



National Vehicle Standards

REQUIREMENTS FOR
SMALL PUBLIC SERVICE VEHICLES

Mission

To achieve a first class, professional, efficient, safe and accessible, customer-friendly service for small public service vehicle passengers and service providers.

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ADDENDUM FOR INSIDE OF "NATIONAL VEHICLE STANDARDS" DOCUMENT:

This document was originally published in October 2007 and, as such, certain timescales and areas mentioned within are now *out of date*.

In **Section 3**, on Page 8 it notes that a full size spare wheel will no longer be mandatory at suitability from 1st January 2009. The regulation governing this has **not** changed (Road Traffic (Construction, Equipment And Use Of Vehicles) Regulations, 1963 (S.I 190/1963) Regulation 49) and so a full size spare wheel **is** required at suitability. It is hoped that the Department for Transport will revise this by 1st January 2010. The safety items have been a requirement since 1st January 2009, the relevant legislation is S.I. 569 of 2008.

In **Section 4**, on Page 9 it notes that the new requirements for wheelchair accessible taxis (and the creation of the category of wheelchair accessible hackney) will apply from 2008 for new licences. This has **not** yet been implemented as the Commission for Taxi Regulation is still awaiting a decision from the Minister for Transport with regards to a possible subsidy to assist in the purchase and use of wheelchair accessible vehicles. Due to the parallel influence of EC Whole Vehicle Type Approval the Commission still maintains its intent to apply the proposed new requirements to all licence holders as soon as is practicable but the 2012 year may be too soon given the current (2009) lack of any Ministerial decision.

In **Section 5**, on Pages 16 and 17 it should be noted that the age, luggage and interior size requirements have been a requirement for new taxi and hackney licences since 1st January 2009 and will apply to ALL taxi and hackney licences upon renewal during 2012. The relevant legislation is S.I. 569 of 2008. Please note in particular that the "transparent" windows requirement is scheduled for inclusion from 1st January 2010, for newly issued taxi and hackney licences.

In **Section 7**, on Page 19 and **Section 8**, on Page 21 the revised advertising "allowances" are **not** yet in force; again this is scheduled for inclusion from 1st January 2010.

In **Section 8**, on Page 20 it notes that the new requirements for limousines will apply from 1st January 2009 for new licences: this has **not** yet been implemented and is scheduled for inclusion from 1st January 2010.

In **Section 11**, on Page 24 it notes that an annual suitability style inspection should commence from 1st January 2009. This has **not** been introduced yet and the annual Licence Renewal Assessment is scheduled to apply from 1st January 2010.

In **Section 11**, on Page 24 it notes that an NCT roadworthiness test for new cars will not be required after 1st January 2009. The regulations governing this (S.I. 405 of 2003 as amended) have **not** changed and it is hoped that the Department for Transport will revise this by 1st January 2010.

Dated April 2009.

National Vehicle Standards

REQUIREMENTS FOR
SMALL PUBLIC
SERVICE VEHICLES



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Glossary

Advisory Council – The Advisory Council to the Commission for Taxi Regulation was established under Part 4 of the Taxi Regulation Act 2003 to advise the Commission in relation to matters pertaining to Small Public Service Vehicles (SPSVs).

Air bag – A device installed to supplement safety belts and restraint systems and which, in the event of a severe impact affecting the vehicle, automatically deploys a flexible structure to cushion the contact of the body of the vehicle's occupants with the interior of the passenger compartment.

Anchorage – Points of the vehicle structure to which restraint systems and/or seats are attached and which do not form part of these, or, if they are a part of them, which are permanently joined to the vehicle structure.

Appropriate child restraint system – An approved child restraint system which is appropriate to the user by virtue of the weight range indicated on the child restraint.

Backrest – The upright padded part of the seat that supports the occupant's back.

Belt anchorages – The part of the vehicle structure or seat structure or any part of the vehicle to which safety belts are to be secured.

Cab – An umbrella term for a SPSV covering taxis and hackneys.

Category M1 – A passenger vehicle with seats for not more than eight persons not including the driver.

CCTV – Closed Circuit Television, a means of monitoring and possibly recording that monitoring of a space or area.

Certificate of Conformity – A statement by the manufacturer that the vehicle conforms to the relevant EC Type Approval.

Child restraint system – A device designed for use by a child of not more than 36 kilograms in weight comprising either a combination of straps or flexible components or a supplementary chair or a partial restraint.

Commission – The Commission for Taxi Regulation, an independent public body established under the Taxi Regulation Act 2003, is responsible for the regulation of taxis, wheelchair accessible taxis, hackneys and limousines. It should also be noted that the terms 'Commission for Taxi Regulation', 'Taxi Regulator' and 'Commissioner' are one and the same and tend to be used interchangeably.

CoP – Conformity of Production: a system of Quality Control over the entire production process of a vehicle that ensures consistency of specification and results in the issue of a Certificate of Conformity.

Dispatch Operator – A facility engaged in the activity of taking a booking of a small public service vehicle that is operated by another person and arranging with the operator or driver of the vehicle to provide the service booked, sometimes referred to as a 'radio company'.

ECWVTA – European Community Whole Vehicle Type Approval: a streamlined process for approving new vehicles. Once an initial 'type' of vehicle is examined and the production arrangements are assessed as meeting Conformity of Production (CoP) requirements, more vehicles of this type can be manufactured and sold without the need for further individual vehicle inspections and testing.

Engineer's Report – Assessment made by a mechanical or automotive engineer, automotive assessor or a person with similar qualifications who, by reason of his or her competence, experience and independence, is an appropriate person to assess the fitness and safety of a mechanically propelled vehicle.

EuroNCAP – European New Car Assessment Programme. An independent assessment of the safety performance of some of the most popular cars sold in Europe.

GPS – Global Positioning System, a satellite navigation system. More than two dozen GPS satellites orbit the Earth and transmit radio signals which allow any GPS receiver to determine its location, speed and direction.

GVW – Gross Vehicle Weight means the gross weight of a vehicle laden with the heaviest load which it can reasonably carry having regard to the engine capacity, brakes, tyres and the general construction of the vehicle and shall, until the contrary is shown, be taken to be the design gross weight of the vehicle as specified by the manufacturer or distributor of the vehicle, or where the design gross weight of the vehicle as specified by the manufacturer or distributor is not ascertainable, the design gross weight of the vehicle as specified by an automotive engineer.

Hackney – A SPSV licensed to carry up to eight passengers which must be pre-booked privately and cannot ply for hire on the street or at taxi ranks. As a hackney is not subject to fare control, the fare should be agreed in advance with the customer.

Induction loop – Specialist electronic device fitted in a vehicle to provide increased audibility between the driver and passengers (with compatible hearing aids) by listening inductively without the interference of background sound.

In-vehicle information – Information provided by the Commission for display in SPSVs for the purposes of informing the passengers of their rights and responsibilities, including the National Maximum Taxi Fare.

ISO – International Standards Organisation, a non-governmental international organisation that defines a worldwide range of technical standards.

Kneeling suspension system – A device that permits the total or partial raising or lowering of a vehicle body.

Legal Metrology Service – A statutory body within the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) and the body responsible for enforcing regulations in relation to measuring instruments, including the taximeter, which calculates the fares in taxis.

Limousine – A SPSV which must be pre-booked privately and cannot ply for hire on the street or at taxi ranks. A limousine must be suited by its style and condition to be used for ceremonial occasions or for corporate or other prestige purposes. The fare should be agreed in advance with the customer.

LPG – Liquefied Petroleum Gas, an alternative fuel to petrol or diesel requiring its own fuel tank and associated components; with lower emissions and potentially lower operating costs.

Master control – A control which enables another control to activate the relevant system, but which is not itself alone capable of activating that system.

Model report – A document or file containing specific information pertaining to a vehicle regarding, for example, luggage capacity dimensions etc.

MPV – Multi-purpose vehicle, often a larger vehicle with up to seven seats.

NCTS/NCT – National Car Testing Services is the independent company contracted by the Department of Transport to undertake the passenger car roadworthiness tests (National Car Test or NCT) and the SPSV suitability inspection. They are also contracted by the Commission to administer SPSV licensing.

OE – Original Equipment.

OEM – Original Equipment Manufacturer.

Power lift – Power assisted elevating and lowering device permanently fitted to a vehicle to surmount the difference in height between the floor of the vehicle compartment and the ground.

Ramp – Inclined plane to bridge the difference in height between the floor of the vehicle compartment and the ground.

Rearward-facing – Facing in the direction opposite to the normal direction of travel of the vehicle.

Restraint system – A system combining a seat, fixed to the structure of the vehicle by appropriate means and a safety belt for which at least one anchorage is located on the seat structure.

Safety belt – An assembly of straps with a securing buckle, adjusting devices and attachments which is capable of being anchored to a vehicle and is designed to diminish the risk of injury to its wearer, in the event of collision or of abrupt vehicle deceleration, by limiting the mobility of the wearer's body. In this document the words 'seat belt' and 'safety belt' are used interchangeably.

Safety device/interlock – A mechanism simultaneously activated with the activation of any of the aids for entering and leaving the vehicle, minimising the risk of damages that their use may produce.

S.I. – Statutory Instrument, a form of secondary legislation that includes regulations and is made in the exercise of a statutory power.

Small Public Service Vehicle (SPSV) – This refers collectively to taxis, wheelchair accessible taxis, hackneys, wheelchair accessible hackneys or limousines. They are defined as vehicles capable of carrying a maximum of eight passengers in addition to the driver.

Space saver – A generic term for a spare wheel/tyre assembly specifically designed for restricted speed/distance use.

Squab – The base cushion of the seat upon which the passenger sits.

Suitability inspection – Assessment undertaken for the licensing of a vehicle for use as a SPSV to determine that it meets with the requirements defined for that particular SPSV class, i.e. taxi, wheelchair accessible taxi, hackney, wheelchair accessible hackney or limousine.

Surrogate wheelchair – A rigid, durable test wheelchair of mass 85kg that produces representative loading and seating conditions for testing WTORS.

Swivel seat – Special seat for vehicles that makes it possible to turn around an axis fundamentally perpendicular to the vehicle floor.

SVA – Single Vehicle Approval: a scheme in the UK and Northern Ireland where a vehicle is individually inspected prior to registration to ensure technical compliance with a subset of EC Approval-derived regulations.

Tamper-proof disc – The licence disc fitted to the windscreen of licensed SPSVs after licensing or renewal.

Taximeter – A device used to measure, calculate and display a taxi fare, based on the duration travelled, or the distance, time of day or date and a number of other factors.

Taxi – A SPSV licensed to carry up to eight passengers, which can ply for hire on the street, or stand for hire at taxi ranks, or be called out or pre-booked by a passenger.

Track width – Distance between the centre of a tyre at its contact with the road on one side of a vehicle to the corresponding contact point on the opposite side.

VAT – Value Added Tax.

VDA – The method of luggage volume measurement, used in the motor industry. It is a German standard defined by the Verbund die Automobil Industrie. The

VDA figure is determined by filling the luggage space with blocks of volume of one litre, each measuring 200 x 100 x 50mm. The blocks are then counted i.e. 400 blocks equals 400 litres.

Vehicle type – A category of vehicles which does not differ in such essential respects as: the dimensions, lines and constituent materials of the components of the vehicle structure or seat structure or any other part of the vehicle to which the belt or power lift anchorages are attached.

VRT – Vehicle Registration Tax.

Wheelbase – Distance between the centre of the front wheel and the centre of the rear wheel on the same side of a vehicle.

Wheelchair Accessible Taxi – A taxi capable of transporting at least one person seated in their wheelchair and at least three other passengers.

Wheelchair Accessible Hackney – A hackney capable of transporting at least one person seated in their wheelchair and at least three other passengers.

Wheelchair restraint devices – Systems designed to hold wheelchairs within the vehicle.

Wheelchair occupant restraints – A system designed to keep the passenger within his/her wheelchair, to avoid him/her being projected and prevent or minimise his/her contact with the vehicle interior components or with other occupants during an abrupt movement or an impact.

WTORS – Wheelchair Tie Downs and Occupant Restraint Systems.

2003 Act – Taxi Regulation Act 2003 (No. 25 of 2003).

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Introduction

The Commission for Taxi Regulation ('Commission') is an independent public body established in September 2004 under the Taxi Regulation Act 2003.

The principal function of the Commission is the development and maintenance of a regulatory framework for the control and operation of small public service vehicles (SPSVs) and their drivers and to ensure a quality consumer oriented service for small public service vehicle users.

Following my appointment as Commissioner for Taxi Regulation in May this year my focus, and that of the Commission, has been to continue the implementation of the Commission's Action Plan for 2006/2007 *Driving Forward*.

One of the objectives of the Commission is the provision and maintenance of quality services by small public service vehicles and their drivers. Vehicle standards are a key to the delivery of quality services. The Commission carried out considerable research in relation to vehicle standards and the findings of this research are set out in the 2005 National Review.

The Commission published its fourth consultation paper *Vehicle Standards* in December 2006. The aim of the consultation paper was to afford the Advisory Council to the Commission ('Advisory Council'), An Garda Síochána, SPSV passengers, SPSV drivers, service suppliers, local authorities and suppliers to the industry together with other stakeholders an opportunity to submit their views and suggestions.

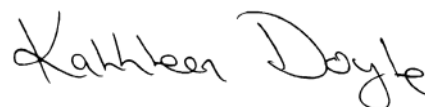
The Commission has considered all submissions and liaised with representative groups including organisations representing people with disabilities and other relevant stakeholders. In conjunction with the advice of the Advisory Council, this has assisted the Commission in arriving at a final decision on new vehicle standards. Such new standards are essential to achieve our mission to achieve a first class, professional, efficient, safe, accessible, customer-friendly service for small public service vehicle passengers and service providers.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all stakeholders for their input to the consultation process, the Chairman and members of the Advisory Council for their valuable advice and assistance, and to thank the Commission management and staff for their high level of commitment and dedication.

This document outlines the new Vehicle Standards for SPSVs in Ireland. Its primary aim is to improve the quality of service, accessibility, comfort and safety of all passengers and drivers. It is also essential that the specifications enable service providers an element of certainty to encourage sustained investment and to balance supply and demand, as well as sufficient advance notice to enable future business planning. With this in mind, the new standards will co-exist with the existing standards for a period of time in order to allow for a smooth transition.

The new requirements cover a number of areas including vehicle condition, basic vehicle specification, comfort and safety and a number of requirements relating specifically to wheelchair accessible taxis and hackneys. Accessibility is a key theme, with major improvements being introduced to the wheelchair accessible service.

I wish to acknowledge the professionalism and high level of service provided by a large number of SPSV operators and I am confident that the new vehicle standards will see all licence holders operating to these high values. I look forward to working with the industry in implementing these new standards to improve the overall experience for customers and to ensure that Ireland has a first class SPSV fleet.



Kathleen Doyle
Commissioner for Taxi Regulation
November 2007

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Requirements for all Small Public Service Vehicles

BASIC VEHICLE SPECIFICATION

Under current Regulations¹ a vehicle means a 'mechanically propelled vehicle having at least four wheels, which is designed and constructed for the carriage of passengers and which has a maximum of eight seats excluding the driver's seat and a maximum design gross vehicle weight of 3,500 kilograms.'

The wheels shall be arranged in axle pairs such that the minimum wheelbase is 2100mm, the minimum track width is 1100mm and any side to side variation in wheelbase is less than 75mm.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Applicable to all vehicle licences from 1st January 2009.

Cleanliness

The interior and exterior of the vehicle shall be clean and of tidy condition and appearance at all times, having due regard to the prevailing weather conditions.

- Paintwork repairs shall not spoil the overall appearance of the vehicle;
- Incomplete, unfinished or inadequate repairs shall be deemed unacceptable; specifically repairs in progress shall not be permitted;
- All repairs shall be consistent with adjacent body panels – no runs, flat or uneven finishes and shall present a good colour match;
- Trim material shall not be split, torn, unsecured, dirty, stained or sagging;
- Windows shall be clean.

Model Reports and Register

A register of 'suitable' vehicles shall be established. Suitability inspections shall then concentrate on any deviations from the Model Report on which the register is based. As vehicle models vary throughout time it is envisaged that the first inspection of any model not recorded in the register will be more detailed and will therefore be undertaken at the Commission's expense.

See Appendix 3 for example Model Reports.

Communications

Pen and paper shall be available from the driver at all times for the assistance of communication between passenger and driver.

In-vehicle Temperature

The internal temperature within the vehicle shall be maintained to at least 20° C (with engine idling) during an external ambient temperature of -5° C.

SAFETY EQUIPMENT

In the event of an accident or fire the safety equipment should be immediately available for use by anyone at the scene capable of using it.

Fire Extinguisher

At least one portable fire extinguisher shall be carried safely and secured in the luggage compartment. It shall be suitable for the inflammability classes A, B and C, with a minimum capacity of 2kg dry powder (or an equivalent capacity for any other suitable extinguishing agent).

The extinguisher shall be in serviceable condition as recommended by the manufacturer, specifically any gauge or date information shall be respected.

The fire extinguisher shall be safely and securely installed in such a way that it can present no danger to the occupants in the event of a collision.

¹ S.I. 405 of 2003

A note will be added to the Passenger Information Card to inform passengers of the location of the fire extinguisher.

First Aid Kit

A First Aid kit complying with DIN 13164 or Health and Safety Authority travel kit recommendations, shall be carried within the vehicle.

The contents of the kit that are date-marked shall be within date. The container shall be marked so as to be immediately recognisable as a First Aid kit.

HAZARD AVOIDANCE AIDS

Advance Warning Triangle

A reflective advance warning triangle shall be carried within the vehicle. It shall be safely and securely installed within the vehicle in such a way that the warning triangle can present no danger to the occupants in the event of a collision.

High Visibility Reflective Safety Vest

All SPSV drivers shall carry a high visibility safety vest which is to be used at the scene of an accident and for enhanced night time visibility.

Torch

All SPSV drivers shall carry a working handheld torch and store it safely within the vehicle. It may be used to highlight step edges or other hazards.

Carrying Children and Use of Child Restraints

The responsibility for the safe secure travel of children ultimately remains with the parents, guardians or responsible adult carer. The onus in this instance should not be simply passed on to the SPSV driver who cannot, by reasons of simple practicality, provide a child restraint system for all possible situations. Responsible parents will bring their own child restraint system.

If a driver decides to purchase any additional device aimed at improving the safety belt run for children, he/she should ensure that it is marked as complying with ECE Regulation 44.04.

Interior Lighting

The standard interior lighting shall be in full working condition.

Spare Wheel

There is no mandatory requirement for the carriage of a full size spare wheel/tyre assembly and associated tools. However, the manufacturer's original supply 'system' (see Appendix 2) shall be securely and safely retained in full working order.

The capacity of any spare wheel well shall not be included for assessing the luggage space volume.

In-vehicle Information

The current Passenger Information Card shall be retained.

A tactile licence number display is under development to assist the visually impaired and will be trialled across a selection of the fleet prior to any mandatory introduction. Such introduction is likely to be in the same manner as the tamper-proof discs; i.e. rolled out over a 12 month period.

The tamper proof disc shall be coloured, for the benefit of the public, to differentiate the three basic categories of SPSV, i.e. taxi (including wheelchair accessible taxi), hackney (including wheelchair accessible hackney) and limousine.

The text size on the tamper-proof discs will be enlarged where possible. Different colour tamper-proof discs will be introduced from January 2008 and will be rolled out over a 12 month period.

Further technical details and specifications may be found in Appendix 2.

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Wheelchair Accessible Taxi and Wheelchair Accessible Hackney Additional Requirements

As of 1st November 2007 there were 1,464 licensed wheelchair accessible taxis nationally

INTRODUCTION

A wheelchair accessible vehicle (taxi or hackney) shall be required to be a vehicle of category M1 constructed or converted specifically so that they accommodate at least one person seated in his/her wheelchair when travelling on the road and at least three adult passengers

With the exception of the requirements specific to wheelchair accessible taxis (taxi roof sign, taximeter, fare chart and advertising, see page 18), the vehicle requirements are common to wheelchair accessible taxi and wheelchair accessible hackney.

The requirements are applicable to newly issued vehicle licences from 2008 and all existing vehicle licences from 1st January 2012.

The new requirements will remove the two accessible door rule, align better with modern European practice and increase vehicle choice.

To improve overall standards, the new requirements take into consideration the forthcoming EC implementation of Type Approval (Directive 2007/46/EC) to accessible vehicles. This Directive will extend, from April 2009, the European safety requirements from the existing categories of cars and motorcycles to include most passenger vehicles, e.g. buses, coaches and converted accessible vehicles.

All wheelchair accessible vehicles shall be based on a vehicle with category M1 ECWVTA. It shall be prohibited from converting an N1 category vehicle unless the vehicle in final converted form holds ECWVTA category M1.

In the long term, an ECWVTA Certificate of Conformity, category M1 (Special Purpose) wheelchair accessible vehicle is desired. However, to accommodate the transition period vehicles with alternative approval certificates shall be considered.

A manufacturer or convertor may propose to the Commission alternative proof of compliance to the requirements. To be considered acceptable any such proposals must demonstrate an equivalent level of performance is maintained.

Some of the options include:

- Full ECWVTA category M1 plus compliance with requirements for the wheelchair and occupant restraints and anchorages and equipment;
- Low Volume Type Approval category M1 plus compliance with requirements for the wheelchair and occupant restraints and anchorages and equipment;
- Single Vehicle Approval category M1 plus compliance with requirements for the wheelchair and occupant restraints and anchorages and equipment.

An Engineer's Report shall be required confirming the compliance of the individual vehicle with the required standards. In principle, this will take the form of ascertaining that the individual vehicle matches that specification for which individual test certificates or approvals are held.

LUGGAGE AND GENERAL VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS

There shall be a permanent rigid roof covering all of the driver and passenger compartments. Specifically, cabriolets and convertibles shall not be considered suitable. Sunroofs shall be permitted, including full length items.

There shall be a luggage space capable of safely containing a minimum volume of 420 litres as measured by the VDA method. Any luggage carried shall be safely secured. The overall luggage capacity shall be checked against manufacturer details where available. Where that data is unavailable the luggage capacity shall be assessed in substantially the same manner as the VDA method using

blocks of 200mm x 100mm x 50mm. This data shall be added to the Model Report.

A guard or cover shall be fitted that is intended to prevent luggage from injuring any passenger in the event of an accident. The capacity of any spare wheel well shall not be included for assessing the luggage space volume.

Space for a folded wheelchair shall be provided. A dummy volume may be used to check the shape of the luggage space: this shall be a parallel sided box of external dimensions 735mm x 330mm x 805mm to ensure that a folded wheelchair can be safely carried.

For taxis only this luggage capacity requirement shall exist simultaneously with the seating dimensional requirements shown later, '*Seating Numbers and Dimensions*', see page 11.

DOOR DIMENSIONS

The vehicle shall be fitted with:

- At least one wheelchair accessible door aperture capable of being opened from both inside and outside, the dimensions of which are shown below;
- At least one other opening (from inside or outside) door (not necessarily of wheelchair accessible dimensions) that enables access to the passenger and wheelchair occupant compartment.

The wheelchair accessible door shall be located to the side or to the rear of the vehicle.

The rear doors (vertically hinged) or tailgate (horizontally hinged) shall be acceptable as:

- the access opening;
- the wheelchair accessible door aperture if the vehicle has been designed for rear wheelchair entry and the aperture dimensions for the accessible door are met.

Wheelchair accessible door dimensions		
	Suggested	Minimum Required
Width	800mm	745mm
Opening Height	1400mm	1250mm

The dimensional requirements of the accessible door, see above, shall be maintained from the wheelchair accessible door through to the wheelchair space. These are clear unobstructed dimensional requirements, i.e. they represent the useful working aperture.

The door dimensions may be checked with a substantially flat and rigid template, approximately 10mm in thickness of the rectangular minimum dimensions shown above. A corner radius of 50mm will be used on the template, see Appendix 4, Figure 1. This template may be used to assess the suitability of the wheelchair accessible door(s) and any necessary passageway between these door(s) and the wheelchair space. The template will be held substantially perpendicular to the intended direction of motion of the wheelchair and occupant. Minimal compression of door seals shall be tolerated in areas of complex three-dimensional geometry.

An additional check may be made to ensure that the internal layout allows sufficient space to safely manoeuvre an occupied reference wheelchair into the designated wheelchair space.

It is recommended for rear entry vehicles that consideration be given to the assessment of the rear door locks and hinges to the technical requirements of 70/387/EC as amended (a strength test of hinges and of latches).

WHEELCHAIR SPACE

The taximeter shall be visible on entry and exit by all passengers.

The wheelchair and the person travelling in it shall travel either forwards facing or rearwards facing. Side facing orientation of the wheelchair and occupant shall not be permitted.

There shall be a space exclusively available for the accommodation of at least one person to travel within their wheelchair. This space shall have a predominantly flat and level surface but it is accepted that in some conversions there may be localised interruptions.

Wheelchair space – dimensions		
	Suggested	Minimum Required
Headroom	1400mm	1350mm
Wheelchair space	750mm wide 1300m long	700mm wide 1200mm long

Such floor intrusions shall be designed and constructed with obvious attention to the intended function of the vehicle, that is, to board and carry a wheelchair and occupant.

These dimensions describe a ‘virtual’ volume for the wheelchair and occupant. It is accepted that there may be intrusions in areas into this space. In the case of folding seats, when folded out of use they may intrude into the wheelchair space if a clear foot space is provided as shown in Appendix 4, Figure 2.

A wheelchair accessible SPSV shall be capable, at all times of operation or when working, of transporting a person seated in a wheelchair, i.e. capable of passing the suitability inspection for a wheelchair accessible SPSV.

SEATING NUMBERS AND DIMENSIONS

Safety belts, anchorages, seats and head restraints shall be in accordance with relevant passenger car M1 EC/ECE/ Construction and Use Regulations or equivalent national standards. Please also see the sub-section ‘*Restraints for Wheelchairs and Passengers Travelling in Wheelchairs*’ see page 13.

Vehicles may require documentary proof of their compliance to these European or equivalent standards prior to licensing as SPSVs.

Seat fabrics shall be original equipment manufacturer quality cloth upholstery or leather retrim or equivalent quality.

For the front passenger seat: (See Appendix 4, Figure 3)

- The top of the uncompressed front passenger seat squab shall be at least 275mm from the floor of the vehicle, with a foot exit space/radius at floor level between the corner of the squab and the door pillar of 350mm minimum;
- There shall be a foot space of at least 350mm long by 350mm wide (a clear predominantly flat area

on the floor of the vehicle immediately in front of the seat of minimum size 350mm x 350mm).

For all other seats: (See Appendix 4, Figure 4)

- A minimum seat squab width of 400mm is required for each passenger. The top of each uncompressed squab shall be at least 275mm and not more than 460mm from the vehicle floor at the front of the squab;
- There shall be at least 650mm measured longitudinally and horizontally from the front face of the backrest at uncompressed squab height to the rear face of the seat or surface immediately in front of it. In addition, there shall be at least 250mm between the front edge of the seat squab and the rear face of the seat or surface immediately in front of it, again measured horizontally at uncompressed squab height;
- Where seats face each other (i.e. opposite), there shall be at least 500mm between the front edges of the opposing seat squabs;
- The shoulder room of the rear seat(s) shall be a minimum of 1360mm. Manufacturer dimensions shall be used or measurements made accordingly;
- Seats shall not be added that contravene any of the requirements in this Section. The replacement of a seat by a swivel seat fitted by an approved installer is not contrary to this requirement;
- Folding or removable seats as supplied by the original manufacturer and respecting the relevant technical requirements of EC/ECE Type Approval or equivalent national standards are acceptable. For the avoidance of doubt, the term ‘manufacturer’ in this instance usually refers to the holder of the vehicle Type Approval certificate and would not ordinarily be a vehicle convertor.

ACCESS STEPS

Where the floor or lowest internal surface (e.g. integral step) of the passenger compartment is higher than 230mm from the ground, an intermediate step shall be provided. The height of this first step surface above the ground shall not be more than 230mm. If kneeling suspension is fitted, this may be used to meet this requirement. The height of any step will be measured at the centre of its width. The height of the first step in relation to the ground will be measured with the vehicle on level ground, at its mass in running order (unladen kerb weight) and the

tyre equipment and pressure being as specified by the manufacturer for the design gross vehicle weight.

The step shall not be temporary in nature and shall be securely affixed to the vehicle.

The tread length (foot depth) shall be at least 200mm with 280mm being the ideal recommended. The width of the step shall be a minimum of 400mm. The ideal recommended width would be for the steps to be the same width as the door opening they serve.

All steps shall have a slip resistant surface.

The maximum slope of the step in any direction shall not exceed 3° when the unladen vehicle is standing on a smooth and horizontal surface in its normal condition of travel (in particular any kneeling device shall not be engaged).

Such steps shall have clearly marked rounded nosings in a brightly contrasting colour of minimum width 40mm, be non-slip and, ideally, be automatically retractable (i.e. upon door closing). Alternatively, the driver can manually retract them. It shall not be possible for any such retractable step to be deployed whilst the vehicle is in motion. An interlock related to the handbrake warning system would be considered sufficient for compliance. For manually operated steps a warning notice in the vicinity of the driver may suffice.

No step shall project more than 10mm beyond the widest part of the vehicle exterior (mirrors are not considered for the purpose of this requirement) whilst the vehicle is in motion. The corners of steps, or supporting structures, facing forwards or rearwards shall be rounded to a radius of not less than 5mm; the edges shall be rounded to a radius of not less than 2.5mm. Protruding parts made of a material of hardness not exceeding 60 shore A may have a radius of curvature less than 2.5mm.

All steps shall be designed and constructed so as to withstand, without permanent deformation, a centrally placed load as below without the deflection at any point on the step exceeding 10mm:

- For steps designed to take one person at a time a mass of 136kg placed in the centre of a single step;
- For steps designed to accommodate more than one person at a time a mass of 272kg placed in the centre of a double step.

Where a vehicle is fitted with a kneeling suspension system, the vehicle and system shall comply with the following requirements:

- A master control and a separate user control for the kneeling system function shall be required to enable operation of the system;
- Any control which initiates the lowering or raising of any part or the whole of the body relative to the road surface shall be clearly identified and under the direct control of the driver or the wheelchair occupant or assistant;
- The lowering process shall be capable of being stopped and immediately reversed by either of the controls above;
- The kneeling system shall not allow the vehicle to be driven at a speed of more than 5km/h where the vehicle is lower than the normal height of travel. An interlock related to the handbrake warning system is acceptable. (In this paragraph 'master control' means a control which enables another control to activate the relevant system, but which itself alone is not capable of activating that system.)

WHEELCHAIR RAMPS AND LIFTS

There shall be a ramp or other mechanism to permit the person using the wheelchair to enter and exit the vehicle safely at all times. This may entail assistance. This boarding aid shall be either part of the vehicle or carried securely within the vehicle.

All ramps shall:

- Have a maximum permitted ramp angle of 16° relative to true level. The ideal suggested ramp angle is less than 11°. The vehicle shall be unladen and on flat level ground for the purpose of this requirement, kneeling suspension may be used to meet this requirement. For side entry vehicles this angle may be measured assuming the free end of the ramp is placed on a 'standard' pavement of height 125mm above the ground on which the vehicle is standing;
- Be able to accommodate a variety of ground and kerb conditions. Consideration of the potential use of the vehicle (i.e. accessing the vehicle on slopes/hills) should be made and noted in the user manual;
- Support a combined wheelchair and occupant mass of minimum 300kg at any position along its length without permanent deformation or failure;
- Where detachable, be suitable for manual handling; having suitable means to lift and manoeuvre the

ramps and be of light weight. The ramp shall have effective location when in use to ensure it is easily fitted to the vehicle and cannot accidentally become detached;

- Have a safe means of ramp stowage. Specific ramp test requirements for secondary safety (impact resistance) are detailed in Appendix 5;
- Be permanently marked with their associated vehicle registration number;
- Provide a continuous non-slip surface for the wheels of the wheelchair, i.e. two separate channels shall not be permitted. The width of the ramp shall be a minimum of 700mm between the edge upturns. The ideal suggested measurement is 800mm;
- Have safety edge upturns at least 25mm high that are brightly coloured as per I.S. EN 1756-2 2004 or equivalent national regulations;
- Comply with the requirements of I.S. EN 1756-2 2004 and Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) 1998 or equivalent national regulations;
- Be maintained in good working order and be available for use at all times. The LOLER Regulations require that personnel lifts are tested and certified every six months by a competent person;
- Display a Safe Working Load (SWL) marking;
- Provide a maintenance specification appropriate to the design of the ramp.

Alternative innovative approaches will be encouraged by the Commission. Discretionary relaxation of certain parts of this section may be considered by the Commission upon application by the manufacturer in respect of innovative design solutions whose essential features make compliance with the above unachievable. Such a request shall contain:

- The reason why the technologies or concepts in question prevent the vehicle or component from complying with the requirements of one or more of the above;
- A description of the areas of innovative design and their benefits to driver and passenger;
- A description of the areas of safety concerned and the measures taken;

- A description of any tests and their results that demonstrate an equivalent level of performance or function as is provided by the requirements above.

RESTRAINTS FOR WHEELCHAIRS AND PASSENGERS TRAVELLING IN WHEELCHAIRS

The wheelchair and the person in the wheelchair shall have separate restraint systems.

The vehicle shall be fitted with a wheelchair restraint system that is suitable for general wheelchair applications.

The vehicle shall be fitted with a restraint system for the person in the wheelchair with a minimum of three anchorage points providing pelvic and upper torso restraints designed and constructed to perform in a similar manner to those of a safety belt complying with 77/541/EEC, as amended. The belt shall lie across the person's pelvis and not be unduly influenced by any parts/shape of the wheelchair itself, i.e. the belt should restrain the person and not the wheelchair. It shall be possible to easily release both the wheelchair and the wheelchair occupant restraints in the event of an emergency.

The anchorages for the wheelchair occupant restraints shall comply with the technical force requirements as defined in 76/115/EEC, as amended. A safety belt or complete WTORS approved to ISO 10542 shall also be considered acceptable. Due to the variable nature of both wheelchair and occupant size, the positional requirements are to be considered for guidance only. Compliance with the static test outlined in Appendix 6 shall also be considered acceptable.

The wheelchair restraint anchorages shall be approximately symmetrically located longitudinally relative to the wheelchair space provided. For all wheelchairs at least four restraints shall be required; two front and two rear for the purpose of securing the wheelchair to the vehicle wheelchair restraint anchorages. Where there are common (shared) anchorages for the wheelchair and the occupant restraints then the test loads shall be met simultaneously, i.e. the common anchorage shall be shown to support both the wheelchair restraint test load and the occupant restraint test load.

Test reports shall be made available at the suitability inspection to show that the vehicle is capable of meeting the requirements regarding the anchorage points for both the wheelchair restraint system and the wheelchair occupant restraint.

In addition to wheelchair tie down equipment complying with the relevant part of ISO 10542, being required, the vehicle anchorages shall still be shown to meet the strength requirements above. All tie down or restraint devices shall be clearly marked or designed or permanently attached to their anchorages in such a manner that it is not possible to attach them to the incorrect anchorage point.

Alternative restraint systems may be considered acceptable but the vehicle manufacturer or converter shall provide proof that the system demonstrates an equivalent level of performance.

Please also see Appendix 7 for the relaxations of the EC standards applicable to the wheelchair and occupant restraints.

A user manual shall be available in the vehicle at all times.

HANDHOLDS

Handholds or rails to assist semi-ambulant customers to gain access to and exit from vehicles shall be provided. Given the propensity of air bags incorporated into modern vehicles, it is not possible to be prescriptive about the exact location of these rails but, in general, they should be located in the vicinity of the doors and steps and central pathways. They should not impede general access or exit. These shall be of contrasting colours similar to those seen on buses and trains, approximately circular in cross section and approximately 35mm in diameter. Their surface should be slip-resistant and there should be at least 35mm clearance between the inside of the working surface of the handhold and any adjacent surface to which it is attached or near.

INTERIOR LIGHTING

Targeted or localised lighting at entrance steps, signage and floor areas and money slots in any dividing screen shall be required. Such lighting shall be around 200 lux with general background interior levels of around 150 lux. Any safety notices shall be capable of being read from the passenger compartment or on entry to the vehicle.

It should be noted that these requirements shall only apply when the vehicle is stationary. It is appreciated that this is a general light level and that the driver may be able to assist further with a handheld torch, if required.

FLOORING

Flooring in wheelchair accessible SPSVs shall be non-slip (with knowledge of wet and dry operating conditions) and any transitions between the floor and doorways or seats shall be delineated with brightly contrasting colours.

INDUCTION LOOP AND MICROPHONE

For vehicles fitted with a full dividing screen, partition or bulkhead between the driver and passenger compartment, an intercom and an induction loop shall be required. Signage shall be placed in the passenger compartment to advise passengers of this.

TRANSPARENT WINDOWS

Wheelchair accessible taxis and wheelchair accessible hackneys shall be fitted with clear window glass. The front windscreen shall exhibit 75% minimum visible light transmission. Remaining windows shall exhibit 70% minimum visible light transmission.

A band of maximum 125mm depth at the top upper edge of the front windscreen shall be permitted a lesser degree of visible light transmission, i.e. it may be darker.

MANDATORY SIGNAGE

The existing mandatory roof sign with the internationally recognised accessibility symbol (See Appendix 4, Figure 5) for wheelchair accessible taxis shall be required.

Wheelchair accessible hackneys shall be required to display the accessibility symbol externally on a door.

A tactile licence number display is under development to assist the visually impaired and will be trialled amongst the industry with further consultation prior to any introduction.

ADVERTISING

The current advertising Regulations shall continue, i.e. advertising shall be allowed in or on taxis and wheelchair accessible taxis but is not permitted in or on hackneys or wheelchair accessible hackneys.

For avoidance of doubt and in consideration of practicalities the following shall be allowed:

The owner's/driver's or company details or supplying vehicle agent's details may be displayed beneath the number plate or in the lower half of the rear window, the maximum size of such a 'statement' to be no more than 500mm x 20mm in size or equivalent area (10,000 square mm).

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE TAXI SPECIFIC ITEMS

For taxi (roof) sign, taximeter, fare chart and advertising requirements please see page 18, '*Taxi Additional Specific Requirements*'.

SPECIALIST TRANSPORT

The Commission acknowledges the need to balance the requirements of all people who choose to travel in their wheelchairs against the economic and environmental costs of providing a service which would require excessively large vehicles which could take every wheelchair. Consequently, the Commission is not in a position to include all specialist transport within its jurisdiction.

The Commission supports the view that all contracts awarded by Government departments, local authorities, health boards and other state bodies should be awarded only to fully accessible vehicles.

The Commission will continue to consult further with the relevant stakeholders to explore provision of specialist transport services.

5

Standard Taxi and Hackney Additional Requirements

INTRODUCTION

The Commission aims to define areas that currently appear vague, in particular luggage capacity and internal space. Smaller vehicles that are considered unsuitable as taxis and hackneys will be prohibited. The Commission shall introduce an appropriate upper age limit as it is known that newer cars are safer and better for the environment.

GENERAL VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS

Taxis and hackneys (other than wheelchair accessible taxis and hackneys) shall be mid-range cars; saloon, hatchback, estate or multi purpose vehicles (MPVs) capable of transporting not less than four and not more than eight adult passengers in reasonable comfort, as well as their luggage in a safe and secure manner.

While not endorsing any particular product some examples of current vehicles within the industry for the purpose of illustration only are the Toyota Avensis, Nissan Primera, Skoda Octavia, Ford Mondeo, Volkswagen Passat and Mercedes.

Taxis and hackneys shall require an ECWVTA Certificate of Conformity, category M1 passenger cars. Proof of previous registration may be accepted in lieu of the EC Certificate of Conformity if accompanied by supporting documentation from the manufacturer, distributor, importer, agent, test house or other similar authority. Such supporting documentation shall demonstrate that equivalent technical and safety standards are met.

They shall have at least four doors. All four doors shall be capable of being opened from both the inside and the outside of the vehicle.

There shall be a permanent rigid roof covering all of the driver and passenger compartments. Specifically, cabriolets and convertibles shall not be considered suitable. Sunroofs shall be permitted, including full length items.

LUGGAGE CAPACITY

There shall be a luggage compartment capable of safely containing a minimum volume of 420 litres as measured by the VDA method. Any luggage carried shall be safely secured. The overall luggage capacity shall be checked against manufacturer details where available. Where that data is unavailable the luggage capacity shall be assessed in substantially the same manner as the VDA method using blocks of 200mm x 100mm x 50mm. This data shall be added to the model report.

Space for a folded wheelchair shall be provided. A dummy volume may be used to check the shape of the luggage space: this shall be a parallel sided box of external dimensions 735mm x 330mm x 805mm to ensure that a folded wheelchair can be safely carried. See Appendix 4, Figure 6.

Hatchback, estate cars and MPV style vehicles shall be fitted with a guard or cover that is intended to prevent luggage from injuring a passenger in the event of an accident.

The capacity of any spare wheel well shall not be included for assessing the luggage space volume.

In respect of taxis only this luggage capacity requirement shall exist simultaneously with the seating dimensional requirements shown below, *'Interior Size and Seats'*.

INTERIOR SIZE AND SEATS

Safety belts, anchorages, seats and head restraints shall be in accordance with relevant EC/ECE/Construction and Use Regulations or equivalent national standards for the vehicle age.

Vehicles may require documentary proof of their compliance to these European or equivalent standards prior to licensing as SPSVs.

Seat fabrics shall be original equipment manufacturer quality cloth upholstery or leather re-trims or equivalent quality.

For the front passenger seat: (See Appendix 4, Figure 3)

- The top of the uncompressed front passenger seat squab shall be at least 275mm from the floor of the vehicle, with a foot exit space/radius at floor level between the corner of the squab and the door pillar of 350mm minimum;
- There shall be a foot space of at least 350mm long by 350mm wide (a clear predominantly flat area on the floor of the vehicle immediately in front of the seat of minimum size 350mm x 350mm).

For all other seats: (See Appendix 4, Figure 4)

- A minimum seat squab width of 400mm is required for each passenger. The top of each uncompressed squab shall be at least 275mm and not more than 460mm from the vehicle floor at the front of the squab;
- There shall be at least 650mm measured longitudinally and horizontally from the front face of the backrest at uncompressed squab height to the rear face of the seat or surface immediately in front of it. In addition, there shall be at least 250mm between the front edge of the seat squab and the rear face of the seat or surface immediately in front of it, again measured horizontally at uncompressed squab height;
- Where seats face each other (i.e. opposite), there shall be at least 500mm between the front edges of the opposing seat squabs;
- The rear seat(s) shoulder room shall be a minimum of 1360mm. Manufacturer dimensions shall be used or measurements made accordingly;
- Seats shall not be added that contravene any of the requirements in this Section. The replacement of a seat by a swivel seat fitted by an approved installer is not contrary to this requirement;
- Folding or removable seats as supplied by the original manufacturer and respecting the relevant technical requirements of EC/ECE Type Approval or equivalent national standards are acceptable. For the avoidance of doubt, the term 'manufacturer' in this instance usually refers to the holder of the vehicle Type Approval certificate and would not ordinarily be a vehicle convertor.

VEHICLE AGE

Vehicles shall be no more than nine years old. The date of first registration is the date on which the vehicle was first registered, irrespective of the country of registration.

The Commission acknowledges the business investment made by licence holders in the SPSV industry and supports this continued investment. In recognition of financial packages undertaken by standard taxi and hackney vehicle licence holders in the purchase of vehicles, the age limit requirement of nine years for existing SPSV licence holders shall not commence until 1st January 2012. New vehicle licences shall, from 1st January 2009, only be issued to vehicles that are no more than nine years of age.

TRANSPARENT WINDOWS

Taxis and hackneys shall be fitted with clear window glass. The front windscreen shall exhibit 75% minimum visible light transmission. Remaining windows shall exhibit 70% minimum visible light transmission.

A band of maximum 125mm depth at the top upper edge of the front windscreen shall be permitted a lesser degree of visible light transmission, i.e. it may be darker.

GENERAL ACCESSIBILITY FEATURES

The Commission encourages all standard taxis and hackneys to include accessibility features as far as practicably possible. Examples would include floor mats with coloured edging, additional lighting and yellow handholds. Taxis and hackneys shall be awarded the Commission's 'Quality Assurance Mark' for the provision of these initiatives. The Commission believes the highest possible standards should be encouraged and recognised through quality service certification.

6

Taxi (including Wheelchair Accessible Taxi) Additional Specific Requirements

As of 1st November 2007 there were 17,485 licensed taxis nationally

The requirements are applicable to all vehicle licences from 1st January 2009.

TAXI (ROOF) SIGN

The current taxi sign design Regulations shall continue. See Appendix 8 for further details.

It shall not be permitted to remove the taxi sign at any time when the vehicle is on hire. For vehicles with long or tall roofs, e.g. bigger MPV it shall be permitted to affix more than one roof sign, i.e. one front and one rear for improved visibility.

If engaged on a long journey, i.e. in excess of 30km, and with the consent of the hirer then the roof sign may be positioned longitudinally to reduce fuel consumption.

There shall be no requirement to link the taxi sign light to the meter status. However the taxi sign light should be switched on when the vehicle is available for hire, including at a rank and should be switched off when the vehicle is not available for hire.

TAXIMETER

The current taximeter Regulations shall apply. See Appendix 9 for further details.

It should be noted that for the suitability inspection the taximeter need not necessarily be sealed by Legal Metrology Services. Upon successful completion of the suitability inspection and the licensing process, an appointment must be made as soon as possible to have the taximeter sealed.

FARE CHART

The current requirements shall continue. The sun visor National Maximum Taxi Fare sticker displaying the current maximum fare shall be required to be prominently displayed in the front passenger area. The recommended placement is on the sun visor or the dashboard. It is the responsibility of the vehicle owner, driver or operator to satisfy themselves that this is not interfering with any restraint system, e.g. airbag.

ADVERTISING

The current advertising Regulations shall continue, i.e. advertising shall be allowed in or on taxis and wheelchair accessible taxis.

However the Commission would remind vehicle operators of paragraph 6 in Appendix 8, see page 35.

7

Hackney (including Wheelchair Accessible Hackney) Additional Specific Requirements

As of 1st November 2007 there were 4,759 licensed hackneys nationally

The requirements are applicable to all vehicle licences from 1st January 2009.

ADVERTISING

The current advertising Regulations shall continue, i.e. advertising shall not be allowed in or on hackneys and wheelchair accessible hackneys.

For avoidance of doubt and in consideration of practicalities however, the following shall be allowed:

The owner's/driver's or company details or supplying vehicle agent's details may be displayed beneath the number plate or in the lower half of the rear window, the maximum size of such a 'statement' to be no more than 500mm x 20mm in size or equivalent area (10,000 square mm).

METERS

The fitment of meters in hackneys shall be prohibited.

8

Limousine Additional Requirements

As of 1st November 2007 there were 1,311 licensed limousines nationally

The requirements are applicable to newly issued vehicle licences from 1st January 2009 and all existing vehicle licences from 1st January 2012.

INTRODUCTION

The Commission received a number of suggestions from the limousine representative bodies regarding the limousine category. The Commission will continue to consult with the limousine representatives during 2008, particularly regarding imposing an age limit on limousines other than those constructed more than 30 years before the licence application date.

The following refines the general limousine requirements.

GENERAL VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS

Vehicles shall have an engine capacity of at least 1900cc, except in the case of vehicles constructed more than 30 years before the licence application date.

Limousines shall be a larger than average prestigious passenger vehicle which shall be evidently suited by reason of its style and condition for the provision of hire services for ceremonial occasions, corporate occasions or other prestige purposes. Passengers shall expect to travel in high quality, luxury, dignified and comfortable surroundings.

Within the constrictions of age, vehicles shall have an ECWVTA Certificate of Conformity, category M1 passenger cars. Proof of previous registration may be accepted in lieu of the EC Certificate of Conformity if accompanied by supporting documentation from the manufacturer, distributor, importer, agent, test house or other similar authority. Such supporting documentation shall demonstrate that equivalent technical and safety standards are met.

Modified vehicles shall require either a Single Vehicle Approval Certificate or an Engineer's Report no older than 90 days. In this respect 'Engineer's Report' means an assessment made by a mechanical or automotive engineer, automotive assessor or a person with similar qualifications who, by reason of his or her competence, experience and independence, is an appropriate person to assess the fitness and safety of a mechanically propelled vehicle.

DOORS

Where passengers are carried in a compartmented section of the vehicle (i.e. an area with seats and a permanent rigid roof), there shall be at least two doors that open into or from this compartmented area. All such doors shall be capable of being opened from both the inside and the outside of the vehicle. Rear doors (vertically hinged) or a rear tailgate (horizontally hinged) shall be considered acceptable as a door, providing that they are obviously designed or constructed for the intended purpose of passenger access.

TINTED WINDOWS

The front windscreen shall exhibit 75% minimum visible light transmission. The front door side windows shall exhibit 70% minimum visible light transmission. A band of maximum 125mm depth at the top upper edge of the front windscreen shall be permitted a lesser degree of visible light transmission, i.e. it may be darker. The remaining rear windows (i.e. to the rear of the driver) shall be permitted a darker tint.

METERS

The fitment of meters in limousines shall be prohibited.

STRETCHED VEHICLES

The maximum permitted stretch, i.e. wheelbase increase, shall be considered individually in relation to any guidelines that may be present. For example the Ford QVM (Quality Vehicle Modifier) rules state that only Lincoln Town Cars, Ford Excursions and Lincoln Navigators are approved for conversion into a stretch limousine. In addition, QVM rules specify that a Town Car can only be stretched 120" or Navigator and Excursion 140". Cadillac operates a similar scheme called CMC, Cadillac Master Coachbuilder. Vehicles holding safety approvals in their modified form shall also be considered acceptable.

The tyre load and speed rating shall be appropriate for the (stretched) design gross vehicle weight. The design GVW shall generally be indicated on the vehicle chassis plate. A 107 tyre load rating or greater shall be required unless documentary evidence is provided to the contrary.

All glassware supplied or used in the vehicles should be shatterproof or plastic and, where possible, secured safely when not in use.

The maximum design GVW is 3500kg.

SEATING

The number of passengers a vehicle shall be licensed for shall be determined as follows:

A minimum seat squab width of 400mm is required for each passenger. A seating position fitted with a safety belt shall be counted as one seating position. For bench seats without safety belts, the number of seating positions shall be assessed as multiples of the required minimum squab width of 400mm each. For example, a bench seat of 1500mm squab width shall be counted as providing three seating positions.

For all SPSVs the maximum number of passengers permitted is eight. For long limousine style bench seats, e.g. the 'J' seat, any remaining seating space above the eight passenger seating positions as defined above must be rendered un-occupiable. An example method for this would be the fitment of a padded armrest that breaks up the seating surface. It is considered unacceptable that a vehicle may be licensed for the maximum eight passengers yet may clearly physically accommodate more.

It should be noted that in the unique case of the stretched limousine it is anticipated that the numbers with side facing seats will naturally reduce over time due to the restrictions contained within EC Directive 2005/39 which prohibit the registration of new cars with side facing seats. However this will be monitored, along with any developments in the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland and if required the Commission will review the relevant suitability requirements in 2011 in the event that further action is required. Naturally there will be ongoing consultation with the industry and representative groups.

ADVERTISING

The current advertising Regulations shall continue, i.e. advertising shall not be allowed in or on limousines.

For avoidance of doubt and in consideration of practicalities however, the following shall be allowed:

The owner's/driver's or company details or supplying vehicle agent's details may be displayed beneath the number plate or in the lower half of the rear window, the maximum size of such a 'statement' to be no more than 500mm x 20mm in size or equivalent area (10,000 square mm).

Although not strictly a vehicle specification issue limousine owners, operators and drivers are reminded that other statutory obligations may apply, for example, Construction and Use Regulations.

9

Safety and Security

There are a number of products available, see also Appendix 10 *'Pilot Schemes'*.

SAFETY SCREENS

The Commission will allow individual drivers freedom of choice with regards to possible safety screen installations. Consideration should be given to the provision of an intercom and induction loop system and the effectiveness of internal heating systems for full dividing screens separating passenger and driver compartments.

Safety screens or shields should be transparent with 70% visible light transmission, manufactured from shatterproof material and fitted in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. They should be securely fastened in place. Any slot designed for the passage of money or other material should be delineated as such by outlining with a bright contrasting colour. Documentation from the manufacturer of the shield may be required to demonstrate compliance with the material properties and recommended installation procedures.

IN-VEHICLE CCTV

The Commission will allow individual drivers freedom of choice with regards to possible security camera and CCTV fitments, subject to the qualification that the driver should ensure that the provider is properly licensed by the Private Security Authority. For further information see page 38.

DISPATCH OPERATOR COMMUNICATION

Dispatch operators shall be required to be licensed by the Commission in 2008. The Commission encourages all drivers to affiliate to a dispatch operator. A dispatch operator holds records of bookings taken including contact details of the person placing the booking, along with details of the destination of the service booked. This provides the driver with a level of security in the knowledge that records can be made available when required.

The Commission will work with licensed dispatch operators to carry out further research into the effectiveness of developing security measures in SPSVs linked to dispatch operators. Development of a pilot scheme will be discussed with dispatch operators.

10 Achieving Quality and Excellence

INNOVATION

The Commission aims to be aware of relevant new technologies and intends to include a section on its website outlining new developments. We remain available to answer queries on technical matters including those relating to innovative ideas and products.

QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAMME

The Commission believes that the highest possible standards should be encouraged, recognised and rewarded through quality service certification.

The achievement and awarding of the Quality Mark will be a clear indication to customers that the service provider has consistently achieved a high level of service.

There are three main areas involved with the introduction of a Quality Mark. The vehicle quality is one part, the driver's skills and attitude another and the overall booking experience a third. The Commission is introducing a driver skills development programme in 2008 and creating a register of dispatch operators in early 2008. Consequently, the integrated analysis of the full Quality Mark will follow the development of this register at the end of 2008.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

If a SPSV operator decides to operate an environmentally friendly vehicle the Commission, at its discretion, may allow the relaxation of certain requirements, e.g. the luggage capacity of the Toyota Prius hybrid is 408 litres, slightly smaller than the stipulated 420 litres for a taxi.

The Commission shall require suitable proof that the vehicle is in fact eligible for any dispensations.

11

Compliance

SUITABILITY INSPECTION

A suitability style inspection shall be part of the licence renewal process, alongside the roadworthiness test. Amongst other things, this inspection shall check the vehicle for interior condition and cleanliness, the presence of the First Aid kit, fire extinguisher, pen and paper, torch, high visibility jacket and warning triangle and the operation of the interior light.

Failure of this inspection shall be deemed reason for the non-renewal of the licence. For example, the absence of restraints, straps or ramps etc, shall be reason for non-renewal of licence of wheelchair accessible vehicles.

Therefore at the first licensing of a vehicle there will be a suitability inspection and, unless a new vehicle (see below) a roadworthiness test. For licence renewals there will be a roadworthiness test plus a predominantly visual suitability style assessment as outlined above. All will be separately charged in the interests of transparency.

Subject to liaison with the Road Safety Authority, this requirement shall take effect from 1st January 2009.

NCT ROADWORTHINESS TEST

All vehicles, regardless of age, which are the subject of an application for a SPSV licence, shall be inspected for suitability.

There shall be no requirement for a new vehicle to undergo the NCT roadworthiness test prior to being assessed for suitability.

For the purposes of this requirement, 'new vehicle' means a vehicle which:

- Is less than 90 days old when reckoned from its first registration date;
- Has travelled less than 2,000 kilometres;
- And irrespective of the country of first registration.

Subject to liaison with the Road Safety Authority, this requirement shall take effect from 1st January 2009.

TAMPER-PROOF DISCS

From January 2008, different colours will be introduced to differentiate the three basic SPSV categories: namely taxi (including wheelchair accessible taxi), hackney (including wheelchair accessible hackney) and limousine. These will be rolled out upon licence renewal over a 12 month period.

APPENDIX 1

Taxi Regulation Act 2003, Section 34

- 34** 1 The Commission may make regulations in relation to the licensing, ownership, control and operation of small public service vehicles and dispatch operators, the licensing and control of small public service vehicle drivers and small public service vehicle licence holders, and the standards to be applied to such vehicles and their drivers.
- 2 Regulations under this section may, in particular and without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1) make provision in relation to
- a licences in respect of small public service vehicles,
 - b the categories of small public service vehicles in respect of which licences may be granted,
 - c licences in respect of the drivers of small public service vehicles and the categories of small public service vehicles they may drive for hire,
 - d the persons (including the Commission) who may grant licences,
 - e applications for or matters relating to licences including the following
 - i the terms or conditions relating to the grant of a licence,
 - ii the manner and form of an application for the grant of a licence,
 - iii the fees to be paid in respect of the grant of a licence or badges or plates or signs relating to a licence,
 - iv the format and content of a licence,
 - v the inspection and certification of a vehicle that is the subject of an application for or renewal of a licence,
 - vi the age of a vehicle that is the subject of an application for a licence,
 - vii the insurance of a vehicle that is the subject of an application for or renewal of a licence,
 - viii the period of validity of a licence,
 - ix the revocation and suspension of a licence,
 - ee the standards to apply to the service provided by dispatch operators,
 - f the operation of a small public service vehicle, including any or all of the following matters
 - i the vehicle standards to be complied with, including standards in relation to the entry to and accommodation in the vehicle for people with a disability, including wheelchair users or persons with mobility and sensory difficulties,
 - ii the size of a vehicle including the passenger carrying and luggage carrying capacity of the vehicle,
 - iii the identification, including the internal and external signage or colour of a vehicle,
 - iv advertising in or on the vehicle,
 - v the conditions or restrictions, if any, to be applied to the transfer of a licence to another person or to another vehicle,
 - vi the conditions subject to which the vehicle may be operated as a small public service vehicle,
 - vii the use of taximeters, machines for issuing receipts and other apparatus,
 - viii the keeping of records in relation to the operation of the vehicle as a small public service vehicle,
 - ix the information that must be displayed, and the manner of such display, in relation to the licence granted in respect of the vehicle, including where appropriate the approved maximum fare structure applying to the vehicle,
 - x the insurance of the vehicle,
 - xi the display, and manner of such display, of information necessary for the assistance of a passenger, including information relating to the requirements established for the conduct of drivers of small public service vehicles and requirements established for the conduct of hirers and other passengers,
 - xii requirements relating to the fitting or non-fitting of equipment in the vehicle and the operation of such equipment,

APPENDIX 1

Taxi Regulation Act 2003, Section 34 continued

- g the inspection of small public service vehicles,
 - h powers of authorised persons in addition to those under section 49.
- 3 In making regulations under this section, the Commission may establish requirements and conditions for the purpose of the assessment of applicants for the grant of licences, including requirements and conditions in respect of
- a the fitness of a person to hold a licence having regard to an assessment carried out by the Garda Commissioner or on behalf of the Commission,
 - b requirements relating to the knowledge of the geography, routes, place names and other matters relevant to the provision of service by a small public service vehicle in an area in respect of which a person makes application for the grant of a licence,
 - c the knowledge of and ability to meet the needs of people with disabilities including mobility and sensory difficulties to a standard determined by the Commission in consultation with the National Disability Authority,
 - d knowledge of and ability to meet the needs of consumers,
 - e knowledge of the regulations, standards and requirements relating to the licensing, driving and operation of small public service vehicles, and the general law relating to road traffic,
 - f the health of the applicant.
- 4 The Commission may, for the purpose of assessing applications for the grant of a licence, authorise or approve persons for the purpose of determining that a person who wishes to apply for the grant of a licence complies with or has reached an acceptable level of competence in respect of each or any of the standards established under this section.
- 5 Any regulation made under this section relating to the licensing of drivers of small public service vehicles shall be made only after consultation with the Garda Commissioner and the Council.
- 6 The Commission may, after consultation with the Garda Commissioner and the Council make regulations for the purpose of specifying conditions and requirements for drivers of small public service vehicles in respect of any or all of the following
- a the identification of drivers including internal and external vehicle signage, badges or any other means that may be specified,
 - b the dress code of drivers,
 - c availability for work and scheduling of persons as drivers.
- 7 In making regulations under this section, the Commission may set different and separate requirements and conditions in relation to the licensing of drivers of different categories of small public service vehicle.
- 8 The Commission, in making regulations under this section, may set different requirements and conditions in relation to
- a the licensing and operation of different categories of small public service vehicles and their drivers,
 - b for different circumstances, and
 - c for different areas.
- 9 In making a regulation under this section the Commission may amend or revoke any regulation made under section 82 of the Act of 1961 in so far as it relates to small public service vehicles and their drivers.
- 10 A person who fails to comply with or contravenes a regulation under this section is guilty of an offence.
- 11 In this Part, 'dispatch operator' means a person engaged in the activity of taking a booking of a small public service vehicle that is operated by another person and arranging with the operator or driver of the vehicle to provide the service booked.

APPENDIX 2

Technical Information

Seating Assessment

Each passenger requires their own seating position. The number of passengers a vehicle is to be licensed for shall be determined as follows:

A minimum seat squab width of 400mm shall be required for each passenger. A seating position fitted with a safety belt shall be counted as one seating position. For bench seats without safety belts then the number of seating positions shall be assessed as multiples of the required minimum squab width of 400mm each. For example a bench seat of 1500mm squab width shall be assessed as providing three seating positions.

In-vehicle Temperature

The location for measurement shall be at least 500mm from any heat/cooling vent. The temperature shall be measured with a standard thermometer or calibrated digital device on the longitudinal centre line of the passenger compartment, at a height of 700mm from the vehicle floor mid position fore and aft. If there are any heater outlets/ducts/vents within a 500mm radius of this point then a point mid way between such outlets may be used, maintaining the 700mm height (i.e. not necessarily on the centre line nor mid-distance fore/aft).

Fire Extinguisher

The fire extinguisher shall be suitable for the inflammability classes A, B and C, with a minimum capacity of 2kg dry powder (or an equivalent capacity for any other suitable extinguishing agent).

The fire extinguisher shall be suitable for fighting a fire in the engine or passenger compartment from organic solids, flammable liquids or flammable gases and be compliant with IS EN3-7 2004 or direct equivalent standard.

The fire extinguisher shall be fitted with a seal verifying that it has not been used. It shall bear a mark of compliance with a standard recognised by a competent authority and an inscription at least indicating the date (month, year) of the next recurrent inspection or of the maximum permissible period of use, as applicable. The fire extinguisher should be periodically inspected in accordance with authorised national standards in order to guarantee its functional safety. Servicing to BS 5306 2000 Part 3 is advised.

The manufacturer's recommendations as to mounting and orientation must be strictly adhered to.

The current cost for a fire extinguisher ranges from €25 – €60.

APPENDIX 2

Technical Information continued

First Aid Kit DIN 13164 contents

- 1 x roll of self-adhesive plaster, 5m x 2.5cm,
- 8 x pieces of self-adhesive bandage 10cm x 6cm,
- 1 x large first-aid packet,
- 3 x medium first-aid packets,
- 1 x large dressing for burns,
- 2 x small dressings for burns,
- 3 x large elastic gauze bandages, 8cm x 4m,
- 2 x small elastic gauze bandages, 6cm x 4m,
- 6 x gauze wound compresses 100mm x 100mm,
- 2 x triangular bandages,
- 1 x pair of scissors,
- 1 x insulation emergency blanket gold/silver 1600mm x 2100mm and
- 4 x disposable vinyl gloves, large.

The current cost for a First Aid kit ranges from €6 – €12.

Advance Warning Triangle

The advance warning triangle shall be approved to ECE Regulation 27 and marked accordingly. The current cost for an advance warning triangle ranges from €5 – €10.

High Visibility Reflective Safety Vest

The high visibility safety vest shall be approved to ANSI/ISEA 107 1999 or 2004 or to BS EN 471, 1994 or 2003 and marked accordingly. The current cost for a high visibility safety vest ranges from €3 – €7.

Spare Wheel

In this respect the term 'system' covers a traditional (permanent) spare wheel/tyre assembly, a (temporary use spare tyre) spacesaver wheel/tyre assembly and associated tools for swapping this, run flat tyres and also other temporary devices such as inflational tyre sealant. It is recommended that breakdown cover is in force for all vehicles with temporary use systems.

Environmental Awareness

Alternatively fuelled vehicles may be licensed but the onus is on the owner of the vehicle to provide sufficient proof/documentary evidence that recognised safety standards have been followed in the individual installation.

APPENDIX 3

Example Model Reports

Manufacturer	Toyota
Model	Avensis
Body Style	Saloon
Roof Style	Permanent
Period on Sale	2003–present
Number Doors	4
Luggage Capacity	Pass (520 litres)
Folded Wheelchair Space	Pass
Rear Seat Length	Pass
Front Foot Space	Pass
Front Exit Radius	Pass
Squab Height	Pass
Rear Shoulder Room	Pass (1378mm)
Suitable for	Taxi and Hackney

Manufacturer	Skoda
Model	Octavia
Body Style	Hatchback
Roof Style	Permanent
Period on Sale	2004–present
Number Doors	4
Luggage Capacity	Pass (560 litres)
Folded Wheelchair Space	Pass
Rear Seat Length	Pass
Front Foot Space	Pass
Front Exit Radius	Pass
Squab Height	Pass
Rear Shoulder Room	Pass (1365mm)
Suitable for	Taxi and Hackney

Manufacturer	Nissan
Model	Primera
Body Style	Saloon
Roof Style	Permanent
Period on Sale	2001–2006
Number Doors	4
Luggage Capacity	Pass (450 litres)
Folded Wheelchair Space	Pass
Rear Seat Length	Pass
Front Foot Space	Pass
Front Exit Radius	Pass
Squab Height	Pass
Rear Shoulder Room	Pass (1362mm)
Suitable for	Taxi and Hackney

Manufacturer	Volkswagen
Model	Passat
Body Style	Saloon
Roof Style	Permanent
Period on Sale	2005–present
Number Doors	4
Luggage Capacity	Pass (485 litres)
Folded Wheelchair Space	Pass
Rear Seat Length	Pass
Front Foot Space	Pass
Front Exit Radius	Pass
Squab Height	Pass
Rear Shoulder Room	Pass (1386mm)
Suitable for	Taxi and Hackney

APPENDIX 4

Figures and Drawings

Figure 1
Accessible door template

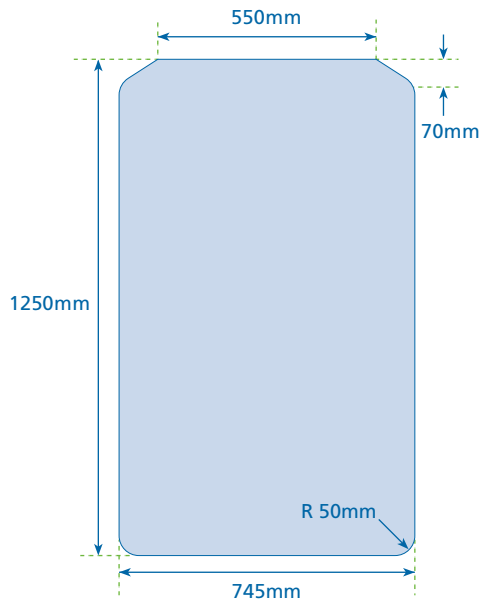


Figure 2
Wheelchair space allowance

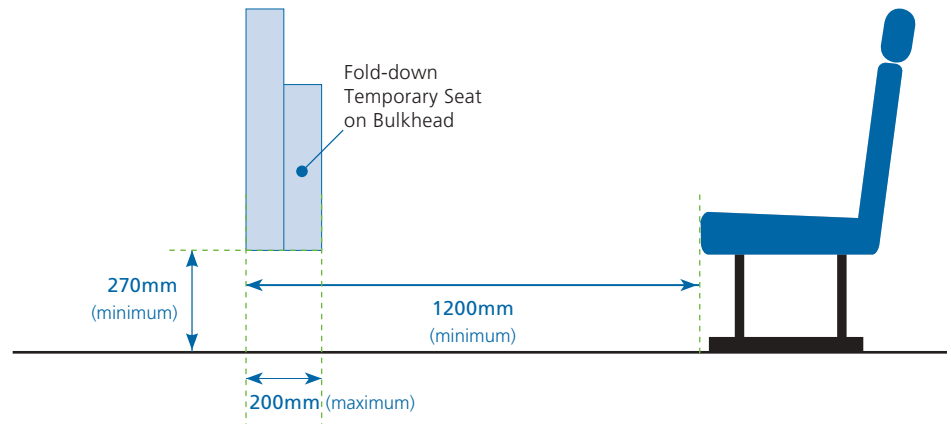


Figure 3
Front passenger seat exit radius and foot space dimensions

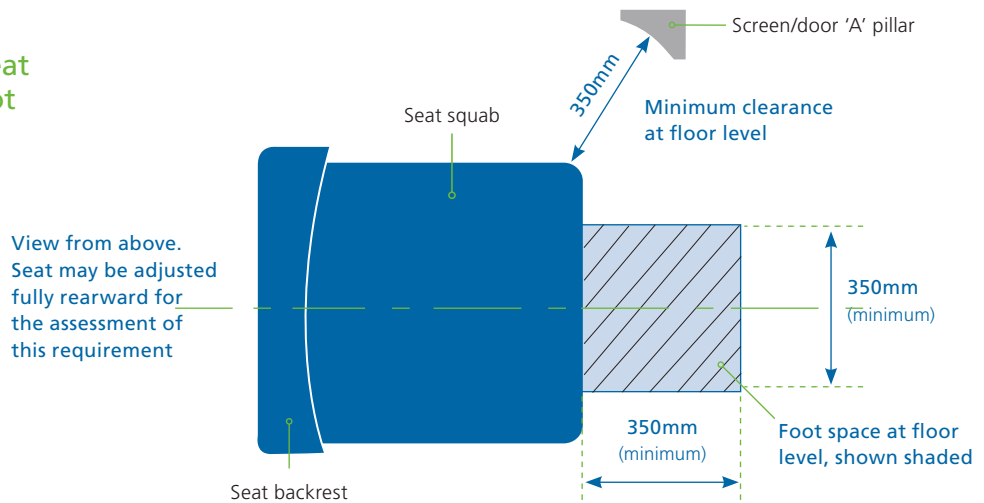


Figure 4
Seat spacing
dimensions

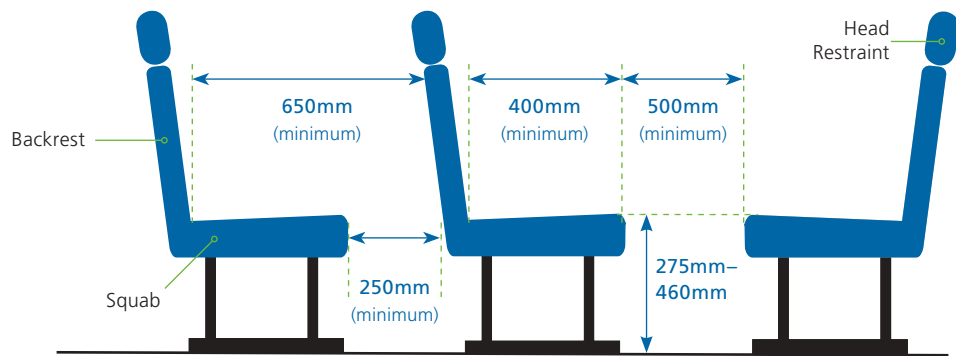


Figure 5
Taxi roof sign
wheelchair symbol

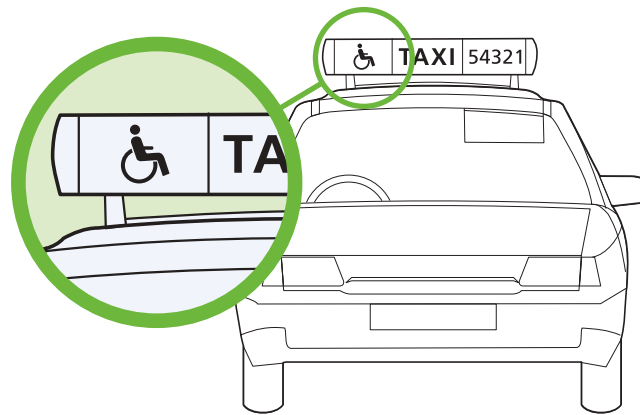
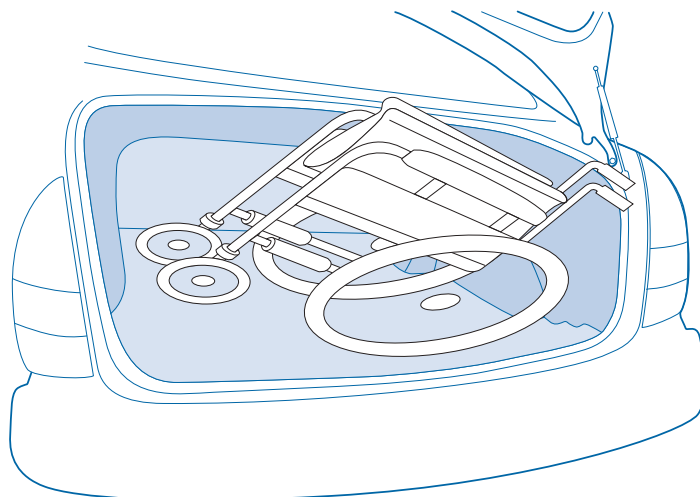


Figure 6
Luggage capacity
for a folded wheelchair



APPENDIX 5

Impact Requirements for Ramps (Static Test)

This test applies to all wheelchair accessible SPSVs and so provide wheelchair access ramps or power lifts, which fold and/or lock or stow within the vehicle passenger compartment. These requirements are applicable to each vehicle type. These requirements have been significantly influenced by the work of Motability UK and the testing organisation STATUS.

All access ramps or power lift devices should comply with I.S. EN 1756-2 2004 and should be marked accordingly.

Any access ramp/power lift system should be securely attached to the vehicle structure and, in its stowed position, be capable of meeting the static strength test requirements below.

A static test should be carried out on the ramp/lift structure in accordance with the following requirements:

- a The force specified below should be applied by means of a device that spreads the load across the width and the stowed height of the ramp/lift platform assembly. A strap running around the back of the ramp/ lift platform at the point defined in (b), across vertical spreader channels and connected to the loading device at the front of the ramp would be suitable;
- b The force specified below should be applied by means of a device positioned at as close as possible to the centre of gravity of the ramp/lift structure. This should preferably be a position stated by the manufacturer. Otherwise, if the ramp/lift platform is a symmetrical structure this can be taken as half way along the length and stowed height of the structure;
- c The force in (a) and (b) above should be applied in the forward direction and at an angle of between 0° and 15° above the horizontal plane;
- d The force should be applied as rapidly as possible through the central vertical axis of the ramp/lift structure;
- e The force should be maintained for a period of not less than 0.2 seconds; and
- f The test should be carried out on a representative section of the vehicle structure together with any fitting provided in the vehicle which is likely to contribute to the strength or rigidity of the structure.

The forces referred to above are:

A force equal to 20 times the weight of the complete ramp/lift structure i.e. force
(N) = 20 x ramp mass (kg) x 9.81

The test above should fail unless the following requirements are met:

- a no part of the system should have failed, or should have become detached from its anchorage or from the vehicle during the test;
- b the ramp/lift should be capable of deployment after completion of the test;
- c no part of the system should be deformed to such an extent after completion of the test that, because of sharp edges or other protrusions, the part is capable of causing injury.

APPENDIX 6

Wheelchair Tie Down Anchorage Requirements

These requirements have been significantly influenced by the Motability UK and the testing organisation STATUS.

A static test should be carried out on the anchorage points for both the wheelchair restraint system and the wheelchair occupant restraints in accordance with the requirements below:

- 1
 - a the forces specified in paragraph 2 should be applied by means of a device reproducing the geometry of the wheelchair restraint system; i.e. rigid surrogate wheelchair with attachment points for front and rear restraints;
 - b the forces specified in paragraph 2 should be applied by means of a device reproducing the geometry of the wheelchair occupant restraint and by means of a traction device specified in paragraph 5.3.4 of Annex 1 of the 76/115/EEC as amended; and supported on the device defined in (a);
 - c the forces in (a) and (b) above should be applied simultaneously in the forward direction and at an angle of between 5° and 15° above the horizontal plane;
 - d the forces in (a) above should be applied in the rearward direction and at an angle of between 5° and 15° above the horizontal plane;
 - e the forces should be applied as rapidly as possible (a maximum load introduction time of ten seconds) through the central vertical axis of the wheelchair space;
 - f the force should be maintained for a period of not less than 0.2 seconds; and
 - g the test should be carried out on a representative section of the vehicle structure together with any fitting provided in the vehicle which is likely to contribute to the strength or rigidity of the structure. Only the components of the wheelchair restraint and occupant restraint devices which form part of the anchorage with the vehicle are required for the purposes of the test;
- 2 The forces referred to in paragraph 1 are.
 - a in the case of anchorages provided for the wheelchair restraint system:
 - i 22250N ± 200N applied in the longitudinal plane of the vehicle and towards the front of the vehicle at a height of not less than 200mm and not more than 300mm measured vertically from the floor of the wheelchair space;
 - ii 11100N ± 200N applied in the longitudinal plane of the vehicle and towards the rear of the vehicle at a height of not less than 200mm and not more than 300mm measured vertically from the floor of the wheelchair space;
 - b in the case of anchorages provided for a wheelchair occupant restraint system, the forces should be in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 5.4 of Annex 1 of Directive 76/115/EEC as amended for M1 vehicles;
- 3 A test in paragraph 1 should fail unless the following requirements are met:
 - a no part of the system should have failed, or should have become detached from its anchorage or from the vehicle during the test;
 - b mechanisms to release the wheelchair and user should be capable of release after completion of the test;
 - c no part of the system should be deformed to such an extent after completion of the test that, because of sharp edges or other protrusions, the part is capable of causing injury.

APPENDIX 7

EC Seat Directive Numbers

The relevant Type Approval Regulations applicable to seat strength are 74/408/EEC, as amended or equivalent ECE Regulation 17.03.

Within the new Framework Directive 2007/46/EC certain relaxations to Directive 74/408/EEC are applicable for vehicles approved as wheelchair accessible vehicles under Annex XI, Appendix 3, as follows:

- Appropriate information shall be made available to the vehicle owner that a wheelchair used as a seat in the vehicle must be capable of withstanding the forces transmitted by the tie-down mechanism during the various driving conditions.
- Appropriate adaptations may be made to the seats of the vehicle provided that their anchorages, mechanisms and head restraints guarantee the same level of performance provided for in the Directive.

The relevant Type Approval Regulations applicable to safety belt anchorages are 76/115/EEC, as amended or equivalent ECE Regulation 14.06.

Within the new Framework Directive 2007/46/EC certain relaxations to Directive 76/115/EEC are applicable for vehicles approved as wheelchair accessible vehicles under Annex XI, Appendix 3, as follows:

- Each wheelchair location shall be fitted with an integrated restraint system which consists of a restraint system for the wheelchair and a restraint system for the wheelchair user.
- Anchorages for restraint systems shall resist forces as prescribed in Directive 76/115/EEC and in Standard ISO 10542-1: 2001.
- Webbing and hardware intended to secure the wheelchair (tie-down mechanisms) shall meet the requirements of Directive 77/541/EEC and of the relevant part of Standard ISO 10542.
- Tests shall be performed by the technical service which has been appointed for testing and checking in accordance with the Directives referred to above. The criteria are those included in these Directives. Tests shall be performed with the surrogate wheelchair described in Standard ISO 10542.

The relevant Type Approval Regulations applicable to safety belts are 77/541/EEC as amended, or equivalent ECE Regulation 16.04 as amended.

Within the new Framework Directive 2007/46/EC certain relaxations to Directive 77/541/EEC are applicable for vehicles approved as wheelchair accessible vehicles under Annex XI, Appendix 3, as follows:

- When, due to the conversion, anchorage points for the safety belts need to be moved outside the tolerance provided for in point 2.7.8.1. of Annex I to Directive 77/541/EEC, the technical service shall check whether the alteration constitutes a worst case or not. If that is the case, the test provided for in Annex VII to Directive 77/541/EEC shall be performed. Extension to the EC Type Approval does not need to be issued.

The relevant Type Approval Regulations applicable to head restraints are 78/932/EEC as amended or equivalent ECE Regulation 25.04.

APPENDIX 8

Taxi Roof Sign Regulations Guide

Note: this does not purport to be a legal interpretation of the legislation but is simply an informative guide.

- 1 The sign shall be constructed of a durable material, be weatherproof and capable of being securely mounted on the roof of the vehicle so that it is not subject to vibration likely to damage the electric light installation required under paragraph 5 below.
- 2 The dimensions of the sign shall be such that the surface of the sign which is capable of being illuminated shall not be more than 120 millimetres approximately and not less than 110 millimetres approximately in height and not more than 1,100 millimetres approximately in length. (\pm 20mm)
- 3
 - a The front and rear faces of the sign shall each be divided into three sections of equal size.
 - b The central sections on each face of the sign shall display the word 'TAXI' or, in the Irish language, 'TACSAÍ' in yellow letters on a dark blue background of low light transmittance. No letter shall be more than 90 millimetres high or more than 16 millimetres in stroke width.
 - c The sections of the sign on the left of the sign as viewed from the rear of the vehicle and on the right of the sign as viewed from the front shall have a yellow background and shall display on that background in black letters or numerals as the case may be:
 - i the licence number, each numeral of which shall be approximately 89 millimetres in height; the strokes for each numeral shall be approximately 16 millimetres broad; the total width of every numeral except the numeral '1' shall be approximately 63 millimetres and the spacing between the nearest parts of adjoining numerals shall be approximately 7 millimetres, and
 - ii to the left or right hand side of the licence number, the words 'licence number' or, in the Irish language, 'uimhir cheadúnais'.
 - d No letter or numeral displayed on the remaining sections of each face of the sign shall exceed 70 millimetres in height.
- 4
 - a Subject to subparagraph (b), the panel on the right of the sign as viewed from the rear of the vehicle and on the left of the sign as viewed from the front of the vehicle shall contain only:
 - the contact details in relation to the taxi or wheelchair accessible taxi,
 - the contact details of the dispatch operator, as appropriate, or
 - the name of a small public service vehicle representative body.
 - A wheelchair accessible taxi shall display on the panel on the right of the sign as viewed from the rear of the vehicle or on the left of the sign as viewed from the front of the vehicle the following symbol or a substantially similar symbol, which symbol shall be approximately 90 millimetres in height:
 - b Where the panel on the right of the sign as viewed from the rear of the vehicle or on the left of the sign as viewed from the front of the vehicle remains blank, its background shall be yellow in colour.
- 5
 - a The sign shall be capable of being lit by means of an internal electric light installation.
 - b The sign when lit shall not show a red light to the front or a white light to the rear.
 - c The sign when lit shall emit a diffused light and shall be designed to emit a light of a brightness not exceeding 400 candela per square metre of the illuminated area of the sign.
- 6 A taxi sign shall at no time be so defaced, obscured or altered in such a manner that the word 'TAXI' or 'TACSAÍ' or the licence number are rendered illegible or partly illegible.



APPENDIX 9

Taximeter Regulations Guide

Note: this does not purport to be a legal interpretation of the legislation but is simply an informative guide.

A taximeter fitted to a taxi or wheelchair accessible taxi shall:

- a be securely attached to the vehicle so that the taximeter cannot be detached or be caused to become inaccurate by vibration of the engine or by the motion of the vehicle,
- b be in such position on the vehicle as to enable a passenger inside the vehicle easily to see and read the taximeter,
- c have the transmitter cable connecting the taximeter with the wheels or the driving mechanism of the vehicle so situated and so protected by an outer cover as to render damage to the cable unlikely,
- d be fitted with a device capable of printing automatically a receipt showing the fare charged for a hire, and
- e be in good order, repair and condition and subject to the terms of the Metrology Act 1996 (No. 27 of 1996) have affixed the mark or marks signifying conformity with that Act.

APPENDIX 10

Pilot Schemes

Introduction

The Commission committed in its consultation on Vehicle Standards to initiate a number of pilot programmes to include induction loop and microphone, swivel passenger seat, audible taximeter, safety screens and in-vehicle CCTV.

As part of the initiative the Commission invited all of the industry to take part in such pilots, at no cost, to ascertain the effectiveness of including any or all of the above in SPSVs in the long term. A very low response was received from the industry with only some 60 licence holders offering to take part in the pilot schemes. The Commission will commence the pilot schemes in early 2008 and will report in mid 2008 to the industry as to the feasibility of introduction of all or any of the extra features. If the result of the pilot schemes show effective results with a reasonable cost included, licence holders will be encouraged to include the features in their next vehicle purchase and any licence holders who include any or all of such initiatives shall be awarded the Commission 'Quality Assurance Mark'.

As part of the pilot schemes the Commission will evaluate the effectiveness and examine the costs involved.

Induction Loop

The results of the pilot scheme will be available by mid 2008 and will be distributed to the industry through the Commission industry newsletter. Discussions will also be held with the industry representative bodies as to the feasibility of including an induction loop in standard taxis, hackneys and limousines. Licence holders who choose to install an induction loop shall be awarded the Commission 'Quality Assurance Mark'.

However, an induction loop will be mandatory for wheelchair accessible vehicles with dividing screens between driver and passenger from 2008.

Swivel Passenger Seat

The results of the pilot scheme will be available by mid 2008 and will be distributed to the industry through the Commission industry newsletter. Discussions will also be held with the industry representative bodies as to the feasibility of including a swivel seat in the long term.

The Commission acknowledges the cost and technical requirements to replace a standard vehicle seat with a swivel seat. It is important to note that a swivel seat is considered to mean a complete seat assembly that maintains wherever practicable, the original safety features and design considerations and is professionally installed and maintained. The current cost of a swivel seat for a standard taxi or hackney range from €2100 – €4600.

Licence holders who choose to install a swivel seat shall be awarded the Commission 'Quality Assurance Mark'.

APPENDIX 10

Pilot Schemes continued

Audible Taximeter

The Commission to date has not found a supplier in Ireland for audible taxi meters. Continued efforts are being conducted to ascertain suppliers in the EC. When the Commission has established a supplier the pilot scheme can commence. If this can take place by early 2008, the results of the pilot scheme will be available by mid 2008 and will be distributed to the industry through the Commission industry newsletter. Discussions will also be held with the industry representative bodies as to the feasibility of including an audible taximeter in the long term.

Safety Screens

A security screen between the driver and passenger can provide a level of protection and reassurance to drivers. The choice of a safety screen remains with the driver. Current costs for safety screens are between €360 – €665.

Screens will often be of a universal design and may not be as beneficial as envisaged. Their universal nature means that in some installations an excessive gap may exist between screen and the vehicle body that would defeat the intended purpose of improved protection. The pilot scheme will determine the usefulness of such screens in a variety of popular vehicles. The results will be published in 2008 to provide further guidance.

In-vehicle CCTV

The results from the pilot scheme will be published in 2008 to provide guidance for drivers.

Drivers, licence holders and operators should familiarise themselves with the law regarding recorded images and Data Protection. An excellent summary can be found here courtesy of the Data Protection Commissioner, <http://www.dataprotection.ie/viewdoc.asp?m=m&fn=/documents/guidance/cctv.htm>

Drivers, licence holders and operators proposing to fit security cameras should ensure that the provider is properly licensed by the Private Security Authority. The choice of any in-vehicle CCTV system remains with the driver.

Commission Quality Assurance Programme

The Commission Quality Assurance Mark shall be developed during 2008 on a pilot basis. Details of the scheme will be forwarded to all licence holders through the Commission industry newsletter. The award of the Quality Mark will be to those licence holders who achieve a high level of service and in particular to those licence holders who include accessibility features in their vehicles as outlined in the pilot schemes. Vehicles which are newer, in pristine condition, larger than average, of higher quality and fitted with more luxurious options e.g. air conditioning, are some of the features which will be included in the scheme.

APPENDIX 11

Power Lift Requirements

In relation to power lifts the following shall apply:

- A vehicle-mounted power-operated lift may be provided. Specific test requirements for secondary safety (impact resistance) are detailed in Appendix 5.
- Power lifts shall comply with the requirements of I.S. EN 1756-2 2004 and Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) 1998 or equivalent national regulations.
- Any such equipment shall be maintained in good working order and be available for use at all times. The LOLER Regulations require that personnel lifts are tested and certified every six months by a competent person.
- A Safe Working Load (SWL) marking shall be displayed.
- The minimum intrinsically flat platform size shall be 750mm x 1200mm or consistent in size with the wheelchair space.
- A power lift shall be capable of operation by means of a control situated adjacent to the lift which itself shall only be capable of operation by means of a master control situated in the driver's cab.
- A power lift shall produce an audible signal when in operation.
- A power lift shall be capable of being manually operated in the event of power failure unless there are also fitted portable ramps or similar meeting the same requirements as for ramps mentioned elsewhere in this section.
- A power lift shall not be capable of operation when the vehicle is in motion; an interlock related to the handbrake warning system is acceptable. (In this paragraph 'master control' means a control which enables another control to activate the relevant system, but which is not itself alone capable of activating that system.)

Notes

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