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MALTA SVA SCHEME FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Since the scheme for the inspection of second-hand vehicles prior to export to Malta from Japan (the so-called 'Malta SVA' scheme) was started in the last half of 2003, there have been a number of changes to the way in which the scheme is implemented.

These changes are not step changes but, rather, evolutionary phases. This is to be expected, as the scheme is new and unique. The idea of inspecting vehicles is, of course, not unique, but the requirements for vehicles going to Malta are a unique set of conditions based on a statutory instrument, with an underlying philosophy, that is unique to Malta.

As VCA has gained experience from conducting these inspections, so we have changed the way that we work in order to make life easier for all involved as well as to more properly fit the inspections with the underlying philosophy of the Maltese government.

The following Frequently Asked Questions should hopefully address most if not all of the points that are still unclear to some people or which have been introduced or changed since the scheme first came into operation.

1) Why do we have to submit vehicles for the so-called Malta SVA inspection?

Because the Maltese government said so.

2) Why does VCA conduct the inspections?

Because the Maltese government authorised us to do so.

3) Is the Malta SVA scheme part of a plan to try to stop second hand vehicle imports to Malta?

No, the opposite is the case. By way of the Malta SVA scheme it is possible to demonstrate that second hand vehicles going into Malta from Japan are at least of the proper specification. This improves the reputation of such vehicles and creates an environment under which such trade may continue.

4) Who is VCA?

VCA stands for 'Vehicle Certification Agency'. We are an executive agency of the United Kingdom Department for Transport. Please visit our web site www.vca-asia.net for information in English and in Japanese.

5) Who was responsible for setting up the way that the scheme is implemented?

The scheme in its present format is a development of input from the Maltese transport department, the Malta Used Vehicle Importers Association (UVIA) and VCA.

6) Who has the responsibility for arranging the certification of vehicles?

Ultimately the responsibility lies with the importer who intends to bring the vehicles to Malta. It is the responsibility of the importer to ensure that vehicles they import from Japan to Malta are certified in accordance with the Malta SVA scheme. Of course those importers are in Malta, so it will normally be easier for them to ask the person or organisation from whom they obtain the vehicles (i.e. the exporter) to arrange for the vehicles to be inspected and certified.

7) How do I arrange for vehicles to be inspected?

Details of the procedure to follow and the documents to use may be found on our web site www.vca-asia.net.

8) If I need further information, how may I obtain it?

Please send e-mail to malta@vca-asia.jp. It is unlikely that we will be able to deal with telephone enquiries. VCA is a government agency and the Malta SVA is just a part of our activities. So that we may properly manage our resources to give all customers a proper level of service we strongly encourage the use of e-mail for communication.

9) How much does it cost?

Please refer to our web site www.vca-asia.net

10) What items are inspected on the inspection?

Please refer to the documents on our web site www.vca-asia.net

11.1) What if my vehicle fails the inspection?

If the vehicle can be rectified at the time of inspection, then we can still certify the vehicle, otherwise the vehicle will have to be re-inspected after it has been rectified.

11.2) It will take time for me to rectify the defect, can the VCA inspector wait whilst I fix it?

The standard hours for inspection are 09:00 to 17:00. Within that time period, the inspector can wait for a maximum of one hour for rectifications to vehicles as long as the delay is not impinging on the schedule of another inspection. After that time, if it is still within the inspector's conditioned hours, further waiting will be charged at 6,000 yen per hour charged by fifteen minute increments. Moreover, cognisance must be given to the time that the return journey to Nagoya will take. With the exception of inspections conducted at Nagoya, most inspection premises require several hours of travel to return from the site back to base. In cognisance of this fact, we have to state that **ON NO ACCOUNT CAN THE INSPECTOR WAIT BEYOND 17:00** In some cases, particularly those where the journey time back to Nagoya is three hours or more, the inspection should be completed by 16:00 unless prior arrangements have been made.

12) Is there any charge for a re-inspection?

If the re-inspections are added to a minimum number of 16 vehicles for new inspection, the re-inspection fee will be 4,800 yen for the UVIA member, otherwise the cost will be the same as that for a new inspection. (In case of the Non-UVIA member: 6,000 yen per vehicle)

13) How can I avoid failures on the inspection?

There is a lot of information on the VCA web site that details the nature of the inspection and should enable you to carry out a pre-inspection of your vehicles to ensure that there

are no issues on which they might fail the inspection. IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO CHECK YOUR VEHICLES CAREFULLY BEFORE THE INSPECTION TO MAKE SURE THAT THERE ARE NO ITEMS ON WHICH THEY ARE LIKELY TO FAIL. Basically, vehicles that are of original specification with no modifications at all are unlikely to fail the inspection. Cars that have been modified with changes to the controls, glass, lights, engine and such like are quite likely to fail. This should be borne in mind when acquiring cars with a view to exporting to Malta.or damaged

14) My vehicle only failed for one small item, shouldn't the re-inspection fee be less than for a more significant failure?

The charge for re-inspection is not related to the reasons or reasons for failure.

15) I have a lot of vehicles to be inspected and my yard is quite a long way from Nagoya, can the inspector stay overnight to save time?

Malta inspections are normally one-day trips. However, if VCA receives at least 3 days notice of such a request, then it may be possible for the inspector to stay overnight and conduct inspections over more than one day. In such a situation, you will be expected to cover the cost of all additional expenses, such as hotels and meals.

16) I have questions about the Malta SVA scheme, yet the inspector seems unable to answer them; why is that?

In order to avoid problems with coordination that existed in the early months of the scheme, the decision was taken to totally separate the inspection function from all other functions such as management and administration. All decisions, all management and all administration of the Malta scheme are dealt with from the VCA office in Nagoya. The inspector travels to the site, inspects the cars and leaves, that is all.