

Road Traffic (Motor Vehicles, Seat Belts) Rules

Table of Contents

1 Citation

2 Definitions

3 Application

4 Anchorage points

5 Seat belts to be provided

6 Seat belts to be properly secured to anchorage points

7 Markings on anchorage points

8 Anchorage points for rear seat belts

9 Rear seat belts to be provided

10 Seat belts in taxis and light goods vehicles

11 Offences and penalties

Legislative History

ROAD TRAFFIC ACT (CHAPTER 276, SECTION 6)

ROAD TRAFFIC (MOTOR VEHICLES, SEAT BELTS) RULES

R 15

[30th December 1977]

Citation

1. These Rules may be cited as the Road Traffic (Motor Vehicles, Seat Belts) Rules.

Definitions

2. In these Rules, unless the context otherwise requires —

“body-restraining seat belt” means a seat belt designed to provide restraint for both the upper and lower parts of the trunk of the wearer in the event of an accident to the vehicle;

“business service passenger vehicle” means a motor car registered in the name of —

- (a) a statutory board, company, firm, society, association or club, and used for the owner’s business; or
- (b) an individual and used for the purpose of any trade, business, profession or vocation,

but does not include a motor car used —

- (i) for the carriage of goods other than samples;
- (ii) for the carriage of passengers for hire or reward; and
- (iii) for instructional purposes for reward unless prior approval of the Registrar has been obtained;

“goods-cum-passengers vehicle” means —

- (a) a station wagon constructed for the carriage of 7 passengers or more, excluding the driver, and registered by the owner for the use by him or a member of his family or any person by his authority without consideration for social or domestic purposes or for the owner’s business and excluding the use for instructional purposes for reward;
- (b) a panel van; or
- (c) a twin-cabin goods vehicle;

“heavy goods vehicle” means —

- (a) a goods vehicle the maximum laden weight of which exceeds 3.0 metric tonnes, registered using a certificate of entitlement issued before 1st April 1998; or
- (b) a goods vehicle the maximum laden weight of which exceeds 3.5 metric tonnes, registered using a certificate of entitlement issued on or after 1st April 1998,

but does not include any construction equipment, engineering plant, trivan, recovery vehicle or any vehicle used as a mobile canteen or mobile bank;

“lap belt” means a seat belt, anchored at not less than 2 points, which passes across the front of the wearer’s pelvic region and which restrains the lower part of the wearer’s torso;

“light goods vehicle” means —

- (a) a goods vehicle the maximum laden weight of which does not exceed 3.0 metric tonnes, registered using a certificate of entitlement issued before 1st April 1998; or
- (b) a goods vehicle the maximum laden weight of which does not exceed 3.5 metric tonnes, registered using a certificate of entitlement issued on or after 1st April 1998,

but does not include any construction equipment, engineering plant, trivan, motor cycle with a side-car attached to it, recovery vehicle and any vehicle used as a mobile canteen or mobile bank;

“private hire car” means a motor car which does not ply for hire on any road but is hired under a contract, expressed or implied, for the use of the motor car as a whole;

“seat belt” means a belt intended to be worn by a person in a vehicle and designed to prevent or lessen injury to its wearer in the event of an accident to the vehicle and includes, in the case of a restraining device for a young person, any special chair to which the belt is attached;

“seat with integral seat belt anchorages” means a seat which is fitted with all the anchorage points required for use in connection with the seat belt provided for that seat;

“specified passenger’s seat” means —

- (a) in the case of a vehicle which has a forward-facing front seat alongside the driver’s seat, such seat, and in the case of a vehicle which has more than one such seat, the one furthest from the driver’s

seat; or

- (b) if the vehicle has no seat which is the specified passenger's seat under paragraph (a), the forward-facing front seat for a passenger which is foremost in the vehicle and furthest from the driver's seat, unless there is a fixed partition separating such seat from the space in front of it alongside the driver's seat;

“station wagon” means a vehicle with folding seats and side doors and either a tail-board or doors opening at the rear, constructed or adapted for the carriage of goods as well as passengers .

Application

3. Unless otherwise expressly provided, these Rules shall apply —

- (a) to every motor car and motor car used for instructional purposes registered on or after 1st January 1973;
- (b) to every business service passenger vehicle registered on or after 1st January 1973;
- (c) to every light goods vehicle registered on or after 1st January 1973;
- (d) to every private hire car registered on or after 1st January 1973;
- (e) to every goods-cum-passengers vehicle registered on or after 1st January 1973;
- (f) to every taxi;
- (g) to every ambulance, fire engine and hearse registered on or after 1st January 1993; and
- (h) to every heavy goods vehicle registered on or after 1st January 1993.

Anchorage points

4.—(1) Every motor vehicle to which these Rules apply shall be provided with anchorage points designed to hold body-restraining seat belts securely in position on the vehicle for —

- (a) the driver's seat; and
- (b) the specified passenger's seat, if any.

(2) This rule shall not apply so as to require anchorage points to be provided for any seat which is a seat with integral seat belt anchorages.

(3) The anchorage points provided under paragraph (1) shall meet the British Standard Specification for seat belt anchorage points, namely either B.S. AU 48: 1965 or B.S. AU 48a or such other specifications as the Registrar may approve from time to time.

Seat belts to be provided

5.—(1) Every motor vehicle to which these Rules apply shall be provided with —

- (a) a body-restraining seat belt designed for use by an adult for the driver's seat;
- (b) a body-restraining seat belt for the specified passenger's seat, if any; and
- (c) a body-restraining seat belt or lap belt for any front passenger seat other than the driver's seat and the specified passenger's seat.

(2) This rule shall not apply to a vehicle while it is being used under a general licence within the meaning of section 28 of the Act.

(3) The seat belt to be provided under this rule shall meet the British Standard Specification for Seat Belt Assemblies for Motor Vehicles, namely either B.S. 3254: 1960 or B.S. AU 160a or such other specifications as the Registrar may approve from time to time and shall be legibly and permanently marked with such specification.

Seat belts to be properly secured to anchorage points

6. Every seat belt provided under these Rules shall, if the seat for which it is provided is a seat with integral seat belt anchorages, be properly secured to the integral seat belt anchorage points forming part thereof, or, if the seat for which it is provided is not such a seat, be properly secured to the structure of the vehicle by the anchorage points provided for it under rule 4.

Markings on anchorage points

7.—(1) Every vehicle registered on or after 1st January 1978 which is provided with seat belt anchorage points under rule 4 shall be legibly and permanently marked with the specification number of the British Standard for seat belt anchorage points, namely either B.S. AU 48: 1965 or B.S. AU 48a or such other specifications as the Registrar may approve from time to time.

(2) Where in the case of any motor car to which these Rules apply and which was registered on or after 1st January 1978 the driver's seat or the specified passenger's seat is a seat with integral seat belt anchorages, such seat shall meet the British Standard Specification for Seats with Integral Seat Belt Anchorages followed by the suffix "1", namely B.S. AU 140/1: 1967 or B.S. AU 140a/1 or such other specifications as the Registrar may approve from time to time and shall be legibly and permanently marked