

**Division of State Patrol
Informational Memorandum**

01-00-1

**Manual Tab 4
School Bus Inspection Manual**

Topic: Cutaway Van Based School Buses Manufactured In Two Stages.

Background: In the past these vehicles have typically been manufactured with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 10,000 pounds and under. There are many exemptions that these vehicles have as a result of this GVWR. Recently there has been a trend to increase axle weight ratings and therefore increasing the gross vehicle weight rating in excess of 10,000 pounds. This increase is to accommodate a larger school bus body which in turn increases the student capacity. Most of the major school bus body manufacturers have this type of school bus in use. Many questions have been raised in regards to the legality of this school bus. Some of the manufacturers were unclear on the differences Trans. 300 has between A-I and A-II school buses. This memo is intended to address these differences and give guidance when enforcing the rules of Trans 300. When a bus is converted to an A-1 school bus it must comply with the standards applicable to that school bus.

Question 1-Do I have to comply with the mirror requirements for an A-I school bus?

Decision: Yes. All mirror requirements will be enforced as required by Trans 300 for an A-I. Manufacturers have indicated the 6"x30" interior mirror becomes a hazard and aisle obstruction in the smaller body. Until the Trans. Rule is changed we will enforce the larger mirror standard. I have observed this mirror in two school bus body manufacturers and feel it is not a safety hazard although the smaller mirror provides an adequate view of the interior of the smaller school buses. Particular attention must be given to assure the right side mirror is added if the school bus is not equipped with a banana style mirror.

Question 2-Do I need to add the thermopane windows to the upper panels of the service door and to the window directly behind the service door as required for an A-1 school bus?

Decision: Yes.

Question 3-Do I need to have a thermopane window in the driver side door?

Decision-No. This is a roll-up window therefore the exemption in Trans 300.69(3) applies.

Question 4: There is a window in front of the service door but behind the windshield. What are the thermopane requirements for this window.

Decision: If an adequate defrosting system is present and functional the window will not need to be a thermopane. It is an option to have this area a window and the cost of having this large irregular shaped window a thermopane would result in body manufacturers simply covering this area with a body panel. This memo is intended to increase visibility around the service door.

Question 5: There is a battery mounted on the frame rail with the terminals exposed. Should this battery be enclosed in a compartment.

Decision: Trans 300.29 requires the battery to be in a compartment. This may be complied with by adding a removable cover that would protect the battery from the elements and prevent tampering.