

December
2021

Point to Point Transport
Commissioner's

Annual review 2020-21

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Point to Point
Transport Commissioner



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From the Commissioner

I am pleased to present the Commissioner's annual review for 2020–21.



Following another extraordinarily challenging year for the point to point transport industry in NSW, I am proud of my team's efforts to deliver on our priorities while easing pressure on service providers — ensuring safe point to point transport services remain available for people who need them.

We continue to maintain a strong focus on health and safety — as we have throughout the COVID pandemic — working with our NSW Government partner agencies and industry to roll out measures to enhance driver and passenger safety across NSW.

These safety measures include additional vehicle sanitisation stations, distribution of sanitisation kits throughout regional NSW and a NSW Government QR code specifically for the point to point transport industry.

We worked with NSW Treasury, State Insurance Regulatory Authority, Transport for NSW and Service NSW to administer the NSW Government's \$12.6 million support package for the point to point industry.

Prior to the pandemic, we had seen significant industry growth with around 75 million point to point trips made each year — an increase of more than 33 per cent since the point to point transport reforms were introduced.

While public health orders and restrictions relating to COVID-19 resulted in a significant reduction in services by both taxis and hire vehicles, public confidence in the industry remains strong.

Transport for NSW customer survey results show a significant increase in customer satisfaction across all modes. For the two years from May 2019 to May 2021, customer satisfaction was 90 per cent for taxis (up 4 per cent) and 93 per cent for hire cars (up 7 per cent) and rideshare (up 2 per cent).

In June 2021 the NSW Government announced its intention to introduce a package of reforms to the point to point transport industry, including freeing up the supply of taxi licences. This was in response to the independent review of the industry led by Sue Baker-Finch in 2020. Transport for NSW is currently consulting on these proposals.

My team is in the process of establishing a stronger presence across NSW, including employing regionally based authorised officers, further boosting industry safety in these communities.

The point to point transport industry continues to evolve with rapid advancements in technology and innovation.

I am focused on ensuring our compliance approach keeps pace with industry developments. In particular, that we have the necessary high-tech expertise to be able to properly interrogate these increasingly sophisticated systems.

For the first time this year we engaged specialist support when conducting audits of large, technology-based service providers, to help us better understand how their digital systems and controls work, how effective they are, and importantly why things sometimes go wrong.

These specialists also helped us to develop a framework for our compliance team to use during audits of large high-tech companies into the future – both rideshare and taxi companies.

Guided by my strategic priorities, my team and I continue to ensure safer point to point transport throughout NSW using a mix of compliance and education – including safety campaigns, audits, advisory visits, on street compliance, investigations and prosecutions.

During 2020–21, my authorised officers carried out regular activities including 78 safety audits, 61 advisory visits, 44 passenger service levy reviews, 1349 taxi vehicle compliance checks and 1736 hire vehicle (including ride share) compliance checks across metropolitan and regional NSW.

Authorised officers issued 184 improvement notices and 25 prohibition notices. Also, 1,194 penalty infringements were issued by my authorised officers and NSW Police for individual breaches of the point to point transport law.

Our online presence and ongoing improvements to the Driver Vehicle Dashboard (DVD) continue to make it easy for industry members to run their businesses safely and comply with the law.

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

During the 2020–21 financial year, more than 22 million checks were run on drivers and more than 9.5 million on vehicles; or 40 per cent of the 79.4 million checks run since 2017.

New DVD features include two new fields displaying the last time a vehicle had a safety inspection or attended a vehicle sanitisation station.

We have significantly reduced the time it takes to get a taxi on the road. Our new streamlined process allows service providers and affiliates to generate an automated letter through the Industry Portal.

This means less paperwork and less time spent on transactions relating to taxi plate management.

Based on the Commission's experience in audit and oversight of the industry, our focus priorities will continue to include driver on-boarding by service providers, safety management systems, preventative vehicle maintenance, and illegal and unsafe driver behaviour. Public health will also remain a key focus area.

Whilst COVID continues to present challenges, I am optimistic we will again have an industry that is flourishing, providing lots of consumer choice and – most importantly – is safe. Our approach to industry safety is key to achieving this.

Anthony Wing

Point to Point Transport Commissioner

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 law 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.

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.

Commissioner's strategic priorities

The Commissioner's strategic priorities build on our vision for safer point to point transport in NSW and reflect the increasing maturity of the industry.

These will build on the Commissioner's vision for safer point to point transport in NSW and reflect the increasing maturity of the industry.

Priority 1: Targeted compliance

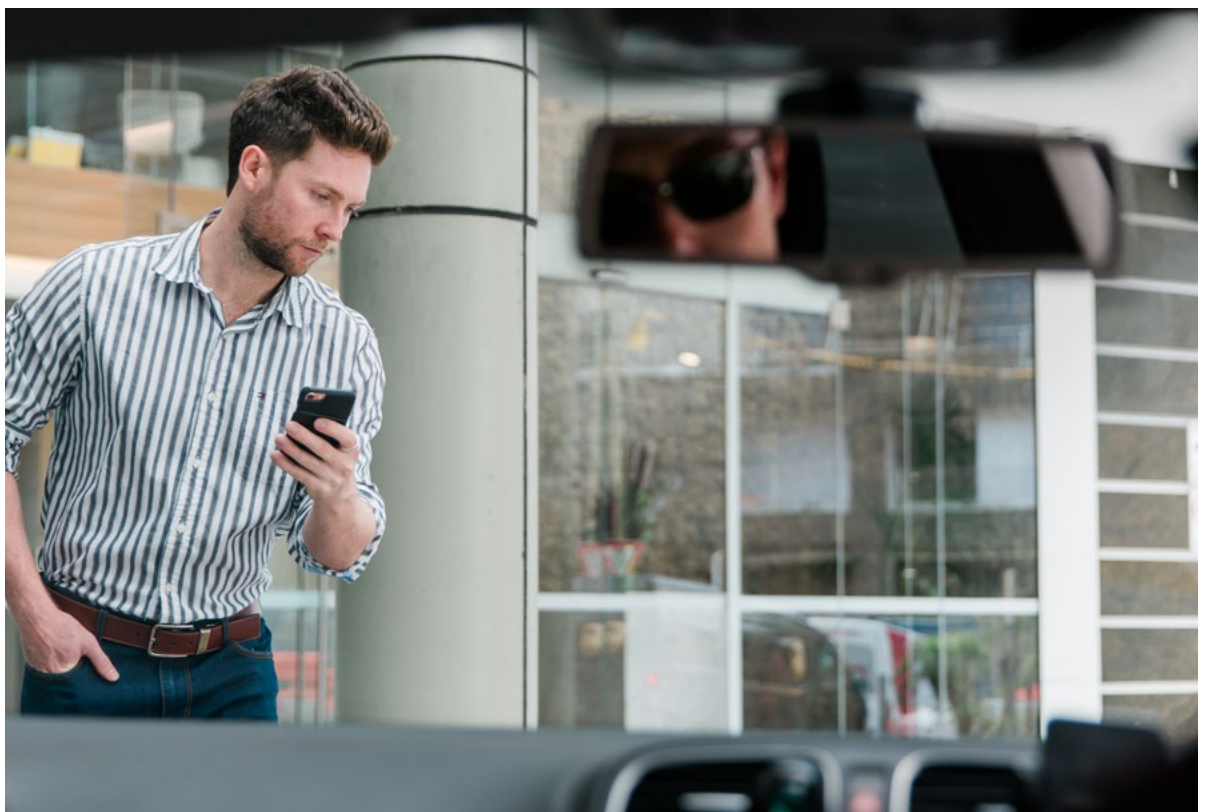
Increased focus on identified higher risk areas, underpinned by better use of technology, intelligence and analytics.

Priority 2: Effective and consistent regulation

Supported by targeted communication with industry and the community.

Priority 3: Streamlining services

Work with Transport for NSW to minimise duplication and advising on regulation of future services.



Safer point to point transport in NSW

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

Compliance approach

As the point to point transport industry matures and service providers develop a deeper understanding of their obligations under the Act, the Commissioner's compliance approach continues to evolve with an ongoing focus on risk-based activities. This includes targeted campaigns, safety audits, on-street compliance, advisory visits, investigations and prosecutions.

Guided by our strategic priorities, the Commission continues to focus on the following higher risk areas under point to point transport law:

- ▶ Driver on boarding
- ▶ Preventative vehicle maintenance
- ▶ Safety management systems
- ▶ Public health
- ▶ Illegal and unsafe driver behaviour.

Compliance activity

To ensure service providers are meeting their safety obligations the Commissioner's authorised officers regularly undertake:

- ▶ audits and advisory visits
- ▶ vehicle inspections and fleet inspections
- ▶ joint operations with the NSW Police and Transport for NSW
- ▶ covert on street compliance operations
- ▶ investigations.

During 2020–21, the Commissioner's compliance team undertook 78 safety audits 61 advisory visits, 44 passenger service levy reviews, 1349 taxi vehicle compliance checks and 1736 hire vehicle compliance checks.

The Commissioner also received 199 enquiries and conducted 79 investigations from complaints made about alleged breaches of point to point transport law.

Authorised officers issued 184 improvement notices and 25 prohibition notices. Also, 1,194 penalty infringements were issued by Commission's authorised officers and NSW Police for individual breaches of the point to point transport law.

Information about our regulatory activity, including on street, investigations, audits and prosecutions, is published via our website and industry newsletter. All compliance reporting contains educational messaging and links to learning resources on our website.

Compliance in the regions

The Commission's team of authorised officers regularly conducts compliance activities across NSW. They visited 76 regional locations over the last year.

We are working to establish a stronger presence across NSW, including by employing regionally-based authorised officers. These officers will allow the Commission to significantly ramp up on-street compliance activities and provide a permanent presence that will act to promote compliance and deter breaches of the law in these communities.

The regional presence will enable us to better engage with local Police and industry participants to increase understanding of, and compliance with, point to point transport law. Local insights will inform our regional compliance approach.

Audits and advisory visits

The Commission's in-house audit team undertakes safety audits of taxi, hire vehicle, rideshare and similar service providers to ensure they are complying with point to point transport law. The team carries out advisory visits on newly authorised service providers and follows up with service providers on their audit results.

During an advisory visit, the compliance team provides advice to service providers on maintaining a compliant safety management system, managing risks, preventative vehicle maintenance and undertaking driver and vehicle checks.

Where service providers breach their obligations we take enforcement action as appropriate, including issuing improvement and prohibition notices, issuing penalties, prosecution and taking action against authorisations and licences, which may include imposing conditions or cancellation.

Improvement notices

In the 12 months ending June, my team issued 184 improvement notices. The top three most common reasons for improvement notices, accounting for 55% of notices issued were:

- ▶ preventative vehicle maintenance
- ▶ driver checks
- ▶ security camera systems in vehicles providing rank and hail passenger services.

Many of the improvement notices issued were due to the service provider not keeping detailed records on how the required safety standards described in their Safety Management System were being met, or not identifying sufficient ways to eliminate or minimise risk.

On-street operations

The Commissioner's on-street compliance team conduct overt and covert operations across NSW to detect and prevent breaches of point to point transport law, including touting and soliciting and unauthorised service providers offering passenger services.

Touting and soliciting at the airport

Touting or soliciting of passengers is a breach of point to point transport law. If caught, an individual can be issued a fine of up to \$550 or up to \$5,500 if the offence is committed within the Sydney Airport precinct — a high traffic area where people are particularly vulnerable to being touted.

As part of our ongoing compliance activity, the Commissioner's authorised officers attend Sydney Airport from time to time in high visibility vests to act as a deterrent. During 2020–21, authorised officers conducted 238 airport patrols. The compliance team also conducts covert operations at the airport and other locations such as at stadiums and other entertainment venues that are identified 'hotspots' for touting.

Over the last year, four individuals were prosecuted for touting and soliciting for passenger services at Sydney Airport. All four resulted in convictions and fines.

Illegal activity around light rail

During September and October last year, my authorised officers conducted a campaign targeting illegal driver activity in the vicinity of the light rail in the Sydney CBD. Over six weekends, 27 penalty notices were issued for illegal ranking and a further 17 for failure to display their driver ID.

Unauthorised service providers

In November 2020, we undertook the first prosecution for providing an unauthorised booking service. The individual, who had been operating on the Central Coast, was convicted by the court, fined and ordered to pay legal costs.

Joint operations with Transport for NSW and NSW Police

The Commission's authorised officers routinely conduct joint operations with both Transport for NSW and NSW Police.

In 2020–21, we undertook a joint operation with Transport for NSW. This required hire vehicles, including rideshare, providing the highest number of trips to present themselves for a road safety inspection and a review of preventive and corrective maintenance, insurance coverage and inspection of retroreflective sign.

The joint operations with NSW Police involved random vehicle checks of hire vehicles (including rideshare) and taxis and focused on roadworthiness and compliance with vehicle and driver identification.

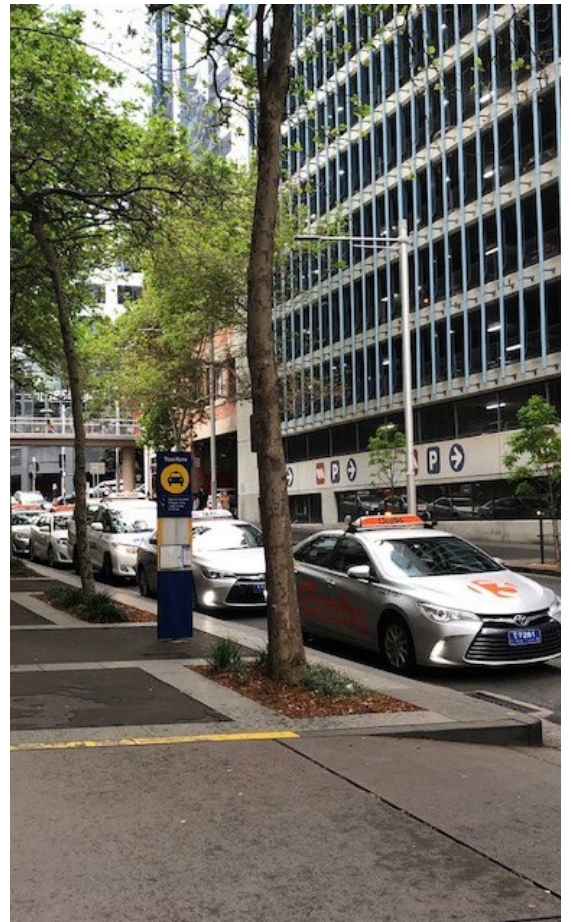
Secure taxi ranks program

There are 53 secure taxi ranks across metropolitan Sydney and regional NSW. Five new temporary secure taxi ranks were established in the last year in Sydney's CBD as part of the NSW Government Sydney CBD revitalisation program. In addition, a number of existing taxi ranks had the hours of operation extended to include Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights.

We introduced temporary secure ranks in Terrigal, Gunnedah, East Maitland and Raymond Terrace to address non-compliance in these locations.

Streamlining reporting processes

The Commission continues to identify what we can do to make it easier for industry to comply with their obligations under point to point transport laws. This past year, in consultation with industry, we streamlined the process for service providers to report notifiable occurrences.



Harnessing regulatory technology

We are continuing to identify and implement technology to support the Commissioner's regulatory functions and risk-based compliance programs.

The Commissioner's regulatory activities are underpinned by robust intelligence and data analytics, supported by investment in technology to ensure we remain in step with industry advances.

Smart CCTV Cameras

Last year we installed CCTV at a taxi rank located at the Central Station Grand Concourse to help improve customer information, safety and compliance. The CCTV Cameras were installed at central station as a proof of concept to test the technology and develop use cases for the expansion of the trial project. Based on a successful test the CCTV trial was expanded to up to 100 sites throughout metro and regional NSW to be delivered throughout 2020–2022.

Smart CCTV trial

The CCTV trial will capture information including on:

- ▶ the number of taxis and non-taxis at the ranks
- ▶ wheelchair accessible taxis
- ▶ the numbers of passengers waiting or length of queues at ranks
- ▶ vehicle number plates
- ▶ the time a vehicle stands in a rank
- ▶ unsafe driver behaviour like double parking.



We have worked with local councils, law enforcement, industry and community as part of our engagement and consultation strategy, with site installations commencing in August. 50 Smart CCTV cameras are due to be installed at 24 locations in and around Sydney by the end of 2021, with the remaining sites to be completed early in 2022, including locations throughout regional NSW.

The trial aims to increase our data analytics capabilities and to harness artificial intelligence and machine learning to monitor vehicle behaviour at ranks, informing our on-street compliance activities. In addition, high and low capacity times and passenger numbers and wait times will be fed into Transport open data services to inform customer choice.

The information collected aims to improve safety, provide insight into industry activity and will inform future initiatives like the NSW Government's 24-hour Economy Strategy.

Analytics and reporting

During 2020 an in-house analytics and technology team was established to further develop analytics and reporting and improve the Commission's efficiency, including through automation of certain tasks.

Online tools and education

The Point to Point Transport Commissioner advises and keeps industry members informed 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 other similar services to comply with the law and run their businesses in NSW.

Driver Vehicle Dashboard

We have made it easier for the point to point industry to do business by providing them with a tool – the Driver Vehicle Dashboard (DVD) – which enables them to run ongoing checks on drivers and vehicles in NSW.

Service providers check driver licensing, vehicle registration, serious driving offences and other safety offences in one easy search. In the last year we added two new fields being the last vehicle inspection date and the last time a vehicle attended a point to point vehicle sanitisation station.

During the 2020–21 financial year, more than 22 million checks were run on drivers and more than 9.5 million on vehicles; or 40 per cent of the 79.4 million checks run since 2017.

Website

In September last year, we launched a new mobile friendly website with easier navigation and better accessibility. Our new Learning Centre offers resources and tools to help industry members comply with the law, while our virtual assistant Chatbot makes it even easier to find what you are looking for.

Industry portal

As a result of changes to the website, the Industry Portal – accessed via the Commission's website – is now mobile friendly, eliminating the need to have a desktop computer and allowing smaller service providers to access the Industry Portal while they're on the move.

Streamlined taxi plate management

We have significantly reduced the time spent on transactions relating to taxi plate management through a new streamlined process.

Taxi service providers and affiliates can now generate an automated letter through the Industry Portal to complete a taxi plate transaction.

The new taxi plate management process reduces the time required to obtain multiple documents relating to the taxi licence and vehicle being registered and means taxis can be used to provide passenger services quickly and efficiently.

Online short courses

During 2020–21 the Commission released online training courses to help industry members better understand their obligations under point to point transport laws. Courses can be accessed through our website or via a mobile phone application.

There are currently six online courses made up of 22 separate lessons and include topics such as disqualifying offences, the passenger service levy, and information on becoming a taxi or booking service provider, affiliated provider obligations, secure camera specifications and driver management.

An increasing number of individuals are completing the courses and new courses are planned.

Educational videos

Educational videos can be accessed via the website. These include how to report a notifiable occurrence, wheelchair accessible taxi driver and assessor competency self-assessment guide, QR codes in taxi, and safety and hygiene tips for point to point transport drivers.

Toolkits and Checklists

There are now interactive toolkits and checklists available for download from the website covering driver on boarding and management, safety audits, fatigue management, registration and insurance, reporting, and wheelchair accessible vehicle driver competency.

Public safety campaigns

The Commissioner conducts public campaigns on high risk safety 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. At such times of high demand it is important that safety is not compromised and passengers are aware of what they can do to ensure their personal safety.

The *Let's make every ride a safe ride* campaign was developed with Transport for NSW to raise awareness of the importance of personal safety and to encourage passengers to implement safe behaviours when using point to point transport services.

The campaign was conducted between 11 November and 26 December 2020 and had an online reach of more than 1.5 million. The campaign targeted: Greater Sydney, Newcastle, Wollongong, Wagga Wagga, Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie, Central Coast and the Hunter Region.

COVID response – keeping industry moving

Working with our NSW Government and industry partners to ease pressure on service providers and ensure safe point to point transport services remain available for people who need them.

Throughout the COVID pandemic we worked with our NSW Government partner agencies and industry on measures to enhance driver and passenger safety across NSW.

Industry support package

We worked with NSW Treasury, State Insurance Regulatory Authority, Transport for NSW and Service NSW to administer the NSW Government's \$12.6 million support package for the point to point industry.

In July 2020 and the following months, we administered:

- ▶ \$2,900 per vehicle for registered owners of eligible Taxis and Wheelchair Accessible Taxis
- ▶ a 50 per cent waiver of the annual taxi license fee payable in the 2019–20 financial year, and
- ▶ a waiver of the first \$500 of authorisation fees per service provider for the 2018–19 financial year, for all authorised service providers.

CBD revitalisation

The Government's CBD revitalisation plan has been developed to counter the downturn in CBD activity from COVID. As part of this, the Point to Point Transport Commission conducted a public facing campaign using a variety of channels to encourage people to come back into the CBD.

The campaign ran from December 2020 – March 2021 and informed people about how to confidently and safely use taxis and other point to point transport through the key safety message of 'check-in when you hop in' using QR codes. The campaign also promoted the availability of an increased number of CBD secure taxi ranks which operate for longer hours.

The campaign's social media posts via Facebook and Instagram had a reach of 5,435,293.

Vehicle Sanitisation Stations

The Point to Point Transport Commissioner and Transport for NSW continue to roll out government-funded, complimentary vehicle sanitisation stations at locations throughout metro and regional New South Wales.

This is a complimentary service for all point to point transport vehicles entitling them up to two sanitisations, per vehicle, per day to help reduce the spread of illness and assist with maintaining driver and passenger safety. This includes taxis, hire vehicles, rideshare vehicles, community transport, Government fleet and Emergency Services vehicles.

Complimentary surgical masks, hand sanitiser and personal clean up kits are provided to drivers as part of this service.

Authorised service providers not in an area serviced by a vehicle sanitisation station can order surgical masks via the industry portal. These get sent directly to the provider to issue to their drivers.

There are 12 vehicle sanitisation stations located at Alexandria, Prestons, Campbelltown, Seven Hills, Arncliffe and North Parramatta, Albury, Dubbo, Tamworth, Central Coast Newcastle and Tweed Heads.

Vehicle clean up kits

Vehicle clean up kits are available for all point to point transport vehicles. These allow drivers to sanitise vehicle surfaces and potentially reduce the spread of infection.

Kits are available at vehicle sanitisations stations across New South Wales, or can be ordered from the Point to Point Transport Commissioner via the Industry Portal.

The kit comes in a resealable plastic bag and contains gloves, saline eye wash, antiseptic swabs, soap and first aid hand towels.

Clean up kits — used alongside other measures including sanitisation stations, routine spot cleans and good personal and vehicle hygiene — add an extra safety measure to protect drivers and passengers and reduce the spread of COVID-19 and infection.

In April 2021, over a thousand kits were sent to regional NSW to help those in remote and regional locations remain COVID safe over the Easter period.

Masks at taxi ranks

In January 2021, secure taxi rank guards at 17 taxi ranks in Sydney CBD provided disposable face masks to passengers who did not have one.

COVID safety communications

The Commissioner continues to provide timely, industry specific updates regarding changes to Public Health Orders, vehicle sanitisation stations, availability of government support, and COVID-related health and safety information.

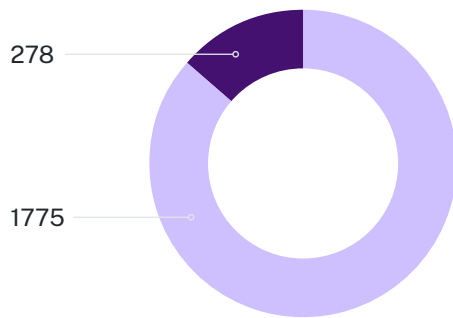
Our ongoing communications — including regular eDMs, text alerts, news articles, website updates, animations, videos and infographics — reinforce the Commissioner's health and safety messages.

We also hold regular meetings with our Industry Reference Group to facilitate information sharing and provide industry representatives with the opportunity to raise issues and ask questions.

Key statistics as at 30 June 2021

Authorisations

Service providers



- Booking service providers
- Taxi service providers



2,053
total service providers (authorisations)

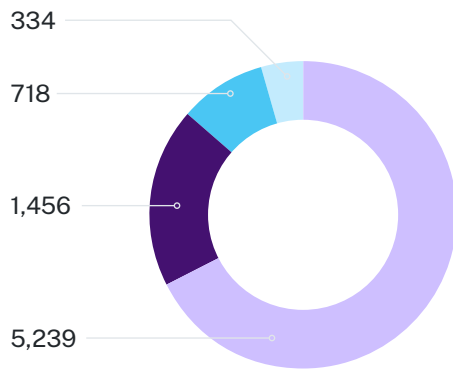


159
decrease in service providers since 20 June 2020



\$210,755,383
levy collected to date (as per RNSW website)

Taxi licences



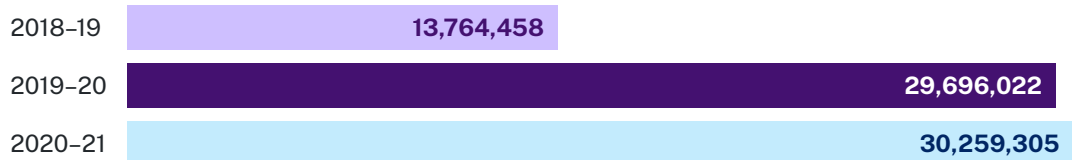
- Sydney — total licences (including WATs)
- NSW excluding Sydney — total licences (including WATs)
- Sydney — total WAT licences
- NSW excluding Sydney — total WAT licences



6,695 total
taxi licences

DVD use

Total checks (drivers and vehicles)

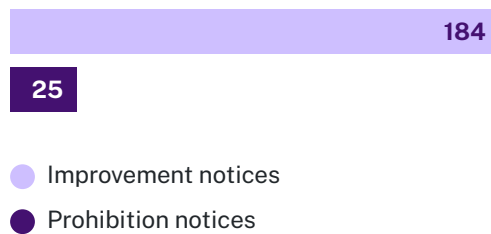


number of checks

Compliance

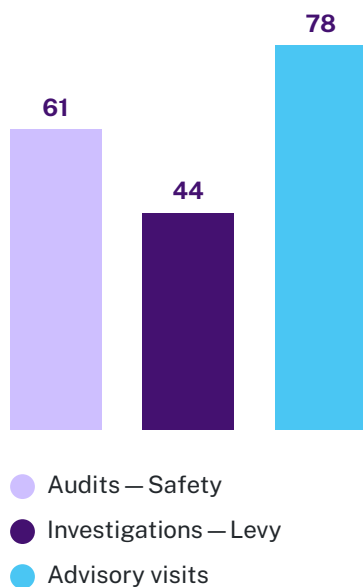
Notices

between 1 July 2020 – 30 June 2021



Audits

between 1 July 2020 – 30 June 2021



Penalty infringements

between 1 July 2020 – 30 June 2021



1,194

total number of penalty infringements by P2P and NSW Police

Prosecutions

between 1 July 2020 – 30 June 2021



9

charges finalised



Point to Point

Transport Commissioner

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