

FAQs on Special Purpose Vehicles

(Motor and Trailer Caravans, Armoured and Custodial Vehicles, Ambulances, Hearses, Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles)

RSA

What are special purpose vehicles (SPVs)? These vehicles belong either to M, N or O category vehicles having specific technical features in order to perform a function which require special arrangements and or equipment.

Do SPVs require type approval? From 29 April 2012 onwards all **NEW** special purpose M1 vehicles must have proof of type approval before Revenue will register them for use on Irish roads. *'Vehicles that are designed and constructed for use by the Defence Forces, Civil Defence, Fire Services or the Gardaí'* are exempt from type approval. You may also wish to our [Information Note on Type Approval](#).

Do SPVs require roadworthiness testing? Yes. The only SPVs exempt from roadworthiness testing are those used by An Garda Síochána and the defence forces.

What is the registration procedure for SPVs? You will need to contact [Revenue](#) who is responsible for vehicle registration in Ireland.

Is a first aid kit a legal requirement for minibuses when transporting patients to and from home? A vehicle with more than 8 passengers is required to have a first aid kit.

Do road sweepers require roadworthiness testing? Road sweepers are subject to roadworthiness testing if built on a category N based chassis i.e. a conventional truck. This test involves checking that a vehicle meets a set of basic safety standards on the day it passed its test. It is the owner's responsibility to ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy while operating on a public road. For further information see [HCV Manual](#).

Can a vehicle imported into Ireland with a valid EC certificate of conformity (EC Type Approval of Small Series) be registered here? Yes.

What is the definition of an ambulance? An ambulance has EU body type code SC and is defined as 'a vehicle of category M intended for the transport of sick or injured persons and having special equipment for such purpose'. The patient compartment must comply with the technical requirements of Standard EN 1789:2007 which specifies the design, testing, performance and equipping ambulances capable of transporting at least one person on a stretcher must adhere to.

Do ambulances require type approval? Yes. Since 29 April 2012 all NEW special purpose M1 vehicles must have proof of type approval.

Do ambulances require roadworthiness testing? Yes. They are required to be tested at [CVRT](#) Centres.

What regulations govern road sweepers?

- For vehicles built on a category N based chassis i.e. conventional truck, they must comply with the EC whole vehicle type approval (ECWVTA). Current type approval requirements for motor vehicles are set out in [Regulation \(EU\) 2018/858](#) and these vehicle types are generally classified under special purpose vehicles. Further information on type approval see RSA website [here](#).

For 'in-service' vehicles the regulations* are as follows:

- [S.I. No. 190 of 1963](#) Road Traffic Construction, Equipment and Use of Vehicles Regulations
- [S.I. No. 5 of 2003](#) Road Traffic Construction and Use of Vehicles Regulations
- [S.I. No. 189 of 1963](#) Road Traffic Lighting of Vehicles Regulations
- [S.I. No. 158 of 1985](#) Side Guards/Lateral Protection and Spray Suppression
- [S.I. No. 272 of 2011](#) are exempt for road sweepers.

*These regulations are in original format and amendments can be viewed at www.irishstatutebook.ie