



An Introduction to Hobby Cars

AOMC

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Applying for a Club Permit

Applications for a Club Permit require a Roadworthy Certificate although some clubs have authorised checking officers who will supply a suitable letter from the club to accompany the application. Clubs may also be able to perform a pre RWC inspection for younger cars not eligible for the CPS.

Obtaining a Roadworthy Certificate for your hobby car

Depending on the age of your hobby car you may have to look for an inspection station prepared to look at it. You should be satisfied that the inspection station knows the cars of your car's era. An extremely modified vehicle eg. uprated engine without uprated brakes, may be considered unroadworthy. If modifications have been made a Vicroads Authorised Engineer's report might be required to confirm that the vehicle meets the requirements of the relevant Vicroads Vehicle Standards Bulletins.

Some service providers offering RWC inspections advertise in car club magazines and the AOMC has prepared a list of these on their website. Remember a RWC is only valid for 30 days so prepare your registration application at the same time as your RWC takes place.

If your car is over 25 years old and you have joined a Vicroads authorised club you may apply for the Club Permit Scheme. Check applicable car clubs for requirements, they may have conditions in addition to the VicRoads requirements.

So there you go.

Remember that people will want to look at your hobby car, so keep it clean and tidy.

Good luck and happy hobby motoring.

Car Clubs

There are many car clubs, large and small, local and national, some with international connections. Some are single marque (make or model), others will accept any applicable vehicle, others relate to a region, an era or period, others to interests – sport, rally, touring. Most have a newsletter or magazine. Some clubs maintain a parts service, even to manufacturing parts at times. The cost of membership, compared to the benefits of membership, leaves little doubt which path to take.

Many clubs are connected with state bodies

In Victoria these are:

The Association of Motoring Clubs (AOMC) With over 200 member clubs, it holds quarterly meetings for club delegates and annual car shows. It has a range of information booklets also available. See: www.aomc.asn.au

The Federation of Veteran, Vintage and Classic Vehicle Clubs (FVV&CVC). It has over 100 member clubs and also holds quarterly meetings at various locations. See: www.federation.asn.au

Australian Street Rod Federation (ASRF) See: www.asrf.org.au

CAMS (Confederation of Australian Motor Sport) See: www.cams.com.au

These bodies liaise with Vicroads, RACV, state authorities and others as applicable to advance hobby motoring in Victoria. Some clubs may not be part of these state groups but are still eligible for Vicroads authorisation as a hobby club. These may require some searching to locate.

In turn, the AOMC and the Federation are members of the Australian Historic Motoring Federation (AHMF), a national body.

The Victorian Club Permit Scheme (CPS)

For a number of years a limited form of “registration” has been available for vehicles over 25 years old owned by members of an authorised Vicroads car club. A revised system was introduced in February 2011.

The CPS now allows up to 90 days a year use of a classic or historic car (over 25 years old). Drivers are required to complete a simple logbook if the car moves more than 100 metres from its home. A 45 day logbook is also available. Vicroads authorised clubs monitor the scheme.

An Introduction to Hobby Cars

Introduction

That you have opened this booklet indicates you are, or have been at a display of classic or historic vehicles, a car club event or have shown an interest in a hobby car. Read on.

What is a hobby car?

Generally it is a car of any age that is not usually a daily driver, is given care and attention for its age and, to the owner, is special. *Hobby car* flows off the tongue more easily than hobby vehicle. In this booklet hobby car is meant to cover car, truck, bus, motorcycle, mechanised wheelbarrow, forklift truck – whatever is **your** interest. Finding and keeping that car on the road, even for only car club events or special occasions, makes it a hobby car.

Owning a hobby car

Prospective owners of a hobby car may be concerned that the cost of ownership is out of their range - expensive, time consuming and difficult to maintain. A hobby car doesn't have to be exotic or an expensive machine and car clubs related to your choice can offer a lot - friendship, social events, technical advice and the background of your chosen vehicle make and model.

Between a car's first life and it entering the Classic or Historic period (In Victoria 25 years from date of build, 30 years in other states) assuming a car has survived, could be the period to supply the vehicle of your choice. Conditions available for the 25 years and older cars are covered in the section Victorian Club Permit Scheme.

A car that is not expensive to buy and can be maintained in a safe condition with relatively little expense and inconvenience is the aim of most hobby car people. Hobby cars don't have to be over 25 years to be of interest and worth preserving. Vehicles 10 to 20 years old can be interesting. Your choice could be a 1970s or 1980s model, an affordable purchase, reliable and with service and spare parts still readily available. Obviously locally produced cars of the chosen era will have an advantage over imported vehicles in this regard but don't rule out something out of the ordinary that catches your eye.

Do you have an interest in a specific marque (a brand name or model)?

Have you got the time? One of the benefits of a hobby car should be that if something goes wrong (and it will) you are able to reach a point where you can close the garage door or put a tarp over it and take the time to arrange your hobby time or budget to cover costs.

Have you got the space to park a vehicle safely, room to carry out checks and minor / major maintenance?

Have you got enough resources? Tools and equipment to effect minor (or major) repairs if required. Knowledge – either acquired from prior experience, from manuals – by purchase, the internet, clubs or public libraries or from a car club.

Have you got the money? Don't enter into hobby cars expecting to make money! It's a hobby and as with membership of a sporting club or similar it will cost you. How much and how often is your decision.

If the answer to any of the above questions is NO then go to car club meetings or events where you will be able to find out more before committing to buying a car.

Selecting a car.

Decision made. Time to get a car.

This booklet does not set out to give buying advice. Much information about selecting a decent secondhand car can be found at other sources.

If the car is in the family or already known to you that could be an advantage. Print or internet advertisements can give an idea of availability and price of the object of your desire, so do some research.

A tour of car yards or recyclers yards (we used to call them wreckers yards) can also give an idea of offerings available. And of course there is always the dream shed or farm find. Since 1969 cars sold in Australia must bear manufacturers plates showing date of build and compliance with Australian Design Rules.

If you find a car missing these plates, walk away!

Vehicles earlier than 1969 may require research to confirm they are as stated.

Make sure you know the rules of buying a car with or without registration and/or a roadworthy certificate, determining clear title and the availability of a pre-purchase inspection.

You will probably be looking at a car in its teenage years, treat it like one.

Is it standing straight? Body and suspension

Is it smoking? Engine wear

Has it got bright eyes? Lights all working

Is it properly dressed? Paint & trim

Generally, standard unmodified vehicles will command a higher price and in the long term, are likely to hold their value better compared with a similar modified vehicle. A modified vehicle may be rejected as being unroadworthy if the modifications are extreme.

How can I get information on my hobby car?

As noted earlier, information and service manuals can be obtained from fellow car owners, car clubs, a public library, the internet or specialist suppliers. Experience counts for a lot, hobby car clubs and owners tend to have a lot of experience don't hold back on asking questions before you tackle a job. It may save some angst (and possible extra expense) later on.

Work in progress

Don't think that you have to totally finish your car before people see it. Most car clubs encourage members to share their experiences at meetings or special days. You can enjoy your car while working on it and build a real connection with likeminded people. Alternatively you may wish to keep your car in "as found" condition. There is a view that original paint and trim, with their patina of age and wear, is more in keeping with a car's age. However you should be prepared to replace or repair mechanical parts to ensure roadworthiness and safety.

Got a car and working on it?

Here are some hints:

Work safely. Use proper stands if wheels are removed; support bonnets and boot lids and ensure doors won't close on you,

Try to complete one task before starting another,

Take photos or sketches of assemblies, processes, layout of pieces before starting and during the work,

Label wiring and vacuum hose (emission control) connections with permanent labels and make sure they are firmly attached,

Write down anything that has a choice of connections.

When your restoration is completed your photographic record will provide much pleasure when reviewed later.