04", the "Japanese Standard JIS D 4604" or "NZ Standards NZS 5401 "(seat belts made from 1983).

Child restraint anchorages.

Passenger cars manufactured on or after 1st July, 1976 must be fitted with child restraint anchorages for each rear seating position.

Glazing.

All glazing used in the vehicle's windscreen, windows or interior partitions must be approved safety glass. In the case of a windscreen, it must have no tinted film in the area swept by windscreen wipers. A minimum of 75% visible light transmission only is permitted. If the windscreen is a heat treated glass, it should have the appropriate identification mark usually including the letter TI, TS or TF and a modified zone on the right hand side of the vehicle, i.e. in front of the driver. If it is a laminated windscreen, it should have a mark incorporating the symbol WHP or ASI. Glazing other than windscreens may have limited tinting but must carry an identifying mark, which, for heat-treated glass, usually includes the letters TP, TS or TF or for laminated glass, the symbol LP, LS, LF or AS2.

Lights

The following vehicle lights must be used:

- at least 2 white front parking lights
- amber turn-signal lights (2 at the front and 2 at the rear)
- at least 2 white headlights which have a dipping device which deflects the beam downwards and to the left
- at least 2 red tail lights and 2 red stop lights
- a rear registration plate light

Head restraints

The front outer seats of passenger cars must have head restraints. If head restraints are of the removable type (i.e. not built into the seat), they are acceptable providing that they are not likely to collapse or separate from the seat in an accident. "Clip on" head restraints are not acceptable.

The vehicle must be a right-hand drive.

If the vehicle is modified with a left to right-hand steering conversion, a certificate from a suitable qualified engineering signatory must be obtained and submitted when the vehicle is presented for registration. Technical requirements for left to right-hand drive conversions are described in the "Federal Office of Road Safety -Vehicle Standards Bulletin No. 4" entitled "Steering Conversions for Left-Hand Drive Vehicles".

NSW registration requirements.

When presented for registration, a "personally imported vehicle" must comply with the NSW roadworthiness requirements. This includes requirements for overall dimensions, size and positions of all compulsory items of equipment. To register a "personally imported vehicle" the following details are required:

- An inspection report from an AUVIS station.
- The owner's proof of identity, such as a current passport.
- Evidence of Australian Citizenship, such as a passport or citizenship certificate. Migrants must provide proof that they have been granted permanent resident status in Australia.
- All importation papers for the vehicle.
- A compulsory Third Party Insurance (green slip) certificate.
- A weighbridge ticket.

GENERAL MOTOR VEHICLE IMPORTS

If the owner does not qualify for the "personally imported vehicle" concession and the vehicle is under 15 years old, then the vehicle must undergo a procedure to demonstrate compliance with the applicable Australian Safety and Emission Standards (applicable at the date of manufacture of the vehicle) and fitted with an Australian "Compliance Plate".

It should be noted that overseas vehicles are almost always built to a different specification to that required by the Australian authority, so do not assume that an imported vehicle (which seems to be identical to a model already marketed in Australia) is in fact identical.

Note: Demonstrating compliance is complex, expensive and generally requires testing by specialist laboratories.

Vehicle import approval documentation

The vehicle import approval for a "general import" vehicle under 15 years old is a one part document for which an application is made in advance from the "Federal Office of Road Safety". This document is for the use of the RTA when the vehicle is presented for registration. A copy of this document should be provided to the Australian Customs Service, via Move Management Australia prior to Customs clearance and collection of the vehicle from our warehouse.

A vehicle import approval for a vehicle in this category will only be granted if:

- it is already fitted with an Australian "Compliance Plate", or
- the owner has obtained a "letter of compliance" from the manufacturer or
- the owner can prove that arrangements have been made for the vehicle to be converted to comply with Australian Design Rules and an Australian "Compliance Plate" will be fitted.

Note: A "letter of compliance" is a statement from the manufacturer indicating that the vehicle complies with the Australian Design Rules applicable at the time of the vehicle's manufacture. A "letter of compliance" can only be issued by an authorised representative of the manufacturer. Other new or used vehicle dealers or distributors do not have authority to sign a "letter of compliance".

If the imported vehicle is covered by a "letter of compliance" the owner must enclose a copy with the "Application for Vehicle Import Approval". An approval clearing the vehicle from the port of entry will be forwarded to the owner by the "Federal Office of Road & Safety". A copy of this should be sent to the customer service representative at Move Management Australia. In addition, arrangements will be made to forward a "Compliance Plate" to the owner for affixing to the vehicle before registration.

Vehicle manufacturers and Move Management Australia are under no obligation to assist in obtaining a "letter of compliance" or with fitting a "Compliance Plate" on an imported motor vehicle.

Note: The information contained in this document is provided by Move Management Australia as a guideline only. If the owner of the vehicle requires further clarification of its content please consult the Move Management Australia customer service representative responsible or the relevant Authority listed herein. Every attempt has been made to convey the facts in this matter as we understand them at this time, however please note that the laws, rules and regulations governing the importation of motor vehicles may change from time to time without notice and in accordance with the relevant Authorities rulings which, we cannot control or be accountable for.

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