



Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure, Transport,  
Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

ROAD VEHICLE STANDARDS

# GUIDANCE NOTE

## Applying to continue supply of a vehicle covered by an opted-in vehicle type approval

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This guidance note explains how to apply for a new vehicle type approval when an opted-in vehicle type approval is expiring or has expired. It also identifies changes made to ROVER functionality to support this process.

The *Road Vehicle Standards (Consequential and Transitional Provisions) Act 2018* allowed holders of certain approvals granted under the former Motor Vehicle Standards Act 1989 (MVSA) to apply for an 'opted-in' vehicle type approval under the Road Vehicle Standards Act 2018. These approvals were granted for 5 years and will expire in 2026.

You must apply for and be granted a new vehicle type approval to continue the provision of a vehicle type that is currently covered by an opted in approval.

### How do I know if I hold an opted-in vehicle type approval?

Opted-in vehicle type approvals have a numbering series between VTA-000001 and VTA-059999 (inclusive) and expire between 1 July and 31 December 2026. You can find your approval number and expiration date on the first page of your approval notice.

### Applying for a new vehicle type approval

The Road Vehicle Standards (RVS) legislation sets defined approval periods and does not make provisions for either extending or renewing an approval.

To continue supplying vehicles covered by an opted-in approval, you will need to complete a new vehicle type approval application form in ROVER.

### Existing models and ADR applicability

When completing your application, you will need to confirm the vehicle's extent of compliance with each applicable Australian Design Rule (ADR). This includes selecting 'Not applicable' for ADRs that are not yet applicable to all vehicle models.

If a vehicle model is exactly the same as the subject of a previously granted approval, the department will consider it to be an existing model (rather than a new model) for the purposes of ADR applicability.

For the department to apply this consideration, the model in the new vehicle type approval application must:

- have the same names or codes for make, model and generation
- be of the same type (as defined in the [Guide to vehicle type approvals](#))
- be the subject of a vehicle type approval before the new approval application is decided.

## Demonstrating compliance using test results

Test results from an RVS-approved testing facility are one of the primary methods for demonstrating a vehicle's compliance with applicable ADRs. However, some test facilities registered under the MVSA may not have applied to become approved testing facilities under the RVS legislation.

As outlined in the [Guide to vehicle type approvals](#), we will consider requests to use MVSA test results if you meet the following criteria:

- that you were the holder of a MVSA approval under 10A(1), 10A(2) or 14A
- you hold a vehicle type approval taken to be granted under the opt-in arrangements
- you are seeking to reapply for a vehicle type approval after the 5-year opt-in period has ceased.

When you enter the details for an MVSA registered test facility into a compliance information form, ROVER will recognise the details are not valid as an RVS-approved testing facility and require you to do the following:

- submit a signed declaration with your application that the test results from the previous MVSA test facility meets the required information to demonstrate compliance, and that:
  - the original test evidence is still applicable and continues to demonstrate the vehicle's compliance with the national road vehicle standards
  - the original test results are accurate
  - retesting for compliance with the applicable national road vehicle standards will impose a significant and unreasonable financial burden on your business
  - retesting would not provide any additional safety, environmental, or anti-theft benefits to the Australian community
- accept responsibility for the accuracy of the test evidence and the vehicle's compliance with the applicable national road vehicle standards, and upload the following supporting documentation:
  - a copy of the original test report/evidence
  - a quote for the cost of retesting provided by an RVS-approved testing facility, evidence of prior testing cost or other suitable supporting information that shows the cost of retesting
  - a statement about the financial burden of retesting
  - a statement about why retesting does not provide the community with any additional safety, environmental, or anti-theft benefits.

The decision-maker will consider all the information provided and decide if the vehicle complies, or substantially complies, with the national road vehicle standards. If a decision-maker is not satisfied by the information and declaration provided, they may:

- request further information to assist in deciding whether to grant a vehicle type approval – this may be a request to provide results of testing from an RVS-approved testing facility or additional information relevant to the matters declared, or
- refuse to grant a vehicle type approval.

If the decision-maker is satisfied with the information and declaration provided, the vehicle type approval will be granted and will remain in force for 7 years, unless revoked earlier.

To re-apply for a vehicle type approval granted under the above arrangements when it expires, you must only submit test results from an RVS-approved testing facility, regardless of any continuing imposition or financial burden to satisfy this criterion.

## Letters of in-principle support

You will need to provide a letter of in-principle support (IPS) when applying for an approval for a non-standard vehicle.

As IPS letters do not have an expiry date, most previously issued letters remain valid unless the vehicle specifications have changed since the IPS was issued. To reduce industry’s workload when reapplying, the department is working with the in-service regulators to remove the need to provide a new IPS letter where a previously issued letter remains valid and appropriate.

## Retaining an approval number

The RVS legislation treats all applications as being for a new approval. ROVER will therefore allocate a new approval number to a successful application by default.

If you want your new approval to retain the same approval number as a prior/existing approval, you need to request this when you make your application. You will also need to request, via a new declaration in ROVER, that the department revokes your prior approval on the day the new approval is granted. This is because 2 approvals with the same approval number cannot exist in ROVER at the same time.

Details regarding the new declaration can be found at [A new declaration](#).

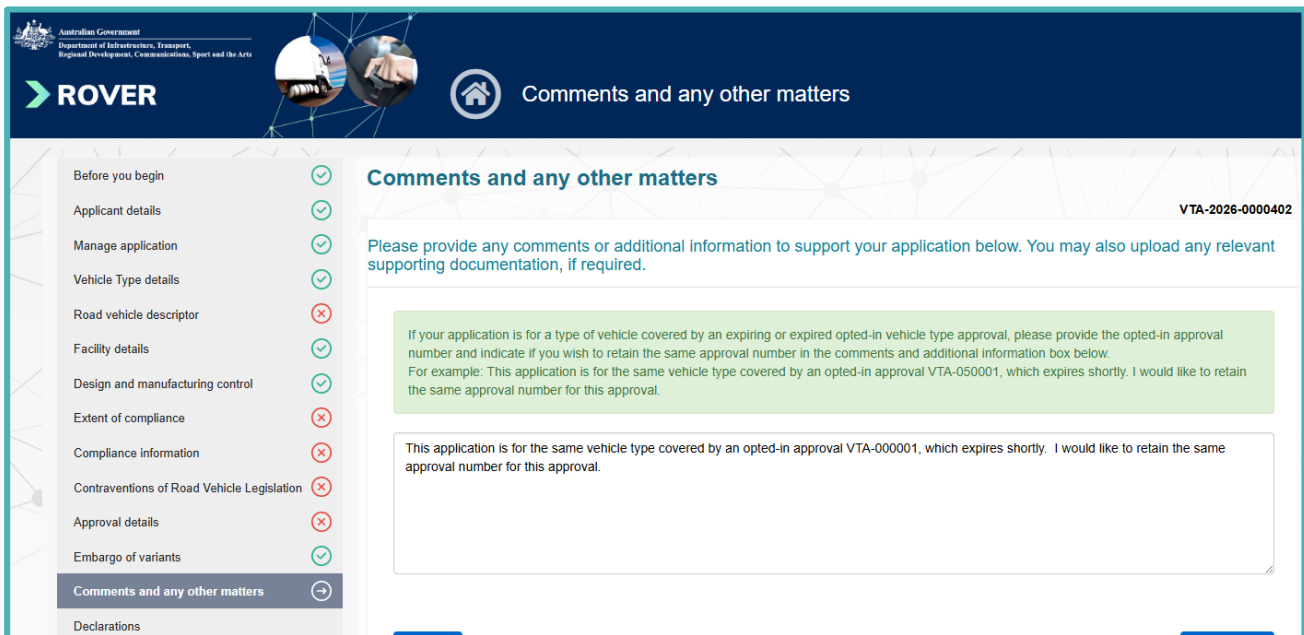
## Identifying a prior approval and requesting to retain an opted-in approval number

If your vehicle meets the requirements to be considered an existing model, you need to provide the opted-in approval number on the **Comments and any other matters** page of your application along with a brief statement that confirms:

- you wish to retain the previously issued approval number should a new approval be granted to you and
- your new application covers the exact same vehicle type as the expiring approval.

For example, Figure 1 shows an application for the same vehicle type covered by opted-in approval VTA000001.

**Figure 1. Comments and any other matters page**



## Approval commencement

When applying for a new vehicle type approval and seeking to retain the same number as an expiring approval, it will not be possible to have the new approval commence on a commencement date of your choice. This is because the RVS legislation does not contemplate renewing an approval, and two approvals of the same number cannot co-exist in ROVER.

In your application you should leave the commencement of approval field blank. You will also need to request that the department revokes your opted-in approval when the new approval is granted. This is done via [a new declaration](#) when you apply for a new approval.

If your application is successful:

- your new approval will commence on the day that it is granted, and
- your prior approval will be revoked if it is in force on the day that your new application is assessed.

Please also note that the RVS legislation allows vehicle type approvals to be in force for a maximum period of 7 years. The department therefore cannot grant a new approval that extends beyond 7 years to account for the remainder of a revoked approval.

## Choosing not to retain an approval number

You do not need to retain the number of the expiring approval for your vehicle type to be considered an existing model for ADR applicability purposes. However, if you do not wish to retain an existing approval number, you need to clearly communicate this choice to prevent ambiguity and any delays in assessing and deciding on your application.

In [ROVER](#), you can request this in the field provided on the **Comments and any other matters** page of your new application. Please provide a brief statement that confirms:

- your new application covers the exact same vehicle type as the expiring approval, and quote the number of the expiring approval; and
- you **do not** wish to retain the previous approval number should a new approval be granted to you.

## Approval commencement

For new vehicle type approvals that do not retain the same approval number as a prior approval, you can nominate a forward commencement date.

If the new approval commences before the prior approval expires, there will be a period of time where both approvals are active. Please note that there will be no link between these approvals in ROVER and so any variations made to one will also have to be independently made to the other.

**Important:** If you nominate a future commencement date (for example, when the prior approval expires), please be aware that you will not be able to make any variations to the new approval until it comes into force.

Any variations made to the prior approval before the new approval comes into force—for example, to demonstrate compliance to a newly-applicable ADR—will not be carried over to the new approval.

If the new approval does not meet all legislative requirements when it comes into force it may be suspended.

Please note you cannot continue to provide vehicles if the approval is suspended.

## A new declaration

The **Declarations** page includes a new declaration that relates specifically to applying to replace an opted-in type approval:

I/I on behalf of the applicant, declare that:

- This application is seeking an approval for a type of vehicle covered by an expiring or expired opted-in vehicle type approval granted under item 5 of Schedule 3 of *the Road Vehicle Standards (Consequential and Transitional Provisions) Act 2018*;
- I have provided the approval number for the type of vehicle covered by the opted-in vehicle type approval at the comments and any other matters page of the application;
- If I am requesting, in the comments and any other matters section of this application, to retain the same approval number from the opted-in approval for this type of vehicle, I request the department revoke the identified opted-in vehicle type approval (if it remains in force) on the day the Secretary decides to grant a new road vehicle type approval, should this application be successful.

The declaration confirms you are seeking a new approval for a vehicle type covered by the identified opted-in approval and, that if you are seeking to retain the existing approval number, that you agree to the revocation of the opted-in approval (if it remains in force) on the day you are granted approval. Revocation is necessary because 2 approvals with the same approval number cannot be in force at the same time.

## Further information

For further information, please visit [Vehicles | Department's website](#) or submit an online enquiry via the [Contact us—RVS | Department's website page](#).

## Quick links

- [Welcome to ROVER](#)
- [Road Vehicle Standards legislation | Department's website](#)
- [Guide to reapplying for an expiring or expired approval](#)

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Updated February 2026 – Removed information on when ROVER will be updated.

Updated March 2026 – Added information on existing models and ADR applicability, demonstrating compliance with test results, letters of in-principle support for heavy non-standard vehicles, retaining an approval number and approval commencement dates.

Updated May 2026 – Clarified the need to identify the prior opted-in approval number, when you can specify a future commencement date and evidence necessary to rely on MVSA test results. Updated the new declaration wording to reflect information in ROVER.