

Devices for school buses

The excerpt from the BSR is as follows:

BSR Part 2 Bus safety duties, Division 1—Bus operator obligations, 8 Devices for school buses

(1) Subject to subregulation (2), the operator of a school bus service must ensure that any bus used to provide that school bus service is fitted with complying lights and signs.

(2) If a bus used to provide a school bus service was fitted with warning lights before 1 July 1999, the operator of that school bus service must be taken to comply with subregulation (1) if the bus—

- (a) is fitted with a hazard warning device; and
- (b) has signs fitted to the front and rear of the bus displaying the words "school bus" in capital letters at least 100 millimetres high.

Regulation 4 Definitions:

Complying lights and signs means warning lights and signs that comply with the requirements of—

(a) in the case of a bus that is a heavy vehicle—clauses 76, 77 and 78 of Schedule 2 to the Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulations; or

(b) in the case of a bus that is not a heavy vehicle—clauses 111, 112 and 113 of Schedule 1 to the Road Safety (Vehicles) Regulations 2021;

Heavy vehicle has the same meaning as in the Heavy Vehicle National Law (Victoria);
Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulations means the Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulation made under section 730 of the Heavy Vehicle National Law (Victoria).

A school bus service means a bus service providing a passenger service along a fixed route on a regular basis primarily for the purpose of transporting children to and from school

What does this mean – what do you need to do?

If you are using your bus to provide a school bus service, it is important that you are compliant with the requirements for complying lights and signs to be fitted. The information above will help you understand what should be fitted to your bus.

If you do not provide a school bus service, but instead use your bus for excursions throughout the school day, then there is no requirement for your bus to comply with this Regulation.

Devices for school buses

Application - After 1 July 1999

The following requirements apply to light and heavy buses used for a school bus service, fitted with warning lights and signs after 1 July 1999.

Fitting of warning lights and signs

The operator of a school bus service must ensure that any bus used to provide that school bus service is fitted with 'complying lights and signs'.

The warning lights must be fitted—

- (a) on each side of, and the same distance from, the centre of the warning sign; and
- (b) with the edge of the warning sign not over 100 millimetres from the nearest point on the lens of the warning lights; and
- (c) with the distance between the warning lights at least 300 millimetres at the nearest point; and

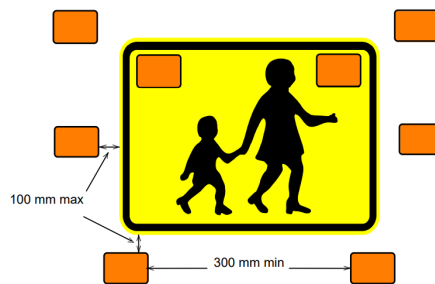


Figure 1 - Alternative light to sign positions

(d) so no part of the bus obstructs the light displayed—

- (i) 30 degrees to the left and right of the centre of each light; and
- (ii) 10 degrees above and below the centre of each light.

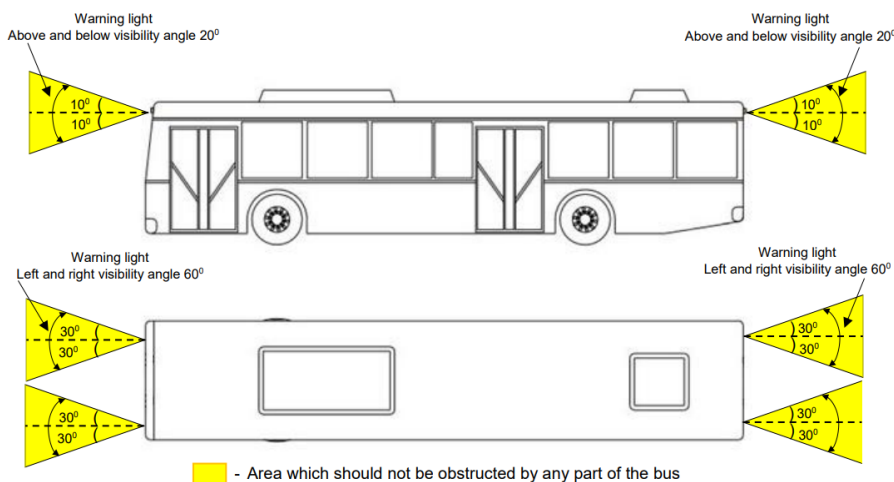


Figure 2 - Warning lights positioning

The warning lights may be on the warning sign if the words or image on the sign are not obscured.

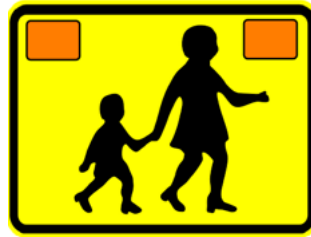


Figure 3 - Warning sign with warning lights

The warning lights at the same end of the bus must be fitted—
 (a) at the same height; and
 (b) as high as practicable; and

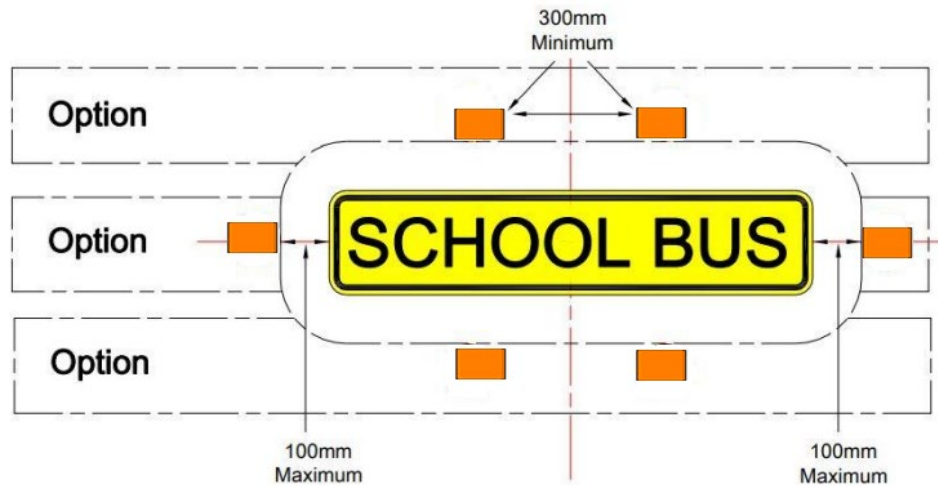


Figure 4 - Warning lights positioning

(c) with the lowest point on the lens of each light not lower than midway between the highest and lowest points on the body of the bus.

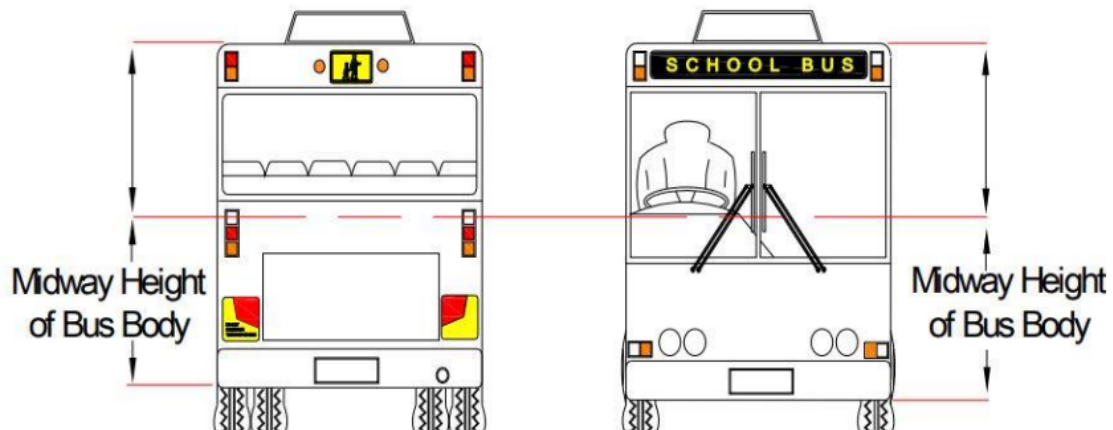


Figure 5 - Midway height of a bus body

If the centres of the warning lights are lower than 1.8 metres above ground level, no part of the warning lights or warning sign may be on the left of the bus.

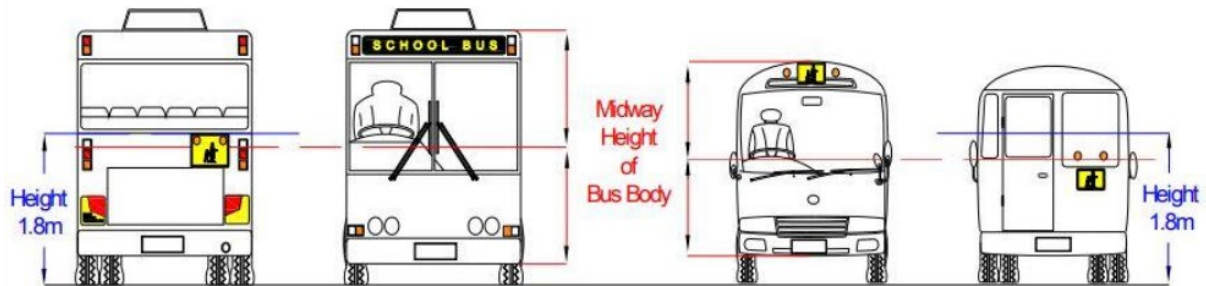


Figure 6 - Warning lights less than 1.8m above ground level

Specifications for warning signs

A warning sign at the front of the bus must—

- (a) display the words "school bus" in capital letters at least 100 millimetres high; or
- (b) display an image of 2 children in the same proportions as the children in Australian Standard AS 1743:2018 Road signs— Specifications (image W6–3), with the image of the taller child at least 230 millimetres high.



Figure 7 - Front warning sign - Option 1



Figure 8 - Front warning sign - Option 2

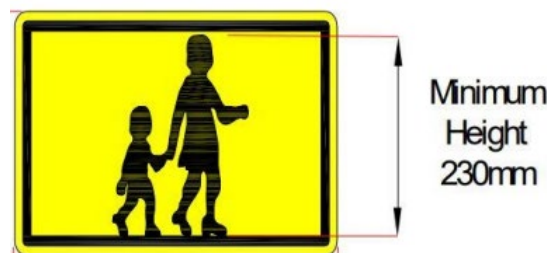


Figure 9 - Front warning sign - Option 3

A warning sign at the rear of the bus must display an image of 2 children in the same proportions as the children in Australian Standard AS 1743:2018 Road signs—Specifications (image W6–3), with the image of the taller child at least 230 millimetres high.

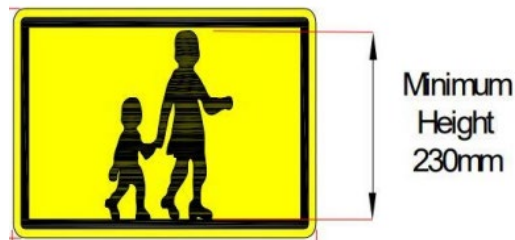


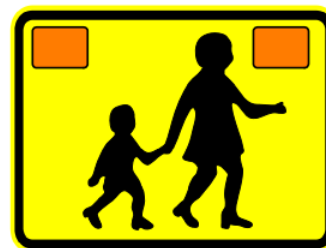
Figure 10 - Rear warning sign

The warning sign displaying an image of 2 children in the same proportions as the children in Australian Standard AS 1743:2018 Road signs—Specifications (image W6–3) must—

- (a) be a rectangular shape at least—
 - i. if warning lights are on the warning sign, 550 millimetres wide and 400 millimetres high; and
 - ii. in any other case, 400 millimetres wide and 250 millimetres high; and
- (b) have a black border; and
- (c) have black graphics and be coated with yellow retro-reflective material of class 1 or 2 that meets Australian Standard AS 1906 Retroreflective materials and devices for road traffic control purposes (Part 1: Retroreflective sheeting).



(400 mm x 250 mm)



(550 mm x 400 mm)

Figure 11 - Specifications of the warning sign displaying an image of 2 children with and without lights on the sign

Operation and performance of warning lights

When operating, a warning light must display regular flashes of yellow light at a rate of at least 90, and not more than 180, flashes a minute.

The warning lights at the same end of the bus must flash alternately.

Unless the driver has turned the warning lights off, they must operate automatically when a door on the bus opens and for at least 10, and not more than 20 seconds after all the doors on the bus have closed.

The bus must have a visible or audible signal that tells the driver when the warning lights are operating.

The bus must be fitted with a switch that allows the driver to turn the warning lights off.



Figure 12 – Example school bus warning lights switch

A warning light must have—

- (a) an effective lit lens area of at least 60 centimetres squared; and
- (b) a luminous intensity (in candela) of at least the values specified in the table below when measured at the angles in the table and in accordance with the test method specified in the third edition ADR 6; or
- (c) meet an alternative acceptable standard set by the Secretary.

Item	Vertical angle from centre of light	Horizontal angle from centre of light								
		-30°	-20°	-10°	-5°	0°	5°	10°	20°	30°
1	10°				50	80	50			
2	5°		180	320	350	450	350	320	180	
3	0°	75	450	1000	1250	1500	1250	1000	450	75
4	-5°	40	270	450	570	600	570	450	270	40
5	-10°				75	75	75			

Table 1 - Luminous intensity of warning light in candela

Application - Before 1 July 1999

The following requirements apply to light and heavy buses used for a school bus service, fitted with warning lights and signs before 1 July 1999.

Warning lights and signs

If a bus used to provide a school bus service was fitted with warning lights before 1 July 1999, the operator of that school bus service is taken to comply with 'Complying Lights and Signs' (fitted after 1 July 1999) if the bus—

- (a) is fitted with a 'hazard warning device'; and
- (b) has signs fitted to the front and rear of the bus displaying the words "school bus" in capital letters at least 100 millimetres high.

Note: Hazard warning device means flashing lights and signs sufficient to warn surrounding traffic that passengers are boarding or alighting from a bus.



Figure 13 - Front warning sign



Figure 14 - Rear warning sign

References

- Bus Safety Regulations 2020 – Part 2 - Division 1 “Devices for school buses”
- Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulation – Schedule 2 - Division 16 “Warning lights and signs on buses carrying children”
- Road Safety (Vehicle) Regulations 2021 – Schedule 1 - Division 19 “Warning lights and signs on buses carrying children”
- Australian Design Rules (ADR) 6/00 – “Direction Indicators”
- Australian Standard 1743 – “Road Signs – Specifications”
- Australian Standard 1906 – “Retroreflective Materials and Devices for Road Traffic Control Purpose”

Additional information

The information contained in this document has been produced as a guide to assist in the understanding of the legislation. This document is an interpretation of the relevant Acts, Regulations and Standard and should not be used as a reference to a point of law.

Clarification of any information in this document may be obtained from Safe Transport Victoria by contacting us on 1800 223 022 or via email at information@safetransport.vic.gov.au.