

Vehicle Safety Systems Inspection Program update

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Bureau of Automotive Repair

Background and benefits (1 of 2)

- AB 471 (Low, Statutes of 2021) authorized BAR to consolidate the brake and lamp programs into a single Vehicle Safety Systems Inspection (VSSI) Program.
 - Increased efficiencies / reduced program overhead
 - Digital inspection process using the California Vehicle Inspection System (Cal-VIS) which mirrors Smog Check
 - Centralized web-based software
 - Palm vein authentication

Background and benefits (2 of 2)

- Digital certificate process
 - Purchase through transmission to DMV and online verification
- Data collection and program metrics

Three-phase implementation approach

- To transition from the brake and lamp programs to the VSSI Program, BAR used a three-phase approach to implementation:
 - Licensing VSSI Stations and Technicians (1st phase)
 - Started on March 27, 2024
 - Begin vehicle safety systems inspections (2nd phase)
 - Started on July 8, 2024
 - Sunset brake and lamp programs (3rd phase)
 - Ended on September 27, 2024

Phase three

- On September 27, 2024, the brake and lamp programs ended:
 - Brake and lamp station and adjuster licenses no longer valid
 - Stations and adjusters no longer permitted to issue brake and lamp certificates of compliance
 - BAR collected and refunded all unused brake and lamp certificates of compliance
 - BAR Enforcement monitored brake and lamp certificates of compliance submitted to DMV after September 27, 2024

Brake and lamp stations and adjusters

- Until March 27, 2025:
 - A brake and lamp adjusting station, whose licenses were in good standing on March 27, 2024, was able to forego the application fee to become a licensed VSSI Station
 - A brake and lamp adjuster, whose licenses were in good standing on March 27, 2024, was able to forego:
 - The application fee to become a licensed VSSI Technician
 - ASE certifications (however, will be required for renewal)
 - The initial licensing examination

VSSI program status

- As of September 28, 2025:
 - 517 VSSI Stations
 - 816 VSSI Technicians
 - 238,601 inspections initiated
 - 195,924 certificates issued
 - 37,891 failed inspections
 - 15.9% inspection failure rate

VSSI program observations (1 of 2)

- In addition to seeing how many certificates are issued, and how many inspections fail, BAR can also see the causes of those failures
- Most common VSSI failure reasons:
 - Open safety recall(s)
 - Lighting system
 - Brake system
 - Passenger compartment
 - Safety restraint system (SRS) light illuminated
 - Cracked windshield

VSSI program observations (2 of 2)

- Most common VSSI failure reasons:
 - Passenger compartment
 - Safety restraint system (SRS) light illuminated
 - Cracked windshield
 - Tires and wheels
 - Worn tires
 - Tire pressure monitoring system (TPMS) light illuminated

VSSI program lessons learned

- Overall, the rollout of the program was a huge success
 - “Grandparenting” existing brake and lamp stations allowed for improved program area coverage
- Cross references to other sections of laws and regulations
- Reuse existing technology components
- Communicate, communicate, communicate
- Program area coverage in remote areas
- Process to address unforeseen circumstances exceptions (e.g. parts unavailability, regional based safety recall)

VSSI program information

- Check the BAR website at www.bar.ca.gov/safety. There you will find:
 - Steps to obtain a VSSI Station and/or Technician license
 - Links to:
 - VSSI manual
 - Station equipment checklist
 - Information on biometric enrollment for technicians
 - VSSI tutorial video

Contact information

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