



Tourist transport operator fact sheet



Tourist transport operators play an important role in NSW by providing safe and convenient point to point transport services for tourists throughout the state.

This fact sheet will help tourist transport operators understand the role of point to point transport and what they need to do to become authorised and comply with specified safety standards and obligations.

What is point to point transport in NSW?

In NSW, point to point transport is a service (in a vehicle of 12 seats or less) that takes passengers on a journey, along their preferred route and at a time that suits them, for a fare. It includes rank and hail taxi services and booked services (via limousines, rideshare, airport transfers, taxis and other hire vehicles such as tourist transport).

What is tourist transport?

Tourist transport is any booked passenger service for tourists and includes:

- winery tours
- sightseeing tours
- motorcycle and trike tours
- off-road tours in 4-wheel drive vehicles
- tours which pickup and drop off at the same point
- passenger services which form part of another tourist activity, e.g. a kayaking trip.

Tourist transport can happen on any type of road or trail, whether it be public, private, unmarked or in a national park.

How does being a 'Booking Service Provider' relate to tourist transport?

To provide tourist transport passenger services legally, a business or person must become authorised by the Point to Point Transport Commissioner as a Booking Service Provider (BSP). In simple terms, a BSP is a business or person that takes bookings to provide passenger services and gives these bookings to drivers. Bookings can be made via an App, website, phone or in person.

In some cases, the tourist transport operator is both the BSP and the driver, and in other cases the BSP is a separate person to the driver. Drivers who just provide the point to point transport passenger service, and do not take the booking, do not need to be authorised as BSPs.

For more information, please refer to the [Booking Service Providers webpage](#).

Frequently asked questions

Why does a tourist transport operator need to become authorised as a BSP?

Safety is the top priority of the Point to Point Transport Commissioner. It is a shared goal for everyone in the point to point transport industry.

One way in which the Commissioner regulates and works toward ensuring a safer industry is through authorisation.

Authorised service providers must comply with the conditions of authorisation and specified safety standards under the law. The Commissioner ensures that service providers meet their safety obligations and comply with safety standards through safety audits and on-street compliance activities.

For more information, please refer to the [Do you need to be authorised? Fact sheet](#) and the [Safety standards for vehicles providing booked services webpage](#).

Can a personal vehicle be used to provide tourist transport?

Yes.

If it is a vehicle with 12 seats or less, it can be used for tourist transport provided:

- it meets the specified vehicle safety standards and has \$5 million in third-party property insurance
- the operator is authorised as a BSP or accepts bookings from an authorised BSP.

The owner of the vehicle used to provide a booked service has specific obligations to ensure:

- the vehicle is regularly and properly maintained
- maintenance or repairs are carried out by a licenced mechanic
- records of maintenance and repairs are kept.

Drivers of passenger service vehicles have specific obligations. For more information, please refer to the [Driver obligations webpage](#).

Do I need to be authorised by the Point to Point Transport Commission or accredited under the Bus Operator Accreditation Scheme (BOAS)?

It depends on the number of seats in the vehicle.

Vehicles with 13 seats or more (regardless of the number of seated passengers at any one time), do not fall under point to point transport law. These vehicles operate under the Bus Operator Accreditation Scheme (BOAS).

Vehicles with 12 seats or less, fall under point to point transport law and providers of booked services using these vehicles must be authorised by the Point to Point Transport Commissioner.

Can a person provide tourist transport without being authorised by the Point to Point Transport Commissioner?

No.

If a person is caught providing unauthorised services, they face a significant fine.

The authorisation process is designed to ensure journeys are as safe as possible for drivers, passengers and the public. Penalties of up to \$110,000 apply for anyone providing an unauthorised taxi or booking service, while drivers will face penalties if they take bookings or carry out passenger services from unauthorised service providers. Penalties are much higher for second or subsequent offences.

If you are aware of someone taking bookings and providing tourist transport without being authorised, this is a safety risk, and you should notify the Commissioner by completing the [Contact us form](#) found on our website.

For more information, please refer to the [Point to Point Transport \(Taxis and Hire Vehicles\) Act 2016](#).

What safety standards apply to tourist transport operators?

Tourist transport providers must comply with the safety standards that apply to all BSPs:

1. Safety Management System

A Safety Management System details how a BSP identifies, records and manages any risks associated with the provision of services, and how the required safety standards will be met.

2. Vehicle standards

The owner of a vehicle used to provide a booked passenger service must ensure the vehicle is appropriately registered and safe to be driven on the road (roadworthy). All vehicles must undergo annual safety checks (pink slip) even if they are less than five years old.

3. Insurance

In NSW, all vehicles providing point to point transport must hold third-party property insurance with cover of at least \$5 million. This is different to Compulsory Third Party insurance (green slip).

4. Provision of information

BSPs must make certain information available to the person who booked the service, including the vehicle registration number and the name of the driver.

5. Drivers

Drivers must comply with safety standards. For this reason, BSPs must take reasonable steps to check their drivers' history and prepare them to drive (onboarding).

For more information, please refer to the following sources:

- [Booking Service Providers webpage](#)

- [Duty of Care and Safety Management Systems Fact sheet](#)
- [Vehicle Insurance Fact sheet](#)
- [Driver Onboarding Fact sheet](#)

What safety standards apply specifically to drivers of tourist transport services?

Tourist transport drivers, like all drivers providing booked services, must:

1. take reasonable care of their own health and safety
2. ensure that their actions do not negatively affect the health and safety of others
3. comply with any reasonable direction, policy or procedure that is given by the BSP, so far as possible
4. ensure that a retroreflective sign is displayed on the vehicle.

For more information, please refer to the [Driver obligations webpage](#).

What fees and levies need to be paid by a tourist transport operator?

Tourist transport operators, like all other BSPs, must pay an annual authorisation fee at the end of each financial year.

If a BSP is authorised at any time during a financial year, it will need to pay an annual authorisation fee, even if it did not provide any passenger services.

For more information, please refer to the [Annual Authorisation Fees webpage](#).

Tourist transport operators must also pay a passenger service levy. The levy is \$1.20 (ex GST) per trip. BSPs need to register as a taxpayer through the Commissioner's Industry Portal to submit levy returns. There are exemptions and rebates which apply to the payment of the passenger service levy.

For more information, please read the [Passenger Service Levy FAQs](#).

Do tourist transport operators need to use a retroreflective sign?

Yes.

Retroreflective signs are important for the safety of passengers, drivers and the public. All vehicles actively providing booked services, including tourist transport vehicles, must have a retroreflective sign clearly displayed on or near the rear of the driver's side of the vehicle.

It is considered best practice for the retroreflective sign to show the name or logo of the BSP.

For more information, please read the [Retroreflective signs Fact sheet](#).

Do travel agents need to be authorised as BSPs?

No.

If making bookings for tourist transport is only a minor part of a travel agent's business, then it does not need to be authorised as a BSP.

Further education

Related resources are available from the [Learning Centre](#) and the following link:

- [The Act and Regulation](#)
- [Point to point tourist transport operator podcast](#)

If you have any questions or need further information, please visit the Point to Point Transport Commissioner's website pointtopoint.nsw.gov.au or call the Industry Contact Centre on 131 727.