



Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development and Communications



➤ Reimportation import approvals

A guide

June 2021

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Director – Creative Services
Communication Branch
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications
GPO Box 594
Canberra ACT 2601
Australia

Email: publishing@infrastructure.gov.au

Website: www.infrastructure.gov.au

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Reimportation import approval

A reimportation import approval under the *Road Vehicle Standards Act 2018* (RVSA) allows an approval holder to import a vehicle they previously exported from Australia.

What is a reimportation import approval?

On 1 July 2021, the RVSA replaced the *Motor Vehicle Standards Act 1989* (MVSA).

Under the RVSA, if you plan to import a road vehicle you had previously exported, back into Australia, you need to apply to the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications (the department) for an approval to import the vehicle.

Before starting your application, you should read these guidelines explaining how to apply and the eligibility requirements of an application.

Why do I need an approval to re-import my vehicle?

Under section 22 of the RVSA it is an offence to import a road vehicle into Australia without an approval. The department manages the approval process through its online application system, [ROVER](#). You must obtain an import approval to import a road vehicle from the department **before** importing the vehicle.

What are the eligibility requirements of a reimportation import approval?

The eligibility requirements for a reimportation import approval are set out at section 163 of the [Road Vehicle Standards Rules 2019](#) (the Rules). In summary:

- The applicant must own the vehicle at the time the application is submitted.
- The vehicle must be outside Australia.
- The vehicle must either:
 - be on the [Register of Approved Vehicles](#) (RAV) and, in all relevant respects, be consistent with the information on the RAV about the vehicle, OR
 - have an identification plate that was placed on the vehicle in accordance with the MVSA and, in all relevant respects, be consistent with the details set out on the identification plate in relation to the vehicle,
OR
 - have a used import plate that was placed on the vehicle in accordance with the MVSA and, in all relevant respects, be consistent with the details set out on the used import plate in relation to the vehicle.

The Rules are made under the RVSA. The RVSA and other related legislation is collectively referred to as the Road Vehicle Standards legislation (RVS) legislation.

What is the Register of Approved Vehicles?

The RAV is an online database of vehicles that have met the requirements of the RVS legislation and been approved for provision to the Australian market.

Once entered on the RAV, a vehicle is available for registration by a state or territory registration authority (pending the regulatory requirements of the particular state or territory).

The [Register of Approved Vehicles](#) is a publicly searchable database.



Please see the [RVS Glossary of terms](#) on our website for a comprehensive list of road vehicle standards terms and their definitions.

Applying for a reimportation import approval

This section explains how to apply for a reimportation import approval. If you are considering re-importing a road vehicle you should read this before you apply.

Who may apply for a reimportation import approval?

The owner of a vehicle may apply for a reimportation import approval for a vehicle. Proof of ownership will be required when you apply.

An agent may also apply on behalf of the owner.

To apply for a reimportation import approval you (or your agent) must first [create an account in ROVER](#) and supply identification details.

When do I need to apply?

You must submit an application for a reimportation import approval **before** importing the vehicle. To import a vehicle without permission is an offence under the RVSA and penalties may apply. Allow enough time to apply for your application to be assessed before your planned importation date. It may take up to 30 business days for an import approval application to be assessed and a decision made.

How do I apply?



After you have created a ROVER account, click on the 'Single Road Vehicle' option. You will be asked a series of questions from the online application form. These will direct you through the reimportation import approval process. You will be required to upload documents, where necessary, to support your application. At the end of the application, you are required to sign a declaration about the information you have supplied.

How do I make changes to my application?

When you start a new application, ROVER allows you to save your work, exit the system and return to your saved work as and when you need to. At any time **before** submission, you can change the details of your saved application.

If you need to make changes **after** submitting your application, there are 3 options:

- if the application has been submitted but not paid, you can withdraw the application and start a new one
- if the application has been submitted and paid, it will show a status of 'in progress'. You can either:
 - notify the department that a change is needed and provide further information when requested (note: this may delay the process), or
 - withdraw the application and start a new one (please note that a new application fee is payable if you choose to do this).



Important: You must apply online through the department’s application system, [ROVER](#).

What information do I need to apply?

Before you apply for a reimportation import approval, it is advisable to have the information you are required to include with the application ready. This includes:

- Details of the vehicle you are applying to re-import, including the type of vehicle, (car, motorbike, truck, trailer, etc) make, model and year of manufacture.
- Proof of vehicle ownership – for example, a purchase invoice, receipt or registration documents.
- Information about where the vehicle is located. You will be asked where (which country) the vehicle is currently located. The vehicle must be outside Australia at the time you make the application.
- A clear photo of the Australian identification plate, used import plate OR details of the RAV entry number.
- Photos identifying the vehicle taken in a clear and well-lit area. The vehicle must be consistent with the supplied information from the RAV or details set out in the identification (or used import) plate.
- Details of any modifications made to the vehicle while overseas. The vehicle is required, in all relevant respects, to be the same as what was entered on the RAV or identification plate or used import plate. This means that any modifications must be minor and superficial only. If you are not sure whether or not the modifications are substantial then you should [contact the help desk](#).
- Details of any contraventions of road vehicle legislation (or contraventions which *may* have been made) by the applicant, or, if the applicant is a body corporate, by the key management personnel.
- Declarations that the information supplied is true and correct and that, if you are granted a non-RAV entry import approval, you will comply with the conditions.

The table below has examples of modifications. The left column includes examples of modifications that have changed the vehicle so it is **unlikely** to meet the details in the RAV or on the plate. The right column includes examples of modifications that are **likely** to be minor and in all relevant respects the vehicle should still meet the details on the RAV or plate.

Examples of relevant changes	Changes that are not likely to be considered relevant
Significant corrosion	Panel repairs or paint jobs
Seating changes	Minor repairs after motor vehicle accident
Replacement engine that does not conform to original vehicle engine	
Lengthened or widened body work	
Major accident damage where the vehicle has not been restored sufficiently to match the details on the RAV or plate	



Important: The table above is indicative only. When applying for a reimportation import approval you must include details of **ALL** changes made to your vehicle so the department can assess your application and decide on whether the vehicle is consistent with the information on the RAV or plate.

If the vehicle you want to re-import has been modified to an extent that it is no longer consistent with the information on the RAV, or the details on the identification plate or used import plate, the vehicle is unlikely to receive a reimportation import approval. You may wish to review [other import options](#), such as a concessional RAV entry approval.

What if I am asked to supply more information?

Sometimes during an assessment, an assessor may require further information so they can assess your application.

For example, they may not be able to identify your vehicle if the photos supplied were too dark.

If this happens, the assessor will send a 'Request further information' (RFI) notice. You will be sent an email telling you an RFI is in your ROVER account.

To respond to the RFI, access your ROVER account and open the RFI notice. The additional information required for your application to be able to be assessed will be clearly requested in the notice. You will be given a period of time to respond to the RFI (usually 30 days). If you require more time you should contact the department to request more time to respond.

How much is the application fee?

At the time of submitting the application you are required to pay an application fee of \$40 for the application to be assessed and decided upon. This fee is based on cost-recovery of processing the application and is generally non-refundable (except in exceptional circumstances).

Checklist – am I ready to apply?

Before you create an account in ROVER

- ✓ Are you an agent or representative of the applicant? If yes, do you have an electronic copy of your [authority to act](#) on behalf of the applicant?
- ✓ Do you have the relevant proof of identity documents required by the [ROVER account creation](#) process?

Before you start the application

- ✓ Have you created an account in ROVER?
- ✓ Do you have clear images identifying the vehicle you are applying to import?
- ✓ Have you identified who will be the primary contact for the approval and their details?
- ✓ Do you have supporting information to show you meet the eligibility criteria?
 - Proof that you own the vehicle?
 - Location of vehicle (outside Australia)?
 - Register of Approved Vehicles (RAV) details; OR
 - Detail set out in identification plate or used import plate?
- ✓ Do you understand the responsibilities of being an approval holder and what you are expected to do to comply with those responsibilities?

Outcome of the application

This section covers the possible outcomes of an application for a reimportation import approval.

When will I find out the result of my application?

A decision will be made on a reimportation import application within 30 business days of the application being submitted.

If further information is needed to support the application the 30 business-day timeframe is paused until the required information is supplied by the applicant. When the additional information is received the timeframe re-commences.

What are the possible outcomes of my application?

There are 3 possible outcomes to the application process for a reimportation import approval:

- Your application is granted and you receive an import approval notice through the ROVER system.
- Your application is refused to be granted. In this case, you will be notified before this decision is made and allowed to submit more information to support your application or address any deficiencies.
- Your application is refused to be considered. This will only happen if:
 - You did not submit the application fee (you will receive warnings if the payment has not been made)
 - You did not apply on the approved form (if you are having trouble using the online form [contact the help desk](#)).
 - You did not provide information required by the application. (You will be contacted if you leave out information required in the application and given time to provide the required information.)

Why do I have conditions on my approval?

All approvals issued under the RVS legislation have conditions included with the approval.

A reimportation import approval is subject to a range of conditions, including to:

- allow or arrange for the vehicle to be inspected if requested to do so. This inspection may be done online or by a physical inspection.
- provide any information or documents specified in a written request from the Secretary or inspector that is reasonably required to assess whether the approval holder is complying with the RVS legislation, including information about the vehicle to which the approval applies.

Other conditions that **may** be applied to the approval, include requirements that:

- **where the vehicle will be imported temporarily**, the approval holder exports or destroys the vehicle to which the approval applies within a specified period and provides evidence that this has been done within the specified period
- the vehicle, or any modifications, is verified by an [authorised vehicle verifier](#) (AVV)
- the approval holder keeps specified records for a set period and provides them when requested to do so by the Secretary or an inspector
- prohibit the approval holder from giving another person access to the vehicle to which the approval applies
- specify how the vehicle to which the approval applies may be used.

The conditions that apply to your approval (if granted) will be clearly outlined in your approval notice.

Complying with your responsibilities

Under the RVS legislation, offences and civil penalty provisions apply when a person (individual or company):

- breaches a condition of the approval
- provides a false or misleading declaration
- provides false or misleading information.

If the department identifies non-compliance, its response will be proportionate to the risk being managed. This may include issuing infringement notices, applying for civil penalty orders or injunctions or entering into enforceable undertakings.

What if I am not happy with the outcome of my application?

If the outcome of your application is a refusal to grant (or a refusal to consider), you may apply to the [Administrative Appeals Tribunal](#) (AAT) for a review of the decision.

How do I make changes to my approval?

After you have been granted a reimportation approval, you may seek changes to the approval if your circumstances have changed since the approval was granted. You can request to **vary**, **suspend**, or **revoke** your import approval.

The department has the authority to do the same in certain circumstances, for example, if you have breached a condition of your approval.

Vary an approval

You may want a change to your approval or choose to update certain information held by us regarding your approval.

To do this, you need to request a variation to your approval. The application must be made via the approved form in ROVER with the required information and documents.

A request for variation is assessed in a similar way to a new application. We may request further information and may refuse to consider the application if that information is not provided.

In making a decision, we must be satisfied that you will meet the conditions of the varied approval.

Suspend or revoke an approval

You may request a suspension or revocation of your approval. This may occur, for example, if you decide that you do not want to reimport your vehicle or that the importation process has been delayed and you are unsure as to when you will be reimporting it to Australia.

Suspension or revocation requests are treated differently to variation requests. A request for suspension or revocation does not have to occur by an approved system form—you may submit it via ROVER, email, or mail.

Once we receive a suspension or revocation request, we will suspend or revoke the approval as soon as practicable.

Appendix 1 – Legislation relating to reimportation import approvals

This section provides useful links and information relating to the RVS legislation:

- [The Road Vehicle Standards Act 2018 \(RVSA\)](#)
- [Road Vehicle Standards Rules 2019](#)
- [Australian Government Charging Framework](#)
- [Privacy Policy – Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications.](#)

Appendix 2 – Further information

For further information, please:

Visit: [RVS legislation implementation](#) webpages

Email: RVSAimplementation@infrastructure.gov.au (for general RVSA information)

ROVERinfo@infrastructure.gov.au (for ROVER assistance)

Phone: 1800 815 272 (Monday to Friday, 9am – 5pm AEST, within Australia)

Phone: +61 2 6274 7444 (calling from overseas)