

# Top End Commercial Passenger Vehicles Forum MINUTES

Thursday 1 November 2018 | 10:30 am – 11:30 am  
Wanaka Room, Level 2, Energy House, 18 – 20 Cavenagh Street, Darwin

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## 1. Welcome

### Present

Pete Heffernan	City of Darwin
Shane de Wit	NT Airports
Jordan Schrapel	NT Airports
Des Crowe (Chair)	Australian Hotels Association
Ali Rkein	Industry Representative – Taxi Council NT
Glenn Murray	Industry Representative – Motor Omnibus
Ross Robertson	Industry Representative – Motor Omnibus
Ron Fleming	Industry Representative – Private Hire Car and Limousine
Bernie Ingram	Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics
Greg Turner	Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics
Simon Gillam	Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics
Shoma Norris (Secretariat)	Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics

### Invited guests

Doug Bell	Department of the Chief Minister
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### Apologies

Rebecca Bentley	NT Airports
Glen Hingley	Tourism Top End
Sarah Andrews	Australian Hotels Association
Melina Pachos	Industry Representative – Taxi (Darwin)
Sam Abolghasemi	Industry Representative – Taxi (Katherine)
Kais Alselawi	Industry Representative – Taxi (Gove)
Bill Piantoni	Industry Representative – Minibus (Darwin)
David Hannon	Industry Representative – Motor Omnibus
Arabella Ward (invited guest)	Department of the Chief Minister

## 2. General Business

### 2.1 Confirm Minutes from Previous Meeting 12 April 2018

The Chair welcomed all present, and an introduction of members was conducted. An opportunity for the group to comment on the previous meeting minutes was provided. The group confirmed and accepted the minutes from the April 2018 meeting.

### 2.2. Previous Action Items

a) *DIPL to recontact absent taxi networks to discuss representation.*

The Gove and Katherine representatives expressed their interest in remaining members of the forum, however both are apologies for this meeting. The Darwin representatives have been unavailable, the Department will make further attempts to contact them.

**Action item:** DIPL to continue to contact absent taxi networks to confirm their membership.

b) *DIPL to extend invitation to rideshare networks and Darwin International Airport.*

Efforts to contact rideshare networks have been unsuccessful thus far, however further attempts will be made. Representatives from NT Airports Pty Ltd are present, and welcomed into the group.

**Action item:** DIPL to invite rideshare networks to join forum.

c) *DIPL to consider publishing a guide on what constitutes an unsafe vehicle.*

The Department referred members to the *Commercial Passenger (Miscellaneous) Regulations 1992*, Part 4 section 9(4) which quotes "In this regulation, a vehicle is **unsafe** if it is likely to endanger any of the following:

- the safety of any person;
- public safety;
- any property."

The Department advised it would be difficult to specifically define what would constitute an unsafe vehicle, however agreed to add further information into information bulletins as a reference.

**Action item:** DIPL to add further information regarding unsafe vehicles into information bulletins, and circulate amongst forum members.

d) *DIPL to invite members to create a subcommittee.*

Excerpt from the Public Accounts Committee Report into the Taxi Industry (2017) "Public Accounts Committee (PAC) Recommendation 9: The Committee recommends that the Department and the Department of Tourism and Culture work collaboratively with the industry to enhance the role of taxis in providing tourist services."

During the previous meeting in April 2018, The Department advised focus has been broadened to point to point to support tourism. Discussion was held on how to better improve the forum to assist with recommendation nine. The group decided it would be beneficial to create a subcommittee to primarily focus on enhancing driver knowledge and their interactions with tourists.

Representatives from the Australian Hotels Association and the Private Hire Car/Limousine industry have expressed their interest in sitting on the subcommittee. The Department will allow some time for the new General Manager of Tourism NT, to settle into his position before extending an invitation, and organising the formation of the group.

**Action item:** DIPL to construct a subcommittee to focus on enhancing driver knowledge and their interactions with tourists prior to the next meeting.

e) *DIPL to provide statistics on new ID card entrants.*

The Department provided the below statistics on new Commercial Passenger Vehicle (CPV) identification cards issued between the dates 1 January 2017 and 21 September 2018:

- 387 Open Taxi ID cards;
- 462 Conditional Taxi ID cards;
- 172 Open minibus ID cards; and
- 215 Conditional minibus ID cards.

The Department advised of the training regime which was trialled for a twelve month period in 2017, and that these statistics are an effect of the trial.

The Taxi Council representative stated that the uptake of rideshare licences has been larger than expected, and that licence fees were decided based on a lower figure of rideshare vehicles predicted to enter the market. The Taxi Council suggested a review and re-evaluation of licence fees.

Members of the forum agreed, and a suggestion was made to write to the head of the agency or the Minister to request an evaluation prior to the expected 2020 review.

The Department agreed to provide trip data across all point to point services and the number of rideshare registrations as information to be put towards this request.

**Action item:** DIPL to provide the number of rideshare registrations and trip data across all point to point services.

f) *DIPL to present audit data at the next meeting.*

The Department informed that CPV Compliance Officers conducted 663 audits. During this period, 14 infringement notices and 17 driver vehicle compliance records were issued. Transport Inspectors issued two defect notices with two breaches of legislation discovered.

During the previous meeting, the forum asked the Department to approach the Executive Director and request the recruitment of additional CPV Compliance Officers. The Department is not able to employ additional Compliance Officers at this point in time; however, Transport Inspectors have been travelling with CPV Compliance Officers to enable them to better identify non-complaint commercial passenger vehicles.

g) *DIPL to provide a report on NTTSS members assigned to B-MPV.*

The Department provided statistical information on the Northern Territory Transport Subsidy Scheme (NTTSS), including the number of wheelchair dependent members assigned to the category B-MPV. As of November 2018 the NTTSS have a total of 1,476 members, 25.81% of which are B-MPV.

h) *DIPL to request additional data and statistics from the Department of Health and National Disability Services.*

Statistics on the number of wheelchairs funded by the Office of Disability were obtained from the Department of Health (DOH), and shared amongst the group. DOH specified that the total number of wheelchair dependent residents within the Northern Territory (NT) is unknown, as many wheelchairs are funded by other sources and funding streams.

It was suggested that a more accurate figure may be obtained from the National Census, and that this information should be sourced by the National Disability Services.

**Action item:** DIPL to contact National Disability Services to source National Census figures on the wheelchair dependent.

### **3. New Business**

#### **3.1 Presentation on the industry effects of the Alcohol Reform**

An invited guest from the Alcohol Review Implementation Team provided an educational presentation to the forum on the industry effects of the Alcohol Reform.

#### **3.2 Update on current Department projects**

The Department informed the group of the current Departmental Review of the Northern Territory Transport Subsidy Scheme, which is expected to conclude by the end of the year 2018. Outcomes of the review will not be available until early months of 2019.

The Department advised the group of the Department Mystery Shopper Campaign, which was conducted between the months of August and September 2018. This campaign predominantly focused on service provided by taxis and minibuses in the Darwin and Alice Springs regions. Results from this year's campaign identified an improvement in customer service with an 85% satisfaction rate, compared to the last Mystery Shopper Campaign held in 2016. The results also identified majority of unsatisfied customers where those who required wheelchair accessible vehicles.

Members of the forum queried whether CPV drivers would receive further training in regards to customer service for the wheelchair dependent. The Department assured that the Point to Point Forum are aware of the concerns the Mystery Shopper Campaign identified, and the requirement for further training for drivers; and will make recommendations for improvement.

The Department informed the group of the survey conducted amongst NTTSS members on the impacts of the introduction of the regulatory model and rideshare services, which was held between the months of September and October 2018. Results from this survey identified no negative impacts. However, the introduction of the regulatory model and rideshare services have had limited effect on the mobility impaired. This is because rideshare in the NT does not service the wheelchair dependent at present.

#### 4. Other Business

Members of the forum considered the entrance of the new members, and recommended the Terms of Reference (TOR) be shared with the group again.

**Action item:** DIPL to circulate Terms of Reference amongst members.

A member of the forum expressed their concerns, on what is perceived to be unfair treatment towards the introduction of ridesharing. The concerns were:

- potential rideshare drivers are able to obtain their 'h' (hire and reward) endorsement through the online radical system, where all other CPV categories must submit their applications manually at a Motor Vehicle Registry (MVR) Office;
- it was decided that networks would be responsible for training and endorsing their drivers, however the Department is now issuing CPV identification cards for the rideshare category without the platform's endorsement on applications;
- potential rideshare vehicles can be inspected by any Authorised Inspector, where all other categories must have their initial roadworthy inspection at the MVR Test Shed;
- rideshare drivers/vehicles are able to enter the market with inappropriate insurance policies; and
- the government publicised the introduction of rideshare based on the support of the industry. It was agreed that rideshare is where people transport other people in their own vehicles. But now drivers are driving other people's vehicles.

The Department responded with clarification of each concern, and further advice that the processes for rideshare have been implemented as a trial, and if proven successful may be expanded to all other CPV categories.

The Department informed the group of a Public Transport project to identify different types of antisocial behaviour, which will be trialed during the month.

NT Airports advised that four pick up bays have been made available for rideshare vehicles at the Darwin International Airport, however they are not frequently used.

#### 5. Next Meeting

The next meeting is anticipated to take place in February 2019.

**MEETING CLOSED: 11:57 AM**

## Top End Commercial Passenger Vehicles Forum Action List

Date Raised	Agenda Number	Action Item	Action Officer	Status as at October 2019
November 2018	2.2 a	DIPL to continue to contact absent taxi networks to confirm their membership.	DIPL	Complete
November 2018	2.2 b	DIPL to invite rideshare networks to join forum.	DIPL	Complete
November 2018	2.2 c	DIPL to add further information regarding unsafe vehicles into information bulletins, and circulate amongst forum members.	DIPL	Complete
November 2018	2.2 d	DIPL to construct a subcommittee to focus on enhancing driver knowledge and their interactions with tourists prior to next meeting.	DIPL	Ongoing
November 2018	2.2 e	DIPL to provide the number of rideshare registrations and trip data across all point to point services.	DIPL	Due to the review scheduled to commence in March 2020, this will be held over
November 2018	2.2 h	DIPL to contact National Disability Services to source National Census figures on the wheelchair dependent.	DIPL	Ongoing
November 2018	4	DIPL to circulate Terms of Reference amongst members.	DIPL	Complete