



Point to Point
Transport Commissioner

Point to Point Transport Commissioner's

Annual review 2019–20



From the Commissioner

I am pleased to present the Commissioner's annual review for 2019-20.



Anthony Wing

Point to Point Transport Commissioner

The safety of point to point transport services is my number one priority. In my first year as Commissioner I focused on promoting a culture of accountability within the NSW point to point transport industry and ensuring service providers understand and comply with their obligations under the law.

In a year that has brought us bushfires, floods and the COVID-19 pandemic, I am proud of my team's efforts to support industry and ease pressure on service providers, ensuring safe point to point transport services remain available – especially for essential workers and vulnerable people.

Throughout the pandemic we have maintained a strong focus on health and safety, working with our NSW Government partner agencies and industry to roll out measures to enhance driver and passenger safety. These safety measures include vehicle sanitisation stations, an industry vehicle safety communication toolkit and a number of videos around vehicle cleaning and personal hygiene.

We also worked with NSW Treasury, State Regulatory Insurance Authority, Transport for NSW and Service NSW to develop and implement the NSW Government's \$12.6

million support package for the taxi industry to provide operators with some financial relief during the COVID-19 outbreak and help taxis remain on the road.

My team and I have continued to ensure safer point to point transport throughout NSW using a mix of compliance and education – including safety campaigns, auditing, advisory visits, on street compliance, investigations and prosecutions.

Our activities are underpinned by robust intelligence and data analytics, supported by investment in technology to ensure we remain in step with industry advances.

We recently trialled the use of CCTV at a taxi rank located at the Central Station Grand Concourse to understand how artificial intelligence might help improve safety and compliance at taxi ranks. Since April 2020, we have been working with Sydney Trains and Transport for NSW to develop the trial program to understand driver behaviour and activity at ranks. We are looking forward to implementing more technology compliance programs in the not too distant future.

Our online presence and ongoing improvements to the Driver Vehicle Dashboard – an online tool that runs real-time driver and vehicle safety checks from multiple external databases and displays results using an easy to understand traffic light system – continue to make it easy for industry members to run their businesses and comply with the law. New features include a vehicle safety check, history and driver licence condition check.

The Commission's in-house audit team regularly undertakes safety audits to ensure service providers are complying with point to point transport law. The team carries out advisory visits prior to audits and follows up with service providers on their audit results.

Compliance actions are taken as appropriate, including issuing improvement notices.

During 2019-20 my compliance officers carried out regular activities including 63 safety audits, 289 advisory visits, 33 audits of the passenger service levy returns and 1,486 taxi and hire vehicle compliance checks across metropolitan and regional NSW. As well as carrying out covert and overt compliance activity, Authorised Officers issued 300 Improvement Notices and 30 Prohibition Notices. Also 1,627 penalty infringements were issued by Commission Officers and NSW Police for individual breaches of the Point to Point Transport law. Targeted compliance activities have resulted in providers of hire vehicle services being fined for touting and soliciting, in addition to driver ID breaches, illegal actions of point to point vehicles.

My team prosecuted five individuals at the Downing Centre Local Court on 11

February 2020. They were charged for allegedly touting and soliciting for passenger services at Sydney Airport. All five of the offences were detected as part of ongoing compliance activity at the Sydney Airport precinct - a high traffic area where people are particularly vulnerable to being touted.

For the 2020-21 financial year, based on its experience this year in audit and oversight of the industry, the Commission's focus priorities will include driver onboarding by service providers, safety management systems, preventative vehicle maintenance and illegal and unsafe driver behaviour. Public health will also remain a key focus area.

As the point to point transport industry matures and service providers develop a deeper understanding of their obligations under the Act, my compliance approach will continue to evolve with an ongoing focus on risk-based activities.



Contents

From the Commissioner	2
About us	5
Safety – safer point to point transport in NSW	6
Public safety campaigns	6
Regulatory activity	7
Compliance activity	7
Targeted compliance activities	7
Touting at Sydney Airport	8
Wheelchair accessible taxis	8
CCTV camera trial	8
Online compliance tools	8
Industry education	9
Supporting industry through tough times	10
Bushfires	10
COVID-19	10
Vehicle sanitisation stations	10
Taxi industry COVID-19 support package	11
Key statistics as at 30 June 2020	12
Authorisations	12
Taxi licences	12
DVD use	12
Compliance	13

About us

Working together to achieve safer point to point transport in NSW

The Point to Point Transport Commissioner – supported by the Point to Point Transport Commission – administers and enforces point to point transport laws to achieve safer point to point transport in NSW. In doing so, the Commissioner contributes to the creation of a more adaptive, innovative and competitive market for the whole industry.

The Commissioner is responsible for managing authorisation and licensing schemes, administering the passenger service levy, and enforcing and recommending safety standards for the point to point industry to ensure safer services for people across NSW.

As required by the *Point to Point Transport (Taxis and Hire Vehicles) Act 2016* (the Act) and the Point to Point Transport (Taxis and Hire Vehicles) Regulation 2017 (the Regulation), the Commissioner ensures industry complies with the law through education and enforcement, providing services for industry participants, and information for passengers, government agencies and the general public.

Staff of the Point to Point Transport Commission work with partner agencies including Transport for NSW, Revenue NSW, Service NSW and the NSW Police Force to assist the Commissioner in delivering these functions.

Use the links below to learn more about the role and functions of the Commissioner and access the Act and Regulation.

Safety – safer point to point transport in NSW

The Point to Point Transport Commissioner is delivering safer point to point transport through a mix of education and compliance, including targeted campaigns. The Commissioner’s focus is on promoting an industry culture of accountability by ensuring industry understand and comply with their obligations under the law.

Public safety campaigns

The Commissioner conducts public campaigns for high risk issues combining education, advice and enforcement to improve the safety of point to point transport.

Christmas and New Year is a busy period for industry, seeing an increase in the number of passenger services by taxi and booking service providers. In that environment it is important that safety is not compromised and passengers are aware of what they can do to ensure their personal safety.

The “Every ride should be a safe ride” social media campaign launched in December 2019 improved passenger safety by providing tips for passengers, such as matching vehicle details provided in app with the vehicle carrying out the passenger service, and that the driver is the same person in the image displayed on their profile.

Regulatory activity

The Point to Point Transport Commissioner administers and enforces legislation relating to taxis, hire vehicles and rideshare services. This includes managing licensing schemes, administering the passenger service levy, and enforcing and recommending safety standards for the point to point industry to ensure safer services for people across NSW.

Compliance activity

The Commissioner's compliance team regularly undertakes activity to ensure service providers are complying with point to point transport laws, including safety audits, advisory visits, on street compliance, investigations, administrative sanctions and criminal proceedings.

Service providers must, so far as is reasonably practicable, ensure the health and safety of drivers, other people involved in providing the service, passengers and any other people the service may impact such as other road users or pedestrians. They are required to eliminate or minimize risks to the provision of safe services by ensuring drivers and vehicles meet safety standards and through a safety management system which identify, assess and control any safety risks.

The Commissioner regularly undertakes safety audits to ensure service providers are complying with point to point transport law. The Commissioner's in-house audit team offers advisory visits prior to audits and follows up with service providers on their audit results. Compliance actions are taken as appropriate, including issuing improvement notices.

Investigations and prosecutions originate from a number of sources – including compliance activities, notifiable occurrences and complaints from industry and members of the public – and may result in warnings, improvement notices and penalty notices,

cancellation of a service provider's authorisation or prosecution.

During 2019–20, the Commissioner undertook 63 safety audits, 289 advisory visits, 33 audits of the passenger service levy returns and 1,486 taxi and hire vehicle compliance checks across NSW. The Commissioner also received 663 enquiries and conducted 46 investigations from complaints made about alleged breaches of point to point transport laws. The Commissioner's Authorised Officers issued 300 Improvement Notices and 30 Prohibition Notices. Also 1,627 penalty infringements were issued by Commission Officers and NSW Police for individual breaches of the Point to Point Transport law.

Targeted compliance activities

The Commissioner's Point to Point Transport Compliance Officers conducted targeted activities during high profile events, such as the Fire Fight Australia Benefit at Sydney Olympic Park in February 2020, Splendour in the Grass in Byron Bay, Spring Racing Carnival at Randwick, the State of Origin in Sydney and Newcastle Supercars.

In December 2019, the on street compliance team conducted a joint operation with the NSW Police Force targeting taxis and hire vehicles (including rideshare) entering the pedestrian zone and light rail corridor in Sydney's central business district.

The joint operation coincided with the testing of Sydney's light rail corridor and

commuter services, which brought about changes to the lane markings and areas in which taxis and hire vehicles were permitted to stop, set down or pick up passengers.

Touting at Sydney Airport

Touting and soliciting at the airport and in any area of NSW is not only an offence under point to point transport law, it is unsafe for passengers and a form of harassment.

The Commissioner prosecuted five individuals at the Downing Centre Local Court on 11 February 2020. The five people were charged for allegedly touting and soliciting for passenger services at Sydney Airport on separate occasions in November 2019.

All five of the offenders were convicted and fined between \$1,000 and \$2,500 each. The offences were detected as part of ongoing compliance activity by the Commissioner at the Sydney Airport precinct – a high traffic area where people are particularly vulnerable to being touted.

Wheelchair accessible taxis

Under point to point transport law, drivers of Wheelchair Accessible Taxis (WAT) must give preference to customers in wheelchairs. Self-assessment guides help service providers understand the importance of ongoing training and assessment for drivers of wheelchair accessible vehicles.

WATs are regularly monitored for compliance and the Commissioner may cancel or suspend the WAT licence if the terms and conditions are not met. In February 2020, the Commissioner cancelled two WAT licences for not meeting the requirement of giving preference to customers in wheelchairs, bringing the total number of WAT licences cancelled by the Commissioner to seven.

CCTV camera trial

The Commissioner is trialling the use of CCTV at the Central Station taxi rank in Sydney. The purpose of the trial is to understand how artificial intelligence technology might help improve safety at taxi ranks.

The trial in conjunction with Transport for NSW and Sydney Trains, has seen the installation of two cameras at the taxi rank outside the Grand Concourse at Central Station.

Through the trial, activity on the rank has been monitored and analysed to provide information around rank use patterns and data to identify the types of vehicles using the rank. Taxi ranks are for use by taxis only and no other vehicles, including other point to point vehicles such as hire vehicles and rideshare services.

The cameras observed any illegal driver activity and collected associated data including number plates and the display of retroreflective signage. Any personal information captured as part of the trial has been stored securely and will be destroyed when it is no longer needed.

The CCTV trial will also provide point to point compliance officers with essential data to improve safety at taxi ranks across the state and ensure service providers are compliant with safety standards under the point to point law.

The data derived is being reviewed to determine if the trial has assisted in reducing illegal activity at the Central Station taxi rank, and whether using artificial intelligence technology in this way can assist compliance officers conduct future work.

Online compliance tools

Through the Commissioner's online presence industry can access information, utilise compliance tools available through the Industry Portal and seek assistance through the Industry Contact Centre.

The Driver Vehicle Dashboard (DVD) is an online tool that runs real-time driver and vehicle safety checks from multiple external databases and displays results using an easy to understand traffic light system.

Industry is able to check driver licensing, serious driving offences, medical fitness, disqualifying criminal charges, previous public passenger driver matters and other serious safety offences in NSW. The DVD is also used to check if vehicle registration and safety checks are current, consolidating multiple lengthy checks into one easy search.

Introduced in November 2017, the DVD continues to evolve with enhanced safety features to meet the needs of industry and increase the safety of point to point transport services. New features include the introduction of a vehicle safety check (previously known as a pink slip) history and driver licence condition check.

The safety check function allows authorised service providers to easily identify taxis and hire vehicles that have had a safety check within the last 12 months, those vehicles which have not and those due for a safety check.

In May 2020 the Commission introduced a digital taxi licence to the Industry Portal. This allows taxi licence holders to manage their taxi licence online and reduces the requirement for paper documents when undertaking business transactions such as registering a vehicle at Service NSW, preparing their taxation documents or leasing the taxi licence on the open market.

Industry education

The Commissioner advises and informs the industry of their legal obligations and works to ensure participants have the knowledge, capability and confidence to meet those requirements. Services are designed to make it easy for the taxi, hire vehicle, rideshare and similar point to point transport services to comply with the law and run their businesses in NSW.

The Commissioner continues to roll out educational tools to help service providers understand their obligations and equip them with knowledge to ensure they have the appropriate safety policies, procedures and systems in place.

Self-assessment guides launched during 2019–20 focus on specific safety requirements, which equip service providers to assess their operations and determine whether any amendments should be made to their safety policies, procedures and systems.

A program of webinars helps to address identified knowledge gaps in areas of high need, such as creating a safety management system and identifying risks, as well as more general information for service providers. Information about the Commission's policies and procedures, compliance activity and key industry statistics are uploaded to the website regularly.

Supporting industry through tough times

We have worked hard to support industry and ensure point to point transport services remained available throughout the Coronavirus pandemic and the 2019–20 bushfire season, while maintaining a strong focus on safety.

Bushfires

During the 2019–20 bushfire season the Commissioner eased pressure on industry by providing more time for service providers in affected areas to lodge their passenger service levy returns and levy liability payments, and by suspending advisory visits and audits for authorised service providers in bushfire affected areas.

COVID-19

The Commissioner maintained a strong focus on safety during the COVID-19 outbreak while working to support the industry and ensure point to point services remained available for essential workers and vulnerable people, connecting them to medical appointments, work, shopping and other essential activity.

In response to the outbreak, the Commissioner released a video and infographic explaining how to properly clean a point to point transport vehicle to reduce the spread of infection. This has been used by a number of stakeholders within and beyond NSW, including Uber across Australia and New Zealand, SafeWork Australia and Transport for NSW. It was also requested by and supplied to Transport for London.

Communication materials to increase the safety of passengers and drivers include a toolkit for point to point transport vehicles, including signage, seat cards, posters, digital and social media materials reinforcing the Commissioner's health and safety messages.

Since then vehicle clean up kits have been made available for all point to point transport vehicles to be used in the event of a passenger spreading droplets, such as coughing or sneezing. These allow drivers to clean themselves or their vehicle surfaces and potentially reduce the spread of infection. The kits are available at vehicle sanitisation stations across New South Wales, or can be ordered from the Point to Point Transport Commissioner via the Industry Portal.

Vehicle sanitisation stations

Additional safety measures designed to enhance driver and passenger safety were rolled out in partnership with Transport for NSW and the point to point transport industry, including the trial of free vehicle sanitisation stations to reduce the risk of community acquired infection of COVID-19.

Vehicle sanitisation includes disinfecting high-touch areas like outside and inside door handles, window controls, headrests and payment terminals. Drivers are also encouraged to do spot cleans in between sanitisation as they continue to deliver their essential service to the community.

All point to point transport passenger service providers are entitled to one complimentary daily sanitisation of a vehicle, including taxis, hire vehicles, rideshare vehicles, and community transport vehicles.

These initiatives aim to improve safety and maintain public confidence in point to point services used for essential travel like going to the shops or medical appointments, including taxis and community transport services.

Taxi industry COVID-19 support package

The NSW Government announced a \$12.6 million support package for the taxi industry to provide operators with some financial relief during the COVID-19 outbreak and help taxis remain on the road.

The Point to Point Transport Commissioner worked with NSW Treasury, State Regulatory Insurance Authority, Transport for NSW and Service NSW to develop and implement the Taxi industry COVID-19 support package.

The table below gives a breakdown of the available assistance and a summary of the four measures. Detailed eligibility criteria applied to each measure.

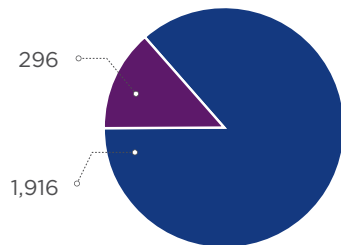
Point to point transport service provider	Support
Registered owners of Wheelchair Accessible Taxis	\$2,900 per registered WAT (to cover six months of the cost of CTP insurance and vehicle registration)
Registered owners of Taxis other than WATs	\$2,900 per eligible taxi (to cover six months of the cost of CTP insurance and vehicle registration)
Eligible taxi licence holders	A 50 per cent waiver of the annual taxi licence fee payable in financial year 2019–20
All authorised service providers	Waiver of the first \$500 of authorisation fees per service provider for 2018–19 financial year

The Commissioner worked with Service NSW to contact eligible registered taxi vehicle owners including Wheelchair accessible taxi (WAT) vehicles with a subsidy cheque of \$2,900. In June 2020, the Commissioner sent out the authorisation fee notices that waived the first \$500 of the fee amount due for 2018–19 and provided rebates to those that had paid their annual taxi licence fee and arranged waivers for those yet to pay.

Key statistics as at 30 June 2020

Authorisations

Service providers



- Booking service providers
- Taxi service providers



2,212
total service providers

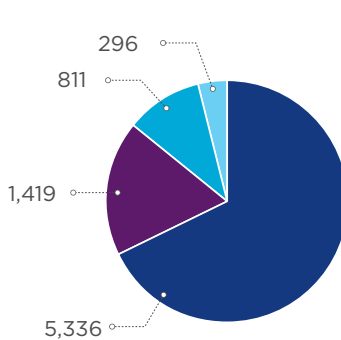


+98
increased in service provider since 1 July 2019



\$158,123,852
levy collected to date (as per Revenue NSW website)

Taxi licences



Sydney - total licences (including WATS)



NSW excluding Sydney - total licences (including WATS)



Sydney - total WAT licences



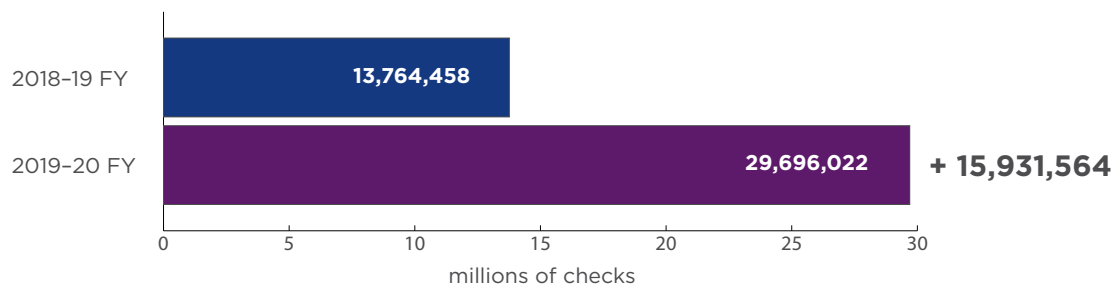
NSW excluding Sydney - total WAT licences



6,995 total
taxi licences

DVD use

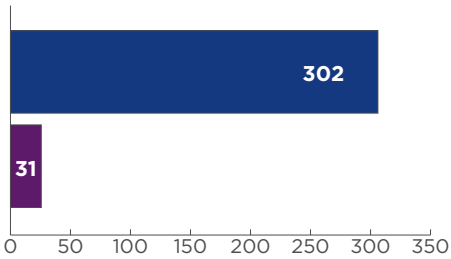
Total checks (drivers and vehicles)





Compliance

Notices

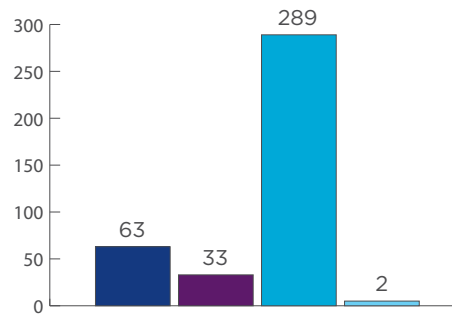
between 1 July 2019 – 30 June 2020







-  Improvement notices
-  Prohibition notices

Audits

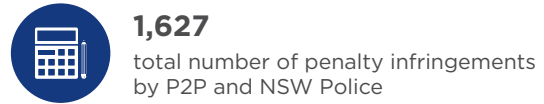
between 1 July 2019 – 30 June 2020



-  Audits - Safety
-  Audits - Levy
-  Audits - Advisory visits
-  Sanctions - WAT cancellations

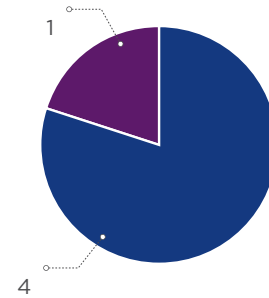
Penalty infringements



between 1 July 2019 – 30 June 2020

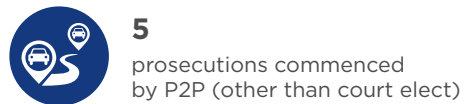


Prosecutions

between 1 July 2019 – 30 June 2020



-  Pled guilty and fined
-  Convicted in his absence and fined



Pointtopoint.nsw.gov.au

Disclaimer

While all care is taken in producing this work, no responsibility is taken or warranty made with respect to the accuracy of any information, data or representation. The authors (including copyright owners) expressly disclaim all liability in respect of anything done or omitted to be done and the consequences upon reliance of the contents of this information.

© Transport for New South Wales

Users are welcome to copy, reproduce and distribute the information contained in this report for non-commercial purposes only, provided acknowledgement is given to Transport for NSW as the source.

P2P004

