

Queensland Written-off Vehicle Scheme Reform

Public Consultation Paper

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1. What is this consultation paper for?

In this section we seek to explain:

- How the Written-off Vehicle Scheme works.
- The preferred options for reform of Queensland's Written-off Vehicle Scheme.
- How you can have your say.

1.1 How does Queensland's Written-off Vehicle (WOV) Scheme work?

Queensland's WOV Scheme manages the risks posed by profit motivated vehicle theft (PMVT, we'll use 'vehicle theft' in this document) to the community. Classifying vehicles as WOVs is the way we do this. A WOV is a vehicle that has been damaged and assessed as a total economic loss.

$$\text{Total Economic Loss} = (\text{cost of repair} + \text{fair salvage value}) > \text{fair market value}$$

Once assessed as a total economic loss, vehicles are classified as either a statutory write-off (SWO) or a repairable write-off (RWO).

- SWOs are vehicles that have damage too severe to be safely repaired and returned to the road. SWOs cannot be re-registered in Queensland or any other Australian jurisdiction, even if repaired. These vehicles are suitable only to be used for parts or scrap metal.
- RWOs are vehicles that do not meet the damage assessment criteria for a SWO. RWOs may be registered after they have been repaired and passed the standard Safety Certificate check, and a WOV Inspection (WOVI).

The WOVI includes an analysis of the vehicle's history and repair documents. It is a thorough and detailed analysis of the identity and history of the vehicle to ensure its identity is legitimate and stolen parts have not been used in the repair. Queensland WOVI's are currently conducted by Queensland Inspection Services (QIS)¹.

Details of notifiable vehicles are recorded in the Written-off Vehicle Register (WOVR) and remain

Notifiable vehicles

A vehicle is only 'notifiable' if it's up to 16 years old, is assessed as a total loss, and falls in one of these categories:

- a vehicle with a gross vehicle mass (GVM) not over 4.5 tonne
- a motorcycle
- a caravan
- a trailer with an aggregate trailer mass (ATM) over 4.5 tonne.

These vehicles must also comply with the applicable Australian Design Rules (ADRs). Non-standard vehicles that are not designed to comply with ADRs are exempt from notification,

¹Queensland Inspection Services (www.qis.com.au)

permanently recorded on the register, even if repaired or ownership is transferred.

The WOV Scheme reduces vehicle theft by checking that RWOs don't contain stolen parts and by taking severely damaged vehicles off the road permanently so that vehicle identifiers cannot be used for rebirthing stolen vehicles. Rebirthing is the term given to a vehicle that is passed off as a newer, better condition or legitimate vehicle when that is not the case.

Further information about the Queensland WOV Scheme can be found on our website – <https://www.qld.gov.au/transport/vehicle-safety/written-off-vehicles/about>.

1.2 What are the preferred options for reform of Queensland's WOV Scheme?

The Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) is proposing that the following package of reform options be considered to improve Queensland's WOV Scheme.

Preferred options for reform of the WOV Scheme.

- Add a Quality of Repair (QoR) process to the WOVI process.
- Include heavy vehicles as notifiable vehicles for the Queensland WOVR.
- Remove the age limit for notifiable vehicles.
- Mandate assessment of notifiable vehicles involved in a serious incident.
- Include odometer readings on the WOVR.
- Mandate notification of the disposal of vehicles and components.
- Add WOV status to the QLD Rego Check app.
- Improve TMR web content, including promotion of Personal Property Securities Register (PPSR) checks.

This package of preferred options for reform is being considered to ensure that the WOV Scheme continues to minimise the incidence of vehicle theft, supports Queensland road safety outcomes and provides accurate information for consumers when buying used vehicles.

These options also seek to achieve a higher degree of national consistency.

As a result of these reforms there will be an increased focus on the safety of vehicles repaired through the WOV Scheme. We are proposing that vehicle safety be recognised as a supporting objective of the WOV Scheme.

1.3 How can I have my say?

We are seeking the views of the Queensland public, national bodies, consumer representative groups, advocacy groups, our non-government organisation partners, including peak bodies, professional groups and officers from other Queensland Government agencies.

Please consider the preferred options identified in this paper and provide your feedback by using the Get Involved survey which can be found at <https://www.getinvolved.qld.gov.au>.

Section 5 will provide more details on what will happen once we receive your feedback.

2. What problems will the reform fix?

In this section we seek to explain:

- The problems identified with Queensland's WOV Scheme.
- The impact of these problems on Queenslanders.
- How Queensland's WOV Scheme differs from other states and territories.

2.1 What problems were identified with Queensland's WOV Scheme?

Following the recommendations of the 2021 Queensland Parliamentary Inquiry into 'Vehicle Safety, Standards and Technology, including Engine Immobiliser Technology', we commenced a review of the WOV Scheme and undertook a problem validation exercise.

We engaged with key industry stakeholders and identified four main areas of concern:

- Potential for unsafe vehicles to be repaired and registered for road use in Queensland
- Under reporting of WOVs
- Vehicle theft of older and heavy vehicles is not being managed
- Lack of public awareness.

More information on the history of Queensland's WOV Scheme, the process taken to identify the problems and the proposed options for reform can be found at **Appendix 1 – How did we get here?**.

2.2 How do these problems impact Queenslanders?

Potential for unsafe vehicles to be repaired and registered for road use in Queensland

All RWO vehicles are required to undergo a safety certificate check and a WOV prior to re-registration. There is a concern that some vehicles are being supplied to unsuspecting purchasers with substandard repairs. Inconsistencies between Queensland's WOV Scheme and the schemes of other jurisdictions also appear to provide a re-registration pathway for vehicles that would not otherwise be legally or commercially viable for re-registration in their original jurisdiction.

There have been significant advances in the design and manufacture of vehicles, including the introduction of advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS). ADAS features may automate lighting, provide adaptive cruise control, assist in avoiding collisions, incorporate satellite navigation and traffic warnings, alert drivers to possible obstacles or lane departure, assist in lane centring and provide other features. In the event a vehicle is involved in a crash, specialist training and equipment may be required to ensure these systems are not damaged, and if they are damaged, to return them to correct operation during the repair process.

Unreported WOVs and vehicle theft

During the consideration of these two problems we identified that the options for reform often addressed both issues. We decided to combine them in this paper.

These problems mean that:

- Queenslanders, whether as an owner, driver or other road user might unknowingly own, drive or travel in a vehicle that should have been written-off.
- Older vehicles could be targeted for vehicle theft including using vehicle identifiers to rebirth stolen vehicles.
- A third of vehicles on the road are not notifiable vehicles and cannot be recorded on the WOVR, this includes all heavy motor vehicles.
- Notification is only required if a vehicle is formally assessed following a crash or other significant damage event, resulting in some vehicles not being assessed.
- There is no requirement for vehicles to be assessed following major events such as flooding or fire, which can result in opportunistic individuals exploiting these events for profit.

Lack of public awareness

During the review we spoke to key stakeholders and members of the public who highlighted a lack of public awareness of the WOV Scheme. It seems that the lack of awareness stems from two main issues:

- Problems with availability, accessibility, quality, and consistency of general information about the WOV Scheme.
- A lack of transparency about a vehicle's history between sellers of WOVs and consumers.

As a result, used car buyers may purchase a vehicle without knowledge that it has been written-off. This can lead to increased future repair costs due to potentially poor repair work. The vehicle may also be of lower value than they were led to believe due to the written-off status of the vehicle.

2.3 How is Queensland's WOV Scheme different from other states and territories?

Queensland's WOV Scheme commenced as part of a national approach to combat the illegal use of vehicle identification numbers (VIN) and the re-birthing of stolen vehicles and parts.

Initially all state and territory schemes were similar, ensuring national consistency.

Changes made over time to the damage assessment criteria, used to determine whether a vehicle should be classified as a SWO, have been adopted by all states and territories.

However, there have been other changes which have not been adopted by all states and territories:




- The use of a QoR process
- The inclusion of heavy vehicles in the WOVR
- Deeming all notified vehicles as SWO (adopted solely by New South Wales).

The proposed reform package will improve Queensland's alignment with the nationally agreed approach for WOV Schemes. We do not propose to deem all notified vehicles as SWOs.

Quality of Repair process

A process to ensure that repairs completed on the vehicle are done so in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines or to a recognised industry standard.

The process for ensuring this varies between jurisdictions, some require the repairer to produce:

	receipts for parts and services
	proof of safety system functionality
	photographic evidence before and after repair

Jurisdictions with Quality of Repair processes

	Queensland	New South Wales	Victoria	Western Australia	South Australia	Tasmania	Australian Capital Territory	Northern Territory
Quality of Repair (QoR)								

Since 2010 all other jurisdictions have implemented a QoR process. The addition of a QoR process has been considered for Queensland on two previous occasions. On both of these occasions the QoR process was not adopted, leaving Queensland as the only jurisdiction without a QoR process.

Written-off Heavy Vehicle Register

At a meeting of transport and infrastructure ministers in May 2017 it was agreed that jurisdictions, industry stakeholders and the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) would establish a Written-off Heavy Vehicle Register (WOHVR) as a priority.

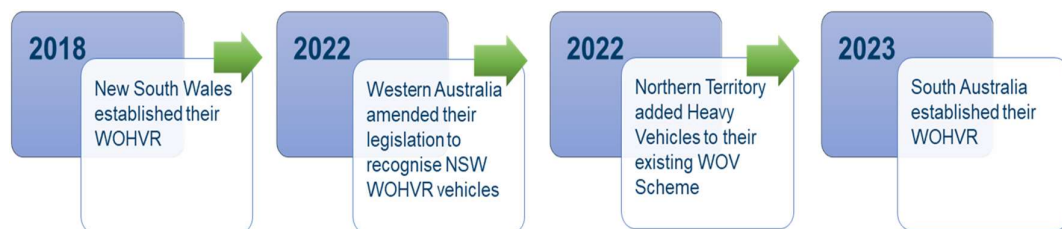
The implementation of a WOHVR requires heavy vehicles to be assessed against heavy vehicle damage assessment criteria and ensure that any repairs made are of an acceptable standard.

There has been some delay in the implementation of WOHVRs by jurisdictions.

New South Wales, the Northern Territory and South Australia have established a process for recording written-off heavy vehicles. The implementation of the WOHVR also varies between jurisdictions.

Victoria, Tasmania, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory don't currently have a WOHVR. While still under consideration, implementation timeframes for these jurisdictions are to be determined. Note that Western Australia amended their legislation to allow for the recognition of heavy vehicles that are written-off in NSW.

Timeline of implementation of Written-off Heavy Vehicle Registers



3. How do the preferred options address the problems?



















In this section we seek to explain:

- The preferred options for reform of the Queensland WOV Scheme to address the problems.
- The impacts of each option.

3.1 What will the preferred options do?

By implementing the identified options, Queensland's WOV Scheme will continue to reduce vehicle theft, ensure that vehicles returning to road use are safer, facilitate greater national consistency and provide consumers with greater confidence when purchasing RWO vehicles.

Impact of preferred options on identified problems

Preferred package of options	Unsafe Vehicles	Unreported Vehicles	Vehicle Theft	Public Awareness
Add a QoR process to the WOVI process.				
Include heavy vehicles as notifiable vehicles for the Queensland WOV.				
Remove age limit for notifiable vehicles.				
Mandate assessment of notifiable vehicles involved in a serious incident.				
Include odometer readings on WOV.				
Mandate notification of the disposal of vehicles and components.				
Add WOV status to the QLD Rego Check app.				
Improve TMR web content, including promotion of PPSR checks.				

3.1.1 Add a Quality of Repair (QoR) process to the WOV Inspection (WOVI) process.

This option would see a QoR process being added to Queensland's WOV Scheme.

The practical impacts of this option would include:

- Increased confidence in the safety of repairs to RWOs.
- Increased consumer protection.
- Increased national consistency in the repair of RWOs.
- Marginal increase in costs for repairing RWOs.
- Increased costs due to more thorough final inspections.

We are the only Australian jurisdiction without QoR requirements as part of the WOV Scheme. This means that substandard repair methods or repairs performed by unqualified repairers are not necessarily identified. This is a worry as the design of modern vehicles involves complex materials, electronic safety systems and construction methods designed to produce lighter, safer and more fuel-efficient vehicles. Poor quality repairs can lower the structural integrity and effectiveness of safety systems, including airbags and seatbelt pretensioners.

Repairs to RWOs can be undertaken by individuals themselves or third-party repairers. There is a possibility that third party/self-repairers may attempt to cut corners to reduce the cost of a repair. This adds further risk to safety with regards to RWOs.

Data from QIS indicates that since 2015, 24% of RWOs fail their first inspection. Approximately 9% also fail subsequent inspections. Common reasons include:

- Un-repaired damage evident.
- Failure to provide evidence of parts used for repair.
- Warning lights on dash indicating variety of safety systems may be faulty or inoperable.

Despite the inspection regime, it is unknown how much non-repaired damage is not identified in inspections.

On average, over 46,000 vehicles (approximately 1.15% of potentially notifiable vehicles) are written-off in Queensland per year, with approximately 69% of these being classified as RWOs.

The number of SWOs and RWOs in Queensland - 2015 to 2023

Year	SWO	RWO	Total	SWO %	RWO %
2015	15,687	35,354	51,041	31	69
2016	13,353	24,767	38,120	35	65
2017	14,987	26,196	41,183	36	64
2018	14,054	29,748	43,802	32	68
2019	16,818	34,191	51,009	33	67
2020	12,363	35,331	47,694	26	74
2021	12,353	33,918	46,271	27	73
2022	19,843	32,110	51,953	38	62
2023	11,067	35,284	46,351	24	76
TOTAL	130,525	286,899	417,424	31	69

The Queensland WOV between 2015 and 2023 shows an overall increase in the number of RWO vehicles that have been originally written-off in another jurisdiction and subsequently re-

registered in Queensland. This is particularly prominent for vehicles that were written-off in Victoria.

Interstate WOVs inspected in Queensland by year

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
Victoria	757	1,283	1,696	2,402	2,489	2,501	3,121	4,283	2,985	21,517
South Australia	102	169	206	174	210	274	454	443	311	2,343
ACT	70	154	182	186	293	378	340	386	250	2,239
Western Australia	100	119	141	135	133	151	179	163	50	1,171
Northern Territory	58	73	69	81	50	65	57	58	24	535
Tasmania	24	30	36	44	39	46	62	62	31	374
New South Wales	7				7	8	7	10	2	41
Total	1,118	1,828	2,330	3,022	3,221	3,423	4,220	5,405	3,653	28,220

f QoR process in Queensland means that the safety of these vehicles cannot be assured. A QoR would impose more rigorous obligations on repairers and vehicle inspectors to ensure repaired WOVs are safe for road use.

One implementation approach would be to require the repairer to keep a repair diary with photographic evidence of key stages of the repair, purchase components from reputable sources, provide receipts for parts, and show evidence that manufacturers' or industry standards repair methods have been complied with and used. Clear reference to manufacturer and industry standards will ensure the safety of structural repairs and prohibit the illegal use of vehicle identifiers. Currently repairers are only required to retain and produce receipts for parts and details of donor vehicles if used. It is anticipated that this approach may add an additional two to six hours of time per vehicle during the repair. This approach aligns with the QoR process in other Australian jurisdictions and is currently adopted by Victoria.

An alternative implementation approach would be to require the vehicle to be inspected at particular times throughout the different stages of the repair process, instead of just once prior to re-registration. This would significantly increase the oversight of the repair process and therefore increase the likelihood of the vehicle being repaired to the required standard. It would, however, impose additional burden (time and cost) on the repairer, as well as increase the inspection load for Queensland's WOV processes.

The inspection times for the QoR process will likely increase dependent on the complexity of the repairs completed. For example, an inspection in Queensland can take up to 90mins to complete and in Victoria an inspection might take 2 to 6 hours. This will likely also see an increase in the fees charged for the inspection.

Comparison of written-off vehicle inspection costs

Jurisdiction	Current Cost
Queensland	\$484.45
Victoria	\$576.25
South Australia	\$347.00
Western Australia	\$350.00 ¹
Northern Territory	\$63.80
Tasmania	\$222.23
ACT	\$664.80

¹ Price is not regulated but determined by authorised written-off vehicle inspection service providers individually, this is an average of 4 providers contacted.

Based on QoR processes in other jurisdictions, there will be an increase in workload to undertake the additional tasks throughout the repair process. This is likely to require an increase in staffing, equipment and facilities to undertake the inspection process. If inspection costs are passed onto repairers, it may change the economic viability of repairing some WOVs.

3.1.2 Include heavy vehicles as notifiable vehicles for the WOV Register (WOVR).

This option will see vehicles over 4.5tonne, regardless of age, being added to the WOVR.

The practical impacts of this option would include:

- Increased safety of heavy vehicles for drivers and other road users.
- Reduction in vehicle theft of heavy vehicles.
- Reduction in the average age of vehicle fleet.
- IntroducesWOVI costsfor heavy vehicles.
- Consistency with neighbouring jurisdictions and agreed national approach.

There are currently 228,923 heavy vehicles over 4.5tonneregistered in Queensland. Of these only 46,656 are currently notifiable, as they areheavy trailers that are not more than 16 years old. Theremaining 182,767 are heavy vehicles that are not notifiable vehicles for the current WOV Scheme.

Heavy vehicles spend significantly more time on the road than light vehicles. The average age of the heavy vehicle fleet is currently 15.8 years, which is older than the light vehicle fleet average age of 12.5 years.

This proposed change will ensure that poorly repaired heavy vehicles do not contribute to crashes that result in fatality or serious injury or aretargetedforvehicle theft. While vehicle theft of heavy vehicles is not high volume, when it does occur, the vehicle cost is generally much higher than for light vehicles.

Heavy vehicles would be required to comply with the same WOVI andsafety certificate checksand would be subject to QoR requirements should they be added to the WOV Scheme.

Including heavy vehicles in the WOV Scheme will create an additional cost to notifiers to assess and add the vehicle to the register. Once on the register, it will add additional costs to have QoR

and identity inspections to ensure vehicles are repaired to safe standards and stolen parts are not used in repairs. These additional costs will be borne by the heavy vehicle industry.

3.1.3 Remove age limit for notifiable vehicles.

This option would see the age limit for notifiable vehicles being removed. This means that any vehicle regardless of age will be included in the WOV Scheme.

The practical impacts of this option will be:

- Increased safety of vehicles more than 16 years of age.
- Increased consumer protection for buyers of vehicles more than 16 years of age.
- Reduction in vehicle theft incentive for vehicles more than 16 years of age.
- Reduction in number of cheaper vehicles on the used car market.
- Reduction in average age of vehicles on Queensland roads.
- Some historic and classic vehicles may become ineligible for road use should they be classified as a SWO.

Currently only vehicles up to 16 years old are deemed to be notifiable vehicles and any vehicles older than this do not need to be assessed.

Registration details for vehicles in Queensland can be seen in the table below.

Vehicles currently registered in Queensland (as at 7 March 2024)

	Total Number	Average Age	Number > 16 years	Percentage > 16 years
Light vehicles	4,701,714	11.8 years	1,276,625	27.15%
Light trailers	1,054,546	15.7 years	441,279	41.85%
Heavy vehicles	149,878	14.5 years	61,072	40.75%
Heavy trailers	79,075	27.4 years	32,389	40.98%
All vehicles	5,985,183	15.76 years	1,811,365	30.26%

National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council (NMVTRC) data from the 2017-21 period² indicates that light vehicles (that is, passenger and light commercial or PLC vehicles) more than 16 years are over-represented in profit motivated vehicle thefts. While these vehicles made up around 18% of the fleet, they constitute over 40% of profit motivated vehicle thefts. An interactive visualisation of the data is available on the NMVTRC website³.

As previously identified, approximately 1.15% of notifiable vehicles are written-off per year. If this benchmark is used for vehicles more than 16 years of age around 20,000 additional vehicles may be added to the WOV each year. This figure may be even higher due to the introduction of mandatory total economic loss assessments after serious incidents, and older vehicles requiring comparatively less damage before being deemed a total economic loss.

If these vehicles are involved in a significant crash or other damage event, they will be assessed and classified as either a SWO or RWO. This will mean that there will likely be an increase in the cost of older second-hand vehicles. There is also the chance that older vehicles may not be

²The NMVTRC ceased on 30 September 2021, data after this point is not available

³ Source: [NMVTRC · Motor vehicle theft reduction in Australia \(carsafe.com.au/age\)](https://carsafe.com.au/age)

considered for repair as the cost might exceed the value of the vehicle. Of these vehicles it is likely that only a small number would be repaired and require a WOV.

We have no way of knowing the extent of accident damaged cars being purchased over the age of 16 years where consumers were unaware and therefore unable to make informed decisions.

Removing the age limit on vehicles will mean that there will be an increase in the number of vehicles which will need to be notified in the event they are significantly damaged.

3.1.4 Mandate assessment of notifiable vehicles involved in a serious incident.

This option would introduce a requirement for notifiable vehicles that are involved in a serious incident such as crash, flood or fire, to undergo a total economic loss assessment and be managed within the WOV Scheme.

The practical impacts of this option will be:

- All vehicles deemed a total economic loss classified as RWOs would be subject to the QoR process (if implemented).
- Increased consumer protection.
- Removal of all vehicles that meet the SWO criteria from road use.
- Reduction in number of vehicles that currently bypass assessment.
- Reduction in the number of cheaper vehicles in the used car market.
- Reduction in business opportunities for small repair businesses and used car dealers.

For example, if a vehicle dealer is not covered by insurance and a flood occurs, the dealer can repair the obvious or cosmetic damage and sell the vehicle to an unsuspecting buyer. The buyer is then faced with a risk that the vehicle is not safe for use on the road, or that issues such as rust or problems with electrical systems will emerge in the future.

Approximately 80% of notified vehicles are the result of an assessment by an insurance company. A lesser percentage are notified by auto parts dismantlers, scrap metal dealers and auction houses. The current regulation only requires the classification of a WOV if a notifier or other person assesses the damaged vehicle. The regulation does not mandate the assessment, which provides discretion to the vehicle owner or notifier to bypass the WOV Scheme.

This option would mean that all vehicles must be notified, regardless of whether the vehicle is insured. There will be a requirement to identify suitable persons to undertake this assessment.

3.1.5 Include odometer readings on WOV.

This option would see the odometer reading of a vehicle added to the WOV as a mandatory requirement to reduce the potential for odometer tampering.

The practical impacts of this option will be:

- Increased consumer protection and confidence in the mileage of vehicles.
- Reduction in ability for fraudulent vehicle sellers or repairs to sell tampered vehicles.

Odometer or "speedo" tampering is the process of altering a vehicle's odometer to mis-represent the distance the vehicle has travelled. This is done to artificially inflate the value of the vehicle as it then appears that the vehicle will have suffered less wear and tear.

Odometer tampering is illegal and criminal charges can result.

Adding the odometer onto the WOV will not only act as a deterrent to fraudulent vehicle sellers, but it will also offer increased protection to vehicle buyers. This will provide an additional source

of information to the odometer records that are provided when a vehicle's registration is transferred.

3.1.6 Mandate notification of the disposal of vehicles and components.

This option would impose a requirement on vehicle scrap yards, metal recyclers and other relevant businesses to check the WOV status of a vehicle planned to be scrapped or crushed. If it is not on the WOVR the business will need to notify TMR so the vehicle can be added to the WOVR.

The practical impacts of this option will be:

- Prevent vehicle identifier use in re-birthing.
- Increased effectiveness in reduction of vehicle theft.
- Increased reporting requirements on business dealing with end-of-life vehicles.

Currently there is no requirement to check the WOV status or to notify a vehicle on the WOVR if a vehicle is scrapped or crushed.

If a vehicle is crushed and had not been added to the WOVR, or had been added as a RWO, the VIN from that vehicle could potentially be used on a stolen vehicle of the same type and model in vehicle re-birthing.

This option will also prevent the use of structural parts and components from vehicles that have been classified as SWOs.

By mandating the notification of scrapped or crushed vehicle these VINs will not be available to support profit motivated vehicle theft activities.

3.1.7 Add WOV status to the QLD Rego Check app.

This option would see WOV status being added to the QLD Rego Check app and rego check tool on the TMR website.

The practical impacts of this option will be:

- No additional costs to vehicle buyers.
- Improved awareness of vehicle history for vehicle buyers.
- Disincentive for unscrupulous vehicle seller activity, as prospective buyers will easily be able to identify vehicle history.
- Additional cost to TMR in development and maintenance of the enhanced system.

This option would assist prospective buyers with their consideration of a vehicle purchase as they could more easily check the WOV status of a Queensland registered vehicle prior to making a decision. However it would not allow prospective buyers to determine the written-off status of a vehicle that had not been previously registered in Queensland.

3.1.8 Improve TMR web content, including promotion of PPSR checks.

Work has already commenced on this option.

We will be looking at updating our public facing web content and providing clearer information in relation to the WOV Scheme and options available for obtaining information about vehicles. We will also be looking at providing clearer links to where additional information can be found including access to PPSR searches.

Depending on the outcome of the reforms we will also ensure that details of any changes to the Queensland WOV Scheme are clearly provided.

There are several ways for potential buyers to access details of a vehicle's WOV history.

A PPSR certificate can currently be obtained for \$2 per vehicle from the Australian Financial Security Authority (AFSA). This provides a significant amount of detail about the history of the vehicle, including make, model, colour, WOV status and whether it has been reported as stolen. It will also tell you whether there is money owing on the vehicle.

Extract from a PPSR Certificate showing WOV and stolen status of vehicle.

Additional Motor Vehicle Details – NEVDIS

Identifier number:	[REDACTED]	Identifier type:	VIN
Vehicle type:	CAR / SMALL PASSENGER VEHICLE	Make:	[REDACTED]
Body type:	STATION WAGON	Model:	[REDACTED]
Colour:	GREY	Engine number:	[REDACTED]
Registration plate number:	[REDACTED]	State vehicle registered:	QLD
Registration expiry:	[REDACTED]	Year/Month of compliance:	[REDACTED]
Year of manufacture:	[REDACTED]		

Important NEVDIS notifications about the Vehicle

Written-off:

- Not recorded as written-off.

Stolen:

- Not recorded as stolen.

Although this information is available some vehicle buyers are unaware of where to find it. Improving website content will ensure Queensland used car buyers will be more aware of these options.

3.2 What other options were considered?

In considering options for reform, we conducted significant engagement with key industry stakeholders on many options.

Following consultation, and internal consideration it was determined that the potential benefits of the other options considered could be achieved through the proposed package of reforms that are the subject of this consultation paper. It was also considered that the implementation and associated costs of these options resulted in them being unsuitable for further consideration.

More details on these options can be found at **Appendix 2**.

4. Why are the objectives of the WOV Scheme being updated?

In this section we seek to explain:

- The current objective of Queensland's WOV Scheme.
 - Why we need to update the objectives.
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4.1 What are the current objectives of the WOV Scheme?

Queensland's WOV Scheme was initially designed to reduce the rate of vehicle theft by eliminating the pathways to:

- re-registering stolen light vehicles; and
- using parts from stolen light vehicles to repair other damaged vehicles.

This objective has not changed since the commencement of the WOV Scheme.

4.2 Why do we need to update the objectives?

Queensland's WOV Scheme has been effective in reducing vehicle theft and this will remain the primary objective going forward.

However, since the commencement of the WOV Scheme the design and manufacture of vehicles has significantly changed. The proposed reforms are seeking to strengthen the WOV Scheme with a significant focus on ensuring RWO's are safe for re-registration and that members of the public are aware of the WOV Scheme.

The current formula for the total economic loss assessment would remain as the primary assessment when determining whether a notifiable vehicle is written-off.

By expanding the objectives to include safety as a supporting objective we will ensure that the original purpose of the scheme to combat vehicle theft is maintained and enhanced. It will also ensure that safety becomes a recognised consideration, offering greater confidence and safety to vehicle buyers.

5. What happens next?

In this section we seek to explain:

- What will happen at the end of this consultation.
 - How long it might take for these reforms to be implemented.
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5.1 What happens at the end of the consultation period?

We will consider any feedback received following this consultation period and incorporate feedback into the final package of reform options for the Minister's consideration. This final package will also include implementation proposals that will take into account who the changes will impact.

5.2 How long will it take for the scheme to change?

It is difficult to determine the time it will take to make these changes.

Following the Minister's endorsement and cabinet approval, it would take approximately 12 to 18 months to draft legislation, progress through parliament and implement changes to the WOV Scheme.

Once this is completed, there will likely be a transition period, which will communicate details of how these options will impact vehicles bought under the previous WOV Scheme.

5.3 Thank you!

We would like to acknowledge and thank you for your time in considering this consultation paper, and for providing your comments. Your views and input will help us to determine the appropriate options for reform of the Queensland WOV Scheme. These reforms will ensure the WOV Scheme continues to provide appropriate safeguards for the protection of Queenslanders.

6. Glossary

Term	Meaning
ADAS	Advanced Driver Assistance Systems
AFSA	Australian Financial Security Authority
Austrroads	Association of Australian and New Zealand transport agencies
NHVR	National Heavy Vehicle Regulator
NMVTRC	National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council
PMVT	Profit Motivated Vehicle Theft (vehicle theft)
PPSR	Personal Property Securities Register
RWO	Repairable written-off vehicle
SWO	Statutory written-off vehicle
TMR	Department of Transport and Main Roads
VIN	Vehicle Identification Number
WOV	Written-off Vehicle
WOVI	Written-off Vehicle Inspection
WOHVR	Written-off Heavy Vehicle Register
WOVR	Written-off Vehicle Register
QIS	Queensland Inspection Services
QoR	Quality of Repair
SRS	Supplemental Restraint System

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 – How did we get here?

Appendix 2 – Options considered for reform of the WOV Scheme.

Appendix 1– How did we get here?

History of the Queensland WOV Scheme

Queensland's WOV Scheme was established in 2002 as part of a national initiative to combat the illegal use of vehicle identification numbers and the re-birthing of stolen vehicles and parts.

In 2010 the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council (NMVTRC) and jurisdictions agreed that a review of the management of WOVs was required due to changes in the design of vehicles and illegal (organised crime) activities. The review determined that:

- new statutory WOV damage criteria were required to ensure all vehicles that were damaged to an extent that they could not be safely repaired would be prevented from being re-registered; and
- more rigorous inspection processes should be instituted for RWO vehicles to ensure that the repairs had been carried out to vehicle manufacturer's specifications and that repaired WOVs were safe to be used on a road. These inspection processes are referred to as the Best Practice Principles for the repair of WOVs, or a Quality of Repair (QoR) process.

Following this review the Association of Australian and New Zealand Road Transport and Traffic Agencies (Austroads) approved the national adoption of the updated Damage Assessment Criteria for the Classification of SWO. These were published and adopted in 2011.

At a meeting of transport and infrastructure ministers in May 2017 it was agreed that jurisdictions, industry stakeholders and the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) would establish a heavy vehicle Written-off Vehicle Register as a priority.

In 2019 we completed stakeholder consultation on the operation of the existing WOV Scheme, and options to improve the future management of the scheme, including how we could implement a WOHVR in Queensland.

In 2021 the Minister for Transport and Main Roads announced changes to the WOV Scheme that would implement the nationally agreed proposal to establish a WOHVR, limit the number of vehicles classified as RWO vehicles (similar to the NSW approach), and bring Queensland into alignment with all other states and territories by introducing a QoR process for RWOs.

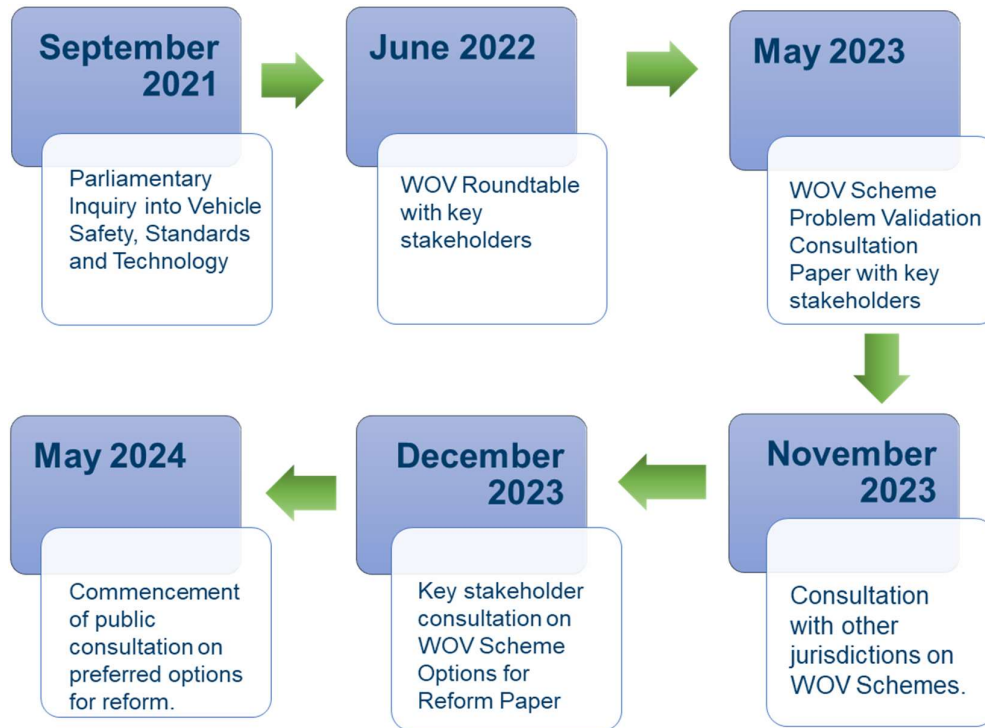
A subsequent Queensland Parliamentary Inquiry paused implementation and made recommendations that prompted a review of the planned approach. The Queensland Parliamentary Inquiry into 'Vehicle Safety, Standards and Technology, including Engine Immobiliser Technology' concluded in 2021 and made several recommendations, including:

- re-considering the proposed changes to the WOV scheme.
- considering methods of strengthening the inspection process for RWOs.
- considering introducing mandatory requirements that sellers of WOVs notify prospective buyers of the vehicle's written-off history.

What consultation has taken place so far?

Following the recommendations from the Parliamentary Inquiry we consulted with targeted industry participants and other state and territory agencies, see below.

Timeline of consultation



Throughout 2022 and 2023 we have been speaking with industry and other states and territories to better identify current issues with the WOV Scheme and developing options for reform to address these issues.

These discussions and considerations have formed the basis for this paper.

How we considered other schemes?

As mentioned above we have spoken extensively with other states and territories and considered their schemes, looking at how and why they have made the changes they have.

Inconsistencies between Queensland's WOV Scheme and the schemes of other jurisdictions appear to provide a re-registration pathway for vehicles that would not otherwise be legally or commercially viable for re-registration in their original jurisdiction.

We have looked at implementing some of the changes that have worked for other jurisdictions.

Appendix2– Options considered for reform of the WOV Scheme.

As identified there were other options for the reform of the WOV Scheme that were considered during the reform assessment. These were raised with key industry stakeholders, and further considered following their feedback.

Ultimately we determined that they were not suitable to be progressed further..

Unsafe vehicles are being repaired and registered for road use in Queensland

Continue with existing approach (Status Quo)

This option would see the current WOV scheme repair requirements continue, without any amendments.

This option is not supported as it does not address the concern that unsafe vehicles are being repaired and registered for road use in Queensland. It also does not prevent vehicles from being transported to Queensland for repair.

Restrict WOV to Queensland notified vehicles only.

This option would result in only vehicles that were written-off in Queensland being allowed to be repaired and re-registered in Queensland.

This would address the risk of WOV vehicles from interstate being transported to Queensland for repair and inspection. It is understood that RWOs are purchased in other jurisdictions and brought to Queensland for inspection to bypass interstate QoR requirements.

This approach would have a negative effect on the business model of some repairers and businesses, relying on WOVs from other jurisdictions as vehicle stock. This will reduce the number of repaired RWOs available to consumers. Some stakeholders have previously claimed this will contribute to socio-economic disadvantage.

This option is not supported as it does not address the concern that unsafe vehicles are being repaired and registered for road use in Queensland. It would have prevented vehicles from being transported to Queensland for repair.

Unreported written-off vehicles and vehicle theft

Continue with existing approach (Status Quo)

This option would see no change to the current arrangements for vehicles that can be notified as WOVs, meaning that heavy motor vehicles and vehicles over 16 years old remain excluded.

This approach would minimise the costs to government in terms of changing the notification arrangements, implementing associated enforcement, and establishing a WOHVR.

Similarly, there would be no additional burden on industry participants such as WOV notifiers and repairers. Older and heavy vehicles, will not be removed from the used vehicle market, meaning more affordable vehicles remain available to consumers.

The effect of vehicle theft of older vehicles disproportionately impacts lower socio-economic segments of the community that cannot afford to buy late model vehicles.

This option is not supported as it does not address the concern that unsafe vehicles are being repaired and registered for road use in Queensland. Additionally, it continues to allow potentially unsafe older and heavy vehicles to remain in use on Queensland roads.

Deem all notified vehicles as SWO as adopted by New South Wales (NSW).

This option would see Queensland deem all notified vehicles as SWO unless there were exceptional circumstances. This model has been adopted by NSW. An application to repair and re-register a WOV is considered in limited circumstances, where the vehicle fits an exempt vehicle category.

This option is not supported as, although it addresses both the vehicle theft and the safety of repair concern, the associated cost to consumers and industry is considered too high.

Lack of public awareness

Continue with existing approach (Status Quo)

This option would see no changes to current websites, IT systems and other communication channels. Maintaining the status quo does not create any additional cost burden for TMR or its agents.

This option is not supported as the lack of action is not acceptable and the cost of updating public information is relatively low.

Require vehicle sellers to notify prospective buyers of a vehicle's WOV history.

This option would require vehicle sellers to provide prospective buyers of the WOV history of the vehicle.

One of the concerns that has been raised was that buyers of vehicles are unaware of the WOV history of the vehicle they are looking to purchase.

This option is not supported even though this was supported by industry. Although this option does provide some confidence to prospective buyers this is better achieved by the buyer sourcing this information themselves rather than placing an obligation on the seller.

Require a permanent WOV plate be fitted to the vehicle.

This option would see a WOV plate fitted if a vehicle is classified as a RWO. This approach is similar to the use of vehicle plates and modification plates to record important information on the vehicle for the term of its serviceable life. If the vehicle is a RWO that has been inspected and approved, the plate would be amended to reflect this.

This option is not supported largely due to the unreliability of the WOV plate. There is possibility for the physical plate to be removed. The benefits of this process could be achieved through other less onerous options.

Implement a workflow system with push notifications to involved parties.

This option would use modern communication technologies, such as targeted email and SMS, to provide key information and documentation directly to the customer.

Buyers and/or sellers would be required to notify us when they buy and sell any WOV in the same manner as when ownership of a registered vehicle is transferred. We would be able to provide

push notifications directly to customers in the same way registration renewal reminders are provided.

The notification could provide the buyers and sellers with timely advice about their legal obligations, procedures for WOV and associated costs, and the safety issues and commercial risks of buying a WOV.

This option is not supported as it would not provide a potential buyer with information until after they had bought the vehicle. It was considered that other options would provide a better outcome with a reduced cost.