

Vehicle standards information



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Seat belt buckle covers

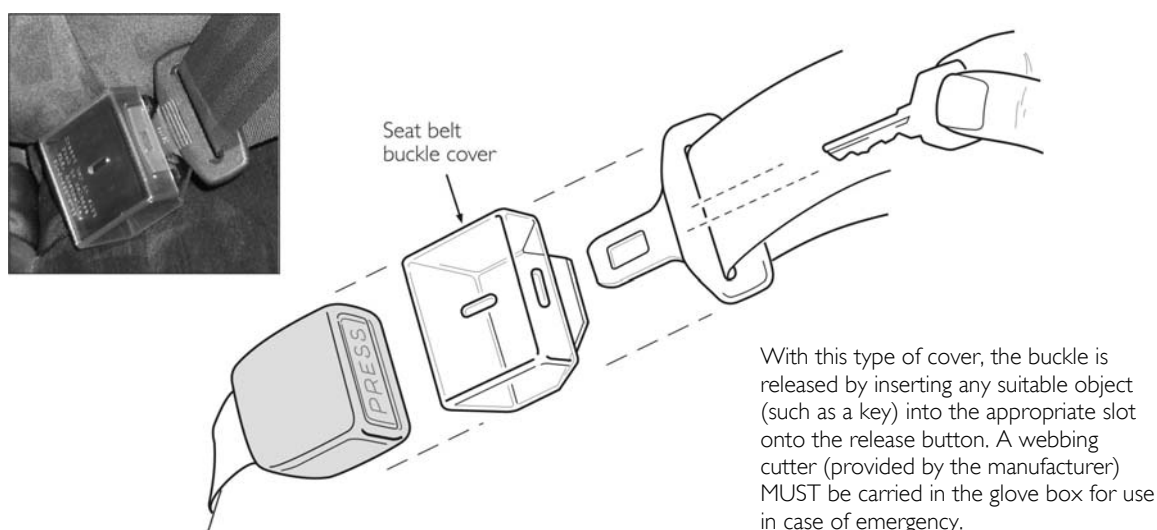
Purpose

1. To inform parents and carers about seat belt buckle covers which ensure that seatbelts used by people with behavioural problems remain firmly fastened.
2. To provide information about legal requirements with regard to fitting a seat belt buckle cover.

Issue

To help ensure that people with behavioural problems cannot release their seat belt buckle while travelling in a motor vehicle, a number of 'buckle cover' products are available. These are designed to fit over the seat belt buckle to prevent it from being easily undone. An example of one type of seat belt buckle cover and how to release it is shown in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1: EXAMPLE OF A SEAT BELT BUCKLE COVER



For vehicle owners and operators in New South Wales

What the law says

The Road Transport (Safety and Traffic Management) (Road Rules) Regulation 1999 requires that a passenger in or on a motor vehicle that is moving, or is stationary but not parked, must wear an approved seat belt that is properly fastened and adjusted. An approved seat belt is one that has been certified and installed in accordance with the vehicle standards requirements of Schedule 2 to the Road Transport (Vehicle Registration) Regulation 2007.

Vehicle owners must maintain the seat belts fitted to their vehicles as originally certified. No modification should be undertaken that would render the seat belt contrary to its certification unless approval in writing is given by the Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA).

Exemption for a person with a behavioural problem

In order to fit a seat belt buckle cover on the seat belt used by a person with a behavioural problem, the following are required:

- A Medical Certificate issued by a Medical Practitioner for the Nominated Person (i.e. the person with the behavioural problem) for which a seat belt buckle cover is required.
- The Medical Certificate is to be carried in the vehicle the Nominated Person is travelling in, and must be shown to an Authorised Officer of the RTA or Police if requested.
- The seat belt buckle cover must comply with Australian Standard AS 4370: 1996 and be fitted to the seat belt in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. The manufacturer's instructions for the buckle cover should be attached to the medical certificate for easy reference.
- The seat belt buckle cover must be removed when not being used by the Nominated Person.
- The vehicle must continue to comply with the Road Transport (Vehicle Registration) Regulation 2007 and the Australian Design Rules (ADRs) in all other respects.

The RTA has no objection for a seat belt buckle cover being fitted and there is no need to apply for a written RTA approval provided the above requirements are fully met.



For further enquiries:



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