

Star Grading System Guide



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I. Star Grading Introduction

Star Grading is open to all BCA members and is a great way to showcase the quality of vehicles. Star Grading makes it easier for customers to compare the standards of service offered by individual bus and coach operators, and allows tour operators and travelers to select products in advance with confidence.

The Approved Destination Status (ADS) Code of Conduct requires that all buses and coaches used for ADS tours must be BCA Star Graded three stars or higher. The ADS system is based on a bilateral tourism arrangement between the governments of New Zealand and the People's Republic of China that allows groups of Chinese nationals to travel as tourists to New Zealand. Compliance with the ADS system is monitored by the government agency, Tourism New Zealand.

Bus and coach operators providing services for ADS tours are also required to become Qualmark endorsed. The Qualmark assessment criteria for bus and coach operators stipulates that a minimum of 50% of an operators fleet must be of a demonstrated standard of appointment (e.g. BCA Star Graded) appropriate to the target market. This requirement increases to 75% and 100% respectively for three and five star Qualmark endorsements.

The requirements for ADS transport providers are specified in clauses 4.13 to 4.16 of the ADS Code of Conduct and can be found in the appendix at part VIII of this Guide, or at the following link: <http://www.tourismnewzealand.com/developing-nz-tourism/developing-the-tourism-industry/ads-china-monitoring-unit/the-ads-code-of-conduct/>.

Information about becoming Qualmark endorsed can be found at <http://www.qualmark.co.nz>.

a) The Star Grading Committee

The Star Grading system is overseen by the Star Grading Committee. The Committee is made up of five members who are appointed annually by the BCA Council and includes representatives from bus and coach operators of different sizes and people with technical knowledge of the bus building industry.

The Star Grading Committee is responsible for setting the criteria for Star Graded vehicles and reviewing the criteria as required. The Committee also considers and makes decisions on applications for exemption from the Star Grading criteria and hears appeals from members about decisions made by the BCA or VTNZ. For more information about the appeal process see part VI of this Guide.

II. Becoming Star Graded

Only Bus and Coach Association members can have their vehicles Star Graded. An initial Star Grading check must be done by VTNZ at the operator's cost. Once the BCA have received a copy of the Star Grading classification check sheet from VTNZ, we will issue you with a Star Grading decal that indicates the classification that the vehicle has received. The colour of the decals is changed every year to make it clear that a vehicle's Star Grading is current.

Once you receive your Star Grading decal you must ensure that it is displayed on your vehicle at all times. If the decal has to be removed for any reason (i.e. to clean, repair the area where decal is displayed) it is the vehicle owner's responsibility to contact the BCA and arrange for a replacement decal. A fee may be charged for a replacement decal.

The decal may only be used for the vehicle that received it and may not be applied to any other vehicle. Vehicle owners must inform the BCA of any changes to the registration or ownership of a Star Graded vehicle to enable the BCA to change the information displayed on our website and to pass on details to government agencies where necessary.

The BCA does not currently charge members an application fee to become Star Graded. However, we reserve the right to introduce such a fee at any time.

Members who wish to have their vehicle(s) Star Graded must agree to adhere to the Terms and Conditions for Star Graded Vehicles, which can be found in the appendix at part VIII of this Guide.

a) Application for Exemption from Star Grading Requirements

If a vehicle does not meet one or more of the requirements for a particular Star Grading classification the operator may make an application for exemption from the requirement. You may apply for an exemption either before or after having an initial check done with VTNZ.

Members who wish to make an application for exemption must contact the BCA office. You will be required to explain why you think the vehicle should be exempted from any particular requirement. You should provide photographs and technical specifications of your vehicle as evidence in support of your application.

Your application will be sent to the Star Grading Committee for consideration. An exemption will only be granted if the Committee considers that the vehicle provides the same level of passenger comfort as a vehicle that does meet the criteria.

Once a decision has been reached by the Committee you will be advised of the outcome. If you are unhappy with the Committee's decision it may be appealed by following the appeals procedure set out in part VI of this Guide.

III. Continuing to be Star Graded

a) Rechecks by VTNZ

1. Recheck by VTNZ will now be based on vehicle age instead of stars:
 - a. A vehicle will be checked once when it is star graded in the first 5 years of the vehicle being registered, either in New Zealand or overseas.
 - b. From the 5th year onwards, the vehicle will be subjected to bi-annual checks, regardless of star grading. Therefore a vehicle will require a check at age 7, 9, 11 ...
 - c. The recheck will be based on the vehicle's number of years, plus 364 days.

Rechecks are done to ensure that Star Graded vehicles are maintained to an acceptable standard during the Star Graded life of the vehicle. The recheck covers the vehicle's cleanliness and appearance as outlined in the Mandatory Minimum Requirements. The recheck ensures that the vehicle is being monitored and provides an opportunity for VTNZ to notify BCA if they believe there are any issues with the vehicle.

In order to rollover on 1 July a Star Graded vehicle must have had a recheck done within the 6 months prior to the rollover (1 January to 30 June). The recheck must be conducted by VTNZ, and it is recommended that it is done in conjunction with the vehicle's COF.

It is the operator's responsibility to ensure the recheck has been done and that BCA has received the completed recheck form from VTNZ by the time the annual rollover is conducted.

b) Annual Rollover

The Star Grading rollover takes place annually on 1 July. The purpose of the rollover is to ensure that the entire Star Graded fleet receives the new decals for the year at the same time.

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Prior to the rollover, the BCA will send members a letter listing their Star Graded vehicles and indicating if the BCA has received a recheck for each vehicle. Members will also be informed if any vehicle's Star Grading classification is due to be downgraded because of age.

The BCA must receive a response to this letter before 1 July or the details in the letter will be deemed to be correct and published as such.

If a member believes that the information sent out or published by the BCA is incorrect they will need to provide evidence showing why a correction should be made. Evidence of the vehicle having passed its recheck must come to the BCA directly from VTNZ.

c) Lapse or Revocation of Star Grading

i) Revocation

Star Graded vehicles must continue to meet all grading criteria and Mandatory Minimum Requirements at all times during the period that the decal remains valid. If the vehicle is not maintained in this condition, or if its attributes change to a degree that would have resulted in the vehicle not passing the initial inspection, the Star Grading classification may be revoked.

The BCA also reserves the right to revoke a vehicle's Star Grading at any time if a member breaches any of the Star Grading Terms and Conditions or any of the Rules of the Association or ceases to be a member of the BCA.

If a vehicle's Star Grading is revoked, it may be restored at the discretion of the BCA and upon meeting any conditions set by the BCA. This may include having a full initial inspection done by VTNZ at the member's cost.

ii) Lapse

All Star Graded vehicles must undergo a recheck with VTNZ to ensure that the vehicle continues to meet the Mandatory Minimum Requirements. Vehicles must receive rechecks at the frequency outlined in III(a) – this will ensure that the vehicle's Star Grading does not lapse prior to annual rollovers on 1 July. If lapsed, the vehicle will be removed from the list of Star Graded vehicles on the BCA website.

If a vehicle's Star Grading classification has lapsed the vehicle can re-enter the Star Grading system at any time by having a recheck done by VTNZ at the member's cost. When the BCA receives a passed recheck from VTNZ the vehicle's Star Grading will be re-instated. The rating that the vehicle receives will be based on the information held in the BCA database as to the age and attributes of the vehicle.

If a vehicle's Star Grading has lapsed for more than 6 months you will be required to return a signed copy of the Star Grading Terms and Conditions to the BCA office along with your recheck sheet. By signing the Terms and Conditions you are acknowledging that your vehicle's attributes have not changed to a degree that would have resulted in the vehicle not passing its initial check.

d) Failed Initial Grading Check or Recheck

If a vehicle does not meet one or more of the Mandatory Minimum Requirements, or any of the requirements of the classification applied for, no Star Grading will be awarded. The operator has 28 days from the date of the initial test to have any necessary repairs or improvements made and present the vehicle to the VTNZ testing station where the original check was conducted for reassessment. If VTNZ are convinced that the repairs or improvements mean that the vehicle now meets the assessment criteria, they will inform the Bus and Coach Association that the vehicle should have the Star Grading awarded. It is the responsibility of the operator to complete the reassessment process within the specified timeframe.

Alternatively, the vehicle may be eligible for a lesser Star Grading classification than the one for which the vehicle was tested. If the vehicle satisfies all of the criteria of a lesser Star Grading classification it can be awarded that rating without being reassessed. To have the BCA consider this the operator should contact BCA staff within 28

days of the initial test.

On receipt of a failed recheck from VTNZ the BCA will amend the records in its database to show that the vehicle is non compliant with the Mandatory Minimum Requirements of Star Graded Vehicles. The vehicle will also be removed from the list of Star Graded vehicles that is publicly available on the Bus and Coach Association website, and a notification will be sent to Tourism New Zealand that the vehicle is not currently compliant with the Mandatory Minimum Requirements of Star Graded Vehicles. The vehicle will be reinstated with its Star Grading once a passed recheck sheet is received from VTNZ.

IV. Allegations of Non-Compliance

If the Bus and Coach Association receives an allegation that an operator's Star Graded vehicle does not meet the necessary criteria of its Star Grading classification or the Mandatory Minimum Requirements, the operator will be notified of the allegation by letter. The member will be informed of the substance of the allegation, including an explanation of why the allegation may mean that the vehicle does not meet requirements.

After receiving notice of the allegation the operator has 14 days after in which to submit evidence that the allegation has been sufficiently remedied or was not accurate.

The BCA will review the evidence to determine if the vehicle should remain Star graded and may request further information if required. The operator will be informed of the outcome once a decision has been reached by the BCA.

If the operator does not submit evidence within 14 days of being informed of the allegation, or if the evidence submitted is not sufficient, the BCA reserves the right to require a recheck to be undertaken by VTNZ at your cost. If the vehicle fails the recheck, or if a recheck is not undertaken on request, the vehicle's Star Grading classification may be revoked.

If an operator is not satisfied with the outcome of this process they may appeal using the appeal process outlined below.

V. Appeals

Decisions of the BCA or VTNZ regarding the issuing of a Star Grading classification or allegations of non compliance may be re-examined on appeal to the Star Grading Appeal Committee. Members wishing to make an appeal must complete the Star Grading Appeal form and return it to the BCA office with the appeal fee of \$100 plus GST.

The Star Grading Appeal Committee is a committee of three and normally consists of the Chair of the Star Grading Committee, one other Star Grading Committee member and a member nominated by the appellant.

The appellant can take part in the appeal process and may speak to their appeal if they wish. The appellant may also nominate a 3rd party to be present on their behalf. An appeal hearing may be conducted via telephone conference or face to face at a destination decided by the Chair of the Star Grading Committee. Appellants should provide all available information in support of their appeal, including photographs and technical specifications of their vehicle.

The Star Grading Committee will examine all available evidence regarding the Star Grading classification issued for your vehicle or the allegation of non-compliance and make a decision. The Committee's decision is final. Reasons for their decision will be given to the operator and the outcome will be published in Circular for other members' information.

VI. Star Grading Criteria

a) Mandatory Minimum Requirements

Exterior body work to be free of any panel damage or rust:

Required ✓

The body work should be free from any dents, bumps or other signs of panel damage.

Paint work to be free from any scratches or stone chips:

Required ✓

The vehicle must be presented in a clean and tidy manner. Mild and unavoidable wear and tear such as mild stone chips and light scratches are acceptable. But any damage that is noticeable at a distance of three metres from the vehicle is not. This is intended to capture such things as unsightly scrapes and scuff marks, rust and other stains or other unsightly marks such as graffiti.

Windows to be clean and free of, chips, cracks and staining:

Required ✓

The vehicle must be presented in a clean and tidy manner. Mild and unavoidable wear and tear is acceptable.

Seat upholstery to be free from stains, rips, fading, fraying, burns and soiling. Spring and frame to remain functional and intact:

Required ✓

The vehicle must be presented in a clean and tidy manner. Mild and unavoidable wear and tear is acceptable. The spring and frame structure of seats should remain functional and intact so that it can support a passenger in a comfortable manner as originally intended.

Carpets to be free from stains, rips, fading and soiling:

Required ✓

The vehicle must be presented in a clean and tidy manner. Mild and unavoidable wear and tear is acceptable. The carpet should be assessed by a walk down the aisle and the person administering the check should be looking for dark stains, heavy soiling, rips, tears and holes. In cars, limousines and small vehicle people movers this should be assessed from a seated position.

Wall and head lining to be in good clean condition, free from stains and soiling:

Required ✓

The vehicle must be presented in a clean and tidy manner. Mild and unavoidable wear and tear is acceptable.

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b) Criteria for each Star Grading Classification

The criteria for a two star vehicle

Required
Must meet Mandatory Minimum Requirements <i>Required ✓</i>
Maximum age: <i>Required ✓</i> 7 – 15 seats: 15 years 16 – 24 seats: 20 years 25 seats or more: 25 years
Engine power ratio: <i>Required ✓</i> The vehicle power to weight ratio is tested to ensure that under fully laden conditions the performance of the chassis is not grossly affected in its ability to give a comfortable ride and maintain the governed road speed under normal road conditions. At two star level the vehicle must have a minimum power to weight ratio of 9.5kW/tonne. <i>To calculate the engine power to weight ratio, divide the kilowatt rating of the vehicle by the manufacturer's GVM or NZ road mass limits whichever is lesser. To obtain the kilowatt rating of an engine divide the horsepower by 75%</i>
Air conditioning and heating: <i>Required ✓</i> The vehicle must have a functioning A/C system, an efficient forced air jet system and heating system which conform with or exceed the manufacturer's recommendations for a coach of the relevant seating capacity.
Individual coach-type seats: <i>Required ✓</i> Seats should be individual, upholstered, coach-type seats. Vehicles may have single seat bases; however these bases must be sculpted instead of flat. In vehicles with fewer than 25 seats, a bench seat at the rear of the vehicle is acceptable if it has individual contoured back rests for each passenger.
Seat spacing – 650mm@610mm: <i>Required ✓</i>
Adequate onboard luggage stow area <i>Required ✓</i> Suitable luggage racks should be capable of carrying a normal day bag or coat. If there are no luggage racks, under seat space must be large enough to allow a coat, hand bags, camera bag or day bag to be stowed.
PA system (including driver's microphone): <i>Required ✓</i> The PA system shall incorporate a combination of a radio and tape deck or CD, DVD or MP3 playing devices. The vehicle must be equipped with a driver's microphone. The vehicle must be fitted with a minimum of one speaker per eight seats.

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Not Required	
Air suspension:	<i>Not required ✖</i>
Individual A/C outlet and control:	<i>Not required ✖</i>
Reading lights:	<i>Not required ✖</i>
Reclining seats:	<i>Not required ✖</i>
Curtains, blinds or sunscreens:	<i>Not required ✖</i>
Tinted panoramic windows:	<i>Not required ✖</i>
Trimmed baggage lockers:	<i>Not required ✖</i>
Courier seat:	<i>Not required ✖</i>
Courier microphone:	<i>Not required ✖</i>
Video:	<i>Not required ✖</i>
Drinking water/fridge:	<i>Not required ✖</i>
Toilet:	<i>Not required ✖</i>

The criteria for a three star vehicle

Required	
Must meet Mandatory Minimum Requirements <i>Required ✓</i>	
Maximum age: <i>Required ✓</i> 7 – 15 seats: 18 years 16 – 24 seats: 18 years 25 seats or more: 18 years	
Engine power ratio: <i>Required ✓</i> <p>The vehicle power to weight ratio is tested to ensure that under fully laden conditions the performance of the chassis is not grossly affected in its ability to give a comfortable ride and maintain the governed road speed under normal road conditions.</p> <p>At three star level the vehicle must have a minimum power to weight ratio of 9.5kW/tonne.</p> <p><i>To calculate the engine power to weight ratio, divide the kilowatt rating of the vehicle by the manufacturer's GVM or NZ road mass limits whichever is lesser. To obtain the kilowatt rating of an engine divide the horsepower by 75%</i></p>	
Air conditioning and heating: <i>Required ✓</i> <p>The vehicle must have a functioning A/C system and heating system which conform with or exceed the manufacturer's recommendations for a coach of the relevant seating capacity. Passive air conditioning ducting is also acceptable</p>	
Individual A/C outlet and control: 16 or more seats <i>Required ✓</i> <p>There should be a minimum of one A/C outlet per two passenger seats. The airflow of the vent must be able to be controlled by the passenger and must be able to be fully restricted. The centre-rear seat (where present) is exempt from this requirement. Passive air conditioning ducting is also acceptable.</p>	
Adequate reading lights: <i>Required ✓</i> <p>There should be a minimum light meter reading of 25Lux for all passenger seating. One light meter reading should be sufficient, but it must be taken from the passenger seat that is furthest from the light source. The reading should be taken at the front centre of the seat cushion to ensure consistency across different vehicles. The testing should be conducted inside the testing station, not outdoors.</p> <p><i>Note: it is not a requirement in any vehicle to have individual reading lights at the three star level so long as the lighting in the vehicle is able to satisfy the above conditions.</i></p>	
Individual coach-type seats: <i>Required ✓</i> <p>Seats should be individual, upholstered coach-type seats. Vehicles may have single seat bases; however these bases must be sculpted instead of flat. In vehicles with fewer than 25 seats, a bench seat at the rear of the vehicle is acceptable if it has individual contoured back rests for each passenger.</p>	
Seat spacing – 650mm@610mm: <i>Required ✓</i> <p>Forward or rearward facing seats which face in the same direction must comply with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) as the seats must recline, the seat spacing must be measured: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) with the rearward-facing seat in the upright position and the forward-facing seat reclined to its maximum angle or by 30 degrees from the vertical, whichever is the smaller angle; and (ii) horizontally at the height of the rearmost point of the forward-facing seat; and (iii) between the backrest of the rearward-facing seat and the rear of the forward-facing seat 	

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(iv) at 610mm from the floor; and

(b) the seat spacing must be at least 650 mm.

Passenger seating positions must comply with the following requirements:

(a) the foot room must be measured from a line on the floor, which is:

(i) immediately below the front of the seat cushion for seats facing in the same direction; and

(ii) not more than 70 mm behind the line immediately below the front of the seat cushion for seats facing each other or sideways-facing seats; and

(b) the foot room must extend at least 300 mm in front of this line and be at least 300 mm wide; and

(c) if vehicle parts, such as the wheel housing, driveshaft tunnel, or similar equipment, protrude into the foot-room area, they must not encroach into the area in a manner that is likely to hinder emergency evacuation of the passenger service vehicle.

Floor coverings, seat coverings and interior trim

Required ✓

Seats: seat upholstery shall be of a high standard.

Floor: floor must be covered with carpet, linoleum or quality wood flooring (chip board, plywood or similar are unacceptable). Wood must be treated and coated in varnish or similar to provide protection and acceptable presentation.

Walls: walls must be fabric covered or molded plastic, painted steel or similar is not acceptable.

Roof: roof must be fabric covered, molded plastic or formica, painted steel or similar is not acceptable.

Adequate onboard luggage stow area

Required ✓

Racks, where fitted, shall be trimmed and padded.

7 – 15 seats: if there are no luggage racks, under seat space must be large enough to allow a coat, hand bags, camera bag or day bag to be stowed.

16 – 24 seats: there must be luggage racks on at least one side of the vehicle capable of carrying a coat, hand bags, camera bag or day bag.

25 seats or more: there must be luggage racks on both sides of the vehicle capable of carrying a coat, hand bags, camera bag or day bag

Curtains, blinds or sunscreens:

16 or more seats

Required ✓

Curtains, blinds or sunscreens shall be fitted to all side windows. It must be possible for passengers to adjust curtains, blinds or sunscreens. When adjusted away the curtains, blinds or sunscreens must not inhibit passengers view.

Tinted panoramic windows:

Required ✓

Fewer than 25 seats

Window must be tinted to a minimum of 30%. Window must have a large unobstructed viewing area. The preference is for one piece fixed windows but sliding windows will be accepted as long as the frame is discreet in appearance and does not obscure passengers viewing ability. Example: a vehicle with a thick aluminum sliding window frame or a thick central pillar where the two windows intersect would fail but a window with a thin outside frame and with no central pillar or an internal thin central pillar would pass.



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25 seats or more

Windows must be tinted to a minimum of 30%. Window must have a large unobstructed viewing area. Windows must be one piece fixed windows.



PA system (including driver's microphone):

Required ✓

The PA system shall incorporate a combination of a radio and tape deck or CD, DVD or MP3 playing devices. The vehicle must be equipped with a driver's microphone. The vehicle must be fitted with a minimum of one speaker per eight seats.

Not Required

Air suspension:

Not required ✖

Individual A/C outlet and control:

7 – 15 seats

Not required ✖

Reclining seats:

Not required ✖

Curtains, blinds or sunscreens:

7 – 15 seats

Not required ✖

Trimmed baggage lockers:

Not required ✖

Courier seat:

Not required ✖

Courier microphone:

Not required ✖

Video:

Not required ✖

Drinking water/fridge:

Not required ✖

Toilet:

Not required ✖

The criteria for a four star vehicle

Required	
Must meet Mandatory Minimum Requirements	
<i>Required ✓</i>	
Maximum age:	
<i>Required ✓</i>	
7 – 15 seats: 12 years	
16 – 24 seats: 12 years	
25 seats or more: 12 years	
Rear or mid mounted engine:	
25 seats or more	
<i>Required ✓</i>	
Engine power ratio:	
<i>Required ✓</i>	
The vehicle power to weight ratio is tested to ensure that under fully laden conditions the performance of the chassis is not grossly affected in its ability to give a comfortable ride and maintain the governed road speed under normal road conditions.	
At four star level the vehicle must have a minimum power to weight ratio of 12kW/tonne.	
<i>To calculate the engine power to weight ratio, divide the kilowatt rating of the vehicle by the manufacturer's GVM or NZ road mass limits whichever is lesser. To obtain the kilowatt rating of an engine divide the horsepower by 75%</i>	
Air suspension:	
<i>Required ✓</i>	
Vehicles with 16 seats or more must be fitted with full air suspension. Air suspension may utilise a spring leaf system or a rod system to locate and prevent an axle from moving forwards or rearwards but the air needs to be the principle load carrying method. Any factory air system should comply and there will be many different types. If some sort of auxiliary airbag system is retro fitted to create the effect of air suspension, and there is doubt as to its authenticity it will need to be referred to the BCA Star Grading committee for approval.	
Air conditioning and heating:	
<i>Required ✓</i>	
The vehicle must have a functioning A/C system and must be a combined heating and cooling system which conforms with or exceeds the manufacturer's recommendations for a coach of the relevant seating capacity. Passive air conditioning ducting is also acceptable.	
Individual A/C outlet and control:	
<i>Required ✓</i>	
There should be a minimum of one A/C outlet per two passenger seats. The airflow of the vent must be able to be controlled by the passenger and must be able to be fully restricted. The centre-rear seat (where present) is exempt from this requirement. Passive air conditioning ducting is also acceptable.	
Adequate reading lights:	
<i>Required ✓</i>	
There should be a minimum light meter reading of 25Lux for all passenger seating. One light meter reading should be sufficient but it must be taken from the passenger seat that is furthest from the light source. The reading should be taken at the front centre of the seat cushion to ensure consistency across different vehicles. The testing should be conducted inside the testing station, not outdoors.	
<i>Note: it is not a requirement in any vehicle to have individual reading lights at the four star level so long as the lighting in the vehicle is able to satisfy the above conditions.</i>	
Reclining seats:	
<i>Required ✓</i>	
Vehicle must have reclining seats fitted. Vehicles must have individual seat bases.	

Seat spacing – 650mm@610mm:

Required ✓

Forward or rearward facing seats which face in the same direction must comply with the following:

- (a) as the seats must recline, the seat spacing must be measured:
 - (i) with the rearward-facing seat in the upright position and the forward-facing seat reclined to its maximum angle or by 30 degrees from the vertical, whichever is the smaller angle; and
 - (ii) horizontally at the height of the rearmost point of the forward-facing seat; and
 - (iii) between the backrest of the rearward-facing seat and the rear of the forward-facing seat
 - (iv) at 610mm from the floor; and
- (b) the seat spacing must be at least 650 mm.

Passenger seating positions must comply with the following requirements:

- (a) the foot room must be measured from a line on the floor, which is:
 - (i) immediately below the front of the seat cushion for seats facing in the same direction; and
 - (ii) not more than 70 mm behind the line immediately below the front of the seat cushion for seats facing each other or sideways-facing seats; and
- (b) the foot room must extend at least 300 mm in front of this line and be at least 300 mm wide; and
- (c) if vehicle parts, such as the wheel housing, driveshaft tunnel, or similar equipment, protrude into the foot-room area, they must not encroach into the area in a manner that is likely to hinder emergency evacuation of the passenger service vehicle.

Floor coverings, seat coverings and interior trim

Required ✓

Seats: seat upholstery shall be of a high standard.

Floor: floor must be covered with carpet, linoleum or quality wood flooring (chip board, plywood or similar are unacceptable). Wood must be treated and coated in varnish or similar to provide protection and acceptable presentation.

Walls: walls must be fabric covered or molded plastic, painted steel or similar is not acceptable.

Roof: roof must be fabric covered, molded plastic or formica, painted steel or similar is not acceptable.

Adequate onboard luggage stow area

Required ✓

Racks, where fitted, shall be trimmed and padded.

7 – 15 seats: if there are no luggage racks, under seat space must be large enough to allow a coat, hand bags, camera bag or day bag to be stowed.

16 – 24 seats: there must be luggage racks on at least one side of the vehicle capable of carrying a coat, hand bags, camera bag or day bag.

25 seats or more: there must be luggage racks on both sides of the vehicle capable of carrying a coat, hand bags, camera bag or day bag.

Curtains, blinds or sunscreens:

Required ✓

Curtains, blinds or sunscreens shall be fitted to all side windows. It must be possible for passengers to adjust curtains, blinds or sunscreens. When adjusted away the curtains, blinds or sunscreens must not inhibit passengers view.

Tinted panoramic windows:

Required ✓

Windows must be tinted to a minimum of 30%. Window must have a large unobstructed viewing area. Windows must be one piece fixed windows.



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Trimmed baggage lockers:

Required ✓

Lockers shall be trimmed to control damage to luggage with a soft surface on bulkheads and partitions. Floors may not be bare unpainted steel. Some manufacturers have ribbed steel which is very durable and some may have lino or have a material trim on the floor

PA system (including driver's microphone):

Required ✓

The PA system shall incorporate a combination of a radio and tape deck or CD, DVD or MP3 playing devices. The vehicle must be equipped with a driver's microphone. The vehicle must be fitted with a minimum of one speaker per eight seats.

Courier seat:

Required ✓

A courier seat shall be fitted and be for the exclusive use of the courier.

Courier microphone:

Required ✓

Not Required

Rear or mid mounted engine:

7 – 15 and 16 – 24 seats

Not required ✗

Video:

Not required ✗

Drinking water/fridge:

Not required ✗

Toilet:

Not required ✗

The criteria for a four plus star vehicle

Required	
Must meet Mandatory Minimum Requirements	
<i>Required</i> ✓	
Maximum age:	
<i>Required</i> ✓	
7 years	
Rear or mid mounted engine:	
<i>Required</i> ✓	
Engine power ratio:	
<i>Required</i> ✓	
The vehicle power to weight ratio is tested to ensure that under fully laden conditions the performance of the chassis is not grossly affected in its ability to give a comfortable ride and maintain the governed road speed under normal road conditions.	
At four plus star level the vehicle must have a minimum power to weight ratio of 12kW/tonne.	
<i>To calculate the engine power to weight ratio, divide the kilowatt rating of the vehicle by the manufacturer's GVM or NZ road mass limits whichever is lesser. To obtain the kilowatt rating of an engine divide the horsepower by 75%</i>	
Air suspension:	
<i>Required</i> ✓	
The vehicle must be fitted with full air suspension. Air suspension may utilise a spring leaf system or a rod system to locate and prevent an axle from moving forwards or rearwards but the air needs to be the principle load carrying method. Any factory air system should comply and there will be many different types. If some sort of auxiliary airbag system is retro fitted to create the effect of air suspension, and there is doubt as to its authenticity it will need to be referred to the BCA Star Grading committee for approval.	
Air conditioning and heating:	
<i>Required</i> ✓	
The vehicle must have a functioning A/C system and must be a combined heating and cooling system which conforms with or exceeds the manufacturer's recommendations for a coach of the relevant seating capacity.	
Individual A/C outlet and control:	
<i>Required</i> ✓	
There should be one A/C outlet per passenger seat. The airflow of the vent must be able to be controlled by the passenger and must be able to be fully restricted. The centre-rear seat (where present) is exempt from this requirement.	
Adequate reading lights:	
<i>Required</i> ✓	
There should be a minimum light meter reading of 25Lux for all passenger seating. One light meter reading should be sufficient but it must be taken from the passenger seat that is furthest from the light source. The reading should be taken at the front centre of the seat cushion to ensure consistency across different vehicles. The testing should be conducted inside the testing station, not outdoors.	
<i>Note: all vehicles should have individual reading lights fitted at the four plus star level. This is not applicable to the middle rear seat.</i>	
Reclining seats:	
<i>Required</i> ✓	
Vehicle must have reclining seats fitted. Vehicles must have individual seat bases.	
Seat Harnesses	
3 point safety harness is required	
Seat spacing – 700mm@610mm:	
<i>Required</i> ✓	

Star Grading System Guide

Forward or rearward facing seats which face in the same direction must comply with the following:

(a) as the seats must recline, the seat spacing must be measured:

- (i) with the rearward-facing seat in the upright position and the forward-facing seat reclined to its maximum angle or by 30 degrees from the vertical, whichever is the smaller angle; and
- (ii) horizontally at the height of the rearmost point of the forward-facing seat; and
- (iii) between the backrest of the rearward-facing seat and the rear of the forward-facing seat
- (iv) at 610mm from the floor; and

(b) the seat spacing must be at least 700 mm.

Passenger seating positions must comply with the following requirements:

(a) the foot room must be measured from a line on the floor, which is:

- (i) immediately below the front of the seat cushion for seats facing in the same direction; and
- (ii) not more than 70 mm behind the line immediately below the front of the seat cushion for seats facing each other or sideways-facing seats; and

(b) the foot room must extend at least 300 mm in front of this line and be at least 300 mm wide; and

(c) if vehicle parts, such as the wheel housing, driveshaft tunnel, or similar equipment, protrude into the foot-room area, they must not encroach into the area in a manner that is likely to hinder emergency evacuation of the passenger service vehicle.

Floor coverings, seat coverings and interior trim

Required ✓

Seats: seat trim should be materials to the standard of mouquet, leather or sheepskin quality.

Floor: floor must be covered with carpet, linoleum or quality wood flooring (chip board, plywood or similar are unacceptable). Wood must be treated and coated in varnish or similar to provide protection and acceptable presentation.

Walls: walls must be fabric covered or molded plastic, painted steel or similar is not acceptable.

Roof: roof must be fabric covered or molded plastic or formica, painted steel or similar is not acceptable.

Adequate onboard luggage stow area

Required ✓

Racks, where fitted, shall be trimmed and padded.

7 – 15 seats: if there are no luggage racks, under seat space must be large enough to allow a coat, hand bags, camera bag or day bag to be stowed.

16 – 24 seats: there must be luggage racks on at least one side of the vehicle capable of carrying a coat, hand bags, camera bag or day bag.

25 seats or more: there must be luggage racks on both sides of the vehicle capable of carrying a coat, hand bags, camera bag or day bag.

Curtains, blinds or sunscreens:

Required ✓

Curtains, blinds or sunscreens shall be fitted to all side windows. It must be possible for passengers to adjust curtains,

blinds or sunscreens. When adjusted away the curtains, blinds or sunscreens must not inhibit passengers view.

Tinted panoramic windows:

Required ✓

Window must be tinted to a minimum of 30%. Window must have a large unobstructed viewing area. Windows must be one piece fixed windows.



Trimmed baggage lockers:

Required ✓

Star Grading System Guide

Lockers shall be trimmed to control damage to luggage with a soft surface on bulkheads and partitions. Floors may not be bare unpainted steel. Some manufacturers have ribbed steel which is very durable and some may have lino or have a material trim on the floor.

PA System (including driver's microphone):

Required ✓

The PA system shall incorporate a combination of a radio and tape deck or CD, DVD or MP3 playing devices. The vehicle must be equipped with a driver's microphone. The vehicle must be fitted with a minimum of one speaker per eight seats.

Courier seat:

Required ✓

A courier seat shall be fitted and be for the exclusive use of the courier.

Courier microphone:

Required ✓

Not Required

Rear or mid mounted engine:

7 – 15 and 16 – 24 seats

Not required ✗

Twin doors:

Not required ✗

Video:

Not required ✗

Drinking water/fridge:

Not required ✗

Toilet:

Not required ✗

The criteria for a five star vehicle

Required	
Must meet Mandatory Minimum Requirements	<i>Required ✓</i>
Maximum age:	<i>Required ✓</i> 7 years
Rear or mid mounted engine: 25 seats or more	<i>Required ✓</i>
Twin doors:	<i>Required ✓</i> For vehicles with 38 seats or more at least one front door and one centre or rear door is required.
Engine power ratio:	<i>Required ✓</i> The vehicle power to weight ratio is tested to ensure that under fully laden conditions the performance of the chassis is not grossly affected in its ability to give a comfortable ride and maintain the governed road speed under normal road conditions. At five star level the vehicle must have a minimum power to weight ratio of 12kW/tonne. <i>To calculate the engine power to weight ratio, divide the kilowatt rating of the vehicle by the manufacturer's GVM or NZ road mass limits whichever is lesser. To obtain the kilowatt rating of an engine divide the horsepower by 75%</i>
Air suspension:	<i>Required ✓</i> The vehicle must be fitted with full air suspension. Air suspension may utilise a spring leaf system or a rod system to locate and prevent an axle from moving forwards or rearwards but the air needs to be the principle load carrying method. Any factory air system should comply and there will be many different types. If some sort of auxiliary airbag system is retro fitted to create the effect of air suspension, and there is doubt as to its authenticity it will need to be referred to the BCA Star Grading committee for approval.
Air conditioning and heating:	<i>Required ✓</i> The vehicle must have a functioning A/C system and must be a combined heating and cooling system which conforms with or exceeds the manufacturer's recommendations for a coach of the relevant seating capacity.
Individual A/C outlet and control:	<i>Required ✓</i> There should be one A/C outlet per passenger seat. The airflow of the vent must be able to be controlled by the passenger and must be able to be fully restricted. The centre-rear seat (where present) is exempt from this requirement.
Adequate reading lights:	<i>Required ✓</i> There should be a minimum light meter reading of 25Lux for all passenger seating. One light meter reading should be sufficient but it must be taken from the passenger seat that is furthest from the light source. The reading should be taken at the front centre of the seat cushion to ensure consistency across different vehicles. The testing should be conducted inside the testing station, not outdoors. <i>Note: all vehicles should have individual reading lights fitted at the five star level. This is not applicable to the middle rear seat.</i>
Reclining seats:	<i>Required ✓</i> Vehicle must have reclining seats fitted. Vehicles must have individual seat bases.

Star Grading System Guide

Seat Harnesses

3 point safety harness is required

Seat spacing – 700mm@610mm:

Required ✓

Forward or rearward facing seats which face in the same direction must comply with the following:

- (a) as the seats must recline, the seat spacing must be measured:
 - (i) with the rearward-facing seat in the upright position and the forward-facing seat reclined to its maximum angle or by 30 degrees from the vertical, whichever is the smaller angle; and
 - (ii) horizontally at the height of the rearmost point of the forward-facing seat; and
 - (iii) between the backrest of the rearward-facing seat and the rear of the forward-facing seat
 - (iv) at 610mm from the floor; and
- (b) the seat spacing must be at least 700 mm.

Passenger seating positions must comply with the following requirements:

- (a) the foot room must be measured from a line on the floor, which is:
 - (i) immediately below the front of the seat cushion for seats facing in the same direction; and
 - (ii) not more than 70 mm behind the line immediately below the front of the seat cushion for seats facing each other or sideways-facing seats; and
- (b) the foot room must extend at least 300 mm in front of this line and be at least 300 mm wide; and
- (c) if vehicle parts, such as the wheel housing, driveshaft tunnel, or similar equipment, protrude into the foot-room area, they must not encroach into the area in a manner that is likely to hinder emergency evacuation of the passenger service vehicle.

Floor coverings, seat coverings and interior trim

Required ✓

Seats: seat trim should be materials to the standard of mouquet, leather or sheepskin quality.

Floor: floor must be covered with carpet, linoleum or quality wood flooring (chip board, plywood or similar are unacceptable). Wood must be treated and coated in varnish or similar to provide protection and acceptable presentation.

Walls: walls must be fabric covered or molded plastic, painted steel or similar is not acceptable.

Roof: roof must be fabric covered or molded plastic or formica, painted steel or similar is not acceptable.

Adequate onboard luggage stow area

Required ✓

Racks, where fitted, shall be trimmed and padded.

7 – 15 seats: if there are no luggage racks, under seat space must be large enough to allow a coat, hand bags, camera bag or day bag to be stowed.

16 – 24 seats: there must be luggage racks on at least one side of the vehicle capable of carrying a coat, hand bags, camera bag or day bag.

25 seats or more: there must be luggage racks on both sides of the vehicle capable of carrying a coat, hand bags, camera bag or day bag.

Curtains, blinds or sunscreens:

Required ✓

Curtains, blinds or sunscreens shall be fitted to all side windows. It must be possible for passengers to adjust curtains, blinds or sunscreens. When adjusted away the curtains, blinds or sunscreens must not inhibit passengers view.

Tinted panoramic windows:

Required ✓

Star Grading System Guide

Window must be tinted to a minimum of 30%. Window must have a large unobstructed viewing area. Windows must be one piece fixed windows.



Trimmed baggage lockers:

Required ✓

Lockers shall be trimmed to control damage to luggage with a soft surface on bulkheads and partitions. Floors may not be bare unpainted steel. Some manufacturers have ribbed steel which is very durable and some may have lino or have a material trim on the floor.

PA System (including driver's microphone):

Required ✓

The PA system shall incorporate a combination of a radio and tape deck or CD, DVD or MP3 playing devices. The vehicle must be equipped with a driver's microphone. The vehicle must be fitted with a minimum of one speaker per eight seats.

Courier seat:

Required ✓

A courier seat shall be fitted and be for the exclusive use of the courier.

Courier microphone:

Required ✓

Video:

Required ✓

The vehicle must be fitted with an operational passenger video system capable of playing modern video media (VCR, DVD, digital video files or equivalent).

Drinking water/fridge:

Required ✓

The vehicle must be fitted with drinking water and/or refrigerator facilities.

Toilet:

Required ✓

The vehicle must be fitted with an operational flush toilet.

The Criteria for Cars and Limousines

Vehicles up to six seats maximum

Required
Must meet Mandatory Minimum Requirements <i>Required ✓</i>
Long wheel Base = 4 Star Short/Standard Wheel Base = 3 Star
Maximum vehicle age 10 years
Air conditioning and heating <i>Required ✓</i> The vehicle must have a functioning A/C system. It should be an efficient forced air jet system with both heating and cooling capabilities.
Adequate luggage stow area <i>Required ✓</i> Suitable luggage capacity for hand luggage / handbags / camera / day bags or in either the rear boot or in side door pockets or rear window space behind rear seats.
Audio system <i>Required ✓</i> The audio system shall incorporate a combination of a radio and tape deck or CD, DVD or MP3 playing devices and a minimum of two working speakers.
Drivers microphone <i>May be required ✓</i> If there is any barrier in place between the driver and the passengers in the rear seats a driver's microphone must be installed.

VIII. Appendix

- a) **Approved Destination Status Code of Conduct – requirements for buses and coaches used for ADS tours.**

4.13 From 01 July 2011, every **transport provider** used for an **ADS tour** must be **Qualmark endorsed**.

4.14 From 01 January 2011, the **ADS approved ITO** may only use as transport for **ADS tours** vehicles operated by a **transport provider** who has completed the form set out at Schedule 6 and provided a copy of the completed form to **TNZ**.

4.15 From 01 January 2011, where a vehicle of 7 seats or more is to be used to transport an **ADS tour**, that vehicle must have been assessed for and issued with the Bus & Coach Association (NZ) Inc 3 star standard grading certificate by Vehicle Testing New Zealand (VTNZ). A valid star rating decal issued by the Bus & Coach Association (NZ) Inc must be affixed to the body of the vehicle.

4.16 From 01 January 2011, where a vehicle of 6 seats or fewer is to be used to transport an **ADS tour**, that vehicle must have been assessed for and issued with the Bus & Coach Association (NZ) Inc 3 star standard grading certificate (assessed under the “Cars and Limousines” category) by Vehicle Testing New Zealand (VTNZ). A valid star rating decal issued by the Bus & Coach Association (NZ) Inc must be affixed to the body of the vehicle.
From the Revised ADS Code of Conduct for ADS Tours 2010, updated 4 October 2011.

B. Terms and Conditions for Star Graded Vehicles

Terms and Conditions for Star Graded Vehicles

Version 2.2

Please note: The Approved Destination Status (ADS) Code of Conduct requires that all buses and coaches used for ADS tours must be BCA Star Graded three stars or higher. The ADS system is based on a bilateral tourism arrangement between the governments of New Zealand and the People's Republic of China that allows groups of Chinese nationals to travel as tourists to New Zealand. Compliance with the ADS system is monitored by the government agency, Tourism New Zealand.

Definitions

1. For the purpose of interpreting these terms and conditions (unless the context otherwise requires):

“We” means the Bus and Coach Association (NZ) Inc. “BCA”, “our” and “us” have a corresponding meaning.

“You” means any full financial member of the Bus and Coach Association who owns controls or operates Star Graded vehicles; “member” and “your” have a corresponding meaning.

“VTNZ” means Vehicle Testing Services Ltd, and includes qualified Vehicle Inspectors undertaking an inspection at an authorised station.

“Mandatory Minimum Requirements” means the minimum standards for vehicles set out in the BCA Star Grading System Guide.

Member Rights and Obligations

2. As a member of the BCA you agree to adhere to the BCA Rules and the Code of Ethics of the BCA. Failure to do so may result in the Star Grading classification of your vehicle being revoked or the termination of your membership.
3. By applying for a Star Grading classification for a vehicle you agree to adhere to these terms and conditions at all times and acknowledge that if you fail to do so your Star Grading classification may be revoked.
4. In order to gain a Star Grading classification you agree to pay any application fee to BCA and an inspection fee to VTNZ. All Star Grading checks and rechecks must be undertaken by VTNZ.
5. If your vehicle passes its Star Grading check it will be awarded a Star Grading classification. Once we have received a copy of the check sheet from VTNZ we will issue you with a Star Grading decal to reflect this classification. If we disagree with the classification awarded by VTNZ we may request that you have the vehicle reassessed by VTNZ at your expense, or may award a classification based on the information held by us as to the age and attributes of your vehicle.
6. Decals are valid for 12 months, after this a recheck must be completed within the six months prior to the next roll over, which takes place annually on 1 July.
7. You agree that the Star Grading decal issued for a vehicle is valid from the date it is issued by us, until the date when the decals for the following year are issued. Upon that date, the decal becomes invalid. You agree not to display invalid decals on your vehicles.
8. You agree that Star Grading decals issued for a vehicle inspected by VTNZ will be used only for that vehicle and will not be applied to any other vehicle.
9. You agree to inform us of any changes to the registration or ownership of your Star Graded vehicle during the period that the decal is valid. Failure to do so may mean that incorrect details are publicly displayed on our website or passed on to government agencies.
10. You agree that once a Star Grading decal for a vehicle is issued and received by you it will be displayed on the vehicle at all times. The decal is required to be displayed to the right of the front door of the vehicle. If the

Star Grading System Guide

decal has to be removed for any reason (i.e. to clean or repair the area where decal is displayed) it is your responsibility to contact us and arrange for a replacement decal.

11. You agree that your Star Graded vehicle will continue to meet all grading criteria for its classification and all Mandatory Minimum Requirements at all times during the period that the decal remains valid. If the vehicle is not maintained in this condition, or its attributes change to a degree that would have resulted in the vehicle not passing the initial inspection, the Star Grading classification may be revoked.
12. You agree to complete an annual recheck with VTNZ after your Star Grading classification has been held for 12 months. A BCA/VTNZ recheck form must be completed and sent to BCA by VTNZ. You must ensure that we have received the check sheet by 30 June if you wish to be issued a new Star Grading decal for the next annual period. A newly Star Graded vehicle is not required to have recheck done for the first annual rollover that takes place after the vehicle's initial check.
13. In the event that your vehicle fails an annual recheck, you have 28 days to have the vehicle checked again by VTNZ against the annual recheck criteria. If you do not have the vehicle checked again within this time period, or if the vehicle fails the recheck again, we may revoke the vehicle's Star Graded status.

BCA Rights and Obligations

14. We reserve the right to charge an application fee for Star Grading. Your decal will not be issued until this fee has been paid.
15. We reserve the right to charge for replacement decals. A replacement decal will not be issued until this fee has been paid.
16. We reserve the right to require a full initial check or recheck to be undertaken at any time, by VTNZ at your cost, to prove that allegations of non-compliance have been sufficiently remedied or were not correctly made out by the complainant, or to prove that a vehicle that has failed its initial grading or annual recheck has been adequately repaired or improved. If such a check is requested and not undertaken, we reserve the right to revoke your Star Grading status or refuse to issue your vehicle with a Star Grading decal.
17. We reserve the right to revoke a vehicle's Star Grading classification at any time if any of these terms and conditions are breached or if your membership of the BCA ceases. If the Star Grading classification is revoked for any reason you must immediately remove the Star Grading decal from the vehicle. We will amend our database and website to reflect the revocation and notification will be sent to Tourism New Zealand that the vehicle is not currently Star Graded. This may have serious implications for you continuing ADS work.
18. We may from time to time and at our sole discretion amend, add to or delete any of these terms and conditions with immediate effect by giving notice to you.

Annual Roll Over

19. A roll over will take place on 1 July annually. The purpose of this roll over is to ensure that all Star Graded vehicles are maintained to an acceptable standard during the Star Grading life of the vehicle. An annual recheck is required as part of the roll over and will cover the vehicles cleanliness and appearance and consists of a recheck of all of the Mandatory Minimum Requirements. The recheck must have taken place within the six months immediately prior to the roll over.
20. We will send you details of your fleet information that is stored on our database prior to the rollover. This will indicate which of your vehicles is recorded in our database as being Star Graded and whether we are yet to receive the annual recheck for any of your vehicles. You will also be informed if any vehicle's classification is due to be downgraded because of age. BCA must receive a response to this communication before the new decals are issued or the details will be deemed to be correct and published as such.
21. If you do not complete a recheck with VTNZ by 30 June annually and ensure that BCA has received a copy of the completed recheck, you will not be issued a new, valid Star Grading decal. Your vehicle's Star Grading classification will not be listed on the BCA website, and the vehicle will be recorded in the BCA's database as lapsed.

Star Grading System Guide

Lapsed Star Grading

22. If a vehicle's Star Grading has lapsed it can re-enter the Star Grading system at any time by having a recheck done by VTNZ at your cost. If a vehicle has been lapsed for more than six months, you will also be required to return a signed copy of these terms and conditions to the BCA office. By signing the terms and conditions you acknowledge in accordance with clause 11, that your vehicle's attributes have not changed to a degree that would have resulted in it not passing its initial inspection.
23. When we receive a passed recheck from VTNZ and, where necessary, a signed copy of the terms and conditions, the vehicle's Star grading will be re-instated. The classification that the vehicle receives will be based on the information held by us as to the age and attributes of the vehicle.

Allegations of Non-Compliance

24. If we receive an allegation that your Star Graded vehicle does not meet the necessary criteria for the Star Grading classification received or the Mandatory Minimum Requirements, we will contact you with details of the allegation. After receiving the details of the allegation you have 14 days in which to submit evidence that the allegation has been sufficiently remedied or was not accurate.
25. We will review your evidence and may also request further information to assist us in making our decision. You will then be informed of the outcome.
26. If you do not submit evidence within 14 days of being informed of the allegation, or if the evidence you submit is not sufficient, the BCA reserves the right to require a recheck to be undertaken by VTNZ at your cost. If a recheck is not undertaken on request, or if the recheck criteria are not met, the vehicle's Star Grading classification may be revoked.

Appeal

27. If you wish to appeal any VTNZ decision about the Star Grading classification issued for your vehicle or a decision regarding an allegation of non-compliance you must complete the Star Grading Appeal form and return it to us with the appeal fee.
28. The Star Grading Committee will examine all available evidence regarding the Star Grading classification issued for your vehicle and make a decision. The Committee's decision is final. Reasons for their decision will be given to you, and the outcome will be published in Circular for other members' information.

I declare that I will abide by the BCA terms and conditions for Star Graded vehicles so long as any of my vehicles are Star Graded.

Name _____

Date _____

Company _____

Signature _____