

Window tint laws darken up

South Australian car owners now have greater flexibility when tinting their car windows.

In February 2018, the South Australian government relaxed regulations regarding the darkness of the windows behind the driver in a passenger vehicle. These can now be tinted by professionals to 20% visible light transmission (VLT), instead of the previous 35% VLT limit, which means they can be darker.

VLT measures the amount of light coming through the glass. Each State and Territory sets a VLT limit on how dark car windows can be tinted. In 2016 a review by the National Transport Commission (NTC) recommended windows rear of the driver be allowed a 20% VLT. The new South Australian VLT standards reflect the NTC position.

Car owners usually want the darkest legal finish when getting their windows tinted, because it looks sleek and offers the best protection. The darker the film the greater the reduction in daytime glare and often the higher the heat rejection.

President of the Window Film Association of Australia and New Zealand (WFAANZ), Ally Cronan, comments, "In many cars, passengers sitting in the back seat are children, so allowing darker film on side and rear windows in the back seat often means that kids can benefit from less glare and more comfort afforded by the film."

When it comes to getting car windows tinted, what's always been confusing is the disparity between the darkness of factory tinted glass in new cars and after-market window film. Federal law permits dark privacy glass in new vehicles, yet tinters are prohibited by State or Territory law from applying that same darkness of film to existing vehicles.

Ally Cronan explains, "In other words, your mate can buy a new car with dark windows – but you're not allowed to have the windows of your old car tinted to match theirs. The new VLT regulation introduced in South Australia helps close the gap between privacy glass and after-market film, which is great news for motorists and tinters."

Car owners should keep in mind the VLT limit for the front seat side windows remains at 35%. Window film is never allowed on the greater part of the windscreen, even if it's optically clear. Also, when window film is applied to privacy glass, the combined VLT of the glass plus film must be considered. If the privacy glass (without film) is already close to 35% or 20% VLT, film of any kind should not be applied.

Ally adds, "It pays to use a credible window film installer who is aware of and abides by the law, especially in light of these changes. Always choose a WFAANZ member as they follow a code of practice and can recommend the best legal film for your needs. To find a WFAANZ installer in your area, please visit the WFAANZ website www.wfaanz.org.au."

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**The Window Film Association of
Australia and New Zealand**

WFAANZ is a non-profit industry association
representing window film installers and distributors.
For further information or to find a tinter please visit
www.wfaanz.org.au