



11 February 2016

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Small Passenger Services Review  
Ministry of Transport  
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Dear Sir

## Small Passenger Service Vehicle Review submission

Greater Wellington Regional Council (GW) welcomes the opportunity to submit its views on the future of the small passenger services sector. We acknowledge that the current regulations are no longer fit for purpose and do not fully meet sector or customer requirements.

Our assessment of the five options identified by the review is that your preferred Option 4 would result in an improved customer experience through increased competition, higher incentives for innovation and reduced barriers to providing passenger services.

Option 4 with additional considerations is Greater Wellington's preferred option - we would like to see further treatment of the following:

- Clear distinctions between and definitions of carpooling and ride-sharing
- Removal of meters
- Removal of regulated signage
- Taxi infrastructure

### Carpooling

GWRC supports and promotes carpooling as a sustainable transport option that contributes to a reduction in single-occupancy vehicles and congestion, and maximises energy efficiency.

The critical component in any carpool scheme is matching commuters. We are seeing an increase overseas, and soon to be in New Zealand, in the number of companies using technology (apps) to match commuters for carpooling and subsequently charging a minor transaction fee for this service.

The consultation document currently states on page 11 that:

“Carpooling is where people are transported under a cost-sharing arrangement between occupants of a vehicle. Cost sharing includes (but is not limited to) fuel costs and reasonable wear and tear of a vehicle; but does not include any infringement fee incurred in the course of the journey, or compensation for the driver's travelling time. We are also aware that some third party services operate (with limited scale) – or are looking to operate – by connecting

people (unknown to each other) that are travelling to similar destinations at similar times. Under the current rules, as long as any money exchanged is no more than cost recovery, these services are not required to meet any rules.”

Also on page 11, under the title “Ride-sharing – third parties connect those travelling to a similar destination (emerging service)” the document states:

“Ridesharing is similar to carpooling. A driver and passenger (who may not know each other) are travelling to similar destinations at similar times. They are connected by a third party that takes a share of any money exchanged between the passenger and driver. New Zealand is not currently seeing ridesharing, but overseas, it is an emerging service for users of small passenger services. The existing rules do not account for ridesharing well, and it is likely that these services would operate under the cost-sharing exemption.

While it appears that carpooling and ride-sharing (as defined above) would be exempt from any small passenger service rules, it does not make it clear enough that some ride-sharing services (such as Uber) are in fact matching drivers and passengers not necessarily travelling in the same direction, paying “compensation for a driver’s time” and are operating more like a taxi service.

The issue emerges on Page 23 with the following wording:

“Under option 4, all passenger services provided by taxi, private hire, shuttle, dial-a-driver and transport network companies, would have to be through an approved transport operator. As with Option 3, all vehicles providing passenger services would have to meet the existing rules for in-vehicle security cameras that currently apply to taxis. This requirement would have a supporting provision to provide exemptions on a case-by-case basis.”

And then on page 24:

“Carpooling and companies providing only communications services would be exempt from any rules.”

It is important for the Ministry to make it clear here that ride-sharing companies providing carpool matching services (even if a small cost-recovery charge is being made by the company) would be exempt from the security provisions but that ride-sharing companies operating more like a taxi service where the passenger pays fuels costs and “compensation for the driver’s time” (eg. Uber) not be exempt.

We wish to see companies and their apps promoting carpooling being exempt from the rules currently proposed for small passenger vehicles, specifically P-endorsements and security cameras. However, there is always the possibility that companies which promote themselves as ride-sharing but are operating more like a taxi service (i.e. Uber) could easily make some minor alterations to their promotional material to appear as if they were carpooling matching services.

The following definition of uberCOMMUTE comes from the Uber Chicago website and shows that Uber is operating a carpooling service in some countries:

“uberCOMMUTE allows people who drive to work to use Uber's technology to find commuters along their way, sharing the cost of their commute while helping to reduce congestion by taking cars off the road.”

The line between uberCOMMUTE and Uber (as in the taxi-like service it is known for) could potentially be a very thin one if Uber was allowed to operate under the exemption rules being proposed for ride-sharing.

Additional new services are being offered through Uber overseas which may come to New Zealand in the near future which may have impacts on both carpooling and public transport. Uber is piloting a new service in Seattle called uberHOP. A number of passengers who are traveling a similar route are paired with the same driver. These passengers are given directions to a pick-up location and a time when the driver will pick them up. uberHOP is a service that closely mimics a public bus. If people perceive mass public transport to be expensive and uberHOP is offering a cheaper option, there is nothing to prevent an increase in the number of small vans operating along mass PT routes.

### **Removal of meters**

Under the Land Transport Management Act, Greater Wellington is required to consider the needs of transport-disadvantaged people and delivers on this through provision of the Total Mobility scheme.

Total Mobility has 9,730 active customers, of which 54% are over the age of 80yrs and approximately 25% are cognitively or intellectually impaired.

Under Option 4, whilst a pre-agreed fare may be obtained through a company booking, it seems that a customer will be required to negotiate directly with the driver for hailed fares. Certainty of service and consistency of fare are extremely important for these customers so the removal of fare meters will potentially place them in a position of uncertainty and increased anxiety, based on their ability to negotiate.

We would like to see additional consideration given to the rules for setting fares, and prominent public display of those rules. As an example in Australia it is possible to search a taxi fare online before you travel.

### **Removal of regulated signage**

Over 10% of Total Mobility customers are visually impaired. The total removal of regulated signage is likely to lead to increased anxiety and confusion, particularly with hailed fares where the vehicle is not immediately identifiable. It may also leave transport disadvantaged customers with increased vulnerability and reduced sense of security.

Recent consultation with Total Mobility customers confirms visually impaired customers are particularly reliant on the roof signage (illuminated at night) with many blind customers relying on the braille signage located on the inside of the left side door.

We would like to see a set of minimum signage guidelines introduced to ensure the needs of most visually impaired customers are met. Such guidelines should include minimum requirements for external signage that meet accessibility standards (illuminated at night) and internal braille signage.

## **Taxi Infrastructure**

Taxi infrastructure in Wellington is already under pressure and will need to be reviewed in light of any additional use. Currently only taxis are able to use ranks – under Option 4 it seems services will be able to use them.

The current problem from a bus public transport point of view is the overflow of taxis onto bus stops at busy times. We would therefore like to see a commitment by Local Authorities to review (taxi) infrastructure in conjunction with Regional Councils

## **Summary**

In summary, Greater Wellington is certainly looking forward to the use of technology and innovation that Option 4 should enable provided the issues raised in our submission are addressed. We expect that this will result in clarity between service types, increased availability, improved coverage and a greater level of customer service.

GW would welcome any opportunity to engage directly with the Ministry of Transport in respect to our concerns and are happy to be contacted at any time to discuss this submission further.

Yours sincerely



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## **RESPONSE FORM: *FUTURE OF SMALL PASSENGER SERVICES – CONSULTATION PAPER***

There are no questions for Sections 1, 3 and 6–10.

You do not need to fill out every section.

### **How we will use your submission**

We will consider your responses, along with other responses from the public, the small passenger service sector, and other interested organisations, to develop recommendations for the Government's consideration.

A summary of submissions will be published on the small passenger services page on [www.transport.govt.nz](http://www.transport.govt.nz). This summary may include the names of the organisations or individuals that made submissions. It will not include their contact details.

### **Your submission may be made public**

Once you make your submission, anyone can ask for it under the Official Information Act 1982.

If you don't want anything in your submission released, you should let us know what material you want withheld, and why, at the time you make your submission.

Under the Official Information Act, we decide whether to release or to withhold material and can only withhold information in accordance with the provisions set out in that Act. Further information is available at [www.legislation.govt.nz](http://www.legislation.govt.nz).

### **Request to withhold material**

I request that the Ministry consider withholding the release of some or all of my submission:

☐ Yes

☒ No

If yes - describe the reasons why:

## Your details

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What is your interest in future of the small passenger services sector? Are you:

- ☐ A private individual
- ☒ Part of the small passenger services sector

Your name (optional):

Your address (optional):

Your email (optional):

If your submission is made on behalf of an organisation, please name that organisation here:

**Greater Wellington Regional Council**

**PO Box 11 646**

**Manners Street**

**WELLINGTON 6142**

Would you like us to email you with the results of the consultation process?

- ☒ Yes – please provide email address

**wayne.hastie@gw.govt.nz**

- ☐ No

## Section 2 – The need for change

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**Question 1** – *What are the important factors driving the need for change for the small passenger services sector?*

Tick the factors below you think are driving the need for change

- ☐ Technology is changing the transport sector
- ☐ The current rules are no longer fit for purpose and flexible for the future
- ☐ The need for a more innovative sector that delivers improved customer service

If there are other factors you think are important, enter them below:

## Section 4 – Features important in the future sector

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**Question 2** – *What are the important features you would want to see from the small passenger services sector in the future?*

Tick the features below you think are important for the future sector

- ☐ Responsive to supply and demand
- ☐ The compliance burden is as low as it can be while achieving regulatory objectives
- ☐ Transparent fees and charges
- ☐ Effective choice so people can travel where they wish in a timely manner
- ☐ Incentivises improved customer services
- ☐ Mitigates safety risks for passengers and drivers

If there are other factors you think are important, enter them below:

## Section 5 – Summary of options for the future

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**Question 3** – Which of the five options do you think will be best for New Zealand's small passenger services sector in the future?

The Ministry of Transport's review team concluded that option 4 would be best for New Zealand's small passenger services sector in the future. Do you agree?

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Yes

***With additional considerations***

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No – If you do not agree, tick the option below that you think would be best

☐

Option 1 – status quo – modified

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Option 2 – reinforce separate taxi/private hire markets and their regulatory burdens

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Option 3 – drivers responsible under new single class system (reduced regulatory burden)

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Option 5 – existing taxi requirements apply to all operators (higher regulatory burden in new single class system)

Why do you prefer this option over option 4?

## Section 11 – Definitions for exemptions

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**Carpooling would be exempt under all options**

**Question 4** – Do you agree the exemption for carpooling should apply where:

- the people in the vehicle already know of each other (for example, they are friends, members of the same sports team or work for the same company). The driver and passenger may agree to share the responsibility of driving or the passenger will contribute money towards the driver's costs for the trip (that is, the operating costs of the vehicle such as petrol and depreciation, but not any payment for the driver's time).

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Yes Please see comments in text box for Question 5

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No – if you disagree that carpooling should be exempted in the above circumstance, please explain why



and –

**Question 5** – *Do you agree the exemption for carpooling should apply where:*

- the people in the vehicle (who may not know each other) are travelling to similar destinations at similar times and use a third party to connect them. The passenger(s) will contribute money towards the driver's costs for the trip (that is, the operating costs of the vehicle such as petrol and depreciation, but not any payment for the driver's time).

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Yes Please see text below

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No – if you disagree that carpooling should be exempted in the above circumstance, please explain why below

The consultation document does not make a distinction between apps for ride-sharing which has the purpose of matching carpoolers, versus apps for ride-sharing such as Uber where the trip is more like a taxi service and drivers make an income as Uber drivers.

We believe greater clarification needs to be provided on the difference between these different ride-sharing apps in order to distinguish between these quite different purposes and the regulations that pertain to them. If all ride-sharing apps and therefore the companies behind them, are seen as of only one form then as an organisation which promotes carpooling in the region, we can foresee that potentially there may not be viable carpooling apps developed by companies which can be promoted to foster carpooling in the region.

Requiring ride-sharing companies and their drivers to have a P-endorsement will reduce the viability of these companies in attracting drivers to join, thus reducing options for people to carpool. We therefore wish to see ride-sharing companies (those promoting carpooling) exempt from the rules currently proposed for small passenger vehicles, specifically P-endorsements and security cameras.

**Exempting companies providing communications functions only**

**Question 6** – *Do you agree the exemption for companies providing communications functions should apply where:*

- a company (for example, a call centre company) providing back office communication functions for a completely unrelated small passenger service company.

And would not include:

- a company providing technology or communications, but actually participates in the small passenger services market in a manner similar to other operators (this company would be required to comply with the relevant rules).

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Yes



No – if you disagree that communications companies be defined in this way, please explain why

The consultation document does not make a distinction between companies that have developed apps for ride-sharing which has the purpose of matching carpoolers, versus companies that have developed apps for ride-sharing such as Uber where the trip is more like a taxi service and drivers make an income as Uber drivers.

We believe greater clarification needs to be provided on the difference between these different ride-sharing apps and the companies behind them in order to distinguish between these quite different purposes and the regulations that pertain to them.

We therefore wish to see ride-sharing companies (those promoting carpooling) exempt from the rules currently proposed for small passenger vehicles, specifically P-endorsements and security cameras.

### Applying the rules to ridesharing services

**Question 7** – *Do you agree that the requirement for ridesharing services to meet the same rules as the rest of the small passenger services sector should apply where:*

- third parties (often a technology-based company using apps) connect people who are driving to a destination with other people who want to travel to a similar place. The third party that connects a driver and passenger receives revenue from the transaction, commonly by taking a percentage of the money paid by the passenger to the driver.

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Yes



No – if you disagree that ridesharing service be defined in this way, please explain why

Again this relates to comments above and the need for greater distinction/clarity between those companies (and their apps) promoting carpooling and those companies with apps promoting something like Uber which is more like a taxi service. More and more carpooling apps overseas and soon to be in NZ are taking a minor fee for matching carpoolers so any rules that require carpooling apps and their companies and drivers to comply with the rules pertaining to other small passenger services, will kill carpooling.

## Section 12 – Common requirements under options 3 and 4

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What are the right core passenger safety rules we need for the future small passenger services system?

**Question 8** – *Do you agree that the core requirements for passenger safety can be achieved through:*

- *P endorsement* – all drivers would have to hold a 'P endorsement' issued by the NZ Transport Agency. A person applying for a P endorsement would have fewer requirements to meet than now. To obtain a P endorsement, a driver would have to pass a criminal record and driving record check, be medically fit to drive, and have held a full New Zealand driver licence for at least two years. A P endorsement identification card would have to be displayed in the vehicle.

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Yes

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No – if no, please explain why

**Question 9** – *Do you agree that the core requirements for passenger and driver safety can be achieved through:*

- *work time limits* – to ensure that drivers were not fatigued, they would have to comply with work time limits that set a maximum number of work hours and require rest breaks. Drivers would need to maintain logbooks covering all of the time that they worked. All drivers could work to the existing time limits for taxis, of up to 7 hours before a rest break is required.

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Yes

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No – if no, please explain why

**Question 10** – *Do you agree that the core requirements for passenger safety can be achieved through:*

- *reporting serious complaints to the NZ Transport Agency* – to ensure a P endorsement holder remains fit and proper, the person or company responsible for providing the service\* would be required to notify the NZ Transport Agency of any complaints received alleging serious improper behaviour by a driver. The person or company responsible would also be required to support the NZ Transport Agency or the NZ Police in undertaking any regulatory or compliance action.

\*This would be a driver under option 3 or an approved transport operator under option 4

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Yes

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No – if no, please explain why

What are the right core driver safety rules we need for the future small passenger services system?

**Question 11** – *Do you agree that the core requirements for driver safety can be achieved through:*

- *power to refuse to accept some passengers* – this enables drivers to refuse to accept passengers if drivers consider that their personal safety could be at risk.

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Yes

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No – if no, please explain why

**Question 12** – *Do you agree that the core requirements for driver safety can be achieved through:*

- *duty to promote driver safety* – this requires drivers (under option 3) or approved transport operators (under option 4) to make business choices from the range of mechanisms available to them. Such measures would be in addition to the mandated safety requirements.

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Yes

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No – if no, please explain why

What are the right core in-vehicle security camera rules we need for the future small passenger services system?

**Question 13** – Do you agree that the core requirements for in-vehicle security cameras can be achieved through:

- *in-vehicle security cameras* – all passenger service (all taxi, private hire, shuttle, dial-a-driver, and rideshare) vehicles would have to meet the existing rules for in-vehicle security cameras that currently apply to taxis.

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Yes - **Though not those ride-sharing companies promoting carpooling**

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No – if no, please explain why

**Question 14** – Do you agree that the core requirements for in-vehicle security cameras can be achieved through:

- *exemption from camera requirement* – the NZ Transport Agency would exempt a vehicle from the camera requirement where a driver (under option 3) or an approved transport operator (under option 4) met all of the following criteria:
  - *providing services to registered passengers only* – the service is only provided where the passenger is registered with company or driver
  - *collection of driver and passenger information* – when registering with the company or driver, a passenger and driver must provide their name, photo, address, and phone number
  - *availability of driver and passenger information* – before each trip starts, the company or driver makes the name and photo of the passenger and driver available to each other
  - *retaining a record of each trip* – the company or driver keeps a record of each trip, including the start and end points.

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Yes

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No – if no, please explain why

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What are the right fatigue management rules we need for the future small passenger services system?

**Question 15** – *Do you agree that the core requirements to mitigate driver fatigue can be achieved through:*

- *work time and log books* – current requirements permit taxi drivers to drive for up to 7 hours before taking a break, and the rest of the sector up to 5.5 hours before a break. The review proposes applying the work time requirements for taxi services to the whole sector under the single class approach.

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Yes

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No – if no, please explain why

What are the right vehicle safety rules we need for the future small passenger services system?

**Question 16** – *Do you agree that the core requirements for vehicle safety can be achieved through:*

- *Certificate of Fitness* – this is a general safety check. It is more robust than a Warrant of Fitness for private cars and is required every six months.

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Yes

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No – if no, please explain why

What are the right consumer protection rules we need for the future small passenger services system?

**Question 17** – *Do you agree that the core requirements for consumer protection can be achieved through:*

- *agree the basis of the fare* – drivers would have to agree the basis of the fare with the passenger before the trip starts. This could be a set fare or a per km rate. The fare could also be agreed between the passenger and the company at the time of booking.

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Yes

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No – if no, please explain why

**Greater Wellington Regional Council does not agree that the core requirements for consumer protection can be fully achieved through an agreed basis of fare arrangement.**

In the Wellington region, Total Mobility (TM) has 9,730 active customers, of which 52% are over the age of 81yrs and approximately 25% are cognitively or intellectually impaired.

Certainty of service and consistency of fare are extremely important for these customers so the fare meter provides a visible and fair method of calculating the trip value. Customers who are currently using services operated by private hire operators are required to book their trips in advance and fares are agreed over the phone or through the booking system (not face to face with a driver).

The removal of fare meters will potentially marginalise vulnerable TM customers leaving them in a position of uncertainty and increased anxiety based on their ability to negotiate a fare with a driver, particularly with hailed trips.

#### **Fare increase**

There is also a risk that fares will be higher than they are currently, particularly in areas where there is little competition between operators. This will be of considerable concern to the majority of TM customers that are superannuitants or in receipt of other government support.

The governmental share of the taxi fare is 50%, shared between NZTA and regional councils, therefore any fare increase results in increased expenditure.

#### **Fraud**

TM has also been subject to fraud in the past and we continue to identify examples of driver and/or customer abuse of the scheme, usually through private arrangements or overcharging of fares to the scheme by drivers. To address this transactions are audited on a regular basis with fare meter information providing an important indicator that the fare charged is reasonable and accurate.

Removal of the fare meter will certainly remove a particularly useful check and balance in terms of the correct charging of fares and increase the potential for fraud. This may also result in an increase in costs associated with administration and auditing functions.

#### ***Example 1:***

Marion is a frail 83yr pensioner who always pays \$3.20 to travel home from the mall, a 2km distance. She hails a taxi from the rank as normal however the trip will now cost her \$5.00 as there is no longer a fare meter to charge per km and the company has introduced a \$10.00 minimum fare.

This is the only vehicle on the rank and Marion feels too anxious to negotiate with the driver so reluctantly pays the fare.

This example results in an increase of \$1.80 to the customer and \$0.90 each to GWRC and NZTA.

**Example 2:**

Mary is a 34yr intellectually impaired customer who resides at a local supported living home. She has a favourite driver that is usually available to pick her up after the morning school rounds. She enjoys going for 'tiki tours' each day, especially since she only pays \$10.00 for the trip. She does not recognise that the driver has overcharged Total Mobility at \$40.00.

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that consideration be given to establishing rules for setting fares, and requiring the prominent public display of those rules, such as in vehicles and on operator websites. For example, in Australia a customer can calculate the cost using the operator's online fare calculator.

**Question 18** – *Do you agree that the core requirements for consumer protection can be achieved through:*

- *driver to take most advantageous route* – this would require the driver to take the route that is most advantageous to the passenger (unless agreed otherwise for example where multiple passengers are going to different locations within the same trip).

☒ Yes

☐ No – if no, please explain why



**Question 19** – *Do you agree that the core requirements for consumer protection can be achieved through:*

- *Driver to accept first hire offered* – this imposes a duty on the driver to accept the first hire offered (subject to exceptions for driver safety) so a driver could not refuse to take passengers only travelling short distances.

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Yes

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No – if no, please explain why

What rules are no longer needed to control specific outcomes, leaving companies to their own business decisions?

**Question 20** – *Do you agree that the following is no longer required?*

- *registered fares* – the Ministry of Transport’s review proposes removing the rules governing pricing that require taxis to register their fares with the NZ Transport Agency and charge using a meter. Instead, the Ministry of Transport’s review proposes that all small passenger service drivers should have a duty to agree the basis of pricing with the passenger prior to the commencement of the trip or when the booking is made. This would mean the NZ Transport Agency would no longer have a role to intervene in fare disputes between passengers and drivers, and existing consumer protection law (Consumer Guarantees Act 1993 and the Fair Trading Act 1986) would be relied on.

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Yes

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No – if no, please explain why

**Greater Wellington Regional Council does not support the removal of registered fares (specifically fare meters).**

Refer response to Question 17

**Question 21 – Do you agree that the following is no longer required?**

- *regulated signage (including Braille)* – the current rules set out specific signage requirements for taxi services that relate to the operator's brand, taxi roof sign, contact details, and fares. We propose removing these requirements. Operators would be able to make a choice about what signage they used and the information provided in it. The current rules require information in Braille: the name of the taxi organisation, its contact telephone number and the vehicle's fleet number. The Ministry of Transport's review proposes removing this requirement. Blind passengers can use alternative ways to obtain the information currently provided in Braille, such as enquiring at the time of booking, and using smartphone apps that provide a record of the trip.

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Yes

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No – if no, please explain why

**Greater Wellington Regional Council does not support the removal of regulated signage.**

A significant number of TM customers in the Wellington region are visually impaired. We are aware from feedback that visually impaired customers are particularly reliant on the roof signage (illuminated at night) with many blind customers relying on the braille signage located on the inside of the left side door to confirm the company and fleet details.

The potential removal of regulated signage is likely to lead to increased anxiety and confusion for visually impaired people, particularly with hailed fares where the vehicle is not immediately identifiable.

It is agreed that a visually impaired customer may use alternative ways to obtain the information currently provided in Braille, such as booking apps and websites, however this is unlikely to be the case when hailing a taxi from a rank.

We request consideration be given to establishing a set of specified signage requirements that includes:

- Braille signage as per current rules
- Minimum requirement for external signage to include company branding and illuminated roof sign

***Example 1:***

Tom is a visually impaired customer that uses Total Mobility transport to attend a community event on Courtenay Place. He books his pick-up over the phone with 123 Transport and agrees to a fare of \$8.80. He is unable to book the return trip now as the event's finish time is currently unknown.

The event concludes at 8.40pm so the customer walks over to hail the return trip from the rank located immediately outside the event venue. Tom knows there are 4 vehicles waiting on the rank but is unable to determine

which belongs to 123 Transport as none of the vehicles have signage.

He only wants to use this operator because he knows they charge a 'per km' rate and the return fare will be similar to what he paid earlier.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that consideration be given to establishing rules around signage requirements that are consistent with accessibility standards.

#### **Question 22** – *Do you agree that the following is no longer required?*

- *area knowledge* – taxi drivers in urban areas are required to have passed an area knowledge test. The purpose of the requirement is to ensure that drivers are able to take passengers on a direct route to their destination. The Ministry of Transport's review proposes removing the area knowledge requirement and leaving companies to make their own decisions. Technology, such as GPS systems, provides alternative means to achieve the objective. Passengers are also able to use this type of technology to track the route that the driver is using.

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Yes

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No – if no, please explain why

#### **Question 23** – *Do you agree that the following is no longer required?*

- *English language* – taxi drivers are required to have a sufficient knowledge of the English language. The Ministry of Transport's review proposes removing the English language requirement and leaving companies to make their own decisions about the language competency of their drivers. The NZ Transport Agency considers that few drivers are currently tested.

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Yes

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No – if no, please explain why

**Question 24** – *Do you agree that the following is no longer required?*

- *panic alarms* – currently, taxis are required to have in-vehicle panic alarms. There are no mandated driver safety requirements for private hire vehicle drivers. The Ministry of Transport's review proposes removing the mandatory requirement for panic alarms. Drivers should be able to refuse to accept a passenger where they consider their personal safety could be compromised and passenger service operators should have a duty to promote driver safety. Passenger service operators should make their own business decisions on how they promote driver safety (which could include the use of panic alarms or other technologies).

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Yes

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No – if no, please explain why

**Question 25** – *Do you agree that the following is no longer required?*

- *passenger service licence (PSL)* – regulatory compliance is currently managed through a range of mechanisms including approved taxi organisations, passenger service licence and driver obligations. The Ministry of Transport's review proposes requiring all passenger service operators to be an approved transport operator. A key responsibility of approved transport operators would be making sure all of their drivers had a P endorsement, worked within work time limits, and drove vehicles with a valid Certificate of Fitness.

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Yes

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No – if no, please explain why

**Question 26** – *Do you agree that the following requirement is no longer required?*

- *24/7 service* – taxis are currently required to provide services 24/7 in large cities. There is no similar requirement for private hire operators (or carpooling or ridesharing). The Ministry of Transport's review proposes removing the regulatory requirement for taxis to provide a 24/7 service, and leaves operators to provide levels of service in response to their understanding of demand.

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Yes

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No – if no, please explain why

**Question 27**– *Do you agree that the following is no longer required?*

- *restrictions on private hire services connecting with customers* – currently, private hire services can only take pre-booked customers. Taxis can take pre-booked or hailed customers. Shuttles can only take passengers travelling between specific destinations. The Ministry of Transport’s review proposes removing the restrictions on how passenger service operators can connect with customers. This will promote enhanced competition and improved customer service.

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Yes

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No – if no, please explain why

**Question 28** – *Do you agree that the following is no longer required?*

- *driver passed driving test in last five years* – all P endorsement holders have to have passed a full licence test in the five years preceding their applying for their P endorsement. The Ministry of Transport’s review proposes removing this requirement. A fully licensed New Zealand driver is deemed competent to be on the road without having to sit ongoing tests (certain circumstances excluded). The existing provision of having passed a test in the last five years imposes a cost on the driver, with little benefit.

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Yes

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No – if no, please explain why

**Question 29** – *General comments on the proposals in the Future of small passenger services — consultation paper*

Please add any general comments here:

Greater Wellington Regional Council would welcome any opportunity to engage directly with the Ministry of Transport in respect to our concerns and are happy to be contacted at any time do discuss this submission further.

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