

SURFACE VEHICLE RECOMMENDED PRACTICE

SAE J273

REV.
DEC81

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Superseding J273 JUN72

Submitted for recognition as an American National Standard

PASSENGER CAR VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER SYSTEM

- 1. Scope**—This practice supplements SAE J272c. It applies to characteristics of passenger car descriptive and identifying information which are to be set forth in a uniform manner in the vehicle identification number.
 - 1.1 Purpose**—This SAE Recommended Practice provides direction for the design of a passenger car Vehicle Identification Number (VIN).
- 2. References**
 - 2.1 Applicable Publications**—The following publications form a part of the specification to the extent specified herein. Unless otherwise indicated the latest issue of SAE publications shall apply.
 - 2.1.1 SAE PUBLICATIONS**—Available from SAE, 400 Commonwealth Drive, Warrendale, PA 15096-0001.

SAE J218a—Passenger Car Identification Terminology
SAE J272c—Vehicle Identification Number Systems
SAE J1044a—World Manufacturer Identifier
- 3. Definitions**
 - 3.1** Refer to SAE J272c for definitions of vehicle identification number, world manufacturer identifier, vehicle descriptor section, vehicle indicator section, field, and sequential number.
 - 3.2** Refer to SAE J218a for definitions of make, car line, series, body type, model year, and year of manufacture.
 - 3.3 Engine Type**—A code as determined by the vehicle manufacturer to identify the vehicle power source.
- 4. Requirements**
 - 4.1 World Manufacturer Identifier (WMI)**—The WMI shall be the first section of the VIN and consist of three characters pre-assigned to the manufacturer by the National Organization (SAE in the case of U.S. vehicle manufacturers) in accordance with SAE Recommended Practice J1044a, World Manufacturer Identifier.

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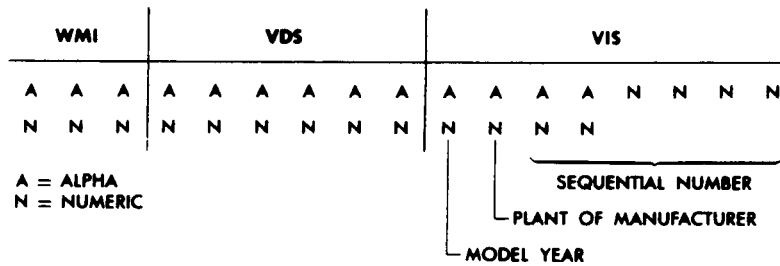


FIGURE 1—

4.2 Vehicle Descriptor Section Content (VDS)—The VDS shall be the second section of the VIN. It shall consist of six characters. This section shall identify the general attributes of the vehicle, such as make, car line, series, body type, and engine type. The coding and sequence of this section is determined by the manufacturer.

4.3 Vehicle Indicator Section (VIS)—The VIS shall be the last section of the VIN and shall consist of eight characters, the last four of which shall be numeric. If the manufacturer chooses to designate model year or year of manufacture and/or plant of manufacture in this section, it is recommended that the year be indicated by the first character of the VIS and the plant by the second character. The recommended code to be used when designating year is indicated in the Table in J272c.

NOTE—This SAE Recommended Practice may not necessarily be consistent with existing national statutory requirements.

5. Notes

5.1 Marginal Indicia—The change bar (I) located in the left margin is for the convenience of the user in locating areas where technical revisions have been made to the previous issue of the report. An (R) symbol to the left of the document title indicates a complete revision of the report.

PREPARED BY THE SAE VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS COMMITTEE