



Government
of South Australia

GUIDELINES FOR THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN WRITTEN-OFF VEHICLE REGISTER



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About these Guidelines

The *Guidelines for the South Australian Written-Off Vehicle Register* are intended as a guide for all participants responsible for reporting written-off vehicles for inclusion on the Written-Off Vehicle Register (WOVR).

These guidelines contain the requirements for insurers, vehicle wreckers and vehicle dealers (including auction houses) as determined by the Motor Vehicles Act and Regulations. It also provides a guide for the use of the codes required for recording the details of written-off vehicles on the register.

Acknowledgment

These guidelines were based substantially on the *ACT Written-off Vehicle Register Manual* produced by the ACT Department of Urban Services. The National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council provided guidance regarding assessing the statutory write-off category and Allianz Australia Limited provided the cover picture. Transport SA would like to thank them for permission to use this information.

Application

While every effort has been made to ensure clarity and correctness, nothing in these Guidelines should be interpreted in such a way as to contravene or negate any clauses or requirements in relevant Acts or Regulations, which remain the over-riding authority. It is incumbent upon individuals to ensure that they fulfil all their legislative obligations and duties, and these Guidelines should merely be regarded as indicative.

Explanation of Terms

For the purpose of these guidelines the following definitions apply:

Auction House	Auction house will have the same meaning as 'Vehicle Dealer'.
Date of Write-off	The date on which a vehicle is determined by a delegated agent (insurer, auction house, vehicle wrecker etc) or owner, as a write-off. Where an assessor on behalf of an insurer assesses the vehicle damage, the date of write-off is when the insurer makes the decision to write-off the vehicle.
Insurer	A Body Corporate/ person who carries on the business of insuring vehicles.
Make	The name of the manufacturer of the vehicle (eg. Holden), as recorded on the compliance plate.
Model	The model of the vehicle (eg. Commodore).
Notifiable Vehicle	A vehicle which, under the <i>Motor Vehicles Regulations 1996</i> , must be notified to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles for inclusion in the WOVR (see <i>Notifiable Vehicles</i> for more information).
Registrar	The Registrar of Motor Vehicles.
Registration Number	The number recorded on the number plate attached to the vehicle, or if the number plates have been removed, the last registration number recorded against the vehicle.
Type	Used to cross-check vehicle details, may be one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sedan, station wagon, utility, etc• Motorbike• Trailer• Caravan
Vehicle Dealer	A person who carries on the business of selling motor vehicles.
Vehicle Identifier	For a vehicle manufactured before 1 January 1989, the identification number on the chassis/body/shell or other location on the vehicle. For a vehicle manufactured after 31 December 1988, the vehicle identification number allocated in accordance with the Australian Design Rules.

Vehicle Identification Number (VIN)

The unique seventeen character number allocated to a vehicle, motorbike, trailer or caravan manufactured after 31 December 1988, that is based on the International Standards Organisation (ISO) Vehicle Identification System and used as a means of identifying the vehicle.

Vehicle Wrecker

A person who carries on the business of wrecking motor vehicles or disassembling motor vehicles for salvage.

Written-off

A vehicle is written-off if:

- a) it has been damaged by accident, collision, demolition, dismantling, fire, flood, trespass or other event to the extent that its fair salvage value, when added to the cost of repairing it for use on a road or road related area, would be more than its fair market value immediately before the event that caused the damage; or
- b) it is to be, or has been, wrecked or wholly or partly disassembled for salvage; or
- c) it is to be, or has been, sold or acquired for wrecking or disassembling for salvage.

What is the Written-Off Vehicle Register?

A written-off vehicle register (WOVR) is a government initiative that has been introduced throughout Australia by all jurisdictions. While South Australia was one of the first to have a WOVR, some changes have been necessary to bring the Register into line with best practice principles agreed to by all jurisdictions.

A set of recommended best practice principles for WOVRs has been developed through Australia-wide consultation with governments, industry and motoring organisations, and endorsed by all States and Territories. The South Australian legislation and policy is now based on these principles.

All Australian States and territories have a WOVR in place, ensuring a nationwide and consistent approach towards combating the re-birthing of stolen vehicles. Re-birthing involves the acquiring of a legitimate Vehicle Identification Number (VIN), usually from a written-off vehicle, and applying that VIN to a stolen vehicle of the same age, make and model. The stolen vehicle is subsequently re-registered and sold to an unsuspecting buyer.

While the majority of vehicle theft is opportunistic, the re-birthing of stolen vehicles by professional thieves is a significant problem.

The use of a WOVR, together with close inspection of high-risk vehicles, significantly reduces the risk that a stolen vehicle will then be registered and sold to an unsuspecting buyer.

A WOVR records a written-off vehicle's identifiers and specific information about the damage to the vehicle. Also recorded is whether the vehicle is a *Statutory* write-off or a *Repairable* write-off. A Statutory write-off will not be re-registered again while a Repairable write-off may be repaired for re-registration. The WOVR information assists Vehicle Identity Inspectors in assessing whether a vehicle being inspected for registration is in fact the re-built wreck, or a re-birthing stolen vehicle.

Legislation

Copies of the legislation may be purchased from the State Government Information Centre, Department for Administrative and Information Services, or downloaded from the Internet at; www.parliament.sa.gov.au/dbsearch/acts-list.htm

Who is bound by the legislation?

The Motor Vehicles Regulations 1996 requires certain entities (*delegated persons*) to provide information on written-off vehicles to the Registrar.

The entities are;

- Insurers
- Vehicle Dealers (including Auction Houses)
- Vehicle Wreckers
- any other person responsible for a notifiable vehicle (for example, the owner of a vehicle).

Notifiable Vehicles

The *Motor Vehicles Regulations 1996* defines those vehicles that are required to be notified to the Registrar for inclusion on the WOVR. The first criterion of a notifiable vehicle is that it is *written-off*.

When is a vehicle written-off?

A vehicle is written-off if;

- a) it has been damaged by accident, collision, demolition, dismantling, fire, flood, trespass or other event to the extent that its fair salvage value, when added to the cost of repairing it for use on a road or road related area, would be more than its fair market value immediately before the event that caused the damage; or
- b) it is to be, or has been, wrecked or wholly or partly disassembled for salvage; or
- c) it is to be, or has been, sold or acquired for wrecking or disassembling for salvage.

A notifiable written-off vehicle must be assessed as either a **Repairable** or a **Statutory** write-off. See *Salvage Condition* on page 11 for a comprehensive definition of these terms.

Which written-off vehicles are notifiable?

The written-off vehicles that must be notified to the Registrar for inclusion on the South Australia WOVR are those that are;

1. required to be registered under the Act in order to be driven on a road whether or not the vehicle is in fact registered, or a vehicle registered in another jurisdiction and has not been notified in that jurisdiction (written-off vehicles *registered* in other jurisdictions should be notified to the appropriate Authority in that jurisdiction); *and*
2. is less than 15 years old at the time it is declared to be a write-off; *and*
3. is one of the following vehicle types;
 - a motor vehicle (other than a motor bike or trailer) with a GVM not greater than 4.5 tonnes; or
 - a motorbike; or
 - a caravan; or
 - a trailer with a GVM greater than 4.5 tonnes.

This includes where a vehicle is wrecked or wholly or partly disassembled, any part of the vehicle that bears a vehicle identification plate or vehicle identification number.

Determining the Age of a Vehicle

To determine the age of a vehicle the following shall apply;

- (a) the month and year of the date referred to on the compliance plate (if any) affixed to the vehicle; or
- (b) the month and year (if any) impressed on or affixed to the vehicle by the manufacturer as the month and year in which the vehicle was manufactured; or
- (c) the year during which the manufacture of the vehicle was completed to a stage that would have enabled the vehicle to be registered, whichever is the earliest.

Role and Responsibilities

The expeditious notification of written-off vehicles is critical for ensuring the success of the WOVR. Late notifications may allow a re-birthed stolen vehicle with a new identity, to be re-registered before the vehicle identifiers are recorded on the WOVR.

It is also important to ensure that WOVR notifications are made before written-off vehicles become available to potential purchasers. This will help to protect those unsuspecting persons from purchasing 'Statutory' write-offs with the intent of repairing the vehicle and later re-registering it.

In order for the WOVR to be effective, the information recorded against each written-off vehicle needs to be able to be clearly interpreted by every Australian State and Territory, regardless of where the information was reported. The accuracy of the information reported is critical to the success of the WOVR in combating the re-birthing of motor vehicles.

One of the more important purposes of the notification form is to provide Vehicle Identity Inspectors with adequate information to identify repaired vehicles and to check the validity of parts used from other write-offs to repair them.

Insurers

Based on experience, insurers or their agents have been responsible for notifying the majority of all written-off vehicles in South Australia. Insurers therefore play a crucial role in notifying the Registrar. It is the responsibility of insurers to assess vehicles and to make appropriate determinations.

It is desirable that insurers have adequate internal systems in place for ensuring compliance with the requirements of the legislation. One desirable practice may be to require applicants applying for a new policy to provide a copy of their registration certificate to ensure that correct vehicle identifiers are recorded.

If an insurer has multiple business sites and some are located outside South Australia, it is the Insurers responsibility to notify the Registrar of any South Australian registered vehicle that is written-off in the State/Territory of that business site.

Assessment of vehicles

The insurance assessor, as the agent of the insurer, is responsible for initially assessing the category of the vehicle.

If considered a write-off, the assessor should recommend to the insurer whether the vehicle is a Statutory or Repairable write-off based on the criteria contained in these guidelines. The assessor should also record the incident type, damage locations and damage severity for recording on the WOVR. The insurer who lodges the written-off vehicle notification with the Registrar is ultimately responsible for the correct details and assessment of the vehicle.

Insurers are required to notify the Registrar of any notifiable vehicle and affix *Written-Off Vehicle Notice/s*;

- as soon as practicable but before selling or otherwise disposing of the vehicle; *and*
- within seven days after a vehicle is determined to be written-off.

The seven-day period is taken to begin from when the determination is made by the *insurer* (rather than the assessor) to write-off the vehicle.

Vehicle Dealers/Auction Houses

Vehicle dealers and auction houses have a responsibility to ensure compliance with the WOVR legislation and these guidelines. Dealers and auction houses must notify the Registrar of all notifiable vehicles that come into their possession unless they have obtained a vehicle that has already been correctly assessed (salvage condition) and previously notified.

Dealers and auction houses should confirm by observing if a *Written-Off Vehicle Notice* has been affixed to the vehicle's firewall or by obtaining documentation from the vendor that a notification has already been accepted by the Registrar or the jurisdiction where the vehicle was registered.

Vehicle dealers are required to advise the Registrar of notifiable vehicles that come into their possession. The occurrence of written-off vehicles being traded in to dealers will likely be rare.

If and when this occurs, the vehicle dealer (or assessor) must assess the damage and complete a *Notification of a Written-Off Vehicle* form for the vehicle, which must then be forwarded to the Registrar (see *Notification Arrangements* on page 10 for more information).

Dealers are required to notify the Registrar of any notifiable vehicles and affix *Written-Off Vehicle Notice/s*;

- as soon as practicable after coming into possession of the vehicle, but before selling or otherwise disposing of the vehicle; *and*
- within seven days after coming into possession of the vehicle.

Vehicle Wreckers

Vehicle wreckers also play an important part in the notification of written-off vehicles. Vehicle wreckers are required to notify the Registrar of any written-off notifiable vehicles that have not been assessed as a write-off (Statutory or Repairable). If a *Written-Off Vehicle Notice* is not affixed to the vehicle when a vehicle comes into their possession, enquiries should be made to establish if notification has previously been made in the jurisdiction where the vehicle was registered.

It is the responsibility of vehicle wreckers to ensure compliance with the WOVR legislation requirements as defined in these guidelines.

Vehicle wreckers do not need to notify the Registrar if the registering authority in the jurisdiction where the vehicle was registered has already been advised of the write-off. South Australian vehicles should be readily identifiable by a *Written-Off Vehicle Notice* affixed to the firewall of the vehicle.

Where a notifiable vehicle has to be notified to the Registrar, the vehicle wrecker must provide the Registrar with the required information on the *Notification of a Written-Off Vehicle* form.

Vehicle wreckers are required to give the Registrar the required information regarding notifiable vehicles and affix *written-off vehicle notice/s*;

- as soon as practicable after acquiring the vehicle, but before commencing to dismantle the vehicle or selling or otherwise disposing of the vehicle; *and*
- within seven days after acquiring the vehicle.

Vehicle Owners/Operators

As well as the requirements for insurers, vehicle dealers, auction houses and vehicle wreckers, the legislation requires WOVN notification from any other person responsible for a vehicle should it be a notifiable vehicle. Such persons include owners of uninsured vehicles and fleet owners (as fleets are often self-insured). If a vehicle is written-off by one of those persons/organisations, the relevant information must be provided to the Registrar using the *Notification of a Written-Off Vehicle* form.

For the individual owners of uninsured vehicles, notification will generally occur when the written-off vehicle's registration is cancelled. These persons will only be able to advise that a vehicle is a *Repairable* write-off because in the majority of instances the person will not have the knowledge or experience to determine if a vehicle is a Statutory write-off.

Vehicle owners/operators are required to notify the Registrar of any notifiable vehicles in their possession and affix *Written-Off Vehicle Notice/s* before selling or otherwise disposing of the vehicle.

Recording Vehicle Identifiers

The vehicle registration number must be taken directly from the registration plates on the vehicle, if fitted.

It is desirable that the VIN is obtained directly from the vehicle or the VIN plate. All 17 characters are to be recorded, no abbreviations are to be used. The VIN should not be taken from the compliance plate unless the VIN is not stamped on the body.

Avoiding duplicate notifications

To avoid duplications, when disposing of a written-off vehicle, it is essential that after advising the Registrar, a *Written-Off Vehicle Notice* is affixed to the vehicle. This will minimise any adverse impact on dealers, auction houses and wreckers who are required to notify of written-off vehicles where a notice has not been affixed.

Updating Existing WOVN Records

A WOVN record will not be deleted.

However, there may be instances where a written-off record will need to be updated. Where this occurs, the old record will be retained for the integrity of the database and audit purposes and a new record will be added.

A new WOVN notification must be provided when a;

1. vehicle previously notified as a Repairable write-off has again been damaged following repair and is now a Statutory write-off; or
2. vehicle previously notified as a Repairable write-off has again been damaged following repair and is now a Repairable write-off; or
3. vehicle previously notified as a Repairable write-off by an owner/operator is re-assessed by a delegated person and should be upgraded to a Statutory write-off.

A Statutory write-off **CANNOT** be downgraded to an Repairable write-off.

Duty to attach Written-Off Vehicle Notice

Insurers, auction houses, vehicle dealers and vehicle wreckers are required to assess whether a vehicle is a Repairable or Statutory write-off (see *Salvage Condition* on page 11). A *Written-Off Vehicle Notice* will signify to potential purchasers that the vehicle to which it is affixed has been written-off and that the VIN of the vehicle has been flagged as written-off on the WOVR and cannot be registered. A Repairable write-off may only be registered after passing stringent inspection requirements.

The *Written-Off Vehicle Notice* for a motor vehicle must be attached securely to the metal portion of the vehicle's firewall panel and as near as possible to the compliance plate (if fitted in that position). If this is not possible due to extensive damage, affix the notice in a prominent position in the engine bay adjacent to where the compliance plate would normally be attached.

The *Written-Off Vehicle Notice* for a motorbike must be attached to the motorbike's frame in a conspicuous position, close to the identifier. For a trailer/caravan, the notice should be attached to the main frame or near the compliance plate.

This notice must not be damaged, destroyed or removed after it is attached to a vehicle. Only a person authorised to inspect written-off vehicles can remove a written-off vehicle notice (i.e. Police or Government Inspectors) except when necessary for dismantling.

Duty to attach Statutory Write-Off Warning Notice

Since a Statutory write-off cannot be registered in South Australia or any other jurisdiction, it is important that a person who may be intending to purchase a written-off vehicle is made aware of the vehicle's status. For this reason, when a notifiable vehicle is determined to be a Statutory write-off, a *Statutory Write-Off Warning Notice* must also be affixed to the vehicle.

The *Statutory Write-Off Warning Notice* for a motor vehicle must be attached securely to the body shell of the vehicle in a conspicuous position. The ideal place for a notice on a vehicle other than a motorbike or trailer/caravan will usually be the roof. More than one label may be placed on the vehicle, since the point of the notices is to warn a potential buyer that the vehicle cannot be registered. These notices must not be damaged, destroyed or removed after they are attached to the vehicle except when necessary for dismantling.

The *Statutory Write-Off Notice* for a motorbike must be attached to the motorbike's frame in a conspicuous position. For a trailer/caravan, the notice should be attached to the main frame in a conspicuous position.

Remember, the *Statutory Write-Off Notice* provides consumer protection.



WARNING

STATUTORY WRITE-OFF

This vehicle cannot be registered

**Repairs to this vehicle will not render
it eligible for registration**

Suitable for parts/dismantling only

THIS NOTICE CAN ONLY BE REMOVED WHEN NECESSARY FOR DISMANTLING
(HEAVY PENALTIES APPLY FOR NON COMPLIANCE)

To be affixed to the body shell of the vehicle in a readily visible position

Warning notices issued by another jurisdiction should remain readable. In cases where the details cannot be deciphered or the notice is in a state of decay, a South Australian notice should be affixed to the vehicle. In these instances, it is not necessary to advise the Registrar.

Notification Arrangements

A person/body corporate authorised to issue *Written-off Vehicle Notices* on behalf of the Registrar must notify the Registrar of the written-off vehicle prior to selling or otherwise disposing of the vehicle or any of its components. The *Notification of a Written-Off Vehicle* form must first be completed.

The notification of WOVR information can only be done manually. Transport SA currently does not provide Internet access for notifying a written-off vehicle. Notification of written-off vehicles can be made personally at any Transport SA or Service SA Customer Service Centre, by phone or facsimile. The contact details are;

**TSA Call Centre
Phone 131 084
Fax. 8204 8217**

or post to:

**Transport SA
Written-Off Vehicle Register
PO Box 1
Walkerville 5081**

Once the vehicle details have been recorded on the Register, an approval number will be provided and must be written on the *Written-Off Vehicle Notice* along with the vehicle's VIN.

Additional forms, *Written-Off Vehicle Notices* and *Statutory Write-Off Warning Notices* may be obtained from any Transport SA or Service SA Customer Service Centre.

Inspection Arrangements

Establishment of Registration

Prior to granting a registration in South Australia, all vehicles flagged as a Repairable write-off, no matter in which jurisdiction the vehicle was previously registered, will require a vehicle identity and safety inspection. The identity inspection is performed by South Australian Government Inspectors to ensure the vehicle identifiers match those recorded on the Register of motor vehicles. Original receipts for the major components used to repair the written-off vehicle will be required to be produced at time of inspection.

Renewal of Registration

The registration of a South Australian registered vehicle will not be renewed if a notification is received advising the vehicle is a Statutory write-off. A South Australian registered vehicle notified as a Repairable write-off will require a vehicle identity and safety inspection prior to renewal of registration. Original receipts for the major components used to repair the written-off vehicle will be required to be produced at the time of inspection.

WOVR Data

Salvage Condition

The 'salvage condition' is the overall condition that the vehicle is in at the time of assessment. The salvage condition is determined by an insurance assessor, dealer, wrecker or vehicle owner, depending on the circumstances. The salvage condition is determined following an assessment of the total damage.

Code	Salvage Condition	Description
E	Economic Repairable	The damage caused to the vehicle in an incident is repairable.
S	Statutory Write-off	The vehicle is involved in an incident to such an extent that the vehicle is only suitable for parts or dismantling.

Repairable Write-Offs

Vehicles that are deemed written-off and are not Statutory write-offs are Repairable write-offs. These vehicles pose a comparatively lower risk because of their higher value, this makes them less attractive to re-birthers. However, because there is evidence that re-birthers are still prepared to purchase these vehicles to provide a new identity, albeit at a reduced profit, Repairable write-offs are subject to vehicle identity inspections to confirm that the vehicle identifiers belong to the original vehicle.

A vehicle safety inspection will also be required prior to granting South Australian registration.

Statutory Write-Offs

Statutory write-offs are vehicles that are deemed unsuitable for repair. These vehicles are known targets of car thieves because they can be purchased at a lower cost than Repairable write-offs.

The definition of what constitutes a Statutory write-off has been agreed to by all Australian jurisdictions. Statutory write-offs are **ineligible for registration** in South Australia and all other jurisdictions.

The Registrar will not reverse an assessment of a vehicle as a Statutory write-off unless the wrong vehicle has been identified.

Statutory write-off is defined in Regulation 47A of the *Motor Vehicles Regulations 1996* as follows:

Statutory write-off to mean a motor vehicle or trailer that is written-off and is:

- (1) a motor vehicle (other than a motorbike) that has been:
 - (i) immersed in salt water above the doorsill level for any period; or
 - (ii) immersed in fresh water up to the dashboard or steering wheel for more than 48 hours; or
- (2) a motorbike that has been:
 - (i) fully immersed in salt water for any period; or
 - (ii) fully immersed in fresh water for more than 48 hours; or
- (3) a motor vehicle or trailer that is burnt to such an extent that it is fit only for wrecking or scrap; or
- (4) a motor vehicle that is stripped of all, or a combination of most, interior and exterior body parts, panels and components (such as, for example, the engine, wheels, bonnet, guards, doors, boot lid); or
- (5) a motor vehicle (other than a motorbike) that is damaged by at least three of the following impact damage indicators:
 - (i) damage to an area of the roof equal to or exceeding 300mm by 300mm in size;
 - (ii) damage to an area of the cabin floor pan equal to or exceeding 300mm by 300mm in size;
 - (iii) damage to an area of the firewall equal to or exceeding 300mm by 300mm in size;
 - (iv) any damage to the suspension;
 - (v) damage to a major mechanical component such as the engine block or transmission casings (for example, where the component is cracked or broken); or
- (6) a motorbike that has impact damage (excluding scratching) to the suspension and at least two areas of structural frame damage.

Assessment of Statutory Write-Offs

The assessment of a Statutory write-off must be made with care and in accordance with the definition provided in this guide. Once a vehicle is notified as a Statutory write-off, the vehicle will be ineligible for registration both now and in the future. This action is a consequence of the decision made by the person assessing the vehicle's salvage condition.

A determination that a vehicle is a Statutory write-off will only be reversed where the incorrect vehicle was flagged in the first instance. Applications for reversal must be made in writing, stating the reason/s and will be closely audited.

One of the main reasons for the Statutory Write-Off ((SWO) category is to address the problem of establishing a continued identity.

If much of a vehicle's structure has been replaced in the repair process, not only will there be no verifiable original identifiers but there will be no significant evidence of the extent and nature of the damage it sustained. It is therefore impossible to confirm the original identity of the vehicle. It is also arguable that such a vehicle is no longer the original vehicle. It is now a 'new' vehicle and the original identity has been lost. This could still be the case even if most of the identifiers from the original vehicle were re-applied to this 'new' vehicle.

Permanently removing extensively damaged vehicles from the registration system eliminates the need to be able to conclusively link a vehicle's original identity to a vehicle which is now made up of mostly non-original (or non-identifiable) components.

There are two other important purposes of the Statutory write-off classification.

- To eliminate from the registration system, those vehicles that have been exposed to conditions that leave little apparent trace but will cause the vehicle to rapidly become unsafe. These are vehicles that have been immersed in salt or fresh water.
- To thwart the 'strip and buy back' ploy used by vehicle thieves. These are the vehicles that are essentially undamaged but have been stripped of sufficient parts that they are considered not economical to repair.

The criteria for a Statutory write-off can be broken up into the following three groups:

Impact or Fire Damaged Vehicles - vehicles which have been so extensively damaged that if they were repaired using appropriate techniques they would be virtually impossible to properly identify.

Water Immersed Vehicles – vehicles which have been immersed in water to the extent that while they may appear sound at the moment, they but will rapidly become unsafe.

Stripped Stolen Vehicles - vehicles which have been stolen and extensively stripped of panels, components etc, to utilise the 'strip and buy back' ploy.

Impact Damage

Criteria

These criteria have been designed to identify vehicles that have been in such a severe crash that repairs would entail replacing much of the vehicles identifiable structure.

The criteria is that three of the following five impact damage indicators must be present if a vehicle is to be classified as a statutory write-off:

- Impact damage to the roof of 300 x 300 mm or more
- Impact damage to the floor pan of 300 x 300 mm or more
- Impact damage to the firewall of 300 x 300 mm or more
- Any impact damage to the suspension
- Impact damage to mechanical components such as engine blocks, transmission cases and axle houses, where these are deformed, cracked or broken.

In a motorcycle, there must be impact damage to the suspension, and two areas of structural frame damage which exclude scratching.

The roof, floor pan and firewall are three relatively remote areas of the vehicle that are somewhat protected in typical impacts and it is unlikely that all three areas would sustain substantial damage in less than a severe crash event. Similarly, the nature of the necessary damage to the mechanical components generally requires a severe event. The intent of the 'impact damage to the suspension' item is also to flag damage that was caused by a severe impact.

Interpretation

The use of the term 'impact' in describing damage of more than 300mm x 300mm to the roof, floor pan or firewall is intended to mean damage that was caused directly by impact with some object during the crash event. It is not meant to identify transposed or incidental damage. For example, following a side impact there might be visible roof ripples caused by distortion of the B pillar. However, these may largely 'pop out' and disappear when stress is relieved by cutting the pillar during the repair process. In this case, there is a risk that the vehicle might be incorrectly assessed as a statutory write-off if it also sustained floor pan and suspension damage.

Commonsense must also be applied when considering the area of the damage given that in many cases the exact limit will be difficult to define. With borderline cases the test should be, 'Was the damage caused by a severe impact?' For example, if a person stands or gently sits on the roof of a car it is quite likely to produce a dent greater than 300mm x 300mm, but this does not mean that that part of the vehicle has suffered a severe crash event. Dents of this nature might be mostly removed with gentle hand pressure and should not be classed as one of the SWO criteria.

Again, the use of the term 'impact' when considering damage to the suspension is intended to describe damage caused by a severe crash. Minor suspension damage can easily be caused in 'normal' driving by hitting potholes or kerbs. Such damage will require a wheel alignment to correct and it may even require the replacement of some components (it is often cheaper to replace components than try to repair them). Therefore, when considering suspension damage as one of the SWO criteria, the test should be, 'Is the nature and extent of the damage significant and the result of a severe impact?' Minor suspension damage even if it may require the replacement of some components should be ignored.

The SWO criteria also refer to 'impact' damage to mechanical components such as engine blocks, transmission cases and axle houses, where these are deformed, cracked or broken. This means that the damage must have been caused by a severe impact and must be readily visible. Damage that has resulted from normal wear and tear or potential but not visible damage to the engine or drive train because of the likely misuse of the vehicle (common in the case of stolen and recovered vehicles) should not be included for the purposes of the SWO criteria.

Fire Damage

Criteria

If a vehicle has been burnt to such an extent that it is only fit for wrecking or scrap it is to be classified as a SWO.

Interpretation

A vehicle's fitness for only wrecking or scrap is a subjective judgement but generally a burnt or partially burnt vehicle should be classified as a SWO if all the major components carrying the vehicle identifiers would need to be replaced. Also, consideration should be given to the extent of the fire damage to glued or bonded structural components and special materials such as high strength steels and laminated firewalls when determining whether the vehicle is only fit for wrecking or scrap.

Salt Water Immersion

Criteria

If a motor vehicle is immersed in salt water above the door sill level for any period, or for a motorcycle, is fully immersed in salt water for any period, the vehicle must be classified as a SWO.

Interpretation

This criterion is intended to ensure that any vehicle that is considered a total loss because it has had any part of its structure immersed in salt water is classified as a SWO.

This criterion is relatively straight forward to apply in most cases. However, it may be less straight forward when only part of the vehicle was immersed such as at an angle with just the front immersed and the water may not have reached the cabin area. However, the vehicle will still have had some of its structure immersed and if such immersion has solely resulted in the vehicle being determined a total loss then it should still be classified as a SWO. The possible effects of the immersion on key electronic components would also need to be taken into account as discussed in *Fresh Water Immersion*.

Fresh Water Immersion

Criteria

If a motor vehicle is immersed in fresh water up to the dashboard/steering wheel for more than two days (48 hours), or for a motorcycle is fully immersed in fresh water for the same period, the vehicle must be classified as a SWO.

Interpretation

This criterion is intended to ensure that any vehicle that is considered a total loss because it has had a substantial part of its structure and cabin and some of its mechanical components and electronics immersed in fresh water for over two days is classified as a SWO.

This criterion is relatively straightforward to apply in most cases. However, like the case of salt water immersion, it may be less straightforward in some circumstances. For example, in a case of partial or angled immersion, significant parts of the vehicle's electronics may have been immersed yet the water may not have reached the dashboard/steering wheel. Also, because of the variety of locations for key electronic components within different vehicles, it is not practical to have some definitive rule covering all possible situations. Further, the

SWO requirement for fresh water immersion of more than two days will be immaterial in the case of many electronic systems particularly those located within the vehicle cabin as these often have no waterproofing whatsoever. A period of immersion of just seconds may be sufficient to cause eventual damage. However, also like the salt water immersion case, if the partial immersion has solely resulted in the vehicle being determined a total loss then it should still be classified as a SWO.

Stripped Vehicles

Criteria

Where a vehicle is stripped of interior and exterior parts, panels and components such as wheels, bonnet, guards, doors, boot lid and interior parts or a combination of these items, and is uneconomical to repair, it should be classified as a SWO.

Interpretation

This criterion is intended to ensure that any stripped vehicle that has been determined to be a total loss, i.e. it is not economical to repair, is classified as a SWO.

It should be noted that if a stripped vehicle is economical to repair, by definition it is not a total loss and by definition, not a written off vehicle. Consequently, there is no repairable write-off category for a stripped vehicle.

In many cases vehicles which have been stolen and stripped but withheld from recovery for sufficient period for the insurance claim to have been paid out, are the result of the 'strip and buy back' ploy. Even if these vehicles have not been stripped to the extent that they are total losses by definition (i.e. uneconomical to repair) if they have been stripped to the point where repairs exceed 20% of the original market value and it is intended to dispose of the vehicle in the un-repaired state, they should be classified as a SWO.

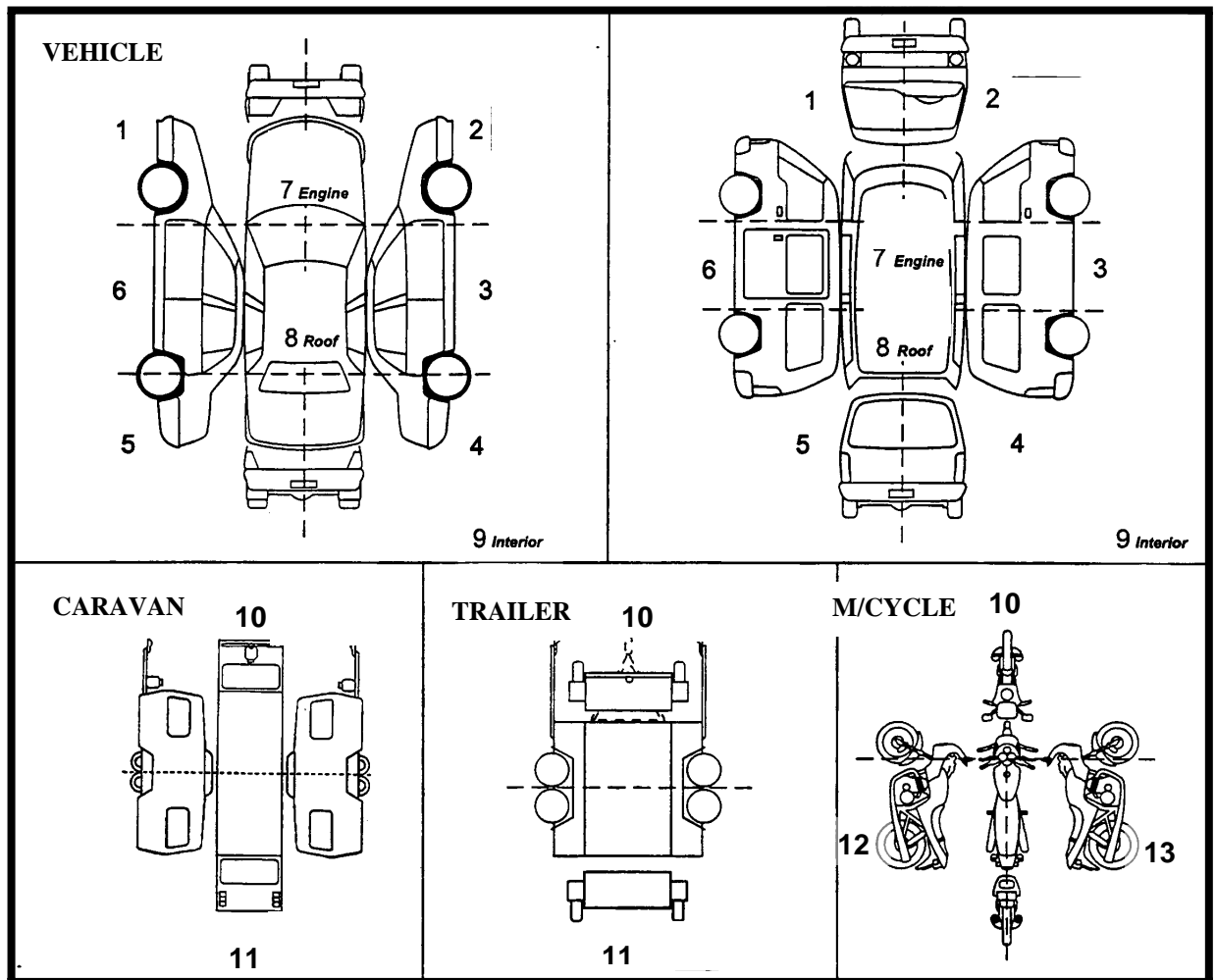
Incident Type

Incident type describes the incident that caused the vehicle to be written-off. More than one incident type may apply, for example impact damage and fire damage, or impact damage and water damage, may be recorded against the vehicle.

Codes	Incident Type	Description
I	Impact damage	Collision of some type with an object, for example, another vehicle, tree or pole.
F	Fire damage	Damage caused by combustion.
M	Malicious/ Stripping	Intentional damage, for example broken door locks, glass window or windows, paint scratched. This code also applies to vehicles that are stripped for parts by a vehicle wrecker.
W	Water damage (salt or freshwater)	Damage caused by the water (salt or freshwater) such as in a storm, river or flood.
H	Hail damage	Damage caused by hailstones.

Damage Location

Diagram 1 – Damage Locations



14 – Whole Vehicle (applies to all vehicle types)

For full descriptions see table next page.

Below are the descriptions for the *Damage Locations* Diagram on the previous page.

Vehicle Type	Damage Location	Description
Vehicle	1 - Passenger Front	Left side front panels and/or glass
	2 - Driver Front	Right side front panels and/or glass
	3 - Driver Side	Panels and/or glass
	4 - Driver Rear	Right side rear panels and/or glass
	5 - Passenger Rear	Left side rear panels and/or glass
	6 - Passenger Side	Panels and/or glass
	7 - Engine	Coverage includes within the engine bay and components mechanical or electrical
	8 - Roof of vehicle	Upper covering of vehicle which is supported by the structure
	9 - Interior of vehicle	Coverage includes from the floor pan to the roof
Trailer/ Caravan	10 - Front	Portion of the frame and other components
	11 - Rear	Portion of the frame and other components
Motor Bike	10 - Front	Portion of the frame and other components
	12 - Left Rear	Portion of the frame and other components
	13 - Right Rear	Portion of the frame and other components
All Vehicles	14 - Whole vehicle	Whole vehicle

Damage Severity

Damage severity means the condition of the vehicle following the incident that led to its written-off status.

Codes	Damage Severity	Description
A	Heavy panel	Replace panel
B	Light panel	Repairable
C	Heavy structural	Replace structural part
D	Light structural	Repair structural part
E	Unrepairable	Physical or economic
F	Major engine damage	Replace engine
G	Minor engine damage	Repair or replace engine parts
H	Major stripping	Interior parts, external panels
I	Minor stripping	Wheels, radio, damaged door locks etc
J	Major vandalism	Interior parts, external panels
K	Minor vandalism	Wheels, radio, damaged door locks etc
L	Full salt water immersion	Immersion in salt water above the doorsill level for any period, or for a motorcycle fully immersed for the same period
M	Full fresh water immersion	Immersion in fresh water for more than 2 days up to or above the dashboard/steering wheel, or for a motorcycle fully immersed for the same period
N	Burnt	More than one third of the vehicle completely burnt, or burnt to an extent that repairs are not economic
O	Smoke and heat	Minor engine fire or minor interior fire or exterior exposed to external heat source
P	Minor smoke damage	Smoke / soot damage to the interior of the vehicle

Recording Written-off Information

Written-off vehicles must be notified using the *Notification of a Written-Off Vehicle* Form. An example of the form is included in Appendix 1.

In addition to the date declared a write-off, the *Incident and Damage Details* section of the form requires the entry of:

- the damage incident (impact, fire, malicious, etc.);
- the damage location; and
- the damage severity.

The codes to be used for entering this information are set out in detail in the previous tables and on the form.

Example

The description of the incident, damage and location should be as detailed as possible.

Where there is more than one incident type that applies to the vehicle, the worse two incidents should be recorded, as shown in the example below.

The code for ‘whole vehicle’, 14, should only be used where appropriate, such as when a vehicle has been completely burnt out or immersed.

The example below is for a motor vehicle that has Impact Damage to the passenger front that will require a replacement panel, repairable damage to the passenger side and roof and minor engine damage.

(A) Damage Incident Type	
I	
(B) Severity of Damage	
MOTOR VEHICLE	A 1 Passenger Front
	2 Driver Front
	3 Driver Side
	4 Driver Rear
	5 Passenger Rear
	B 6 Passenger Side
	G 7 Engine
	B 8 Roof
	9 Interior
	14 Whole of Vehicle

The example below is for a motor bike that has Water Damage from being totally immersed in salt water.

(A) Damage Incident Type	
W	
(B) Severity of Damage	
MOTOR BIKE	10 Front
	12 Rear Left
	13 Rear Right
	L 14 Whole of Bike

The example below is for a motor vehicle that has both Malicious / Stripping and Impact Damage. The vehicle was broken into and damage occurred to the door lock and internal fittings. The vehicle was later involved in an accident. Major damage occurred to the passenger side and engine.

(A) Damage Incident Type		(A) Damage Incident Type	
M		I	
(B) Severity of Damage		(B) Severity of Damage	
MOTOR VEHICLE	1 Passenger Front	MOTOR VEHICLE	C 1 Passenger Front
	2 Driver Front		2 Driver Front
	K 3 Driver Side		3 Driver Side
	4 Driver Rear		4 Driver Rear
	5 Passenger Rear		C 5 Passenger Rear
	6 Passenger Side		C 6 Passenger Side
	7 Engine		F 7 Engine
	8 Roof		C 8 Roof
	K 9 Interior		9 Interior
	14 Whole of Vehicle		14 Whole of Vehicle

Penalties

Failure to Notify

The *Motor Vehicles Regulations 1996* provide for a penalty of up to \$2500 where a notification is not received within the prescribed period for those persons engaged in the course of a trade or business or in any other case \$750. An expiation fee of \$210 applies in the case of an alleged offence not committed in the course of a trade or business.

Failure to Affix Written-off Vehicle Notice/s

The *Motor Vehicles Regulations 1996* provide for a penalty of up to \$2500 for failure to affix a *Written-Off Vehicle Notice* or a *Statutory Write-Off Warning Notice* as described above if committed in the course of a trade or business or in any other case \$750. An expiation fee of \$210 applies in the case of an alleged offence not committed in the course of a trade or business.

Unauthorised Removal, Damage or Destruction of Notice/s

The *Motor Vehicles Regulations 1996* provide for a penalty of up to \$2500 for the unauthorised removal, damage to, or destruction of, a *Written-Off Vehicle Notice* or a *Statutory Write-Off Warning Notice* as described above if committed in the course of a trade or business or in any other case \$750. An expiation fee of \$210 applies in the case of an alleged offence not committed in the course of a trade or business.

Driving a Written-off Vehicle on the Road

The *Motor Vehicles Regulations 1996* provide for a penalty of up to \$2500 for driving a notified written-off vehicle on the road except to or from a place at which the vehicle is to be or has been repaired or a place at which the vehicle is to be or has been inspected by an inspector, if committed in the course of a trade or business or in any other case \$750. An expiation fee of \$210 applies in the case of an alleged offence not committed in the course of a trade or business.

Appendix 1 – Notification of a Written-Off Vehicle



Transport SA

ABN 41 659 119 911

NOTIFICATION OF A WRITTEN-OFF VEHICLE

Telephone Enquiries: 13 10 84

Serial No. W



05/04

This application may be forwarded to a Transport SA or Service SA Customer Service Centre by post, in person, or by facsimile

1. DETAILS OF THE VEHICLE

VIN				PLATE NUMBER	STATE REGISTERED
MAKE	MODEL	TYPE OF VEHICLE (eg, Motor bike, etc)	ENGINE NUMBER	ODOMETER READING	

2. CATEGORY OF WRITE-OFF

• When was the vehicle declared written-off ? / /

• Is the vehicle a Statutory Write-off **S** or a Repairable Write-off ? **E** Refer to definitions inside cover.

Important Information: (1) A Statutory Write-off will not be eligible for future registration. (2) If a Statutory write-off, affix Warning Notice

3. DETAILS OF ORGANISATION OR INSURANCE LOSS ADJUSTER ADVISING OF THE WRITTEN-OFF VEHICLE

SURNAME/BODY CORPORATE NAME	GIVEN NAMES	CLIENT NUMBER	CONTACT PHONE NUMBER
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Please tick where appropriate

WRECKER / DISMANTLER **M**
I/we have acquired the vehicle described above for the purpose of dismantling or wrecking

AUCTION HOUSE / VEHICLE DEALER **M**
I/we have come into possession of the vehicle described above

INSURANCE COMPANY / LOSS ADJUSTER **I**
I/we hereby advise that the vehicle described above has been assessed and considered to be a write-off

4. DAMAGE TO VEHICLE

Before completing the details below, please refer to the definitions located inside the front cover.

- Complete the relevant table/s below by:
 - (A) Placing a **Damage Incident Type code** (as indicated below) in the **Damage Incident Type** box,

IMPACT (I)	FIRE (F)	MALICIOUS / STRIPPING (M)	WATER (W)	HAIL (H)
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 and
 - (B) Record the **Severity of Damage** by placing a **Severity of Damage code** as indicated on the inside of the cover, in the box/es next to the locations of damage. If the write-off is the result of two (2) Damage Incident Types, you must complete a table for each type.

MOTOR VEHICLE	(A) Damage Incident Type	<input type="checkbox"/>	(A) Damage Incident Type	<input type="checkbox"/>	MOTOR BIKE	(A) Damage Incident Type	<input type="checkbox"/>	(A) Damage Incident Type	<input type="checkbox"/>
	(B) Severity of Damage	<input type="checkbox"/>	(B) Severity of Damage	<input type="checkbox"/>		(B) Severity of Damage	<input type="checkbox"/>	(B) Severity of Damage	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1 Passenger Front	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 Passenger Front	<input type="checkbox"/>		10 Front	<input type="checkbox"/>	10 Front	<input type="checkbox"/>
	2 Driver Front	<input type="checkbox"/>	2 Driver Front	<input type="checkbox"/>		12 Rear Left	<input type="checkbox"/>	12 Rear Left	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Driver Side	<input type="checkbox"/>	3 Driver Side	<input type="checkbox"/>	13 Rear Right	<input type="checkbox"/>	13 Rear Right	<input type="checkbox"/>		
4 Driver Rear	<input type="checkbox"/>	4 Driver Rear	<input type="checkbox"/>	14 Whole of Bike	<input type="checkbox"/>	14 Whole of Bike	<input type="checkbox"/>		
5 Passenger Rear	<input type="checkbox"/>	5 Passenger Rear	<input type="checkbox"/>						
6 Passenger Side	<input type="checkbox"/>	6 Passenger Side	<input type="checkbox"/>						
7 Engine	<input type="checkbox"/>	7 Engine	<input type="checkbox"/>						
8 Roof	<input type="checkbox"/>	8 Roof	<input type="checkbox"/>						
9 Interior	<input type="checkbox"/>	9 Interior	<input type="checkbox"/>						
14 Whole of Vehicle	<input type="checkbox"/>	14 Whole of Vehicle	<input type="checkbox"/>						
					TRAILER / CARAVAN	(A) Damage Incident Type	<input type="checkbox"/>	(A) Damage Incident Type	<input type="checkbox"/>
						(B) Severity of Damage	<input type="checkbox"/>	(B) Severity of Damage	<input type="checkbox"/>
						10 Front	<input type="checkbox"/>	10 Front	<input type="checkbox"/>
						11 Rear	<input type="checkbox"/>	11 Rear	<input type="checkbox"/>
						14 Whole of Vehicle	<input type="checkbox"/>	14 Whole of Vehicle	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. WRITTEN-OFF VEHICLE NOTICE

Approval No.

If you are notifying on behalf of an organisation, please print your full name and Client/Licence No.

6. SIGNATURE

I declare the information provided on this form is true and correct. Signed.....Date...../...../.....

Appendix 2 – National WOVV Codes

This table summarises the nationally agreed codes used by road transport authorities (with some variations) for recording written-off vehicle information.

Restriction Type	Salvage Condition	Incident Type	Damage Location	Location Severity
C - Collision W - Storm, Flood, Others	E - Economic repairable S - Statutory write-off I - Inspected and passed*	F - Fire Damage H - Hail Damage I - Impact Damage M - Malicious Damage W - Water (salt or fresh)	01 - Passenger Front 02 - Driver Front 03 - Driver Side 04 - Driver Rear 05 - Passenger Rear 06 - Passenger Side 07 - Engine 08 - Roof 09 - Interior 10 - Front 11 - Rear 12 - Rear Left 13 - Rear Right 14 - Whole Vehicle	A - Heavy Panel (replace panels) B - Light Panel (repairable) C - Heavy Structural D - Light Structural E - Unrepairable (physical or economic) F - Major Engine Damage G - Minor Engine Damage H - Major Stripping (Interior parts, external panels) I - Minor Stripping (wheels, radio, damaged locks) J - Major Vandalism (interior parts, external panels) K - Minor Vandalism (wheels, radio, damaged locks) L - Full Salt Immersion M - Full Fresh Immersion N - Burnt (More than one third of vehicle completely burnt or burnt to the extent that repairs are not economic) O - Smoke and Heat (Minor engine fire or minor interior fire or exterior exposed to external heat source) P - Minor Smoke (Smoke and/or soot damage to the Interior)

*This code used by transport authorities to indicate that a vehicle flagged as a write-off has been cleared as a legitimate vehicle through a vehicle identity check.