



# Manual of Inspection Standards For Licensed Vehicle Testing and Compliance Standards

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## Contents

<b>Page 3</b>	Preface
<b>Page 4</b>	Compliance Standards – Hackney Carriages
<b>Page 8</b>	Compliance Standards – Private Hire Vehicles
<b>Page 12</b>	Wheelchair Facilities
<b>Page 13</b>	Summary of Vehicle Test
<b>Page 15</b>	Licence Conditions - Hackney Carriages <i>(to be added to final document)</i> .
<b>Page 20</b>	Licence Conditions – Private Hire Vehicles <i>(to be added to final document)</i> .
<b>Page 27</b>	Exception Criteria for Hackney Carriages <i>(to be added to final document)</i> .

## **Preface to Telford & Wrekin Council's Manual of Inspection Standards**

This manual provides a guide for those who prepare vehicles for/or carry out the statutory tests on Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles. It also provides vehicle owners with the compulsory requirements that enable a vehicle to be licenced.

The vehicle must comply with the requirements of any Legislation or Regulations relating to motor vehicles in force at the time of licensing. The contents of the manual should not be regarded as a substitute for the relevant statutory provisions and regulations.

The vehicle will be tested in accordance with the current Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) MOT Inspection Manual for Class 3, 4, 5 and 7 including Notes on the Statutory Provisions and Regulations for testing vehicles, under section 45 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 and also in accordance with Telford & Wrekin Council's Policy and Conditions of Licence.

Hackney Carriages and private hire vehicles are subject to much higher annual mileages and more arduous driving than normal private vehicles. Therefore in the interests of passenger and other road user's safety, a more stringent maintenance and testing regime is required. The purpose of the Council's Compliance Test is to confirm vehicles meet these more stringent standards. The test and inspection includes a number of items in addition to the normal MOT test. These elements have been deemed reasonable and necessary in order to protect the public using licensed vehicles. It is not intended that the test be used in lieu of a regular preventative maintenance programme. In assessing the mechanical condition of a vehicle, it is likely that an item which would ordinarily pass an MOT test with an advisory note, could fail the Council's compliance test. .

Any owner wishing to alter or modify his Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle including the fitting of extras or alternative parts to those supplied by the manufacturer must consult the Licensing Team at Telford & Wrekin Council before incurring any expense. Only approved fittings may be attached to or carried upon the inside or outside of the vehicle and a Certificate of Vehicle Type Approval from the DVSA must be submitted to the Licensing Service.

If any unsuitable features arise following the period of any licence issued and, if any defects are found, the owner will be issued with a notice prohibiting the use of the vehicle for hire and reward until the effect has been rectified.

## Telford & Wrekin Council Compliance Standards For Hackney Carriages

### Type of Vehicle

All vehicles submitted to the council for licensing as Hackney Carriages shall meet the safety standards of **one of the following ; M1 Category European Whole Vehicle Type Approval; British National Type approval; or British Single Vehicle Approval (before 29 April 2009); or Individual Vehicle Approval (from 29 April 2009)**. The proprietor shall ensure that the Hackney Carriage vehicle shall only be of the type approved for Hackney Carriage use by the Council, namely a purpose-built/**multi purpose** vehicle built to carry up to eight passengers with factory fitted seatbelts and an engine capacity not less than 1600cc. subject to the following:

**Comment [e1]:** In accordance with DfT Best Practice Guidance, it is proposed to broaden the type of vehicle the Council will licence as a hackney carriage, whilst maintaining the requirement for the vehicle to be accessible.

Hackney Carriage vehicles are approved by way of a list that will specify as many different types of vehicles as possible.

The age limit for purpose built Hackney Carriage vehicles is twelve years **and for multi purpose vehicles is ten years**. The Council may waiver the age restriction in the case of individual purpose built vehicles where an application is made and the Council considers that the vehicle is of "exceptional condition". Where vehicles are of "exceptional condition" and continue to be licensed over the 12 year age limit, the vehicle will be subject to 6 monthly compliance tests. **Multi purpose vehicles over 5yrs of age will be subject to 6 monthly compliance tests.**

**Comment [e2]:** This is consistent with Private Hire Vehicles which are not purpose built.

**Comment [FS3]:** This is consistent with the requirements of PHVs.

### Condition of Vehicle

There shall be no non-standard unauthorised alterations or modifications carried out to the vehicle or to the engine.

The exterior colour of the taxi shall be **one of the manufacturer's colours. Vehicles which are of a colour other than that of the manufacturer must be approved by the Council**

The Hackney Carriage shall be maintained in a sound mechanical and structural condition at all times and be capable of satisfying the Councils mechanical and structural inspection at any time during the continuance of the vehicle's license.

The interior and exterior of the Hackney Carriage shall be maintained in a clean, safe condition.

### Wheel Chair Accessibility

The vehicle must have provision for a minimum of at least one wheelchair.

A certificate should be produced showing all of the fittings used to secure wheelchairs to the floor of the vehicle are to Department of Transport specifications.

The appropriate ramps and associated equipment for loading wheelchairs into the vehicle in the approved manner must be carried and used at all times.

### **Wheels**

All Hackney Carriages must be fitted with manufacturers approved tyres of the same size and type including the spare wheel.

### **Privacy Windows**

The Council shall refuse any vehicle submitted for licensing which is fitted with tinted windows to the rear of the driver which are not factory fitted options at the time of the manufacture of the vehicle.

### **Fire Extinguisher - Road Vehicle (Construction & Use) Regs. 1986 – Schedule 7**

A fire extinguisher shall be carried on the vehicle at all times. The fire extinguisher must be suitable to the risk and is to be carried in the vehicle at all times and securely fixed in the approved manner and in such a position as to be readily available in any emergency.

### **First Aid Kit - Road Vehicle (Construction & Use) Regs. 1986 – Schedule 7**

A standard size and type of first aid equipment which complies with the requirements laid down by the Department of Transport for taxis and minibuses in accordance with regulation 43 and must be carried on the vehicle at all times.

### **Other Equipment**

All Hackney Carriages being compliance tested for a new licence must carry a warning triangle and a set of spare bulbs.

### **Identification Plates**

Once the vehicle is licenced, the external identification plate issued by the Council shall at all times be fixed to the outside rear of the Hackney Carriage to the place provided by the manufacturer or by a Council approved fixing kit.

Hackney Carriage Vehicles should display a replica Hackney Carriage Licence plate issued by the Council, affixed to the inside of the vehicle, in the prescribed manner, so as to be plainly visible to fare paying passengers.

### **Signage**

Once a vehicle is licenced, a copy of the approved table of fares shall be displayed in a clearly visible position.

The following signs and notices will be displayed on licensed Hackney Carriages during the currency of the Licence:

**Comment [e4]:** It is proposed to remove the requirement to carry a Fire Extinguisher. Schedule 7 Construction and Use Regulations relates to Mini Buses and not taxis. Drivers are not necessarily trained in fire fighting. If a driver wishes to continue to carry a fire extinguisher for his own use or feels suitably confident to help others, then he/she can do so but at his/her own risk.

**Comment [e5]:** It is proposed to remove the requirement for Fire Extinguishers and First Aid Kits to be carried, similarly to the above comment. Drivers are not necessarily trained medics..

- A sign stating 'Seat Belt Regulations – Seat Belts must be worn'.
- A sign bearing the words 'First Aid Kit Carried' fixed to the rear bodywork of the vehicle.
- A sign on both rear doors of the vehicle regarding No Smoking.
- A sign (the nationally recognised symbol) confirming that the taxi is wheelchair accessible and caters for the needs of the disabled.
- A sign (if applicable) confirming that the driver of the vehicle accepts travel tokens

**Comment [e6]:** See above comment.

### **Taximeters**

The vehicle shall to be fitted with an automatic taximeter approved by the Council and it shall be located within the vehicle in accordance with the reasonable instructions of an Authorised Officer of the Council.

**Comment [e7]:** It is proposed to make it a condition that all taximeters are automated to calendar changes so that the correct tariff rate is automatically applied.

Any meter fitted shall be technically capable of accepting any restrictions or fare scales that the Council wishes to programme into that meter.

The meter shall be tested and sealed by an Authorised Officer of the Council. Any Hackney Carriage fitted with a meter must be equipped with the standard size tyres as approved by the manufacturer of the vehicle.

Retro-fitted low profile tyres which will affect the performance and accuracy of a meter are not acceptable if fitted after the meter has been tested and sealed. Any such tyres of a low profile type must be fitted before the meter is tested. Any contravention of this condition will result in the immediate suspension of a Hackney Carriage Licence.

### **Light Trailers**

All trailers will be subject to a Compliance Standards check and if found to be satisfactory, issued with a one year certificate.

If the unladen weight of any trailer submitted for testing exceeds 200kgs, a prescribed Ministry Plate must be fitted to the nearside of the trailer except where said trailer is fitted with parking brakes and brakes that act automatically on the overrun of the trailer. In any case all trailers shall meet the braking requirements in accordance with the type and size of said trailer.

All such trailers shall not exceed the gross weight limit of 3,500kgs but in all cases the proprietor should consult the vehicle handbook regarding manufacturer's recommendations particularly where unbraked trailers may be in use.

The trailer shall be fitted with a rigid hard top and shall be sealed against rain and water to protect luggage and goods.



## **Telford & Wrekin Council Compliance Standards For Private Hire Vehicles**

### **Type of Vehicle**

All vehicles submitted to the Council for licensing as Private Hire Vehicles shall meet the safety standards of **one of the following ; M1 Category European Whole Vehicle Type Approval; British National Type approval; or British Single Vehicle Approval (before 29 April 2009); or Individual Vehicle Approval (from 29 April 2009).** and will comply with all current and statutory requirements, inc Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986, the Motor Vehicle (Wearing of Seatbelts) Regulations 1993 & Motor Vehicle (Wearing of Seatbelts by Children in Front Seats) Regulations 1993.

Private Hire Vehicles shall only be of the type approved for Private Hire by the Council. This is detailed by a list specifying as many different types of vehicle as possible or a range of general criteria which allow the trade to put forward vehicles of choice that meet the criteria and by way of a list of designated vehicles that will specify as many different types of vehicle as possible which allow the trade to put forward vehicles of choice that meet the criteria for wheelchair accessibility. The vehicle shall be a motor car or a multi- purpose vehicle built to carry up to eight passengers with factory fitted seatbelts and an engine capacity not less than **1600cc, or a Mini-Bus or similar purpose built vehicle designed to carry up to eight passengers.**

**Comment [e8]:** Is this still appropriate in light of improved engineering of motor vehicles or is a minimum engine capacity of 1400cc more appropriate?

The Council will only license suitable vehicles which do not exceed that age limit for motor cars and Multi Purpose Vehicles ~~(or for purpose built or adapted minibuses)~~ of ten years. Vehicles to be tested every six months from five years of age in line with best practice guidance.

All vehicles will be considered on their own merits so long as they comply with all current and statutory requirements, inc Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986, the Motor Vehicle (Wearing of Seatbelts) Regulations 1993 & Motor Vehicle (Wearing of Seatbelts by Children in Front Seats) Regulations 1993.

### **Condition of Vehicle**

The Private Hire vehicle should be maintained in a sound mechanical electrical and structural condition at all times and be capable of satisfying the council's mechanical electrical and structural inspection at any time during the duration of the vehicle licence.

The interior and exterior of the vehicle shall be maintained in a clean safe condition by the proprietor.

### **Privacy Windows**

The Council shall refuse any vehicle submitted for licence which is fitted with tinted windows to the rear of the driver which are not factory fitted options at

the time of the manufacture of the vehicle.

### **Roof Signs**

Roof signs shall be of a type and size approved by the Council and shall at all times be affixed to the roof of the Private Hire vehicle to the place recommended by the manufacturer or in accordance with reasonable instructions of an Authorised Officer of the Council. The roof sign should be fitted in such a manner as to be easily removable by such Officer or Police Constable.

All roof signs on Private Hire Vehicles shall be connected to the vehicle electrical wiring system and will be illuminated when the vehicle is in service during lighting up times and /or adverse weather conditions.

Roof signs must be maintained and kept in such a condition that the information contained is clearly visible to public view at all times.

For whatever reason, when a Private Hire Vehicle licence is suspended the licence plate and the roof sign shall be removed by an authorised officer of the Council. The roof sign shall be kept in the custody of the Operator until such time as the vehicle is made fit again for service and the suspension lifted by the Council. Only at that point will the roof sign be returned to the vehicle proprietor/driver by the Operator.

### **Identification Plates**

Once licensed, the external identification plates issued by the Council should be fixed to the outside front and rear of the Private Hire Vehicle by means of Council approved fixing kit.

Private Hire Vehicles should display a replica Private Hire Vehicles Licence plate issued by the Council, affixed to the inside of the vehicle, in the prescribed manner, so as to be plainly visible to fare paying passengers.

The internal identification plates (two in number) for Executive Vehicle licences issued by the Council shall be affixed by the proprietor of the vehicle one on the nearside/left hand side of the front windscreen and one on the nearside/left hand side of the rear windscreen in a distinctly visible position that does not interfere with the drivers view of the road.

### **Tyres**

Restrictions as per Manufacturers' standards.

### **Fire Extinguisher Construction & Use Regulations – Schedule 7**

All Private Hire Vehicles must carry a fire extinguisher. The fire extinguisher must be suitable to the risk and should be carried in the vehicle at all times.

**Comment [e9]:** It is proposed to remove the requirement for roof signs in accordance with the DfT Best Practice and replace with magnetic door signs which shall read "Advance Bookings Only" and the Company's name and telephone number.

**Comment [e10]:** It is proposed to remove the requirement to carry a Fire Extinguisher. Schedule 7 Construction and Use Regulations relates to Mini Buses and not taxis. Drivers are not necessarily trained in fire fighting. If a driver wishes to continue to carry a fire extinguisher for his own use or feels suitably confident to help others, then he/she can do so but at his/her own risk.

## First Aid Kit–Road Vehicles Construction & Use Regulations 1986 Schedule 7

A standard size and type of first aid equipment, which complies with the requirements, laid down by the Department of Transport for mini-buses, in accordance with regulation 43 must be carried on the vehicle.

**Comment [e11]:** It is proposed to remove this requirement to carry a First Aid Kit for similar reasons to the above comment. Drivers are not necessarily trained medics.

### Other Equipment

All Private Hire Vehicles must carry at all times a warning triangle and an appropriate set of vehicle spares (e.g. spare bulbs etc).

### Signage

The following signs and notices will be displayed on licensed Private Hire Vehicles during the currency of the Licence:

A sign stating 'Seat Belt Regulations – Seat Belts must be worn'.

A sign bearing the words 'First Aid Kit Carried' fixed to the rear bodywork of the vehicle.

**Comment [e12]:** See above comment

A sign on both rear passenger windows of the vehicle regarding No Smoking.

### Meters

Where meters are fitted to a Private Hire Vehicle, the meter shall be maintained in a sound electrical and mechanical condition at all times.

Any meter affixed to the vehicle may be inspected and tested by an Authorised Officer of the Council.

Any Private Hire vehicle so fitted with a meter must be equipped with the standard size tyres as approved by the manufacturer of the vehicle. Retrofitted low profile tyres which will affect the performance and accuracy of a meter are not acceptable if fitted after the meter has been tested and sealed. Any such tyres of a low profile type must be fitted before the meter is tested

### Light Trailers

All trailers will be subjected to a Compliance Standards check and if found to be satisfactory, issued with a one-year certificate.

All trailers must be of a design such that when close coupled to the prime mover (the vehicle towing it) it does not interfere in any way whatsoever with the operation of any rear door, emergency exits or wheelchair access ramps etc.

If the unladen weight of any Trailer submitted for testing exceeds 1,200kgs, a prescribed Ministry Plate must be fitted to the nearside of the Trailer except

where said Trailer is fitted with parking brakes and brakes that act automatically on the overrun of the Trailer. In any case all Trailers shall meet the braking requirements in accordance with the type and size of said Trailer.

All such trailers shall not exceed the gross weight limit of 3,500kgs but in all cases the proprietor should consult the vehicle handbook regarding manufacturer's recommendations particularly where unbraked trailers may be in use.

The trailer shall be fitted with a rigid hard top and shall be sealed against rain and water to protect luggage and goods.

## **Wheel Chair Facilities For Licensed Hackney Carriages And Private Hire Vehicles**

1. Where a vehicle has been converted it must be approved by the Council.
2. Approved ramps must be securely installed.
3. The ramps must be free from damage, sharp edges or corners.
4. Check, as applicable, the non-slip provision and locating dowel pins.
5. Check condition and operation of wheelchair restraints.
6. Check disabled person's seat belt.

## **Summary of Items to be Tested**

This is a summary of testable items, but the list is not exhaustive.

### **Front & Rear Lamps, Reflectors and Electrical Equipment**

~~Headlamps~~ Front and Rear Position Lamps, End Outline Marker Lamps, Registration

Plate Lamps

~~Headlamp Aim~~

Stop Lamps

Rear Fog Lamps

Direction Indicators and Hazard Warning Lamps

Rear ~~Reflections~~ Reflectors

~~Direction Indicators~~ Audible Warning (Horn)

~~Hazard Lamps~~ Headlamp Aim

### **Steering & Suspension**

Steering control

Steering ~~mechanism~~ / System

Power steering

~~Transmission shafts~~ Drive Shafts

Wheel bearings front and rear

Front suspension

Rear suspension

Shock absorbers

### **Brakes**

Controls ABS warning system

Condition of service brake system

Condition of parking brake system

Service brake performance

Parking brake performance

### **Tyres & Wheels**

Tyre type

Tyre condition

Road wheels

### **Seat Belts**

Mountings

Condition

### **Windscreen Wipers & Washers**

~~Horn~~

Exhaust system

Exhaust emissions

Vehicle structure

~~First aid kit~~

~~Fire extinguisher~~

Internal lights

Information/warning markings

Exterior body condition

Luggage compartment

Meter calibration

Meter seal

Oil leaks

Seating

[Ramps](#)

**Taxi Buses**

Fuel cut off device

Grab rails & vanity covers

Access to exits

Rear seat belts

[Ramps/Tail Lifts](#)