

**Division of State Patrol  
Informational Memorandum**

**11-03-2**

**Tab 4  
School Bus Inspection Manual**

**TOPIC: Airfoil Mounting**

**Background:** There is some confusion as to the proper mounting of airfoils on school buses. They are allowed as optional equipment and there is an interpretive letter that states an airfoil is not to interfere with required safety equipment such as the identification lamps and the red alternate flashing warning lamps. The confusing area is the white flashing strobe and what constitutes blocking or interfering with its view or light output.

The roof-mounted strobe was originally used only during inclement weather and as such was meant to be an early warning of the approach of a loaded school bus. When it is snowing, rainy or foggy it is a familiar sight to see the sky lit up by bus-mounted strobes. The bus body as well as roof hatches (if any) block the direct view of the strobe unless you are a sufficient distance from the bus.

The safety benefit of an airfoil is to keep the red warning signal lights clear of dirt and snow. These lamps communicate to drivers approaching from behind that a bus is about to stop or has stopped and is loading or unloading pupils. This is the most vulnerable time for the pupils and bus and the cleaner the red lights the greater the protection provided.

**Decision:** The benefit of a properly mounted airfoil outweighs any possible close range blocking of the direct view of the strobe so proper mounting of an airfoil does not have to take into consideration the roof-mounted strobe.

**Issued November 14, 2003/DP**