

# DISCUSSION PAPER - RAISED VEHICLE REGULATIONS

## NOVA SCOTIA MOTOR VEHICLE INSPECTION

### INTRODUCTION

- Nova Scotia has legislation in place designed to protect the safety of all road users, including regulatory standards pertaining to the inspection of passenger motor vehicles.
- Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations (SNSMR) is seeking feedback on proposed changes to the current standards and practices for inspecting, registering and permitting raised vehicles.
- Raised vehicles are generally described as vehicles having aftermarket modifications, such as the installation of body/suspension lift-kits and/or over-sized replacement tires. These modifications result in changes to the original height of the bumper, the frame, loaded static tire diameter and/or lighting equipment.
- According to the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators (CCMTA), raising the ride-height of vehicles could:
  - degrade braking performance;
  - compromise fuel system integrity;
  - create a mismatch in the geometric alignment of energy-absorbing structures between excessively raised vehicles and multi-purpose vehicles and passenger vehicles;
  - increase roll-over propensity; and
  - change handling characteristics by altering the designed integration of the original tires, and the steering, braking and suspension systems.<sup>1</sup>

### BACKGROUND

- Changes to Nova Scotia's overall passenger Motor Vehicle Inspection (MVI) program came into effect in February 2009. The changes sought to bring the Nova Scotia MVI program into alignment with national and international standards.
- In the course of implementing the changes, specific concerns were raised by various stakeholders (i.e., motor vehicle industry, MVI Testers, raised vehicle owners) regarding the inspection, registration and permitting of raised vehicles.

### AT ISSUE

- The current method of inspection for raised vehicles as described in the Nova Scotia Official Inspection Station Manual lacks clarity. Nova Scotia seeks to resolve this issue by establishing:
  - valid characteristics and maximum tolerances and dimensions for raised vehicles;
  - the conditions under which licensed mechanics and automotive engineers are authorized to certify mechanical and structural roadworthiness for raised vehicles; and
  - a process by which raised vehicles shall be inspected, registered and permitted.

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<sup>1</sup> CCMTA Best Practices for Regulating Excessively-Raised Vehicles Version 2.8 December, 2010.

## OBJECTIVES

- To maintain and enhance road safety for all Nova Scotians.
- To understand and document the concerns of stakeholders.
- To make informed decisions regarding prospective characteristics and maximum tolerances and dimensions for the inspection and regulation of raised vehicles.

## CURRENT LEGISLATION

Specific federal and provincial legislation, and corresponding regulations, provide the authority under which minimum vehicle safety standards are assured and maintained. These documents may be found by following the links in the table below.

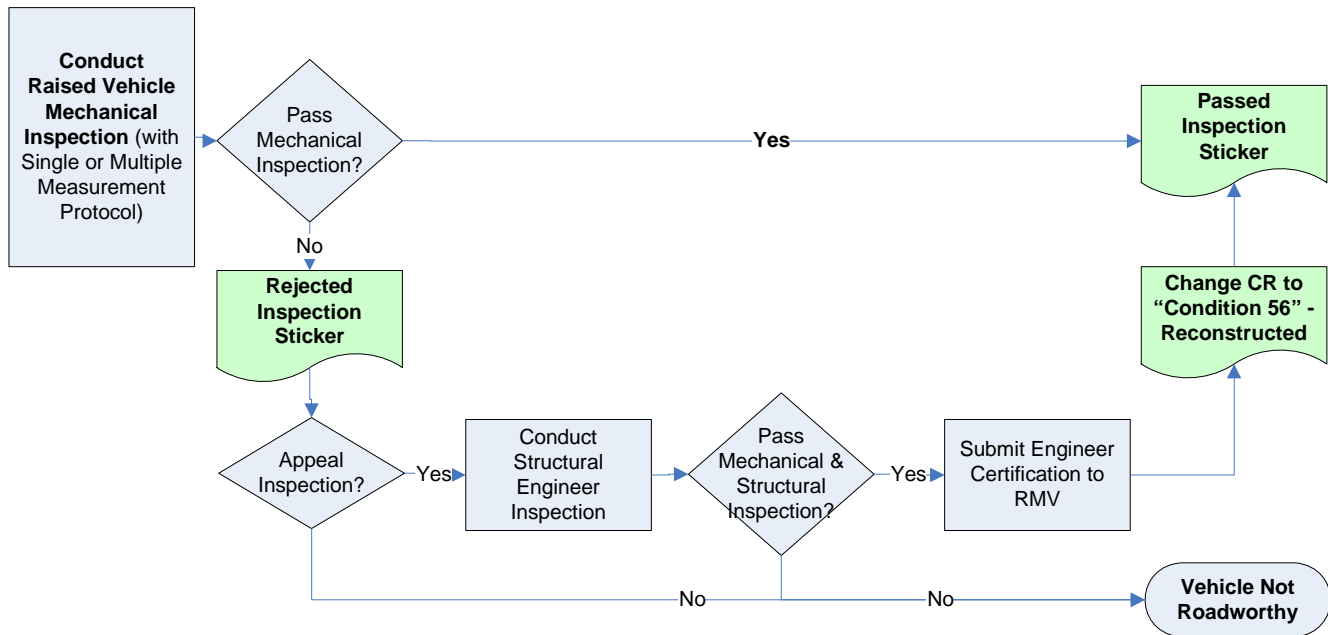
Federal	<p><b><i>Motor Vehicle Safety Act</i></b> Vehicles bearing a label of compliance from Transport Canada have been engineered and tested to the safety standards as identified in the Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (CMVSS) to ensure public and operator safety and protection.</p> <p>LINK: <a href="http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/acts-regulations/acts-1993c16.htm">http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/acts-regulations/acts-1993c16.htm</a></p>
Provincial	<p><b><i>Nova Scotia Motor Vehicle Act</i></b> Section 281(a) <i>“The Registrar may suspend or cancel the registration of a vehicle and may suspend or revoke any permit when the Department determines that the vehicle is unsafe or unfit to be operated or is not equipped as required by law;”</i></p> <p>LINK: <a href="http://nslegislature.ca/legc/statutes/motorv.htm">http://nslegislature.ca/legc/statutes/motorv.htm</a></p>
	<p><b><i>Vehicle Inspection Regulations</i></b></p> <p>LINK: <a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/just/regulations/regs/mvinspct.htm">http://www.gov.ns.ca/just/regulations/regs/mvinspct.htm</a></p>
	<p><b><i>Standards of Vehicle Equipment Regulations</i></b></p> <p>LINK: <a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/just/regulations/regs/mvstdsve.htm">http://www.gov.ns.ca/just/regulations/regs/mvstdsve.htm</a></p>
Reference	<p><b>Nova Scotia Official Inspection Station Manual (Revised 2009)</b></p> <p>LINK: (<a href="http://www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/rmv/inspection/inspection_manual.pdf">http://www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/rmv/inspection/inspection_manual.pdf</a>)</p>

## BEST PRACTICES FOR RAISED VEHICLES

The CCMTA recently published a best practice guideline for regulating excessively raised vehicles (see CCMTA report). SNSMR has reviewed the document and is considering amending existing regulations to

incorporate either the multi measurement protocol (page 17-19) or single measurement protocol (page 20-21).

SNSMR is also considering an appeals process (see illustration below) that would involve (a) obtaining a certification of roadworthiness from an approved automotive engineer and (b) having the vehicles' certificate of registration and permit amended to Condition Code 56 (i.e. Reconstructed).



## OTHER LINKS

American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) Study Findings - Effect of Oversize Tires on Stopping Capability and Handling Stability of an Altered-Height Vehicle  
<http://www.aamva.org/aamva/DocumentDisplay.aspx?id={F8E41755-938C-4CCC-98B9-136C78F76797}>

AMMVA's Model Legislation for Excessively Raised Vehicles  
<http://www.aamva.org/aamva/DocumentDisplay.aspx?id={B9324422-F7BF-415E-BD8B-6843A04E4D37}>

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In your opinion, are the current practices for regulating raised vehicles appropriate?
  
2. Would you support changes to Nova Scotia's MVI program that would align our practices with those identified in CCMTA's best practices document?
  - a. Do you support the use of the single measurement protocol?
  
  - b. Do you support the use of the multi-measurement protocol?
  
3. Do you have specific recommendations for government in terms of characteristics and maximum tolerances and dimensions for raised vehicles?
  
4. Do you have an alternative recommendation for government that would quickly, easily and reliably detect an excessively raised vehicle?
  
5. Do you have any recommendations for government in terms of the procedure for registering and permitting a raised vehicle?
  
6. Are there any other issues or concerns regarding raised vehicles that you would like to raise at this time?

### Stakeholder Information

Please indicate what type of stakeholder you are:

<b>Inspection Tester</b>	
<b>Engineer</b>	
<b>Mechanic</b>	
<b>Off-road enthusiast/club</b>	
<b>Provincial Government Department</b>	
<b>Safety Consultant</b>	
<b>General Public</b>	
<b>Other Specify:</b> _____	

The following information is optional:

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Mailing Address</b>	
<b>Name of organization you represent (if any)</b>	
<b>Telephone number (include area code):</b>	
<b>Fax number</b>	
<b>E-mail address</b>	

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this discussion paper. This information is being collected for the purpose of reviewing Nova Scotia's Motor Vehicle Inspection Program as it relates to raised vehicles. The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPOP) Act governs the collection of this information. Please contact the FOIPOP Review Office at 902 424-4684 if you have any questions about the collection and use of this information.

**TO ENSURE YOUR VIEWS ARE CONSIDERED, PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR COMMENTS BY March 23, 2011 TO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:**

<b>By Regular Mail</b>	<b>MVA Consultations - Raised Vehicles</b> 1505 Barrington Street Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 3N5
<b>By Email</b>	<a href="mailto:MVAConsultations@gov.ns.ca">MVAConsultations@gov.ns.ca</a>
<b>By Voicemail (Message)</b>	(902) 424 - 4380