



Taxi and Chauffeur Vehicle Industry Reform

Drivers - Taxi & Chauffeur

Changes to the taxi and chauffeur vehicle industry are being made to allow more choice for customers and greater opportunities for drivers, operators and booking services.

Innovative technologies including smartphone apps to book, track and pay for these services, and new business models such as 'rideshare' schemes, have recently expanded the range of point-to-point transport available. This will lead to greater choice and more competitive fares for customers, and fresh business opportunities for new and existing operators.

Why are changes needed?

In order for the point-to-point transport industry to take advantage of these trends and undertake sustainable growth, the transport services market will be opened up to healthy competition. The industry needs to embrace new technologies and a culture of high quality customer service.

All drivers will need to be accredited under the *Passenger Transport Act 1994*. A person who wants to be a driver needs to have:

- held a current full Australian driver's licence not subject to any conditions, such as provisional, probationary or suspended for at least six months
- a working with children clearance and national criminal history check through the government screening unit of Department for Communities and Social Inclusion (DCSI)
- a completed certificate of fitness for heavy and commercial vehicles from your regular treating doctor (some people with medical conditions might be asked to provide information from a medical specialist).

Taxi Drivers

Currently, taxis collectively undertake around eight million trips each year, half of which are from ranks and hail. More than one million rides are subsidised through the South Australian Transport Subsidy Scheme for people with permanent disability and health conditions. Wheelchair accessible taxis provide around 189 000 trips each year.

The new regulatory regime will involve the following for taxi drivers:

- continuation of taxis' exclusive rights to rank and hail work
- continuation of exclusive access to subsidy payments on fares through the South Australian Transport Subsidy Scheme as taxis have specific standards under the federal *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- audio to be recorded by taxi security camera systems for improved safety (12 months transition period)
- the driver training program to become the responsibility of the relevant booking service (taxis will be subject to a streamlined robust training regime)
- continuation of a metered fare for rank and hail; pre-booked taxi work can apply a booking fee to allow new Transport Booking Service models to operate
- increase to taxi fares on 1 October 2016
- introduction of a peak period payment fee of \$2 payable to the driver (between midnight and 6:00am) for weekends and public holidays from 1 October 2016

- introduction of a lifting fee in the near future to replace metering charges while passengers are assisted in and out of vehicles
- driver can take booking requests through multiple taxi booking services
- drivers can use any approved EFTPOS but are responsible for using it correctly.

At present, taxi drivers can only accept bookings under the Centralised Booking Service system. Bookings will now be managed by a range of new entities, which will each be called a Transport Booking Service (TBS). As a result, taxi drivers will be able to accept bookings from multiple booking services.

Chauffeur Drivers

Traditional vehicles will no longer be a separate category of accreditation. They will be included in the special vehicle class and will be restricted to weddings, funerals and tourism related tours.

If a vehicle does **any** point-to-point work, it will need to be in the metropolitan category, including part-time/rideshare services (excludes non-metropolitan vehicles). For those TV vehicles currently undertaking supplementary metropolitan point-to-point work, where the vehicle age exceeds eight years, a transition period of 12 months will be provided to allow operators a suitable timeframe to purchase a vehicle that meets the age limit requirements of the metropolitan category.

The new regime also involves:

- broader range of vehicles: wheelbase and 'top of the range' requirements for MVs removed, vehicles will be four door sedans (capable of carrying four adult passengers)
- the removal of "not for hire" signs
- blue plates are mandatory for chauffeured vehicles. An approved vehicle identifier must be displayed for rideshare vehicles
- booking offices for chauffeur vehicles to be replaced by the creation of Transport Booking Service entities (TBSs)
- training for all point-to-point drivers including their legal requirements to become the responsibility of TBSs (where a driver works solely for one operator on direct bookings only, the operator will be responsible for training)
- chauffeur vehicles in the metropolitan category to retain a maximum age of six and a half years
- driver identification to be displayed or sent electronically to the passenger.

Further information

www.dpti.sa.gov.au/TaxiHireCarReview
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