

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2908

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Highways & Transportation, March 1, 2004

Title: An act relating to salvage vehicles.

Brief Description: Strengthening accountability for salvage vehicles.

Sponsors: House Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Representatives Mielke, O'Brien, Ahern, Pearson and Boldt).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Highways & Transportation: 2/18/04, 3/1/04 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Horn, Chair; Benton, Vice Chair; Swecker, Vice Chair; Esser, Haugen, Jacobsen, Kastama, Mulliken, Murray, Oke, Poulsen and Spanel.

Staff: Kimberly Johnson (786-7346)

Background: Under current law, when a vehicle is wrecked beyond repair or declared a total loss, the owner must surrender the title and registration to the Department of Licensing (DOL) within 15 days of the accident. Once the title is surrendered to DOL on the grounds of being a total loss, the vehicle is considered a "salvage vehicle." If the salvage vehicle is rebuilt, current law requires that DOL issue a special title and registration with the words "WA Rebuilt" displayed across the front of the document, and that a member of the Washington State Patrol (WSP) inspect the vehicle. After inspecting the rebuilt vehicle, the WSP officer inscribes a marking on the inside of the driver's side door indicating the vehicle was previously destroyed or declared a total loss.

In order to be designated as a salvage vehicle, the vehicle must be damaged to the extent that the cost of repairs plus the salvage value make the vehicle uneconomical to repair. Salvage does not include vehicles that are six years or older *unless*: (1) the fair market value of the vehicle prior to the wreck was at least \$6,500; and (2) the model year is not more than 20 years from the date of the wreck.

WSP does not have specific rulemaking authority relating to salvage vehicles and salvage vehicle inspections.

Summary of Bill: A physical examination is required for vehicles declared totaled or salvage under Washington law. The physical examination is also required for salvage vehicles from other states that have not been rebuilt or repaired within the jurisdiction of that state.

An inspection must verify that the vehicle identification number is genuine and agrees with the number shown on the original documents supporting the vehicle purchase or ownership. A

WSP VIN specialist must ensure that all major component parts used for the reconstruction of a salvage vehicle were obtained legally. All invoices must be shown at the time of inspection, and must include the name and address of the business, a description of the part, the date of sale, and the amount of the sale, including retail sales or use tax. Additional requirements are provided for the bill of sale.

If the presenter is unable to provide proof of ownership for the vehicle or major component parts, an inspection must be completed for ownership-in-doubt purposes.

A vehicle must have all damaged major component parts replaced or repaired to meet the equipment standards required by law prior to the inspection.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: This bill enhances the State Patrol's ability to identify stolen vehicles and parts by requiring receipts for all major component parts.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Milke (pro); Lt. Jeff Devere, Washington State Patrol (pro).