

# Changes to light vehicle inspections

The Department of Logistics and Infrastructure is implementing reforms to the light vehicle inspection regime in the Northern Territory (NT).

## What is changing?

From 9 February 2026, light vehicles will only need to undertake roadworthy inspections when the vehicle is 7 years and older and when:

- transferring ownership (can be completed by seller or buyer)
- re-establishing NT registration after a vehicle has not been registered in the NT for more than 12 months
- first registering in the NT (prior to compliance inspection for interstate transfers).

## What is a light vehicle?

This includes all light vehicles that are 4.5 tonnes (GVM) or less, such as cars, 4WD, mini vans, motorcycles and boat or box trailers (over 750 kg) that are not Commercial passenger vehicles. There will be no changes to box or boat trailers under 750 kg which do not require periodic roadworthy inspections.

## Why is this change happening?

This change will enable Northern Territory Government Transport Inspectors to carry out more practical on-road inspections, in conjunction with the NT Police Force, which will improve overall road safety for all Territorians.

Vehicles that are maintained and deemed roadworthy are more likely to comply with inspection requirements. Shifting the focus to active on-road enforcement will more effectively identify unroadworthy vehicles while reducing unnecessary costs and inconvenience for motorists.

## How will unroadworthy vehicles be detected?

On-road auditing will be completed by the Northern Territory Government Transport Inspectors, in conjunction with the NT Police Force. Where a vehicle does not comply with roadworthy or safety standards, a defect notice may be issued. A defect clearing inspection is required to clear a vehicle of defects. This must be undertaken at a government vehicle inspection facility. To find a government vehicle inspection facility near you, go to [nt.gov.au/inspection-facilities](https://nt.gov.au/inspection-facilities)

## What is a roadworthy vehicle?

A roadworthy vehicle is one that is safe to drive and meets the standards required by law. Transport Inspectors will check items are compliant such as tyres, brakes, lights, seatbelts, windows and mechanics. For example, if your car is too noisy, drips oil, blows too much smoke or is missing seatbelts, it may be given a defect notice.

A defect notice may also be issued to a vehicle if accessories or equipment (e.g. bull bars, spotlights, fishing rod holders) are not designed or fitted properly and are likely to be a source of danger to the public. Infringement notices (fines or other penalties) may also be issued by police for seriously defective or missing equipment at the same time as a defect notice is issued. If your vehicle gets a defect notice, it must be repaired and have a full roadworthy inspection by a Northern Territory Government Transport Inspector.

## What do I need to do?

All drivers are required to maintain vehicles in compliance with roadworthy and safety standards for registration. Regular maintenance and timely repairs help ensure your vehicle remains safe.

**My registration renewal notice still says I need a roadworthy inspection. Do I need to get one?**

A roadworthy inspection is required if an inspection is due, and the vehicle registration is renewed before 9 February 2026. A roadworthy inspection is not required if the vehicle registration is renewed on or after 9 February 2026.

**Who pays for the roadworthy inspection when transferring ownership?**

The roadworthy inspection can be completed and paid for by the seller or buyer. It must be submitted to MVR prior to transferring ownership of the vehicle. The buyer is obligated to submit an application to transfer ownership within 14 days. The seller is also required to submit a notice of disposal to MVR within 14 days of the sale.

**How long is a roadworthy inspection valid?**

A roadworthy inspection is valid for 6 weeks from its issue date. The vehicle ownership can change multiple times within the 6-week period without having to do another roadworthy inspection.

**Are there any changes for Heavy Vehicles, Commercial Passenger Vehicles (CPV) or Modified Vehicles?**

There are no changes to the current inspection requirements for heavy vehicles or Commercial Passenger Vehicles. CPV (taxis, minibus and rideshare) inspections are only needed to be completed at a government vehicle inspection facility when establishing CPV registration. There will be no changes to modified vehicle inspection requirements. To view details on inspection requirements, go to [nt.gov.au/inspectioncheck](https://nt.gov.au/inspectioncheck)

**Do you need a roadworthy inspection to transfer a vehicle to a Licensed Motor Vehicle Dealer (LMVD)?**

If you are transferring or selling a vehicle to an LMVD, a roadworthy inspection is not required.

**Do you need a roadworthy inspection if you purchase a vehicle from an LMVD?**

No, under the *Consumer Affairs and Fair Trading Act* and related NT law, a licensed dealer must sell a used motor vehicle in a condition fit for registration.

**I'm transferring my vehicle from a joint ownership to a single ownership. Do I need a roadworthy inspection?**

Transferring a vehicle by way of gift (i.e. close family transfers/deceased estates) are still subject to a roadworthy inspection at the time of transfer.

**Where do I get a roadworthy inspection?**

You can get a roadworthy inspection done by any authorised vehicle inspector in the NT. If you live in a remote community or a cattle station, you can contact a mobile authorised inspector. Roadworthy inspections can no longer be done at a government vehicle inspection facility. For a list of authorised inspectors, visit [nt.gov.au/inspectioncheck](https://nt.gov.au/inspectioncheck)

**Which inspections will be completed by Transport Inspectors?**

In addition to on-road auditing, all inspections for modified or individually constructed vehicles or written off vehicles will be completed at government vehicle inspection facilities.

**How do I get a refund on the roadworthy inspection I didn't need?**

MVR cannot issue refunds on roadworthy inspections not completed at a government vehicle inspection facility. You should discuss the matter with the Authorised Inspector who completed your roadworthy inspection.

**I'm transferring my vehicle from interstate with interstate roadworthy inspection valid within the 6 week-period. Do I need to get another roadworthy inspection in the NT?**

The NT does not accept interstate roadworthy inspections for light vehicles. All interstate light vehicle transfers to the NT are subject to a compliance inspection. Prior to completing the compliance inspection, if your vehicle is over 7 years old you must supply a roadworthy inspection completed in the NT prior to completing a compliance inspection.