

VEHICLE READINESS CHECKLIST

Everybody’s saying ‘Get ready!’
But how do you know if you are?

By Dan McGarry

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The Daily Post sat down last week with mechanics from Carpenter Motors and Thrifty Motors. Thrifty was recently acquired by Carpenter, but they co-exist in what one mechanic calls ‘friendly competition’.

Both agreed that the intentions of the Public Works Department are commendable. The problem, as they see it, is one of communication and coordination. They decided to capitalise on the situation, and to provide a service to drivers, by offering a one-stop checkup, inspection and clearance package in which drivers can drop of their vehicles, have necessary fixes made, have it scheduled for inspection, taken up to Public Works, cleared and returned to the owner.

In a press release circulated earlier this week, Carpenter Motors Vanuatu Service Manager, Mark Philip was quoted as saying, “Roadworthy tests can be very slow. Cars are lined up waiting. The process can take hours for vehicles more than four years old, partly

because many drivers have not serviced their vehicles and inspecting them is very time consuming for the mechanics.”

Not everyone will choose this option, and so we sat down with Mark Philip and Patrick Lange, his counterpart from Thrifty, and asked them to help build a roadworthiness checklist.

Caution

This checklist is prepared because of the absence of any authoritative checklists elsewhere. It has not been endorsed by Public Works, and because of uncertainty about how standards are applied, adhering to these criteria cannot guarantee a passing grade on your vehicle inspection.

We can say with some confidence that if your vehicle doesn’t meet these criteria, it probably won’t pass.

Nonetheless, multiple technically qualified professionals agree that these constitute the basic elements of roadworthiness, and you can drive with confidence knowing that you’ve done what is necessary to ensure that your vehicle is as safe as it can reasonably be made.

Lights/electrical system

- o Low intensity parking lights
- o Headlights
- o Tail running lights
- o Brake lights
- o Left/right front and rear indicators
- o Rear number plate light
- o All lights must be free of cracks and blemishes
- o No water buildup inside
- o After-market HID (High Intensity Discharge) lamps MUST be on separate circuit
- o Headlights must be ‘normal’ coloured (i.e. white during nighttime conditions)
- o Intensity sufficient to see and be seen

Frame

- o Damage sufficient to causing driving hazards not allowed
- o Includes poorly/improperly mounted panels, grills, etc.

Chassis

No evidence of rust or corrosion
No cracks, fractures or evidence of weakness
Bolts and other joins solid and corrosion-free
Engine, drive train, exhaust mounted securely

Mirrors

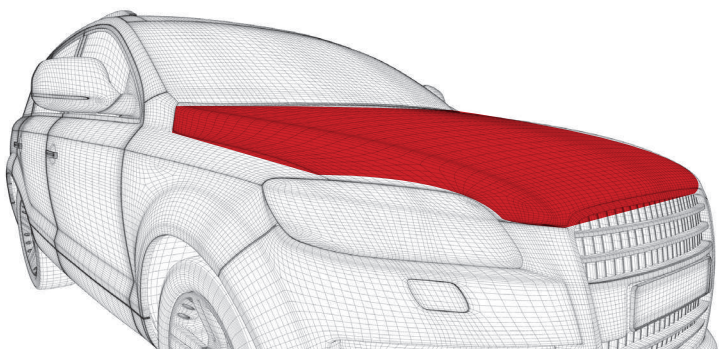
- Center, windshield-mounted
- Drivers door
- Front passenger door
- Mirrors must not be cracked, degraded or unduly blemished
- Window tinting should not obscure them
- Properly adjustable

Doors

- o All doors, hatches must be operable. This includes ute rear hatches.
- o Interior and exterior handles must be intact and operable.

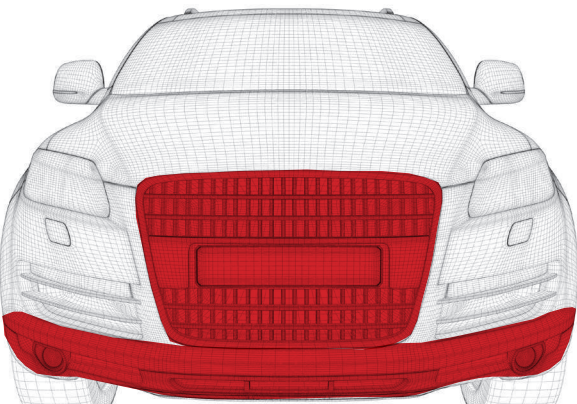
Wheels and suspension

- Wheels must be visibly treaded
- Proper air pressure in all tires
- All tires must be the same size
- No bald patches
- No cracks
- All lug nuts present and properly fastened
- Aligned properly and balanced
- Brake pads and shoes in good condition, no squealing



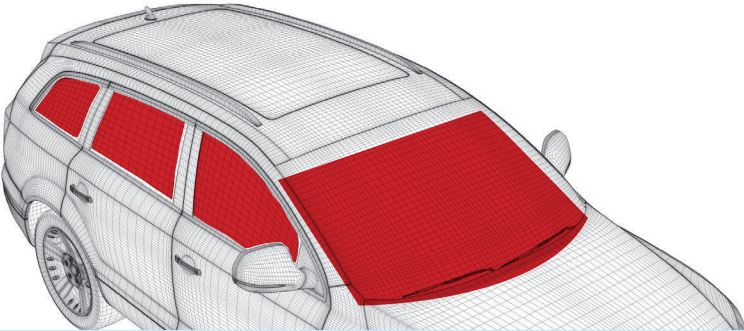
Engine

- o Mounting brackets intact and corrosion free
- o No visible signs of fluid leaking
- o All belts and fluid caps installed and in good condition
- o Must run, rev without visible emissions



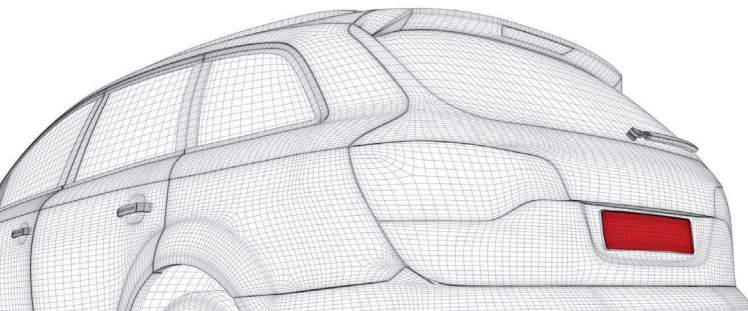
Bumper/grill

- o Intact with no structural damage
- o Properly aligned (not hanging, visibly bent)
- o At a safe distance from air bag sensor
- o Does not visually obstruct front/rear number plates



Windows

- o No tinting on public transport vehicles.
- o Sun-shade permissible on top windshield border, but cannot offer less than 70% visibility
- o All windows intact and operable
- o Tinting on driver and front passenger side windows strongly discouraged
- o Factory-installed ‘privacy glass’ acceptable
- o No cracks, seams or visible flaws
- o Properly mounted
- o Passenger and Driver-side windshield wipers must work
- o Windshield fluid present, sprayer operational
- o Rear windshield wiper required when factory installed



Number plates

- o Front and rear
- o San serif (block) font.
- o The figures of the numbers must not be less than 3 inches high
- o Black background, white lettering.
- o Clearly visible at 150 feet
- o Rear number plate light
- o No tarnishing, blemishes or anything that can obscure the number
- o Ex-rental/Taxi/Bus plates with blacked-out letters may be rejected

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SALES PERSON Thomas Xourel Mb: 540-4782

How to get ready

“This is about safety,” says Philip, “not just for you, but for others on the road. You need to think about it from both sides,” he adds, describing how it’s not sufficient to have a vehicle that will run under ideal conditions. You need to ensure that the vehicle is in proper condition to handle adverse circumstances, too.

Walk around your vehicle with this list. If you’re not an expert, or you’re pressed for time, consider paying a garage to perform this service. As noted above, some are taking advantage of the opportunity to provide end-to-end inspection services.

What to bring

1. Valid and up to date vehicle insurance
2. Vehicle registration card
3. Driving license
4. Receipt from Finance for inspection fee
5. 2016 roadworthiness inspection document
6. Inflated and road-ready spare tire
7. Functional jack and lug wrench
8. Public transport vehicles must have a working, approved fire extinguisher

How to book your appointment

Phone: 22555

If you don’t receive an answer, you can try Winnie at 59 25 963

source: Ministry of Infrastructure and Public Utilities