Is your taxi compliant?

This guide is to help drivers and approved taxi organisations raise the level of compliance in the taxi industry.

Safer Journeys

New Zealand Government

Contents

Acknowledgement: Transport Officer Zaad Lathiff (NZTA Palmerston North) has compiled this booklet.

NZ TRANSPORT AGENCY
WAKA KOTAHI

Introduction

This guide is to help drivers and approved taxi organisations (ATOs) raise the level of compliance in the taxi industry. It is a guide only and not an exhaustive list of requirements, as these are detailed in the relevant legislation. People applying the guidance in this booklet must ensure compliance with all relevant legislation and regulations.

The taxi industry is an important part of the New Zealand transport system. One of the key components in a Safe System is a Safe Vehicle. Vehicle technology and safety are moving rapidly and all taxi operators need to ensure that any taxi-specific equipment placed in the vehicle does not interfere if safety systems are deployed.

At roadside inspections, NZ Transport Agency (NZTA) enforcement officers and NZ Police identified a number of issues relating to the certificate of fitness, Operator Licensing Rule (OLR) and other legislation. Areas of non-compliance in relation to the OLR and vehicle defects have also been detected when the NZTA has carried out fleet reviews and audits.

The information in this booklet is current as at September 2011.

Continuous compliance

The holder of a transport service licence (TSL) must ensure that every vehicle operated under the TSL is maintained in a fit and proper condition.

(Land Transport Act 1998 – 30A (1) (a))

Issues related to the certificate of fitness (CoF)

CoF-related issues include:

- cargo barrier in small passenger service vehicles (PSVs)
- roof rack certification requirements
- child safety ('kiddy') lock signs
- security of spare wheel
- tow bar compliance.

Cargo barrier

The main purpose of a cargo barrier is to protect the occupants from cargo that may shift during vigorous manoeuvres or emergency stops. Cargo barriers are required on PSVs if they don't have a cargo compartment separate from the occupant space, eg the boot of a sedan. Vans, station wagons and hatchbacks (eg Toyota Prius) need a cargo barrier since they do not have a cargo compartment separate from the occupant space.

(Land Transport Rule Passenger Service Vehicles 1999 – 6.8(2))

The cargo barriers must be strong enough to withstand the forces sustained by the cargo barrier during vigorous manoeuvring of the vehicle and meet all the requirements of the PSV Rule and *In-service vehicle inspection requirements manual* (VIRM).

A suitable cargo barrier fitted to a Toyota Prius hatchback

A suitable cargo barrier in a station wagon

Roof racks

Fitting a roof rack to a passenger service vehicle (PSV) is a modification. Therefore, it must be certified and have a sign or plate on the left-hand side stating the following:

- the maximum weight it is allowed to carry
- the manufacturer of the roof rack
- either of the following.
  - identification of the PSV to which it is fitted
  - if rated and certified by the vehicle manufacturer or an authorised person, identification of the approval for that vehicle model.

(Land Transport Rule Passenger Service Vehicles 1999 – 7.3 roof racks)

Note: one bar or two bars fitted across the roof to which a taxi sign is attached are not considered to be a roof rack.

Not a roof rack

Certification not required

Different roof racks and roof rails

Roof rails – certification not required

Roof rack – certification required

Child safety locks

Child safety locks do not need to be removed from, or permanently deactivated in, a small PSV (taxi) provided that a sign approved by the NZTA is displayed by the outer rear door handles.

(Land Transport Rule Passenger Service Vehicles 1999 amended – 2.2 (8))

Approved child safety lock warning sign

Automatic door locks

A door in a PSV must not lock automatically when it is closed.

(Land Transport Rule Passenger Service Vehicles 1999 2.2 (4))

Automatically operating central locking devices and speed-sensitive door locks must be permanently deactivated or removed. (Land Transport Rule Passenger Service Vehicles 1999 – 2.2 (5))

Spare wheel

The spare wheel, if carried, must be securely attached on or in the vehicle, separate from the occupant space, eg in the 'boot' of a sedan.

(Land Transport Rule Tyres and Wheels 2001 – 2.6(1) spare tyres)

Temporary-use (space saver) spare wheel

A temporary-use spare wheel may be fitted to a vehicle only in an emergency provided it is the only temporary spare wheel fitted to that vehicle and must be replaced as soon as practicable with a tyre/wheel that is compliant. The vehicle is not permitted to carry passengers while a space saver is fitted.

(Land Transport Rule, Tyres and Wheels 2001 – spare tyres 2.6)

A properly secured spare wheel

Plate affixed on tow bar certified by vehicle manufacturer

Tow bars

A tow bar fitted to a PSV on or after 1 September 1999 must be certified to comply with New Zealand Standard 5467.

(Land Transport Rule Passenger Service Vehicles 1999 6.13(2))

Other issues

Other issues include:

- the use of seat covers on front seats with side air bags
- child restraints.

Currently, no rules or legislation govern the above. However, it is recommended to follow best practice.

Seat covers on front seats with side air bags (best practice)

Currently, there are no legal requirements governing the fitting of car seat covers on seats that have air bags within them, as there is no standard for side impact involving air bags. However, it is recommended not to cover any air bags since it may affect the correct operation.

Suggestion – make an opening or slit on the seat cover corresponding to the side air bag's location. Alternatively, after market seat covers that are specifically designed for seats fitted with air bags may be used.

Provisions made to front seat cover by alteration to facilitate correct operation of the side air bag

Child restraints (best practice)

As per the vehicle manufacturer's recommendation, child restraints (car seats) should not be placed on the front passenger seat if the vehicle is fitted with a front passenger air bag. Further information on child restraints may be obtained from the NZTA's Factsheet 7 (www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/factsheets/07/index.html).

Child restraint warning stickers in a vehicle equipped with front passenger air bag

Common maintenance issues

The following are some common defects identified in taxis at roadside and fleet audits. Although these defects are normally identified at certificate of fitness (CoF) inspections, they tend to deteriorate between inspections:

- seat and seat anchorages
- lighting faults
- park brake adjustment (excessive lever travel)
- alternative fuel system
- worn tyres.

Seats and seat anchorages

Seats and seat anchorages must be safe, strong, in sound condition and good working order, and compatible in strength with each other and with the vehicle's structure.

The driver's seat and its anchorages must be designed, constructed and maintained to enable the driver to have proper control of the motor vehicle.

Seats and seat anchorages must be securely attached to the motor vehicle's structure.

(Land Transport Rule Seats and Seat Anchorages 2002 – 2.21–2.23 General safety requirements)

Lighting faults

The lighting equipment fitted to a motor vehicle must comply with the Vehicle Lighting 2004 Rule – 2.1 General safety requirements.

A person who operates a vehicle must ensure that the vehicle complies with this rule (section 13.1 of the Vehicle Lighting Rule).

Burnt bulbs and damaged light lenses are the most common lighting faults found in taxis. These faults can be avoided or rectified by completing daily walk-around checks and replacing them immediately when identified.

Parking brake

A parking brake on a vehicle must be capable of holding the vehicle at rest on a slope of 1 in 5.

(Land Transport Rule Light-vehicle Brakes 2002 – 2.3(14)(b))

The majority of taxi drivers don't use the parking brake because most taxi vehicles are equipped with automatic transmission and can be locked in 'Park' position. As a result of this lack of use, the parking brake function deteriorates and, in some cases, ceases to function.

Excessive lever travel is the most common defect identified in a taxi vehicle that makes the vehicle unsafe. The parking brake must be properly adjusted at all times to maintain the vehicle in a safe condition.

Note: it is good practice to 'always' use the parking brake when leaving a vehicle unattended.

Parking brake in 'off' position

Properly adjusted 'fully on' position

Improperly adjusted - shows excessive lever travel

Alternative fuel system

A taxi vehicle equipped with an LPG or CNG fuel system that is in working order must display a current Alternative Fuel Inspection Certificate and the fuel system must be maintained in a safe condition as per the Alternative Fuel VIRM (Vehicle Inspection Requirement Manual).

An identification label must be fitted to the vehicle that is equipped with an LPG or CNG fuel system, positioned in a clearly visible location as close as practicable to the front and rear registration plates. (Alternative Fuel VIRM, page 1-2-1)

Worn tyres

This is another common fault identified on taxis that could easily be eliminated by implementing daily walk-around inspections.

The requirements for tyre tread depth

The rule states that a tyre must have a tread pattern depth of at least 1.5mm (excluding any tie-bar or tread depth indicator strip) within all principal grooves that contain moulded tread depth indicators and around the entire circumference of the tyre.

(Land Transport Rule Tyres and Wheels Amendment 2001 – 2.3 (13))

Tread depth indicators (circled) contained in the principal grooves

The 'pointer' (circled) shows the location of a tread depth indicator in the principal grooves

Note: the tread depth is measured in the principal grooves that contain the tread depth indicators.

Other components

Other mechanical components that are not mentioned above, such as service brakes, steering, suspension and vehicle structure, must comply with the requirements stipulated in the respective rules.

Pursuant to section 30A (1) of the Land Transport Act 1998, a holder of a transport service licence must ensure that every vehicle is maintained in a fit and proper condition and that the requirements of any act, regulation or rule made for this purpose are met.

(Land Transport Rule Operator Licensing 2007)

Signage requirements for a taxi

Note that this is a guide only. For further information, refer to the Operator Licensing Rule 2007. Also note that the vehicle must be fit, proper and in a roadworthy condition.

Inside the vehicle

- A notice/sign to advise passengers of the operation of the in-vehicle security camera.
- The driver's sealed identification card displayed centrally in a vertical position visible to all passengers.
- The meter tested and sealed by an authorised person (the vehicle testing station) and certificate carried in the vehicle.
- The approved taxi organisation (ATO) name, phone number, business location, fleet number and fare schedule displayed in the front of the vehicle (these may be combined with the fare schedule. The fare schedule must be visible to all passengers and should include complaint procedures).
- An approved in-vehicle security camera.
- A panic alarm system that can be activated by the driver.

Approved sign displaying 'TAXI' on the roof and an indication of whether or not the vehicle is for hire. Must be illuminated during the hours of darkness.

Taxi organisation name and fleet number on inside of left rear passenger door

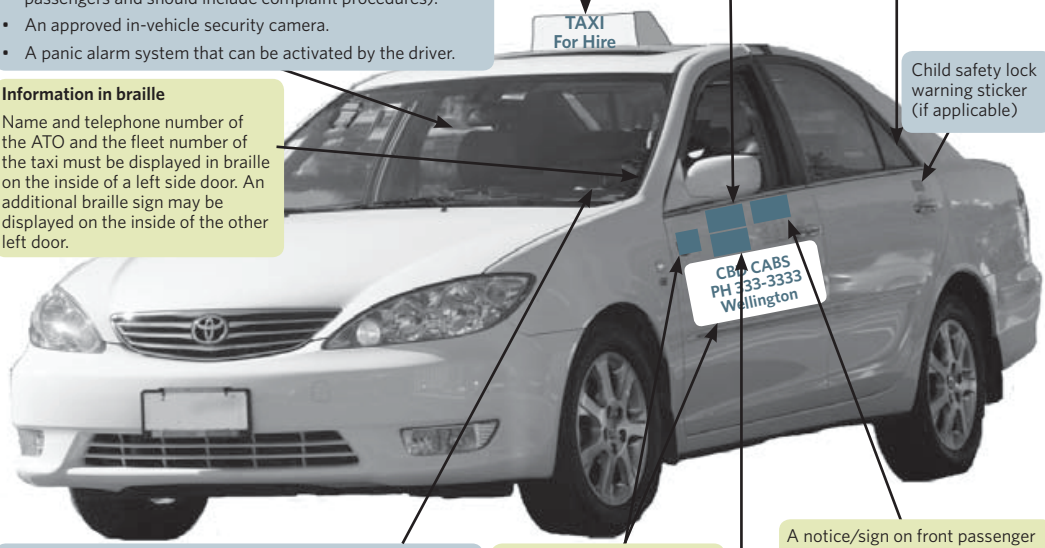
Fare schedule

An approved fare schedule must be displayed on the outside front passenger door.

Information in braille

Name and telephone number of the ATO and the fleet number of the taxi must be displayed in braille on the inside of a left side door. An additional braille sign may be displayed on the inside of the other left door.

Child safety lock warning sticker (if applicable)



Windscreen

- Registration label – left side
- Transport service licence (TSL) card* – left side
- Road user charges (RUC) label (if applicable) – left side
- Certificate of loading (CoL) – left side
- Certificate of fitness (CoF) label – right side
- Alternative fuel certificate (if applicable) –right side

* Not required if displayed on the outside of both front doors.

On both front doors

- An approved sign of ATO showing name, location and telephone number.
- Fleet number.

A notice/sign on front passenger door that indicates the vehicle is fitted with an in-vehicle security camera

TSL number can also be on both front doors.

Taxi roof signs

Roof signs must be approved by the NZTA. The sign must be fitted on the roof, display the word 'TAXI' and indicate whether or not the vehicle is available for hire. It must be illuminated if used during the hours of darkness. The 'For Hire' sign must be displayed when a taxi driver cruises for hire on a road.

(Land Transport Rule Operator Licensing 2007 – 4.3 and 4.4(1))

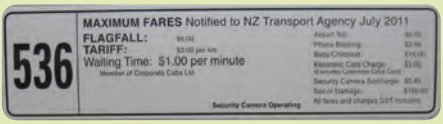
Approved sign must be illuminated during the hours of darkness

Display of fare schedule

Outside the vehicle

Must be displayed on the left-hand front door, preferably just below the window.

(Land Transport Rule Operator Licensing 2007 – 4.7)

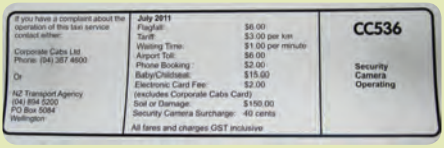


Fare schedule displayed on the outside of the left-hand front door

Inside the vehicle

Must be displayed in a position where it is readily visible to all passengers. If not, an additional fare schedule must then be displayed in the rear.

(Land Transport Rule Operator Licensing 2007 4.8)



Fare schedule displayed on the front passenger side – on the air bag cover and avoiding the seams around it

Notes

- The fare schedule, if displayed inside on the windscreen, must comply with the dimensions allowed for in the glazing rule (ie 50mm from side edges and 100mm from top or bottom edge). This might not be visible to the rear seat passengers if the sun visor is folded down.
- If the fare schedule sticker is displayed over the front passenger air bag cover, it would be advisable to avoid the seam around it to ensure the proper operation of the air bag as intended.

Fare schedule displayed for the rear seat passengers

If the fare schedule displayed in the front inside of the vehicle is not visible to the rear seat passengers, an additional fare schedule must then be displayed in the rear.

Note: the fare schedule must be visible to **all** passengers. It is good practice to place a second fare schedule in the inside rear of the vehicle.

A second fare schedule placed on the inside of the left-hand rear door

Taxi meter

Taxi meters must be CoF tested for accuracy by an authorised person (CoF vehicle testing station) and properly sealed to prevent tampering. The test certificate must be carried in the vehicle at all times and be produced on demand to an enforcement officer.

(Land Transport Rule Operator Licensing 2007 – 4.11)

Taxi meter tested and sealed

Driver's identity card

The driver's identity card (ID) must be displayed centrally in a vertical position as per the requirement of the Operator Licensing Rule 3.2 (8).

The driver's ID card must be displayed centrally in a vertical position where it will be visible to all passengers

Note: the driver's ID card must **not** be placed in front of the driver, on the sun visor, hanging on a thread under the interior mirror or on the roof in a horizontal position even if it is central.

Operator identification

The operator (passenger service licence (PSL) holder) must clearly display on the inside and outside of every taxi used under the licence the following:

- the name of the ATO
- business location
- telephone number
- the unique fleet number assigned by the ATO to the vehicle.

(Land Transport Rule Operator Licensing 2007 – 4.2)

Display on the outside

ATO information displayed on outside front doors

Unique fleet number displayed on outside front doors

Display on the inside front

This requirement will be met if the ATO information and the fleet number are included in the fare schedule, which is displayed on the inside in a prominent position (shown at right) at the front so that a passenger can read it.

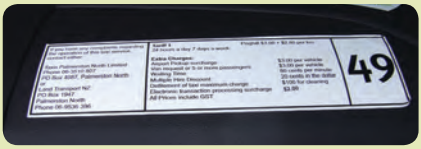
(Land Transport Rule Operator Licensing 2007 – 4.2 (4))

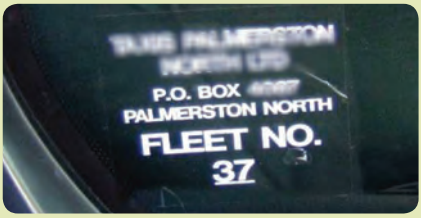
Display on the inside rear

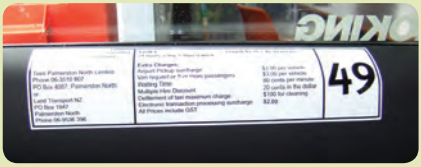
The full name of the ATO and the unique vehicle fleet number must be positioned on the inside of the left-hand rear door as shown at right, so a rear seat passenger can easily read it.

Alternatively, an additional fare schedule (that includes the ATO information and vehicle fleet number) displayed on the inside of the left-hand rear door may meet this requirement.

(Land Transport Rule Operator Licensing 2007 – 4.2 (5))







Requirements for in-vehicle security cameras in major cities

From 1 August 2011, section 4A.1 of the Operator Licensing Rule requires a taxi currently in use in a major city, or available for use, be equipped with an in-vehicle security camera that must be visible to all passengers and be able to record facial images of persons sitting in a normal manner in any seating position.

A list of major cities can be found in schedule 5 of the Operator Licensing Rule. However, Christchurch will be exempted from this requirement until 1 May 2012.

Schedule 6 of the Operator Licensing Rule specifies the camera must have a 'system status indicator' that is clearly visible to the vehicle's driver and that indicates when the system is operating.

Approved in-vehicle security camera mounted in a central position

Section 4A.1 of the Operator Licensing Rule also specifies that a notice to advise passengers of the operation of the in-vehicle security camera system must be clearly and prominently displayed inside the vehicle and on the outside of the front passenger door of the vehicle.

Notice displayed outside of the front passenger door

Notice displayed inside the vehicle

Emergency alert and response facility (panic alarm system)

These are to be used in taxis with in-vehicle security cameras. Section 8.5 (y) of the Operator Licensing Rule under operating requirements specifies an ATO must ensure that every driver who is a member or employed by the ATO who drives a taxi to which the Operator Licensing Rule 4A.1(1) (in-vehicle security camera) applies is provided with an 'emergency alert and response facility' (panic alarm system) that:

- is easily and quickly activated by the taxi driver
- initiates a two-way communication with a person able to arrange assistance
- establishes the identity and the location of the driver or the taxi
- Christchurch is exempt until 1 May 2012.

Panic alarm button Camera system status indicator

Requirements for information in braille

All taxis are required to display the following information in braille on the inside of a left side passenger door (front or rear):

- the name of the ATO
- the unique fleet number of the taxi
- the ATO's telephone number for complaints, as shown on the passenger complaints information displayed inside the vehicle.

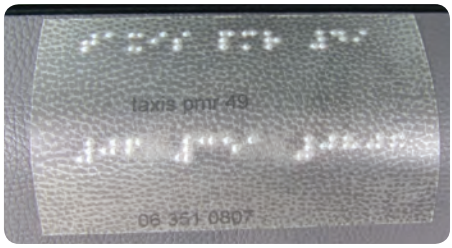
The information must be displayed in a form and in a position approved by the Agency.

(Land Transport Rule, Operator Licensing 2007 – 4.2(8) and 4.2(9))

Position of the braille sign

The rule specifies that the information is displayed inside a left side passenger door, as illustrated. The top edge of the sign is to be within 25mm of the lower edge of the side window in a central position.

Correct position of the braille sign on a left-hand front passenger door



Approx 110×60mm in size produced on a robust material to withstand normal wear and tear

Note: The operator may display a second braille sign on the inside of a left-hand door, although this is not specified by the rule.

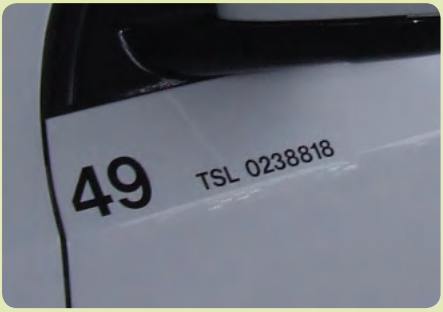
Display of transport service licence (TSL)

A holder of a passenger service licence (PSL) who operates a taxi service must ensure that every taxi used under the licence displays either;

- the transport service licence card or
- the transport service licence number, including the letters 'TSL' on the outside of the vehicle on both front doors in a position clearly visible.

(Land Transport Rule, Operator Licensing 2007 – 2.4 (3))

A taxi displaying a PSL card



TSL number displayed on the outside of the door

For more information

Phone our contact centre on 0800 699 000.

Advertising material

A holder of a PSL must not allow a small passenger service vehicle to be used in the service if there is any advertising material on the outside or inside of the vehicle that:

- is applied to glazing, or
- may impede vision from or into the vehicle, or
- may obscure a notice, sign or other matter required by the OLR or any other legislation to be displayed in or on the vehicle.

(Land Transport Rule, Operator Licensing 2007 – 3.4)

Glossary

ATO	approved taxi organisation
CoF	certificate of fitness
OLR	Operator Licensing Rule
PSL	passenger service licence
PSV	passenger service vehicle
RUC	road user charges
TEO	Taxi Enforcement Officer
TSL	transport service licence
TO	Transport Officer
VI	Vehicle Inspector
WoF	warrant of fitness

Our contact details

Call the Driver Licensing Contact Centre if you have an enquiry about transport service licences (TSLs) or approved taxi organisations (ATOs): ***0800 822 422***

For general enquiries and contact information for the NZ Transport Agency, please check our website at ***www.nzta.govt.nz*** or email us at ***info@nzta.govt.nz***.

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