

Stickers or Other Obscurations in Front and Rear windcreens

Statement

This document provides general guidance and advice on the legislative requirements in Great Britain relating to stickers and other items which could obscure the view through a window in a vehicle. Every effort has been made to ensure that it is factually correct but recipients should check with the producers of this document if they are unsure about the validity of a particular regulation after the date of publication or if they have reason to believe any part is not correct or is now out of date.

We advise that this information sheet is read in conjunction with the information sheet on View to the Front

General Requirements

Front view

The specific act of placing stickers in car windows is not in itself illegal. However, it is an offence, under regulation 30 of *The Road Vehicles (Construction & Use) Regulations 1986 (SI 1986 No. 1078)*, to drive a vehicle in which the glass is maintained in such a condition that the vision of the driver is impaired.

It is also a requirement of the MOT Test that any windscreen that is damaged or obscured to the extent where the vision of the driver is impaired may fail the test. In practice, the annual test will check that items placed in, or stuck to, the windscreen, or surface damage, cracks or discolouration in the windscreen do not seriously obscure the vision of the driver. In order to better define what may be permissible the windscreen is divided into Zones:

- **Zone A** is a vertical area 290mm wide, centred on the steering wheel and contained within the swept area of the windscreen (this area is 350mm wide on vehicles over 3.5 tonnes); and
- **Zone B** is the remainder of the swept area of the windscreen.

For simplicity, surface damage, cracks or discolouration, are simply referred to as damage.

In **Zone A**, a single damaged area shall be contained within a 10mm diameter circle. A combination of minor damage areas shall not seriously restrict the drivers view. Windscreen stickers, or other obstructions, shall not encroach more than 10mm.

In **Zone B**, a single damaged area shall be contained within a 40mm diameter circle. Windscreen stickers, or other obstructions, shall not encroach more than 40mm.

Rear view

Whilst there is nothing specifically illegal about obscuring the drivers view through the rear window of a car, where a rear window is obscured (for example by an oversized sticker or load) the driver may be liable to prosecution if the vehicle does not meet the requirements of regulation 33 of *The Road Vehicles (Construction & Use) Regulations 1986*, which states that when a view to the rear is not possible through the interior rear-view mirror, two fully functional exterior mirrors must be fitted to the vehicle.

You should also be aware that Regulation 100 of *The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986* requires:

a motor vehicle, and all its parts and accessories;
the number of passengers carried, and the manner in which any passengers are carried in or on a vehicle; and
the weight, distribution, packing and adjustment of the load of a vehicle,
to be at all times such that no danger is caused, or is likely to be caused, to any person in or on a vehicle or on a road.

Further to this, *The Road Traffic Act 1988 (as amended by Section 8 of the Road Traffic Act 1991)* Part II, 40A, Using Vehicle in Dangerous Condition, states that:

A person is guilty of an offence if he uses, or causes or permits another to use, a motor vehicle or trailer on the road when:

- (a) the condition of the motor vehicle or trailer, or of its accessories or equipment, or
- (b) the purpose for which it is used, or
- (c) the number of passengers carried by it, or the manner in which they are carried, or
- (d) the weight, position or distribution of its load, or the manner in which it is secured,

is such that the use of the motor vehicle or trailer involves a danger of injury to any person.

Further information

Consolidated versions of National regulations can be found in Sweet and Maxwell's *Encyclopaedia of Road Traffic Law and Practice (Construction and Use)* which should be available at most main reference libraries.

Copies of National regulations can also be purchased from TSO Orders/Post Cash Department, PO Box 29, Norwich, NR3 1GN; telephone: 0870 600 5522; fax: 0870 600 5533; email: customer.services@tso.co.uk; website: <http://www.tso.co.uk/>

If you require any further information regarding the content of this information sheet, please contact the DfT at the address below:

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NOTE: The information in this document is a summary of the Departments understanding of what the law requires. However, ultimately the interpretation of the law is a matter for the courts based on individual facts of any particular case. You are therefore advised to consult the relevant legislation and, if necessary, seek independent advice.