

**ROYAL ST. CHRISTOPHER AND NEVIS POLICE FORCE
LICENSING AUTHORITY**

WINDSCREEN INSPECTION STANDARD

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Vehicles and Road Traffic Act, Cap. 15.06

Effective Date: January 1, 2026

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. This SOP establishes uniform standards and procedures for the inspection of motor vehicle windscreens in accordance with the Vehicles and Road Traffic Act (Cap. 15.06) and related regulations. Its purpose is to ensure that all vehicles certified as roadworthy provide safe visibility and structural protection to drivers, passengers, and other road users.
- 1.2. A damaged or compromised windscreen greatly increases the likelihood of injury during a collision or road traffic accident. The windscreen forms a critical part of the vehicle's safety structure, providing essential support for roof strength and ensuring the proper deployment of airbags. Additionally, a clear and intact windscreen enables the driver to maintain full visibility, reducing the risk of hazards and safeguarding all road users.

2. SCOPE

This SOP applies to all authorized vehicle inspectors within the Federation and covers every motor vehicle equipped with a windscreen that is presented for inspection.

3. LEGAL AUTHORITY

Section 62(5) of the Vehicles and Road Traffic Act (Cap. 15.06) requires that motor vehicles designed to be fitted with a windscreen must be maintained in such condition as to provide adequate protection to the driver and must be maintained in a condition that allows an unobstructed view of the road. The Act further empowers the Licensing Authority to refuse the issuance of a licence to any vehicle that fails to comply with this safety requirement. This SOP therefore establishes the enforceable standard for ensuring windscreen compliance.

4. DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 **Windscreen:** The front or rear transparent screen of a motor vehicle constructed of safety or laminated glass.
- 4.2 **Driver's Line of Sight:** The area swept by the driver's side windscreen wiper.
- 4.3 **Safety Glass:** Glass that, if fractured, breaks into small, blunt fragments and not sharp shards, as defined by international automotive standards.
- 4.4. **Chip:** A small area where the glass surface has been broken or nicked, usually caused by an impact from a stone or other road debris. Unlike a crack, which spreads across the glass, a chip is localized and often appears as a small pit, star, or circular mark on the surface.
- 4.5. **Crack:** A linear fracture in the windscreen glass that extends away from the point of impact or stress. Cracks may run in a straight line, curve, or branch out and can increase in length over time due to vibration, temperature change, or stress on the glass. Unlike chips, cracks represent a more significant compromise of the windscreen's structural integrity and driver visibility.
- 4.6. **Scratch:** A linear mark or abrasion on the windscreen surface caused by mechanical action, such as faulty wiper blades, foreign objects dragged across the glass, or improper cleaning. Unlike chips or cracks, scratches do not result from impact and usually affect only the surface layer of the glass.

5. INSPECTION CRITERIA

5.1 Structural Integrity

Windscreens must be securely fitted with proper sealing. No looseness, displacement, or improper installation is permitted.

5.2 Damage and Defects

- 5.2.1. No cracks, chips, or scratches are permitted within the driver's line of sight.
- 5.2.2. Cracks or chips outside the driver's line of sight must not exceed 6 inches (150 mm).

- 5.2.3 Windscreens with multiple cracks, star fractures, or spreading defects must be rejected.

5.3. Repaired Windscreen Damage

- 5.3.1. Any chip or minor damage to a windscreen that has been professionally repaired using an approved or appropriate resin injection method shall not be deemed a defect, provided that:
 - 5.3.1.1. The repair restores the structural integrity of the windscreen and remains stable, with no evidence of propagating cracks.
 - 5.3.1.2. The repair does not cause undue visual distortion or impede the driver's field of vision, particularly within the primary vision zone.
 - 5.3.1.3. The repaired area complies with accepted roadworthiness and safety standards.

5.4 Visibility

- 5.4.1. Windscreens must be clean and free from obstruction.
- 5.4.2. Stickers, tinting, or attachments that obstruct vision are prohibited, except official license stickers affixed in the designated area.
- 5.4.3. Tinting must not extend more than 10 inches from the top edge of the front windscreen.
- 5.4.4. The rear windscreen must allow a minimum light transmittance of **35%**.
- 5.4.5. In the case of vehicles with smaller front windscreens, the tinted area shall not exceed one-quarter of the total windscreen height, whichever measurement is less.

5.5 Safety Features

- 5.5.1. Windscreens must be manufactured from safety or laminated glass.
- 5.5.2. Plexiglass (acrylic or plastic substitutes) shall not be permitted for the front or rear windscreen.
- 5.5.3. Windscreens must not show delamination, discoloration, or distortion that reduces visibility.

5.6 Supporting Equipment

- 5.6.1. Wipers and washers must be present, securely fitted, and in effective working condition.

6. INSPECTION PROCEDURE

- 6.1. Visual Examination – Inspect the windscreen for cracks, chips, discoloration, or other defects.
- 6.2. Structural Check – Confirm proper fitting and sealing.
- 6.3. Visibility Assessment – Sit in the driver’s seat to confirm a clear forward view.
- 6.4. Wiper/Washer Test – Operate to confirm effective functioning.
- 6.5. Tint Measurement – Use an approved device to verify legal light transmission if tinting is applied.

7. REJECTION CRITERIA

- 7.1. A vehicle shall be rejected if the windscreen is:
 - 7.1.1. **Insecure** – loose, inadequately bonded, or improperly fitted such that it may detach or compromise safety.
 - 7.1.2. **Missing** – entirely absent, leaving the vehicle without proper frontal protection.
 - 7.1.3. **Damaged** – showing any of the following conditions:
 - 7.1.3.1. **Cracks** in the driver’s primary field of vision, or multiple cracks longer than **6 inches (150 mm)** anywhere on the windscreen.
 - 7.1.3.2. **Chips** exceeding half inch (**13 mm**) in diameter in the driver’s primary field of vision, or chips larger than 1.5 inches (**40 mm**) in any other area.
 - 7.1.3.3. **Multiple chips or cracks** that weaken the structural integrity of the glass.
 - 7.1.3.4. **Scratches within the driver’s primary field of vision** that impair visibility or cause distortion.
 - 7.1.3.5. **Any chip, crack, or scratch** that causes visual distortion or otherwise obstructs the driver’s view.
 - 7.1.4. **Tinting** below legal threshold (10 inches.)

7.1.5. Wipers or washers are missing, inoperative, or ineffective.

8. RECORDKEEPING

- 8.1. Inspectors must document findings in the official inspection report in the VRS. All defects shall be recorded with a description and location.
- 8.2. Vehicles failing inspection must be flagged as “Failed” until corrective action is taken.

9. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

- 9.1. In the event of a dispute concerning an inspection outcome resulting in failure, the following procedure shall apply:

9.1.1. Secondary Inspection at the Station

- 9.1.1.1. The vehicle owner may request a secondary inspection to be conducted by a senior inspector or supervisor at the same inspection station.
- 9.1.1.2. This secondary inspection shall be carried out promptly and at no additional cost to the vehicle owner.

9.1.2. Escalation to Licensing Authority

- 9.1.2.1. If the dispute is not resolved to the satisfaction of the vehicle owner following the secondary inspection, the matter may be escalated in writing to the Licensing Authority.
- 9.1.2.2. The Licensing Authority shall review the inspection reports, any supporting documentation, and may order a further independent inspection if deemed necessary.

9.1.3. Final Ruling

- 9.1.3.1. The Licensing Authority’s determination shall constitute the final ruling on the matter and shall be binding on both the inspection station and the vehicle owner.

10. COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

Failure to apply this SOP will be considered a breach of duty and may result in suspension of your access privilege to the system in accordance with the Vehicles and Road Traffic Act.

11. REVIEW

This SOP shall be reviewed annually by the Licensing Authority to ensure alignment with legislative updates, road safety needs, and international best practices.


James Sutton BS, C.A.M.S., JP
Commissioner of Police
The Royal St Christopher and Nevis Police Force

