



## **COUNTRY TAXI LICENCE POLICY**

**This policy is developed pursuant to the Transport Coordination Act 1966.**

### **1 Overview:**

All vehicles operating for hire and reward in Western Australia must hold an appropriate licence issued by the State Government. Department of Transport (DoT) – Passenger Services Unit (PSBU) manages the issuing of all licences for all passenger vehicles used for hire and reward.

The PSBU issues four types of licences:

- **Taxi Licence (Country and Metropolitan)**
- Omnibus Licence
- Small Charter Vehicle Licence (SCV) - Metropolitan area
- Private Taxi (PT) - country areas

The Government has committed to working with the taxi industry to provide fair returns to drivers while offering the public an efficient, economical and safe service, and to ensure that there are appropriate numbers of taxis to meet reasonable consumer demand.

The country taxi industry is governed by Section 111B of the Transport Co-ordination Act 1966 and by the Transport (Country Taxi Car) Regulations 1982. DoT is currently charged with regulating the country taxi industry and does so in the following ways:

**The number of taxis:** There are a fixed number of Licences in each country area. In all towns that currently have taxis; DoT undertakes a review of the need for additional licences every three years. These reviews can be brought forward in instances where DoT, members of the public, the taxi industry or government feels that the demand for taxis has increased significantly or that the public is not being serviced effectively. The review process is undertaken by the regionally based Regional Manager who reviews changes in population, taxi demand and levels of service. In towns with more than five taxis an independent consultant undertakes a survey of residents to gauge their experiences with the taxi industry. The Regional Manager will undertake interviews with the local taxi companies, local businesses and government agencies to ascertain the need for additional licences. If the review process determines that there are insufficient taxis to cover demand in a certain country area, additional licences will be issued by way of a public advertising process. The advertising process involves advertising in the local paper/s that additional licences are being made available. An advertisement will be placed giving a summary of the plates available.

Interested parties will be able to receive an application package. This package will include an application form that needs to be completed. All applications will be assessed against four criteria including: business capacity and experience, customer service, enhancements to competition and preference to owner-driver.



**Fare schedules:** Taxi fares are set by the State Government by means of the *Country Taxi-Car (Fares and Charges) Regulations 1991*. Fares differ on a region by region basis and are increased consistent with movements in the Private Motoring Index (PMI). The PMI measures the movements in a range of motoring costs. In exceptional instances the local taxi industry or local DoT staff can submit additional information to support a higher increase and this will be considered.

**Vehicle standards:** There are currently no age limits on country taxis and no requirement for security cameras. Vehicles must pass the annual roadworthiness inspection and be maintained in a presentable condition, regardless of the age of the vehicle. The types of vehicles approved for use as a taxi are dependent on the specific local need as demonstrated to the satisfaction of DoT. In general, vehicles other than standard sedans, station sedans or people movers will usually not be licensed for use as a taxi. Where the licence states that the vehicle must be Multi-Purpose Taxi (MPT) the vehicle must be approved by DoT as suitable of accommodating at least one wheelchair. DoT has recently completed a thorough review of the country taxi industry, which sets out the proposed changes to the regulatory framework. The report and the recommendations can be found at [www.transport.wa.gov.au/taxis/country](http://www.transport.wa.gov.au/taxis/country)

## **2 Country Taxi Licence Types:**

There are a number of country taxi licences issued in the country. The type issued will be based on an assessment of the local requirements. The current taxi licence types include:

- Conventional taxi which requires a standard vehicle to be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Multi-purpose taxi - capable of carrying at least one wheelchair
- Peak-period taxi - which is only permitted to operate during peak periods, usually Friday and Saturday
- Peak-season taxi - which is only permitted to operated during peak seasons and special events.

Licences may resemble a combination of the above types depending on the local requirements.

## **3 Towns with no current taxi service**

DoT occasionally receives requests for a taxi licence in smaller towns that do not have an existing taxi service. Requests may come from local residents, the shire or a person who has identified that they would like to set up a taxi service themselves.

Where a new operator approaches DoT to set up a service, they will be required to complete the Country Taxi Application Form and must meet the minimum criteria.

In the case where the community or DoT identified the need for a taxi service and no prospective operator has come forward, a licence will be publicly advertised and applicants will need to complete the Country Taxi Application Form.



#### **4 Driver Licensing**

To drive a country taxi, a T extension is required on the drivers Motor Vehicle Licence. This is additional to holding an appropriate category of Motor Drivers Licence applicable to the type of vehicle being driven. [www.transport.wa.gov.au/taxis/15457.asp](http://www.transport.wa.gov.au/taxis/15457.asp)

#### **5 On-line information**

Further information regarding Taxis, Omnibuses, Private Taxis and Small Charter Vehicles is available on the Transport website at [www.transport.wa.gov.au](http://www.transport.wa.gov.au)