

Transport for London

**Public Carriage Office**



**CONSTRUCTION AND LICENSING OF MOTOR TAXIS  
FOR USE IN LONDON**

**CONDITIONS OF FITNESS**

**1 January 2007**

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# CONSTRUCTION AND LICENSING OF MOTOR TAXIS FOR USE IN LONDON

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## Notes

- i In this document the "Licensing Authority" means Transport for London which will exercise, through the Head of Standards and Regulations at the Public Carriage Office (PCO), the duties imposed by the London Cab Order 1934 as amended by the Greater London Authority Act 1999.
- ii Any reference to a taxi in this document refers to a motorised taxi.
- iii In this document the term "approved" or "approved by the PCO" means approval by the PCO Senior Vehicle Policy Manager who is the technical representative of the Licensing Authority.
- iv The address for all communications to the PCO is:  
  
Transport for London – Taxi and Private Hire  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor – Yellow Zone  
Palestra  
197 Blackfriars Road  
Southwark  
London  
SE1 8NJ  
e-mail: [enquires@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:enquires@tfl.gov.uk)
- v The Conditions of Fitness in Part 2 and Directions in Part 3 are laid down or made in accordance with the terms of paragraphs 7 and 14 respectively of the London Cab Order 1934, as amended.
- vi This document sets out the Conditions of Fitness (CoF) for London taxis in force at 1 January 2007 following the reviews of the CoF carried out in 2003-5. The PCO now intends, as far as possible, to maintain a stable platform for vehicle manufacturers and will not, therefore, expect to review fully the CoF for about 10 years. However, the PCO reserves the right to amend the Conditions should there be situations which require it, such as amendments to national or international law with respect to road vehicles. These may include, for example, changes arising from the Disability Discrimination Act or the implementation of European emissions regulations.

## Construction and licensing of taxis in London

In accordance with the provisions of paragraph 7 of the London Cab Order 1934, in pursuance of the Metropolitan Public Carriage Act 1869, no vehicle shall be licensed as a taxi unless it is fit for public service and conforms to the requirements in this document.

## **PART 1**

### **PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED BY MANUFACTURERS AND OWNERS OF TAXIS FOR USE IN LONDON**

#### **1 Approval of new types of taxi**

- 1.1 An application for the approval of a new type of taxi must be made in writing to the PCO and must be accompanied by dimensioned drawings or blueprints, together with detailed specifications and any particulars required by the Senior Vehicle Policy Manager.
- 1.2 Before constructing any new type of taxi, manufacturers are advised to study the Conditions of Fitness set out in Part 2 of this document and to send to the Senior Vehicle Policy Manager at the PCO, dimensioned drawings or blueprints, together with detailed specifications of the proposed vehicle, or vehicle conversion, for advice as to its general suitability for public service in London. It is also advisable to arrange for a preliminary inspection of the vehicle.
- 1.3 Manufacturers should address any current guidance issued by the DfT for the design of taxis and indicate to the PCO the extent to which those guidelines have been accommodated.

In particular, manufacturers should demonstrate that they have taken account of current DfT guidance as regards ergonomic requirements for accessible taxis.
- 1.4 Arrangements must then be made to present the completed vehicle for inspection by the PCO. When presented, every facility must be given for the inspection and testing of the vehicle. A declaration must be provided by the manufacturer or authorised person that the vehicle conforms to the law and is safe for use as a public carriage, together with a certificate of registration and summarised documentary evidence that the vehicle meets the regulations specified in paragraph 5.1.
- 1.5 Any proposed alterations to the original specification must be submitted to the PCO for approval.

#### **2 Existing approved types of taxi**

- 2.1 New taxis of an existing approved type which are offered for licensing for the first time must be presented, by appointment, for inspection by the PCO or its approved agent. If the vehicle conforms to the approved type, a Certificate of Approval will be issued by or on behalf of the Licensing Authority.

#### **3 Presentation for renewal of licence**

- 3.1 To renew the licence of an existing taxi, the vehicle must be presented for inspection with the current licence. If any approved alterations have been carried out since the last inspection, these must be notified when the licence is renewed and appropriate documentation must be submitted.
- 3.2 Every taxi in service must be fully equipped to approved standards in order that wheelchair passengers may be carried.

#### **4 General**

- 4.1 It must be understood that, although the conditions set out in this document have been complied with, approval will be withheld if the Licensing Authority is of the opinion that a vehicle is unsuitable for public use.
- 4.2 Although the PCO may extend approval of any particular type of taxi to all other taxis conforming to the design of that type, it must be understood that the PCO may withdraw such general approval if, in its opinion, any unsuitable features arise.

## PART 2

### CONDITIONS OF FITNESS

The Conditions of Fitness in Part 2 are operative from 1 January 2007. Vehicles type approved before this date remain subject to the conditions in force at the time of approval except that the conditions in paragraphs 15.1 and 15.2 apply to all licensed vehicles.

#### **5 General construction**

- 5.1 Every new type of taxi must comply in all respects with the requirements of the Motor Vehicle (Type Approval) Regulations 1980, the Motor Vehicle (Type Approval) Regulations (Great Britain) 1984, the Motor Vehicles (EC Type Approval) Regulations 1998 and with any further national or international legislation as may be applicable. They must also comply in use with the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 (C & U). Every new type of taxi offered for approval must comply in all respects with British and European vehicle regulations and be "type approved" to the requirements of the M1 category of European Whole Type Approval Directive 2007/46/EC as amended. Those taxis which have not been "type approved" to the M1 category (e.g. conversions) must be presented with approved certification that the specific vehicle meets the requirements of that category.
- 5.2 Taxis offered for type approval must be so constructed as to facilitate the carriage of disabled persons and must be capable as a minimum of accommodating a disabled person in a DfT reference wheelchair in the passenger compartment.

#### **Modifications/Additional Equipment**

- 5.3 No equipment and/or fittings, other than those approved, may be attached to, or carried on the inside or outside of, the vehicle.
- 5.4 No modification may be carried out to a taxi without prior approval from the PCO. Before considering any unapproved modification to a taxi, approval must be sought from the PCO.
- 5.5 Guidance for in-cab modifications such as surveillance systems, etc. may be obtained from the PCO.

#### **6 Steering**

- 6.1 The steering wheel must be on the offside of the vehicle.

#### **7 Manoeuvrability requirement**

- 7.1 The vehicle must be capable of being turned on either lock so as to proceed in the opposite direction without reversing between two vertical parallel planes not more than 8.535 metres apart.
- 7.2 The wheel turning circle kerb to kerb on either lock must be not less than 7.62 metres in diameter.

*N.B. These requirements were fully reviewed in 2005 (See PCO Notice 43/05).*

#### **8 Tyres**

- 8.1 All tyres must comply with the relevant legislation. Specifically, retread tyres must comply with BS AU 144E as amended and be marked accordingly.
- 8.2 Tyres must be of the designated size, speed and weight rating for that make and model of vehicle as prescribed by the vehicle manufacturer.

- 9 Brakes**
- 9.1 An anti-lock braking system is to be fitted.
- 10 Interior lighting**
- 10.1 Adequate lighting must be provided for the driver and passengers.
- 10.2 Separate lighting controls for both passenger and driver must be provided. In the case of the passenger compartment, an illuminated control switch must be fitted in an approved position. This must be within reach of wheelchair passengers. Lighting must also be provided at floor level to each passenger door and be activated by the opening of the doors.
- 11 Electrical equipment**
- 11.1 Any additional electrical installation and/or after-market components to be used within the taxi must meet the requirements of the relevant Automotive Electro Magnetic Compatibility (EMC) Directive, as amended, and be marked accordingly.
- 12 Fuel systems**
- 12.1 A device must be provided whereby the supply of fuel to the engine may be immediately cut off. A manually operated device must have its location together with the means of operation and "off" position clearly marked on the outside of the vehicle. In the case of a vehicle fitted with an automatic inertia fuel cut off switch, no markings are required. Any engine powered by liquid petroleum gas (LPG), compressed natural gas (CNG), liquid natural gas (LNG), petrol or any combination of these fuels must be fitted with an automatic inertia fuel cut off device. They must also have a manually operated fuel cut off device externally mounted which is easily visible and readily accessible at all times from the outside of the vehicle with its location and means of operation clearly marked.
- 13 Exhaust systems**
- 13.1 New taxi models must meet the current and relevant EC Directive for exhaust emissions, i.e. the respective Euro standard. Current taxi models must meet prescribed emission standards (currently Euro 3 for NO<sub>x</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> by July 2008).
- 14 Body**
- 14.1 The body must be of the fixed head type with a partially glazed partition separating the passenger from the driver.
- 14.2 The overall length must not exceed 5 metres. This is essential for determining the size of taxi ranks, other pick-up points and for the free access and flow of other vehicles in London's congested streets.
- 15 Facilities for the disabled**
- 15.1 Every taxi must be equipped to approved standards in order that wheelchair passengers may be carried.
- 15.2 Approved anchorages must be provided for wheelchair tiedowns and the wheelchair passenger restraint. These anchorages must be either chassis or floor linked and capable of withstanding approved dynamic or static tests. Restraints for wheelchair and occupant must be independent of each other. Anchorages must also be provided for the safe stowage of a wheelchair when not in use, whether folded or otherwise, if carried within the passenger compartment. All anchorages and restraints must be so designed that they do not cause any danger to other passengers.

- 15.3 The door and doorway must be so constructed as to permit an unrestricted opening across the doorway of at least 75cm. The minimum angle of a hinged door when opened must be 90 degrees
- 15.4 The clear height of the doorway must be not less than 1.2 metres.
- 15.5 Grab handles must be placed at door entrances to assist the elderly and disabled. All grab handles must be in a contrasting colour.
- 15.6 The top of the tread for any entrance should normally be at floor level of the passenger compartment and comply with the following requirements:
- be not more than 380 mm from the ground, (measured at the centre of the tread width);
  - the surface shall be covered in a slip-resistant material;
  - have a band of colour across the entire width of the edge which shall contrast with the remainder of the tread and floor covering.
- Should any entrance be more than 380 mm from the ground, an external interim step must be made available when the associated passenger door is opened and comply with the following requirements-
- not be more than 380 mm in height from the ground, (measured at the centre of the step width);
  - not be less than 250 mm deep;
  - the surface shall be covered in a slip-resistant material;
  - have a band of colour across its leading edge which shall contrast with the remainder of the step and floor covering;
  - not be capable of operation whilst the vehicle is in motion;
  - if automatic or powered, be fitted with a safety device which stops the motion of the step if the step is subject to a reactive force not exceeding 150N in any direction and if that motion could cause injury to the passenger;
  - can fold or retract so that it does not project beyond the side face of the vehicle and the vehicle is not capable of being driven away unless the step is so folded or retracted.
- 15.7 The vertical distance between the highest part of the floor and the roof in the passenger compartment must not be less than 1.3 metres.
- 15.8 Where seats are placed facing each other, there must be a minimum space of 42.5cm between any part of the front of a seat and any part of any other seat which faces it, provided adequate foot room is maintained at floor level.
- 15.9 Where all seats are placed facing to the front of the vehicle, there must be clear space of at least 66cm in front of every part of each seat squab, measured along a horizontal plane at the centre of the cushion.
- 15.10 A ramp for the loading of a wheelchair and occupant must be available at all times for use, as a minimum, at the nearside passenger door on all new vehicles presented for licensing. The ramp must have a safety lip, be 70cm wide, as a minimum, and comprise a single non-slip surface. It is desirable for this facility to be available at the offside passenger door also. An adequate locking device must be fitted to ensure that the ramp does not slip or tilt when in use. Provision must be made for the ramp to be stowed safely when not in use.



## **Passenger compartment**

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- 16.1 When fitted, occasional seats must be at least 40cm in width and the distance from the back of the upholstery to the front edge of the seat must be not less than 35.5cm.
- 16.2 Occasional seats must be so arranged as to rise automatically when not in use. They must be placed at least 4cm apart. When not in use, they must not obstruct doorways.
- 16.3 The rear seat dimensions must be adequate to carry the appropriate number of adult passengers comfortably.
- 16.4 Suitable means must be provided to assist persons to rise from the rear seat with particular attention to the needs of the elderly and disabled.
- 16.5 Lap and diagonal seatbelts must be fitted on all seats (including rear facing seats).
- 16.6 Colour contrasting sight patches are required on all passenger seats.
- 16.7 Head restraints must be fitted for all (forward and rear facing) seats. The design of headrests should maximise rear sightlines for the driver when any of the passenger seats are not occupied.
- 16.8 An induction loop system (or equivalent) must be fitted.

## **Driver's compartment**

- 17.1 The driver's compartment must be so designed that the driver has adequate room, can easily reach, and quickly operate, the controls.
- 17.2 The controls must be so placed as to allow reasonable access to the driver's seat and, when centrally placed, controls must be properly protected from contact with luggage.
- 17.3 Every vehicle must be provided with an approved means of communication between the passenger and the driver. If a sliding window is fitted on the glazed partition, the maximum width of the opening must not exceed 11.5cm.
- 17.4 Where a single-piece glazed partition is fitted, a facility must be provided for making payment to the driver.

## **Visibility**

### **Driver Visibility**

A single-piece, full width rear window must be fitted. The design of headrests should maximise rear sightlines for the driver when any of the passenger seats are not occupied.

### **Passenger Visibility**

The windows should maximise passenger visibility into and out of the vehicle.

The top of the window line for front and side windows, when measured vertically to the top of the visible portion of the glass, must not be less than 780mm on any glass panel forward of or beside the seated passenger. The vertical distance is to be measured through the E point as defined in Directive 77/649/EEC, from the top of the uncompressed rear forward-facing passenger seat cushion to the first point of totally obscured glass. Manufacturers are to declare conformity to this condition in drawing format.

The bottom of the window line for front and side windows must be low enough to afford passengers adequate visibility out of the vehicle.

A proportion of the window area in the passenger compartment must be available for opening by the seated passenger.

- 18.3 Windows must permit maximum visibility into, and out of, the vehicle. They must have no more than 25% tint value.

- 18.4 Passenger windows must be capable of being opened easily by passengers, including those in wheelchairs, when seated. The control for opening a window must be clearly identified to prevent it being mistaken for any other control.
- 19 Heating and ventilation**
- 19.1 An adequate heating and ventilation system must be provided for the driver and passengers and means provided for independent control by the driver and the passengers. All switches must be within easy reach of seated passengers, including those in wheelchairs.
- 20 Door fittings**
- 20.1 An approved type of automatic door securing device must be fitted to passenger doors to prevent them being opened when the vehicle is in motion. When the vehicle is stationary, the passenger doors must be capable of being readily opened from the inside and outside of the vehicle by one operation of the latch mechanism. The door must not open from the inside if the driver has the foot brake depressed. The interior door handle must be clearly identified to prevent it being mistaken for any other control.
- 21 Fare table and number plate**
- 21.1 A frame must be provided for the fare table and fixed in an approved place. A position for an interior number plate is to be provided with the words "The number of this taxi is...." shown immediately above the position of the plate.
- 22 Floor covering**
- 22.1 The flooring of the passenger compartment must be covered with a slip resistant material, which can be easily cleaned.
- 22.2 The floor covering must not impede the movement of wheelchairs. The colour of the floor covering must contrast with any upstand areas around it and with the colour of the seats.
- 23 Luggage**
- 23.1 Suitable dedicated provision for the secure carriage of luggage must be made, separated from the passenger compartment and proportionate in size to the number of passengers carried.
- 24 Taximeter**
- 24.1 Taximeters must comply with the regulations set out in the PCO document 'Approved Taximeters – Specification for use in London 2006'.
- 24.2 A taximeter of an approved type must be fitted in an approved position. A designated pulse output point must be provided that has a pulse output compatible with the taximeter fitted and, subject to the vehicle and/or taximeter manufacturer's declaration, operates the taximeter within prescribed tolerances.
- 24.2 Taximeters must be capable of issuing a receipt that contains prescribed details. If this is achieved by the addition of a printer, it must meet with relevant Automotive EMC Directives, be marked accordingly and fitted in an approved position. The receipt must contain, as a minimum, the date and time of issue, the metered fare, extras and total fare. All of this information must be obtained from the taximeter in a 'read only' format. Manually input information is not permitted. Additional information, such as the start time and time taken for journey, distance travelled etc, may be permitted by application to the PCO.

**25 "Taxi" sign**

- 25 A "Taxi" sign approved by the PCO, clearly visible both by day and night when the taxi is available for hire, must be fitted.

**26 Radio apparatus**

- 26.1 Where apparatus for the operation of a two-way radio system is fitted to a taxi, no part of the apparatus may be fixed in the passenger compartment or in the rear boot compartment if LPG tanks or equipment are situated therein. Any additional electrical installation and/or after-market components to be used within the taxi must meet the requirements of the relevant Automotive Electro Magnetic Compatibility (EMC) Directive, as amended, and be marked accordingly.
- 26.2 Any other radio equipment, either in the passenger or driver compartment, must be approved by the PCO.

**27 Maintenance**

- 27.1 Vehicles, including all fittings, advertisements, etc., must be maintained to approved standards. The vehicles should always be kept clean and in good working order. Vehicles will at all times be subject to test and inspection and should it be found that a vehicle is not being properly maintained or kept in good working order, a notice will be served on the owner prohibiting him/her using the vehicle until the defect has been rectified.
- 27.2 Safety-critical parts used for the repair and maintenance of taxis, such as brake, steering and suspension parts, should be approved in advance by the PCO as meeting the requirements of the relevant block exemption regulations.

**28 Certificate of insurance and form of holder**

- 28.1 A current certificate of insurance as required by any Acts or Regulations relating to motor vehicles must be carried in a holder securely affixed to the taxi in an approved position. Key information on this certificate, including the registration number (if applicable), the owner's name and the expiry date of the insurance, must be not less than 12 point font size. The certificate must also state that the policy complies with the requirements of the London Cab Order 1934.

## **PART 3**

### **DIRECTIONS**

The Directions in Part 3 apply to all licensed vehicles.

**29 Advertisements**

- 29.1 Suitable advertisements may be allowed on the exterior or interior of the taxi subject to the approval of the Licensing Authority.
- 29.2 Advertisements will not be approved for use unless they comply with the current directions as contained in the 'Guidelines for Advertising on Licensed London Taxis'.
- 29.3 No material may be placed on the glazed areas other than notices which may be approved from time to time, however, suitable advertisements may be allowed on the rear windscreen as directed in the 'Guidelines for Advertising on Licensed London Taxis'.
- 29.4 Applications for approval of advertisements must be made in writing to Cab Advertising Approvals at the PCO or by email to: [pco\\_taxiadverts@pco.org.uk](mailto:pco_taxiadverts@pco.org.uk)
- 29.5 Further information and guidance on advertising matters can be obtained from Cab Advertising Approvals at the PCO or by email to: [pco\\_taxiadverts@pco.org.uk](mailto:pco_taxiadverts@pco.org.uk)

**30 Badges/Emblems**

- 30.1 In addition to advertisements displayed in accordance with paragraph 29 above, vehicles may display the official badge or emblem of organisations:
- (a) which provide emergency vehicle repair and/or recovery services; and/or,
  - (b) membership of which indicates that the driver possesses professional skills/qualifications, which enhance the taxi service provided to the public.
- 30.2 Badges may be affixed to the front of the vehicle only in such a manner as not to be detrimental to the operation of the vehicle, likely to cause injury to any person, or to detract from any authorised sign which the vehicle may be required to display.
- 30.3 No advertisement, badge or emblem, including the stick-on type is to be exhibited other than is provided for in the directions contained in this paragraph or paragraph 29.