

**GUIDELINES ON THE ASSESSMENT OF STRETCHED LIMOUSINES
TO BE LICENSED AS PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES**

For the purposes of these guidelines a stretched limousine is defined as a motor vehicle that has been lengthened by the insertion of an additional body section and modified by a coachbuilder to contain luxury facilities and fixtures.

The vehicle must, of course, comply with all statutory requirements and with the Council's conditions attached to Private Hire Vehicle Licences, as appropriate. In addition, the following guidelines will apply:-

1. **Vehicle Suitability**

On being presented for licensing for the first time, the vehicle must have proof of one of the following.

- (a) A UK single vehicle approval certificate (SVA)
- (b) A European whole vehicle approval certificate (WVA)
- (c) A UK low volume type approval certificate (LVTA)
- (d) Individual Vehicle Approval (IVA),

AND (in all cases) operators shall be required to sign a declaration that the vehicle shall not carry more than 8 passengers (even if there are more than 8 passenger seats within) and that at the time of booking the vehicle, the restriction of carrying no more than 8 passengers shall be explained to the hirer. (Limousine declaration of condition of use (DCU)).

2. **Vehicle Body**

- (a) The body must be of the fixed head (i.e. not convertible) type.
- (b) The vehicle may be right or left hand drive.
- (c) Passenger doors should be capable of being readily opened from inside and outside the vehicle by one operation of the latch mechanism, though this must not prevent doors being fitted with child safety locks. There must be at least two passenger doors, with a separate additional door for the exclusive use of the driver.
- (d) All vehicles must comply with the Road Vehicles (Construction & Use) Regulations 1986 as amended, that specifies that the light transmitted through the windscreen must be at least 75% and the front side windows must allow at least 70% of light to be transmitted through them.

3. **Facilities for Driver**

The vehicle should be so designed and constructed that:-

- (a) At least one external driving mirror should be provided to each side of the vehicle and be so fitted and adjusted as to afford the driver an adequate view to the rear.
- (b) Adequate devices for de-misting and de-frosting the windscreen and rear window and for washing the windscreen are fitted.

4. **Ventilation**

Adequate ventilation must be provided for the driver and passengers either by windows or mechanical means.

5. **Heating**

An adequate heating system should be provided and maintained for the driver and passengers and, where the driver's compartment and passenger compartment are separate, means should be provided for independent control by the driver and passengers.

6. **Luggage**

There should be a separate luggage compartment within the body of the vehicle providing adequate means of carrying and securing luggage.

7. **Vehicle Maintenance and Safety**

The vehicle shall be kept clean and should be maintained in a good state of repair and without prejudice to this general guideline:-

- (a) No visible rust or rust damage should be present.
- (b) No chipped, peeling, cracked or otherwise defective paintwork should be present. The paintwork to any repaired section should match the existing paintwork colour. The paintwork should possess a reasonable degree of shine.
- (c) The body surface finish should be smooth and without ripples or undue blemish. Any repairs to the body should match the existing lines of the bodywork and leave the bodywork of comparable strength to that when the vehicle was first constructed.
- (d) The windscreen, windows, mirrors and lights should be free of any cracks, chips or other blemishes which could reasonably impair the vision of the driver.
- (e) Any tinted glass shall conform to the legal requirements as laid down by the Vehicle Operator Services Agency (VOSA).
- (f) The vehicle should have no damage to the coach trim or bumpers.
- (g) The vehicle will be equipped with a minimum of four road wheels and one full sized spare wheel, with a means for changing a wheel.
- (h) The tyres shall be of an approved rating specified by the manufacturer.
- (i) The wheels shall be matching and comply with (7a) and (7b) above, if wheel trims are fitted they shall be an undamaged, matched set.
- (j) All body fitments must be in place, secure and free from damage.
- (k) The legal vin plate/chassis plate must be fitted to the vehicle in a legible state.
- (l) Where vehicles have wheelchair facilities, then these must comply with the Department of Transport Code of Practice, "The Safety of Passengers in Wheelchairs

on Buses”.

(m) A fully charged and functional fire extinguisher must be provided, securely fitted, and easily accessible

8. **Vehicle Interior**

The interior shall be well maintained and kept in a good state of repair. The seats and flooring shall be kept clean and free from stains, tears, cuts, burns and similar.

- (a) Maximum accommodation for eight passenger seats allowed. All seats in excess of eight must be removed.
- (b) Ease of access from ground to floor level, a step to be provided where necessary (see Mini-bus Regulations).
- (c) Suitable grab handles to be provided at entrance/exit doors as necessary.
- (d) Where any seat is so placed that any passenger seated on it is liable to be thrown through any exit or down any steps, an effective screen or guard to be provided to afford adequate protection for that passenger with padding to guard where appropriate.
- (e) There must be adequate internal lighting to enable passengers to enter and leave the vehicle safely.
- (f) There must be the means of good communication between the driver and passengers.
- (g) If any part of the fuel tank or filling system comes within the vehicle it is to be protected and sealed off.
- (h) Where there is a lit passenger compartment there shall be a screen at rear of driver for use at night.
- (i) No engine fuel to be carried within the vehicle.
- (j) The fuel filler cap to be external.
- (k) Fittings, seats and carpets will be securely fitted and designed to prevent injury or damage, any glass items including mirrors will be of toughened glass. Drinking vessels and containers shall not be made of glass

9. **Seat Belts**

A seat belt shall be provided for each passenger, any seat belts in excess of eight to be removed.

10. **Radio Antenna**

The radio (transmitter/receiver) antenna should not be located near to the fuel filler cap.

11. **Alternative Fuels**

Vehicles powered by fuels other than petrol or diesel are acceptable provided they comply with national safety requirements. LPG and natural gas powered vehicles should have a safety test certificate for the gas tank, renewable every six months, and any vehicle that has been

converted to use these fuels should also have a certificate for a safe installation of the system.

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