Self-contained Vehicles

Printing and issuing certificates and warrant cards

Guidance document

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1 Introduction

Issuing a Certificate and warrant card for a self-contained vehicle is one of the core functions of Certification Authorities.

People can apply to a Certification Authority for a certificate of self-containment (**Certificate)** for a vehicle. If the Certification Authority accepts the application, it must issue a Certificate and a warrant card if it is satisfied (following inspection) that the vehicle meets the requirements for self-containment prescribed in the **Plumbers, Gasfitters, and Drainlayers Act 2006** (the **Act**) and in the **Plumbers, Gasfitters, and Drainlayers (Self-Contained Vehicles) Regulations 2023** (**Regulations**). The Certification Authority is also responsible for collecting the self-containment levy (the **levy**) from the applicant and paying this to the Board as part of the certification process.

Certificates confirm that a vehicle has been certified as self-contained and include detailed information about the vehicle. Certificates contain more information than what is contained on the warrant card.

Warrant cards are the public-facing component of the self-contained vehicles regulatory system. They provide members of the public and enforcement authorities with a way to know, at a glance, whether a vehicle is certified as self-contained and can be used to freedom camp in certain areas.

When a person is using a self-contained vehicle to freedom camp, they must display the vehicle's warrant card and keep the Certificate with the vehicle.[1]

This document is applicable to all Certification Authorities – those that are appointed by the Board through the application process, and those that are deemed Certification Authorities (i.e. Certifying Plumbers) during the transitional period ending 6 June 2025.

The guidance in this document is just that: guidance. It aims to help those who are thinking of applying to be appointed as a Certification Authority, and those who have already been appointed, to understand their core functions and obligations. It does not replace the need to know and understand the obligations and requirements contained in the Act and the Regulations, and nor does it provide or replace legal or other professional advice.

This guidance document should be read in conjunction with the Board's other **guidance documents**, including:

- **Apply to be a Certification Authority – Guidance document**
- **Being a Certification Authority – Guidance document**
- **Vehicle inspection guidance**

All guidance documents are available on the Board's website at **pgdb.co.nz**

[1] See section 87Y of the Act.

1.1 How long Certificates and warrant cards are valid for

Certificates and warrant cards are valid for a period of four years from the date of issue, unless the vehicle undergoes a material modification to its self-containment facilities, or the Certificate is revoked by the Certification Authority.

1.2 Offences relating to Certificates and warrant cards

The Act and the Freedom Camping Act 2011 create offences relating to Certificates and warrant cards. For example, it is an offence for a person to:[2]

- issue a Certificate or warrant card without proper authority to do so (i.e. when they have not been appointed as a Certification Authority)
- fail to display a warrant card when freedom camping in certain areas
- display an altered or a fraudulent warrant card, and
- present an altered or a fraudulent Certificate to an Enforcement Officer

The Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board (**Board**) may also take disciplinary action against a Certification Authority if it issues a Certificate or a warrant card without complying with the Act and the Regulations.[3]

[2] See section 125A of the Act, and sections 20 – 20C of the Freedom Camping Act 2011.
[3] See section 87P(2)(d)(iii) of the Act.

2 Printing and issuing compliant Certificates and warrant cards

Having a process to print and issue high quality, compliant Certificates and warrant cards is an important part of the Certification Authority's role. Certificates and warrant cards must conform to the requirements set out in the Act and the Regulations and will need to be consistently printed to specification by Certification Authorities or their printing service provider.

2.1 Creating Certificates

If a Certification Authority is satisfied that a vehicle meets the requirements contained in the Act and the Regulations, and has received the levy payment from the applicant, it will create and issue a Certificate. Certification Authorities will use the information recorded during the vehicle inspection to create the Certificate. Certificates must contain specific information in accordance with the Regulations, as described in section 3 below.

The only personal information that must be contained on a Certificate is the name of the owner of the vehicle. **No other personal information can be included on the Certificate.** The Certification Authority will need another means of recording relevant personal information it requires. Including other personal information in a Certificate may be an interference with the affected person's privacy.

2.2 Saving Certificates to the Register

A copy of the Certificate must be saved to the Register (in .pdf or .png format) as part of the certification process. The form and specifications of Certificates are provided in section 3 below.

Saving a copy of the Certificate to the Register enables all Certification Authorities and Enforcement Officers to search for a specific vehicle and have access to all of the information contained on a vehicle's Certificate (this is a requirement under the Act).

2.3 Creating warrant cards

Certification Authorities will use the Register to generate a warrant card print file (.csv file or files)[4] containing the information to be included on a warrant card.

2.4 Printing Certificates and warrant cards

Certification Authorities are responsible for printing Certificates and warrant cards. Sections 3 and 4 below provide further detail on the form and specifications of Certificates and warrant cards.

Certification Authorities will either:

- send the Certificate and warrant card files to a printing service provider to print them to the specifications set out in sections 3 and 4 below; or

[4] The print file could include multiple warrant and certificate files

- use the files to print the Certificate and warrant card if the Certification Authority has in-house printing facilities to consistently print Certificates and warrant cards to the specifications contained in sections 3 and 4 below.

If there is an error on the .csv file for the warrant card, the Certification Authority will need to update the information in the Register and re-issue the information for the warrant card. If a vehicle does not have registration plates, other identification details will be included on the Certificate and warrant card.

2.5 Providing the Certificate and warrant card to the vehicle owner

Certification Authorities are responsible for arranging for vehicle owners to receive their Certificate and warrant card. This can be done in person or by post, for example.

If a Certification Authority will not immediately issue a Certificate and warrant card to a vehicle owner after the vehicle has been certified as self-contained (for example, the Certificate and warrant card will be printed and posted out to the vehicle owner), the Certification Authority should advise the vehicle owner at the time of application when the vehicle owner can expect to receive their Certificate and warrant card.

3 Form and specifications of Certificates

The form and specifications of Certificates are provided at Table 1. The specifications promote best practice and include the requirements contained in the Act and the Regulations.

An image of the recommended form of the Certificate is available at Diagram 1 below. A link to the recommended Certificate template can be accessed from the Board's website (**pgdb.co.nz**).

Table 1: Certificate specifications

Item	Specifications
Certificate properties and material	• Durable paper – the Certificate will not fade or deform for at least the period of certification, and will remain legible for at least that period • At least 120 GSM paper • Printed on one side only
Shape	Rectangular
Dimensions	Standard A4, 210 x 297mm
Font	Calibri
Font colour	Black
Font size	See *Diagram 1*
Background colour	White
Printing resolution	At least 300 DPI
Content (regulation 21)	• A statement that the vehicle holds a Certificate of self-containment • Name of vehicle owner **Note***: No additional personal information must be contained on the Certificate* • Details that identify the vehicle (registration plate, make, model, year) • The name of the Certification Authority that issued the Certificate • Date of issue • Expiry date • The maximum number of people for which the vehicle is certified for use as a self-contained motor vehicle • The certification number: the unique number (AA9999999) issued to the vehicle generated by the Register • A technical description of the vehicle's self-containment facilities *see Diagram 1 below*

Diagram 1: Recommended form of Certificate

Certificate of self-containment

The motor vehicle described in this certificate is certified as self-contained in accordance with the Plumbers, Gasfitters, and Drainlayers Act 2006.

Certificate details	
Vehicle owner's name:	
Registration plate number or other identifying numbers:	
Make / model / year of vehicle:	
Name of Certification Authority that issued the certificate:	
Issue date:	Expiry date:
Maximum number of people vehicle is certified for:	
Unique number issued to the vehicle:	

Technical description of motor vehicle's self-containment facilities *(as applicable)*	
Water supply system and loading mechanism	**Wastewater system and offloading mechanism**
Number of water storage tanks:	Number of wastewater tanks:
Total capacity (litres):	Total capacity (litres):
Material:	Material:
Support type:	Waste dia (mm):
Inlet dia (mm):	Outlet dia (mm):
Other comment:	Hose length (mm):
Fixed toilets	Support type:
Type: *(e.g. cassette/waterless)*	Other comment:
Make:	**Sink and rubbish storage**
Model:	Sink waste dia (mm):
Total capacity (litres):	Sink waste length (mm):
Fixing type/description:	Rubbish storage capacity:
Other comment:	Rubbish storage type:
Ventilation system	Other comment:
Wastewater ventilation description:	
Wastewater tank vent outlet location:	
Wastewater tank vent diamater (mm):	
Other comment:	

4 Form and specifications of warrant cards

The form and specifications of warrant cards are provided in the table below. The specifications promote best practice and include the requirements contained in the Act and the Regulations.

Table 2: warrant card specifications

Item	Specification
Warrant card properties	• Durable – the warrant card will not fade or deform for at least the period of certification, and will remain legible for at least that period • UV resistant • Non-reflective • Printed on one side only
Warrant card material	Rigid plastic or vinyl
Shape	Rectangular (rounded corners)
Dimensions	85mm x 55mm
Font	Ebrima
Font colour	White
Font size	See *Diagram 2*
Background colour	Panatone 349C Hex: #006600 RGB: 0, 102, 0 CMYK: 100, 0, 100, 60
Printing resolution	At least 300 DPI
Content of warrant card	• Registration plate (or, if the vehicle is not registered, details about the make and model of the vehicle including chassis number and/or serial number) **Note:** *This means there will be some variability of how the warrant card looks.* • Date of issue of the warrant card • Expiry date of the warrant card • Name of the Certification Authority that issued the warrant card • The maximum number of people for which the vehicle is certified for use as a self-contained motor vehicle • The certification number: the unique number (AA9999999) issued to the vehicle generated by the Register – *see Diagrams 3 and 4* • A statement that the motor vehicle has been issued with a Certificate (the heading)

Note: If warrant cards are not printed to these specifications, or are inconsistently printed or low quality, Enforcement Officers and members of the public may think they are not valid. This may create issues for people freedom camping, and reduce confidence in the self-contained vehicles system.

Diagram 2: Example of warrant card showing font sizes



Diagram 3: Example of warrant card issued by Certification Authority



Diagram 4: Example of warrant card issued by Certification Authority where there is no registration plate

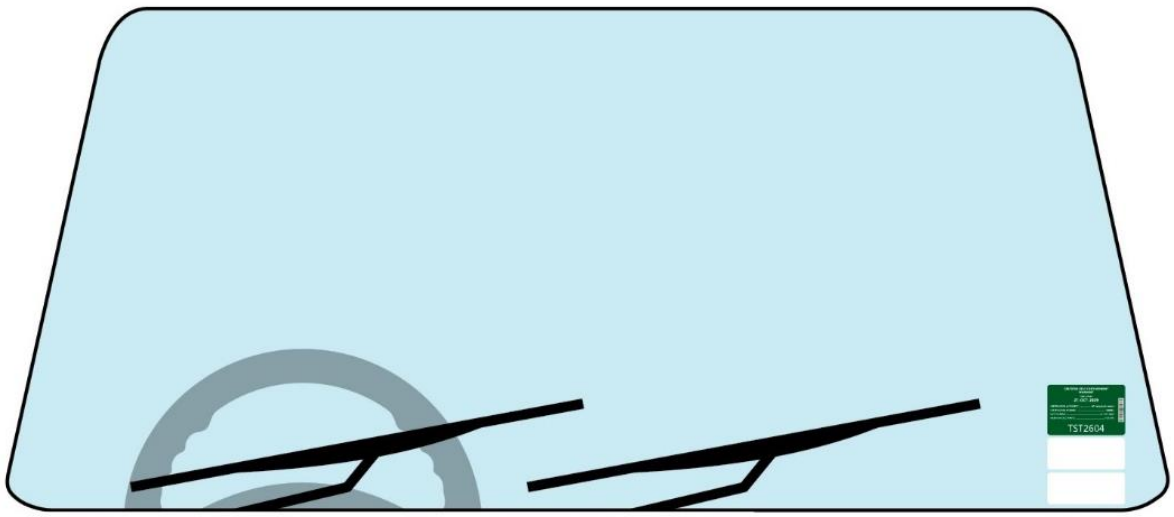
Where a vehicle does not have a registration plate, the make, model, and serial (or other) number of the vehicle must be included on the warrant card in place of the registration number.



5 How to display warrant cards

It is an offence for the occupier of a self-contained vehicle to not display a warrant card while freedom camping. In accordance with the Regulations, warrant cards must be placed in an upright position, facing outwards, on the inside of the windscreen of the certified vehicle (or towing vehicle) on the opposite side to the steering wheel. (See *Diagram 5*).

Diagram 5: Where to display warrant card



If a vehicle does not have a windscreen, the warrant card must be displayed in an upright position as close as possible to the front left-hand side of the vehicle.