

Australian Capital Territory

Road Transport (Public Passenger Services) (Minimum Service Standards—Taxi Network) Approval 2006 (No 2)*

Disallowable instrument DI2006–27

made under the

Road Transport (Public Passenger Services) Regulation 2002, section 18B (Minimum service standards for regulated services)

1 Name of instrument

This instrument is the *Road Transport (Public Passenger Services) (Minimum Service Standards—Taxi Network) Approval 2006 (No 2)*.

2 Commencement

This instrument commences on the day after notification.

3 Approval

I approve the standards contained in Schedule 1 as the Minimum Service Standards for the operation of a taxi network.

4 Revocation

I revoke Disallowable instrument DI2006-21 notified on 9 February 2006.

Michael John Zissler
Road Transport Authority

14 February 2006

*Name amended under Legislation Act, s 60

Authorised by the ACT Parliamentary Counsel—also accessible at www.legislation.act.gov.au

SCHEDULE 1

MINIMUM SERVICE STANDARDS FOR TAXI NETWORKS

PART 1 Minimum Service Standard for the Making, Management and Auditing of Records and Systems Required to be Kept under the Act

- 1.1 A Taxi Network must, within two (2) calendar months from the end of each financial year, lodge with the Road Transport Authority (the Authority) the report of an independent auditor of an audit conducted of the network's monthly statistics and performance in relation to telephone bookings at clause 5.3 and 5.4 (if appropriate) and waiting times at clause 6.1.

PART 2 Minimum Service Standard for the Operation of a Taxi Network

- 2.1 A Taxi Network must:

- (1) within 30 days of commencement of these Minimum Service Standards or of becoming accredited, as appropriate, give affiliated taxi service operators and taxi drivers a copy of the Taxi Network's accepted service standards and rules governing the operation of the network;
- (2) advise the Authority of any affiliated taxi service operator who connects to, or ceases to be affiliated with the network, within 24 hours of the change in affiliation status;
- (3) not provide network services to an affiliated taxi service operator whose accreditation is suspended, cancelled or lapses;
- (4) acknowledge all calls from taxi drivers using appropriate recognised codes;
- (5) equitably apply all standards and procedures to affiliated taxi service operators and taxi drivers;
- (6) ensure that all hirings, apart from hirings for people in wheelchairs, are ordinarily treated on a sequential basis with no prejudice. (An example of an instance when this requirement may be waived is if a parent asks that their child not be driven by a particular taxi driver.) This includes not adopting any radio procedures that are likely to disadvantage the public (for example alerting taxi drivers to the fact that a booking for a taxi is for a short journey only); and

- (7) not to participate in, promote or encourage, wilful dishonest behaviour towards another Taxi Network.
- 2.2 Within three months of commencement of these Minimum Service Standards, a Taxi Network must publish a Customer Service Charter reflecting the Minimum Service Standards at least in relation to complaints handling, telephone waiting times and taxi waiting times.
- 2.3 A Taxi Network must:
- (1) provide the Authority with current lists of all drivers affiliated with the network, including each driver's full name and address, and driver licence or taxi driver authority number, at any time when a driver becomes affiliated or ceases to be affiliated with the network;
 - (2) have processes in place to ensure that any new driver's details (as set out in 13.1(1)) are provided to the authority before the person commences driving for the network;
 - (3) if notified by the Authority that a driver's authorisation to drive taxis has been suspended or cancelled, or has expired, remove the driver's access to the network booking system.

PART 3 Minimum Service Standard for the Training of Taxi Drivers

- 3.1 A Taxi Network must:
- (1) train taxi drivers using the network's equipment on the efficient operation of the equipment, including alarms, vehicle tracking devices and security cameras in taxis;
 - (2) give the Authority a copy of any in-house training programs that are implemented by the network and undertaken by taxi drivers.

PART 4 Minimum Service Standard for the Monitoring of the Safety of Taxi Drivers

- 4.1 A Taxi Network must:
- (1) do all that it can to ensure that: taxis are cleaned and maintained (for example, regularly inspecting taxis), and in-house driver training addresses all relevant public safety and occupational health and safety laws and regulations applying within the ACT;
 - (2) at all times when taxis are connected to the network, monitor the equipment that registers the activation of alarms in taxis and ensure the prompt response by network staff to an activated alarm; and

- (3) adhere to the Standards for Security Cameras approved by the Authority if any taxi connected to the network is fitted with a security camera system.

PART 5 Minimum Service Standard for the Operation of a Taxi Booking Service

5.1 A Taxi Network must ensure that:

- (1) a booking service is provided (directly or through another entity) to the public twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week;
- (2) appropriate technicians (whether employees or contractors of the network) will be available at all times to ensure that faults in transmission can be responded to within an hour after they occur;
- (3) all network equipment is maintained by appropriate technicians (whether employees or contractors of the network);
- (4) arrangements are in place that will, in the event of a breakdown in the central transmitter, permit continuous access to and from the network by all taxis affiliated with the network;
- (5) appropriate facilities (whether those of the Taxi Network or of a contractor of the network) are available to service and repair the network's equipment expeditiously;
- (6) a copy of the contract for the service and repair of the network's equipment is supplied to the Authority;
- (7) training programs are undertaken by all users of the network, about customer relations and the use of any communications equipment, alarms, vehicle tracking devices and security cameras used by the network;
- (8) arrangements are in place to allow off-loads to be dispatched to other taxi networks 5 minutes from the time of the original request for a taxi if the request is not responded to by a taxi affiliated with the Taxi Network;
- (9) a person who books a taxi with the Taxi Network is given the opportunity to accept a hiring from another taxi network or remain with the Taxi Network;
- (10) all bookings that have been off-loaded to another network, remain available to taxis affiliated with the Taxi Network;
- (11) if a booking has been off-loaded to another network and is accepted by that network, the customer is not charged any additional fees;

- (12) an up-to-date record is maintained of any zones that are established in relation to the dispatch of taxis and the method for identifying those zones; and
- (13) a description of each zone established is supplied to the Authority.

5.2 A Taxi Network must:

- (1) after 12 months of operating as a Taxi Network, provide sufficient telephonists and telephone lines or an automated computer system to enable at least 80% of calls for taxi hirings to be connected to the booking service within 20 seconds;
- (2) ensure that at least 70% of callers for taxi hirings other than wheelchair hirings are able to make a booking with an operator or an automated computer system within one (1) minute, and at least 90% of callers for taxi hirings other than wheelchair hirings are able to make a booking with an operator or an automated computer system within two (2) minutes;
- (3) if providing network services to wheelchair accessible taxis (WATs), ensure that 70% of callers for wheelchair taxi hirings are able to make a booking with the WAT manager (between 7.00am and 7.00pm) and an operator or an automated computer system (between 7.00pm and 7.00am) within one (1) minute, and 90% of callers for wheelchair hirings are able to make a booking with the WAT manager (between 7.00am and 7.00pm) and an operator or an automated computer system (between 7.00pm and 7.00 am) within two (2) minutes;
- (4) strive to provide a telephone service whereby 100% of calls are connected to the booking service and responded to immediately.

5.3 A Taxi Network must submit a quarterly report, for telephone waiting times for taxi hirings other than wheelchair hirings, including the following:

- (1) total number of calls for each month within the quarterly reporting period;
- (2) percentage of callers in the quarterly reporting period that were able to make a booking with an operator or an automated computer system within one (1) minute;
- (3) percentage of callers in the quarterly reporting period that were able to make a booking with an operator or an automated computer system within two (2) minutes;

- (4) percentage of calls for in the quarterly reporting period that were able to make a booking with an operator or an automated computer system within 10 minutes; and
 - (5) percentage of calls in the quarterly reporting period that were able to make a booking with an operator or an automated computer system within 20 minutes.
- 5.4 A Taxi Network providing network services for WATs must submit a quarterly report, for telephone waiting times for wheelchair hirings to include the following:
- (1) total number of calls for each month in the quarterly reporting period;
 - (2) percentage of callers in the quarterly reporting period that were able to make a booking with the WAT manager (7.00am-7.00pm), or an operator or an automated computer system (7.00pm and 7.00am), within one (1) minute;
 - (3) percentage of callers in the quarterly reporting period that were able to make a booking with the WAT manager (7.00am-7.00pm), or an operator or an automated computer system (7.00pm and 7.00am), within two (2) minutes;
 - (4) percentage of callers in the quarterly reporting period that were able to make a booking with the WAT manager (7.00am-7.00pm), or an operator or an automated computer system (7.00pm and 7.00am), within 10 minutes; and
 - (5) percentage of callers in the quarterly reporting period that were able to make a booking with the WAT manager (7.00am-7.00pm), or an operator or an automated computer system (7.00pm and 7.00am), within 20 minutes.
- 5.5 A Taxi Network must submit the required reports at clause 5.3 and clause 5.4 in an excel spreadsheet set by the Authority. (Electronic spreadsheets are available on request). Separate reports must be provided for calls to the WAT Manager (7.00am-7.00pm) for clauses 5.4 (2), (3), (4) and (5).

PART 6 Minimum Service Standard for Maximum Waiting Times Performance Standards

- 6.1 A Taxi Network must, after 12 months of operating as a network:
- (1) meet or exceed the following performance standards set by the Authority:

Peak Periods (8.00am – 10.00am & 3.00pm – 5.00pm Monday - Friday)

- (a) 85% of all hirings (apart from those involving a wheelchair in a WAT) have a maximum waiting time of no more than 18 minutes
- (b) 95% of all hirings (apart from those involving a wheelchair in a WAT) have a maximum waiting time of no more than 30 minutes

At all other times

- (c) 85% of all hirings have a maximum waiting time of no more than 10 minutes
- (d) 95% of all hirings have a maximum waiting time of no more than 20 minutes; and

for a taxi network providing services to WATs,

Peak Periods (8.00am – 9.00am and 2.00pm – 4.00pm Monday to Friday)

- (e) 85% of hirings involving a wheelchair in a WAT have a maximum waiting time of no more than 18 minutes
- (f) 95% of hirings involving a wheelchair in a WAT have a maximum waiting time of no more than 30 minutes

At all other times

- (g) 85% of all hirings have a maximum waiting time of no more than 10 minutes
- (h) 95% of all hirings have a maximum waiting time of no more than 20 minutes;

- (2) ensure the maximum waiting time for a person who requests a taxi as soon as possible by telephone is measured from the time when the person ends the telephone conversation with the taxi network to the time when the taxi driver notifies the arrival of the taxi at the place requested by the hirer;
- (3) ensure the maximum waiting time for a person who requests a taxi at a specified time is measured by the time elapsed from the time specified to the time when the taxi driver notifies the arrival of the taxi at the place requested by the hirer;
- (4) ensure that notwithstanding the performance standards in clause 6.1(1), a Taxi Network that provides services to wheelchair accessible taxis must, by December 2007, ensure that the network achieves waiting times for taxi hirings involving a wheelchair at least equal to the waiting time performance of taxi hirings other than wheelchair hirings;

- (5) ensure that when a booking for a particular hiring is off-loaded to another network, the total waiting time is recorded by the original network with whom the booking was made and is included in that network's reporting on performance standards;
- (6) ensure that the average waiting time for any one of the metropolitan districts under the *Districts Act 2002* (ie Canberra Central, Woden Valley, Weston Creek, Tuggeranong, Belconnen & Gungahlin) is no more than 15 minutes longer than the overall Canberra average waiting time.

6.2 A Taxi Network must comply with the following Maximum Waiting Times Reporting Standards:

- (1) the reporting period is calculated over a one (1) month period, unless otherwise requested by the Authority;
- (2) a Taxi Network must measure and report on the number of all taxi hirings (excluding rank hirings) for the following waiting times:

Peak Periods

- Less than 10 minutes
- between 10 and 18 minutes
- between 18 and 30 minutes
- between 30 and 60 minutes
- more than 60 minutes

All Other Times

- Less than 10 minutes
- between 10 and 20 minutes
- between 20 and 30 minutes
- between 30 and 60 minutes
- more than 60 minutes.

6.3 A Taxi Network must:

- (1) measure and report waiting times for hirings other than those involving a wheelchair in a WAT as follows:

Peak Periods

- Hirings with a maximum waiting time of no more than 18 minutes:
Hirings _____ = _____ %/85%
- Hirings with a maximum waiting time of no more than 30 minutes:
Hirings _____ = _____ %/95%

All other times

- Hirings with a maximum waiting time of no more than 10 minutes:
Hirings _____ = _____ %/85%
- Hirings with a maximum waiting time of no more than 20 minutes:
Hirings _____ = _____ %/95%.

6.4 A Taxi Network providing services to WATs must:

- (1) measure and report waiting times for hirings involving a wheelchair in a WAT as follows:

Peak Periods

- Hirings with a maximum waiting time of no more than 18 minutes:
Hirings _____ = _____ %/85%
- Hirings with a maximum waiting time of no more than 30 minutes:
Hirings _____ = _____ %/95%.

All other times

- Hirings with a maximum waiting time of no more than 10 minutes:
Hirings _____ = _____ %/85%
- Hirings with a maximum waiting time of no more than 20 minutes:
Hirings _____ = _____ %/95%

6.5 A Taxi Network may adjust the waiting times for each hiring involving a wheelchair, each reporting period, to compensate for the taximeter not being engaged until after the wheelchair has been loaded and tied down.

6.6 The adjustment permitted under clause 6.5 will be provided by the Authority at the beginning of each financial year.

6.7 In reporting under this standard, a taxi network must give full details including time, locations and pick-up point for any hirers who have waited sixty (60) minutes or more.

6.8 Any hiring that involves a wheelchair in a WAT that exceeds a sixty (60) minute wait must be reported separately at the end of each calendar month and be identified by:

- the location
- time
- length of wait
- WATs that did not accept hiring when offered.

6.9 A Taxi Network providing services to WATs must also record, for each WAT:

- the number of allocated school hirings
 - the number of booked wheelchair hirings
 - the number of standard hirings
 - the number of high occupancy hirings.
- 6.10 Each category in clause 6.9 must also be provided as a percentage of the individual WAT's total number of hirings.
- 6.11 Taxi Network providing services to WATs must advise at the end of the reporting period if any WAT that is affiliated with the network was not available for any twenty-four (24) hour period or longer.
- 6.12 The Taxi Network must comply with the following standards relating to the production of reports:
- (1) submit monthly statistical reports to the Authority within fourteen (14) days from the end of the reporting period, unless otherwise agreed to by the Authority;
 - (2) provide within fourteen (14) days from the end of the reporting period, reports on hirings that experience a wait of sixty (60) minutes or more;
 - (3) submit reports electronically to the Authority;
 - (4) comply with the report formatting standards at clauses 6.13 and 6.14.
- 6.13 A Taxi Network must submit the monthly performance report for all taxi hirings apart from those involving a wheelchair in a WAT for:
- (1) Part A – Waiting Times;
 - (2) Part B – Performance Against Standards;
 - (3) Part C – Details of Each Sixty Minute or More Wait; and
 - (4) Part D – 24 Hour Hiring Waiting Time.
- 6.14 A Taxi Network must submit the monthly performance report for hirings involving a wheelchair in a WAT for:
- (1) Part A – Waiting Times;
 - (2) Part B – Performance Against Standards;
 - (3) Part C – Details of Each Sixty Minute or More Wait;
 - (4) Part D – 24 Hour Hiring Waiting Time; and
 - (5) Part E – WATS Report.

- 6.15 A Taxi Network must submit Parts A, B & C in the format provided by the Authority for all hirings including hirings involving a wheelchair in a WAT if the network provides services to WATs.
- 6.16 A Taxi Network must submit Part D – 24 Hour Waiting Time, in the EXCEL format provided by the Authority for all hirings including hirings involving a wheelchair in a WAT if the network provides services to WATs. A separate report is required for each type of taxi service operated.
- 6.17 A Taxi Network that provides services to WATs must submit Part E – WATS Report in the EXCEL format provided by the Authority for hirings involving a wheelchair in a WAT.
- 6.18 A Taxi Network must, during the first 12 months of operating as a network, strive to meet the performance standards.

PART 7 Minimum Service Standard for Services for Wheelchair Accessible Taxis

- 7.1 A Taxi Network providing services for WATs must:
- (1) ensure that procedures are in place for drivers of WATs to accept a wheelchair hiring if on attendance at a location for a standard hiring, a person in a wheelchair requires such transport;
 - (2) ensure that the Authority is advised of any taxi driver of a WAT who refuses to accept, or does not respond within a reasonable time to, a request for a hiring for a person in a wheelchair;
 - (3) ensure that a dedicated manager for WATs (the WAT manager) is available between the hours of 7.00am and 7.00pm weekdays and Christmas Day;
 - (4) ensure that by 7.30am on every day of the year, all wheelchair hirings booked before 12 midnight on the previous day, are allocated to a WAT so as to:
 - (a) minimise waiting times for passengers in wheelchairs,
 - (b) minimise 'dead running' for each WAT,
 - (c) facilitate the allocation of long standing hirings with a particular WAT to that WAT;
 - (5) implement strategies to ensure each WAT operator has fair and equitable access to wheelchair hirings, including using incentives, penalties or other mechanisms to ensure the less attractive jobs are covered;
 - (6) establish a dedicated phone number for wheelchair hirings only;

- (7) ensure the dedicated phone number for wheelchair hirings connects directly to the WAT manager, or a person assisting the WAT manager during the hours specified in clause 7.1(3);
- (8) ensure the dedicated phone number for wheelchair hirings is diverted to the taxi network's booking service outside the hours specified at clause 7.1(3);
- (9) ensure that all wheelchair hirings booked through the network's booking system in accordance with 7.1.(8) for the following day are provided to the WAT manager to allow compliance with clause 7.1(4);
- (10) ensure that all wheelchair hirings booked through the network's booking system in accordance with 7.1.(8) for the same day are available to taxi drivers 30 minutes prior to the requested pick up time;
- (11) provide a two-way voice radio for the exclusive use of the WAT manager and all WATs;
- (12) ensure that every person who books a WAT through the network is given the opportunity of leaving a contact phone number for the network to use in the event of a delayed pick-up;
- (13) in every case where a pick-up for wheelchair hiring will be more than 30 minutes after the booked or agreed time of pick-up, the network must endeavour to contact the person who booked the wheelchair hiring of this delay if a contact number is provided at clause 7.1(12);
- (14) accept a request from a person who pre books a wheelchair hiring for a preferred driver for that hiring;
- (15) ensure that the WAT manager, or a person assisting the WAT manager, endeavours to meet the request from a person who requests a preferred driver;
- (16) keep a register for all regular WAT clients to include:
 - (a) name,
 - (b) address,
 - (c) contact phone number,
 - (d) any special needs,
 - (e) type of wheelchair used; and
- (17) ensure that records are kept to allow the Authority to take action against a WAT driver or an operator who does not give priority to a wheelchair hiring.

PART 8 Minimum Service Standard for How Contraventions of Road Transport Legislation by Taxi Drivers will be Handled

- 8.1 Within three months of commencement of the Minimum Service Standards, a Taxi Network must develop and provide to the Authority, a taxi driver monitoring and disciplinary program containing:
- (1) the arrangements and processes for dealing with drivers who have been reported to the network as having breached the Road Transport Legislation or the networks rules, or are alleged to have engaged in illegal or harassing behaviour;
 - (2) the arrangements for investigating alleged breaches;
 - (3) the appeals process;
 - (4) escalation processes which could include referrals, graded penalties and/or disciplinary action such as suspension from the network;
 - (5) the arrangements for identifying, and notifying the Authority of, very serious disciplinary matters (for example, the linkages between the complaints and disciplinary processes, and the establishment of 'triggers' for when a series of complaints about a driver warrant investigation by the network or referral to the Authority or when a single complaint is considered serious enough to be referred to the Authority);
 - (6) processes for tracking the number of occasions the disciplinary process has been applied to each driver.
- 8.2 A Taxi Network providing services to WATs must include in the taxi driver monitoring program, processes and procedures to address specific breaches by WAT drivers including:
- (1) a failure to operate the dispatch system when the WAT is operational;
 - (2) a failure to notify the WAT manager in a timely fashion of any private hirings accepted; and
 - (3) a refusal to take a wheelchair passenger when reasonably directed by the WAT manager.

PART 9 Minimum Service Standard for the Processing of ACT Taxi Subsidy Scheme (TSS) Vouchers and Payments

9.1 A Taxi Network must:

- (1) develop and implement procedures for processing TSS vouchers and payments;
- (2) assist taxi drivers and operators in completing and processing TSS vouchers in accordance with the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services Rules;
- (3) ensure that network staff who process TSS payments are appropriately trained in accordance with the Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services Rules;
- (4) ensure records kept for the program are capable of being audited at all times; and
- (5) provide a copy of the procedures for processing TSS vouchers and payments to the Authority.

PART 10 Minimum Service Standard for Customer Inquiries and Complaints

10.1 A Taxi Network must:

- (1) respond to the Authority within seven (7) days after a customer complaint has been forwarded to the Taxi Network by the Authority; and
- (2) develop procedures for handling and recording customer complaints and dispute resolution including:
 - (a) recording all complaints, including telephone and written complaints;
 - (b) recording contact details of complainants;
 - (c) for serious complaints regarding the personal safety of passengers, making follow-up calls/inquiries with complainants;
 - (d) guidance for staff on reporting frequent and/or serious complaints to management.

10.2 A Taxi Network must meet or exceed the following standards for responding to complaints:

Standard for Responding to Complaints	Required Measure
a. First response to complainant within 3 days	Greater than 90%
b. Complaints substantially acted on within 14 days	Greater than 90%
c. Perception that the industry is responsive (<i>to be measured by Authority in annual taxi survey</i>)	Rated "Satisfactory" or Very Satisfactory" by 80% of respondents

10.3 A Taxi Network must:

- (1) provide a quarterly statistical report on the total numbers of complaints and resolutions;
- (2) submit the quarterly statistical report on (a) and (b) at clause 10.2 within fourteen (14) days from the end of the quarterly reporting period, unless otherwise agreed to by the Authority;
- (3) produce the report on (a) and (b) at clause 10.2 in an Excel format set by the Authority.

10.4 An Taxi Network must:

- (1) provide the Authority with procedures for customer complaints and resolution; and
- (2) provide training for staff on customer complaint and resolution processes.

PART 11 Minimum Service Standard for the Handling of Lost Property

11.1 A Taxi Network must:

- (1) develop and implement procedures for handling and recording lost property including:
 - (a) ensuring the security of stored lost property;
 - (b) notifying the Authority of the names and contact numbers of those of its employees who have responsibility for lost property;
 - (c) specifying the responsibilities of drivers;
 - (d) providing continuous public notification that the network operates a lost property service and the telephone number for the service; and

- (e) ensuring the receipt of lost property by the network seven (7) days a week.
- (2) ensure that any lost property is dealt with according to the procedures notified to the Authority and is disposed of in accordance with any directions given by the Authority.
- (3) provide a copy of the lost property procedures to the Authority.

PART 12 Minimum Service Standard for Adequate Number of taxis Available to Operate the Taxi Service

12.1 A Taxi Network must:

- (1) monitor the number of taxis operating during poor/inclement weather conditions and peak periods;
- (2) report to the Authority any period longer than 30 minutes when the network considers an inadequate number of taxis were available; and
- (3) ensure that arrangements are in place to adequately provide taxis equipped with baby capsules and child restraints when requested by a customer.