

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA TO IMPORT A VEHICLE TO AUSTRALIA

Vehicles 15 years or older – Part 4 on the Application Form

Vehicles 15 years or older may be imported to Australia without restriction. This means there are no ownership and use requirements and no plate is issued. An Import Approval is required to collect the vehicle.

The vehicle must be 15 years or older at time of making an application to import, eg a vehicle built December 1988 cannot be applied to be imported until December 2003.

Please note that the Import Approval is a Commonwealth government requirement and vehicles are not exempt from State or Territory registration requirements. You should contact the motor vehicle registration authority in the State or Territory where you intend to register the vehicle for information on their requirements.

Documents required to be submitted with the application form:

\$50.00 application fee, purchase document, certified picture ID if first time applicant and if the year of manufacture shows the vehicle to be 15 years old you will need to supply evidence of the month of manufacture, eg registration/deregistration showing date of first registration, confirmation from the vehicle manufacture or any other evidence available.

Eg. If your vehicle is manufactured in 1989 then in 2004 you will be required to provide evidence of month of manufacture

Note: If you meet the Personal Import requirements (see page 8), you may find it advantageous to import your vehicle under Part 8 on the application form. Your local State or Territory registration authority can advise you on the difference in the registration process for vehicles 15 years or older or Personal Import Vehicles.

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Letter of Compliance – Part 7 on the Application Form

Dealers and distributors do not have authority to sign a Letter of Compliance. A Letter will only be issued by the manufacturer where a vehicle was originally built to Australian specifications (ie to comply with the Australian Design Rules)

A Letter of Compliance states that a vehicle complies with the applicable ADRs at the time of the vehicle's manufacture. Only the authorised Australian representative of the manufacturer, or the organisation holding the Plate Approval for the particular vehicle model can issue a Letter of Compliance for the vehicle you intend to import.. It is therefore only in exceptional circumstances that a Letter of Compliance can be obtained.

You are only permitted to import 1 vehicle in a 12 month period under these arrangements.

The plate is supplied by the Administrator for affixing to the vehicle before registration in your State or Territory. There is a charge for the supply of this plate by the plate engraver.

Details of companies that have approval to issue a Letter of Compliance are available from the Internet at

<http://rvcs-prodweb.dot.gov.au>

Vehicle/RVD Search

Documents required to be submitted with the application form:

\$50.00 application fee, purchase document, certified picture ID if first time applicant, original Letter of Compliance.

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Personal Imports – Part 8 on the Application Form

Visitors, temporary residents, foreign diplomatic personnel, companies and corporations are not eligible to import a vehicle under the personal import scheme.

This scheme allows a vehicle to be imported as a personal import without proof that it meets the ADRs, but the vehicle is expected to provide a level of safety similar to Australian vehicles.

To be eligible for a personal import the following criteria must be satisfied:

- a. the vehicle has been owned and used by the applicant for a continuous period of at least 12 months (3 months where ownership and use of the vehicle commenced before 8 May 2000);
- b. at the time the vehicle is imported, the applicant is:
 - i. an Australian citizen or an Australian permanent resident; or
 - ii. a person who has applied to become an Australian citizen or an Australian permanent resident;
- c. the applicant is of an age that entitles him or her to hold a licence or a permit to drive a road vehicle of that type;
- d. the applicant undertakes to comply with any requirements as to road safety that are imposed in respect of the vehicle by the Administrator; and
- e. the applicant has not imported a road vehicle owned by him/her within the year ending on the day on which the vehicle in respect of which the application is made is landed in Australia.

The following documents must be provided to establish ownership and use of the vehicle overseas for twelve consecutive months, or more:

- every page of your passport including all blank pages
- statement of travel. This involves supplying any details of any absences from your main country of residence during the relevant qualifying period of ownership and use of the vehicle, if your travel was for business reasons you must supply a letter from your employer
- purchase documents
- overseas registration documents in your name
- Driver's Licence

A \$50 application fee must also be provided.

Applicants importing from Japan must include the following additional documents:

- Overseas registration certificate, from time of purchase, to time of deregistration, in the applicant's name

- Overseas de-registration certificate, in the applicant's name, showing the date that the vehicle was deregistered in Japan if applicable
- A parking approval in the applicant's name showing that the applicant had permission to park the vehicle
- Compulsory Tax and Insurance
- The applicant's driver's licence - international or issued by Japanese authorities.

410 & 457 Visa holder and New Zealand Citizens

Regulation 13 of the Motor Vehicle Standards Regulations states that the applicant must be an Australian citizen or an Australian permanent resident or a person who has applied to become an Australian citizen or Australian permanent resident. The Administrator has recognised that people travelling on 410 Visas are unable to apply for permanent Australian Residency, even though they are permitted to remain and live in Australia. The Administrator also recognises that New Zealand citizens and people travelling on a 457 Visa are unable to apply for permanent residency until they have migrated to Australia and met certain immigration requirements. The Administrator will consider applications to import personally owned vehicles from applicants who are entering Australia under these arrangements.

Applicants from New Zealand and those travelling on a 457 “Long Stay Business Visa” will need to demonstrate their credentials as genuine migrants by way of:

- Employment details – letter from employer stating where you are working
- Rental agreement/purchase agreement for property in Australia
- Opening of Australian bank account
- Shipment of household goods
- Australian telephone/electricity accounts
- Australian tax file number
- Medicare card
- Enrolment of children in an Australian school
- Sale of property in home country
- Resignation from work in home country
- Cancellation of rental property in home country
- Entry Stamp into Australia –until you arrive in Australia your import approval is unable to be granted.

This list is a guide and you may be required to provide further evidence of your migration status.

Applicants travelling on a 410 “Retirement Visa” will need to demonstrate their credentials as genuine migrants by way of:

- Rental agreement/purchase agreement for property in Australia
- Opening of Australian bank account
- Shipment/quotation of household goods
- Medical Insurance for Australia
- Australian telephone/electricity accounts
- Australian tax file number
- Sale of overseas property
- Resignation from work in overseas
- Cancellation of overseas rental property
- Entry Stamp into Australia –until you arrive in Australia your import approval is unable to be granted.

This list is a guide and you may be required to provide further evidence of your migration status.

All Applicants

Further details may be requested to substantiate claims of ownership and use of the vehicle during the qualifying period.

Other documents that may be required include:

- Previous owner's deregistration certificate for the vehicle
- Vehicle insurance documents in the applicant's name
- Documents, in the applicant's name, in relation to the purchase of the vehicle, for example, cheque butts, bank statement/credit card statement, ATM withdrawal document, receipt from vendor of vehicle
- Documents, in the applicant's name, showing that the applicant paid for any maintenance or repairs to the vehicle
- The applicant's passport with exit and entry stamps that indicate when the applicant left and returned to Australia and show that the applicant was continuously with the vehicle in the overseas country for the required period
- The applicant's drivers licence – Australian, international or issued by the overseas country
- Proof that the applicant is currently resident in Australia
- Proof that the applicant returns to Australia with the vehicle
- The applicant must produce a copy of both passports when dual passports are held
- Proof of the applicant's physical presence, continuously or intermittently, during a twelve month period in the country where the vehicle was purchased and primarily used prior to lodging an application to import the vehicle to Australia
- Evidence of the frequency, regularity and duration of visits to places outside the country where the vehicle was purchased and used
- Evidence of the maintenance by the applicant of a permanent place of abode in the overseas country during absences (eg telephone accounts, electricity bills).

Documents that are not in English must be accompanied by a translation certified by a member of an accredited agency such as the National Accreditation Authority of Translators and Interpreters.

You may be required to submit original documentation (not photocopies) to confirm eligibility under the Personal Import Scheme. If the applicant declines to submit the documents requested, the Administrator will take this into account in assessing the bona fides of the application and may, as a result, refuse to issue an import approval.

Applicants can contact the Department by phone (calling within Australia 1800 815 272 or outside Australia 61 2 6274 7444 or e-mail Vimports@dotars.gov.au) for advice on acceptable authorities to witness documents in the country where the vehicle is registered and/or used. These persons would hold an authority to witness documents similar to that of a Public Notary or Justice of the Peace in Australia.

Under the Personal Import Scheme, modifications to bring the vehicle up to minimum safety standards can be deferred until you wish to register the vehicle.

For Australian registration purposes a vehicle imported under this category must:

- be roadworthy; and
- meet minimum safety standards

If you are eligible, a Personal Import Approval will be issued. The approval papers comprise four parts:

- One copy clears the vehicle from its point of entry to Australia;
- One allows you to obtain a Personal Import Plate;
- One is for the registering authority; and
- The fourth is for your own records and should be kept with the vehicle.

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Personal Import Plates

A Personal Import Plate is evidence that the vehicle is an approved vehicle import and allows it to be registered.

Before applying for a Personal Import Plate, the vehicle must be brought up to acceptable ADR standards.

Some registering authorities will inspect your vehicle and sign a statement of compliance. Others will refer you to an authorised signatory for inspection.

The statement of compliance must be signed on the appropriate three approval documents by an authorised person.

The original signed statement of compliance which is marked for the plate engraver must be sent to the plate engraver whose address is given on the Import Approval. There is an additional cost for the engraving of the Personal Import Plate.

Contact your State or Territory Registration Authority for details about how to have your vehicle inspected and the statement of authority signed. The addresses of the Registration Authorities are on the back cover of this bulletin.

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Vehicles with Australian Compliance Plates already fitted or previously registered in Australia –Part 6 on the Application Form

If you exported your vehicle from Australia and are returning from overseas and have evidence of current or previous Australian registration then you are not required to obtain an Import Approval for your vehicle as it will be entered into Australia as returned Australian Goods.

If you purchased the vehicle overseas and it has an Australian compliance plate fitted, and you have previous registration in Australia, you are not required to obtain an import approval. Proof of previous registration will be required to obtain clearance through Customs.

If you cannot provide proof of previous registration you are required to obtain import approval.

Documents required to be submitted with the application form:

purchase document, certified picture ID if first time applicant, copy/picture of the compliance plate attached to the vehicle. (If you have not imported in last 12 months you are required to provide certified ID)