

Massachusetts Auto Total Loss Threshold by Law

M.G.L.A. 90D

Section 1: Definitions

"Motor vehicles" or "Vehicles", all vehicles constructed and designed for propulsion by power other than muscular power including such vehicles when pulled or towed by another motor vehicle, except railroad and railway cars, vehicles operated by the system known as trolley motor or trackless trolley under chapter one hundred and sixty-three or section ten of chapter five hundred and forty-four of the acts of nineteen hundred and forty-seven, vehicles running only upon rails or tracks, vehicles used for other purposes than the transportation of property and incapable of being driven at a speed exceeding twelve miles per hour and which are used exclusively for the building, repair and maintenance of highways or designed especially for use elsewhere than on the travelled part of ways, wheelchairs owned and operated by invalids and vehicles which are operated or guided by a person on foot. The definition of "Motor vehicles" shall not include motorized bicycles. In doubtful cases, the registrar may determine whether or not any particular vehicle is a motor vehicle as herein defined. If he determines that it should be so classified, he may require that it be registered under this chapter, but such determination shall not be admissible as evidence in any action at law arising out of the use or operation of such vehicle previous to such determination.

Section 20: Total loss salvage motor vehicles: surrender of certificate of title; salvage title

- (a)** Except as provided for in subsection (e), whenever an insurer acquires ownership of a motor vehicle which it has determined to be a total loss salvage motor vehicle, it shall, within ten days from the date of acquisition, surrender the certificate of title to the registrar and shall apply for a salvage title.
- (b)** Whenever an insurer makes a total loss settlement on a vehicle which it has determined to be a total loss salvage motor vehicle and the insured owner or claimant retains possession and ownership of the vehicle, the insurer shall notify the registrar of such retention on a form prescribed by the registrar and the owner shall, within ten days of such settlement, surrender the certificate of title to the registrar and shall apply for a salvage title. The insurer shall notify the insured owner or claimant of said owner's or claimant's responsibility to comply with the provisions of this section.
- (c)** Whenever a motor vehicle which is not the subject of an insurance settlement is damaged to such an extent that the owner determines said vehicle to be a total loss salvage motor vehicle, the owner shall surrender the certificate of title to the registrar and shall promptly apply for a salvage title.
- (d)** A total loss salvage motor vehicle shall not be titled under this chapter or registered for operation under chapter ninety unless the owner complies with the provisions of section twenty D. The owner of a total loss salvage motor vehicle shall not transfer such vehicle except in accordance with section twenty C.

(e)(1) Whenever an insurer acquires a motor vehicle which it has determined to be a total loss salvage motor vehicle but is unable to obtain the certificate of title, the insurer may apply for a salvage title in its name without surrendering the certificate of title. Such application shall be accompanied by evidence that the insurer has paid a total loss claim on the vehicle and made at least 2 written attempts, addressed to the last known owner of the vehicle and any known lienholder, to obtain the certificate of title. In lieu of a salvage title, the insurer may similarly apply for a certificate of title in its name for a vehicle if the age of the vehicle precludes issuance of a salvage title.

(2) Whenever an insurer requests that Class 2 or Class 3 dealer take possession of a motor vehicle that is the subject of an insurance claim and subsequently a total loss claim is not paid by the insurer with respect to such motor vehicle, the Class 2 or Class 3 dealer may, if such motor vehicle has been abandoned at the facility of the Class 2 or Class 3 dealer for more than 30 days, apply for a salvage title in such dealer's name without surrendering the certificate of title. Such application shall be accompanied by evidence that the Class 2 or Class 3 dealer made at least 2 written attempts, addressed to the last known owner of the vehicle and any known lienholder, to have the vehicle removed from the facility. In lieu of a salvage title, the Class 2 or Class 3 dealer may similarly apply for a certificate of title in the dealer's name for a vehicle if the age of the vehicle precludes issuance of a salvage title.