

**Division Of State Patrol
Informational Memorandum**

6-99-2

**Manual Tab 4
School Bus Inspection Manual**

TOPIC: AS 3 Glazing Used In School Bus Windows

Background: School bus manufacturers are placing AS-3 tinted glass in the rear windows and thermopane windows behind the service door. For years school buses have been approved with AS-3 glazing in the rear of the bus when the school bus has the tinted window option. The AS-3 glazing designator allows this window to be tinted by up to 70% where AS-1 and AS-2 glazing cannot be tinted as dark. In speaking with glass manufacturers about the crash worthiness of AS-3 glass they related it is safer than the AS-4 and AS-5 glass also allowed in the rearmost window positions.

The AS-3 tinted glass is also being used in school buses throughout the state in the thermopane windows behind the service door. Trans 300.69(2) specifies the glazing in windows to the right and left of the driver shall be identified by the designation of AS-1 or AS-2. This would not allow these windows to be tinted and would allow the driver to have a clear unobstructed view of approaching vehicles. The contention is that the top two windows of the service door are the windows to the right of the driver and this section therefore does not apply to the window behind the service door.

Decision: The AS-3 tinted glazing will be allowed to be placed in the rear windows of the school bus. It has been in service for many years and no safety implications have been justified. The AS-3 tinted glazing will not be allowed in school buses where the window is required to be hermetically sealed behind the service door. This window is provided to increase visibility for the driver and therefore should not have any articles placed on it or be tinted to reduce this visibility. Remember that AS-II school buses are not required to have thermopanes here and therefore this glass could be tinted.

Action: Note as minor defect on the inspection report.

Issued May 1, 1999/BA