DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

INFORMATION BULLETIN

November 18, 2002

AMBER REFLECTORS AT REAR OF VEHICLE

Commercial Vehicle Section (CVS) has received numerous inquiries in recent months from departmental personnel, bus and school bus manufacturers and distributors regarding the Department's position on amber reflectors installed on the rear of buses and school buses.

Departmental inspection personnel have noticed a number of buses equipped with rear amber turn signal lamp lenses that have built-in reflector optics. California Vehicle Code (VC) Section 24003, *Vehicle With Unlawful Lamps*, states, "No vehicle shall be equipped with any lamp or illuminating device not required or permitted in this code, nor shall any lamp or illuminating device be mounted inside a vehicle unless specifically permitted by this code." Section 24607 VC, *Reflectors on Rear*, requires every vehicle to be equipped with red reflectors mounted on the rear. However, there is no VC section which allows "amber" reflectors to be mounted on the rear of a vehicle. The reason for this is that red reflectors denote the rear of a vehicle and yellow reflectors denote the front of a vehicle. This distinction is particularly important when the vehicle's lamps are not lighted.

For the reasons indicated above, the Department has determined it to be unlawful for any bus to display an amber reflector to the rear. However, due to the number of buses and school buses already equipped with amber turn signal lamp lenses that have a built-in reflector, the owners of affected vehicles will be given until January 1, 2004, to comply with statutory reflector requirements. California Highway Patrol personnel should notify owners of affected vehicles regarding the provisions of this Information Bulletin.

Any questions regarding this information should be directed to Mr. Mike Ellis, CVS, at (916) 445-1865.

ENFORCEMENT SERVICES DIVISION

OPI: 062
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