

SUBMISSION TO THE MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT RE THE CONSULTATION PAPER ON THE FUTURE OF SMALL PASSENGER VEHICLE SERVICES

Submitted by the Licensed Private Hire Operators
named at the end of this submission

We agree with the general thrust of the Consultation Paper of 14 December 2015. Specifically, we agree that Option 4 presents the optimal way into the future of Small Passenger Service Vehicles (at least until the eventual general acceptance of “Autonomous Operating Vehicles” [Driverless Cars]).

However, we operate in a small but vital segment of this market, in which some of the proposals present a very real threat to our ability to continue to provide our services. In both the high-end corporate market and the tourism sector, there is a significant requirement for high-quality vehicles, superior levels of chauffeured service, reliable discreet confidential transport, and sometimes increased personal protection.

An example of this type of operation is the government's own VIP Transport service, currently using BMW 7-Series vehicles driven by carefully selected and trained chauffeurs. They will not be able to offer the existing service without exemptions from some of the proposed rules; and we seek the ability to be allowed the same exemptions, detailed below with reasons in each case. We also wish to suggest changes to a requirement relating to passenger safety, as noted below. The page numbers refer to the Consultation Paper.

Passenger Safety

Not included in the Consultation Paper

We strongly believe that no driver should operate “for hire or reward” without adequate Public Liability Insurance. We hold such cover, for amounts varying from \$1,000,000 to \$5,000,000; and while it is not a major cost, we believe it is absolutely essential and that every ATO must hold adequate cover.

Pages 23 and 28:

New driver has passed a practical driving test in the last 5 years

We strongly believe that the standard civilian driving test is NOT adequate for drivers entrusted with the safety of paying passengers - our road toll certainly indicates this! There needs to be a higher-standard test which every driver obtaining a P Endorsement must pass.

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Exemption from Camera Requirement

We will all be applying for this exemption, as our services function totally on a pre-chartered basis, and there is no need for camera security for either passengers or drivers in our type of service. However, we need to have changes made to certain aspects of the criteria, as follows:

A. The second criterion, Collection of Driver and Passenger Information

When a Private Hire Operator takes a booking, certain details are always required:

- Booking person, company, etc
- Address for billing
- Contact phone number for a passenger or representative

We wish to be able to obtain an exemption from the proposed requirements. A photo is totally unnecessary, and would make our type of operation extremely difficult. Passengers' identities are occasionally NOT provided in advance, for personal and/or security reasons; such a booking may be made by an agent or representative and we are sometimes required not to display a name when meeting our passenger/s at, say, an airport.

We also wish to be able to obtain an exemption from the requirement to provide details and a photo of the driver. The relevant ATO will have this information on record, and the NZTA ID Card displayed in the car is sufficient information for the passenger/s in our type of service.

B. The third criterion, Availability of driver and passenger information

We wish to be able to obtain an exemption from this requirement, which is completely redundant in our type of service. We could not operate unless the driver had the relevant information to identify his passenger/s; as noted above, the driver's ID card is sufficient in such pre-chartered situations; and the ATO has on record the trip details of our type of (pre-chartered) trip.

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Passenger and Driver Privacy

Given that pre-chartered Private Hire operators must by definition have all the relevant details when accepting a booking, we believe that clients' rights under the Privacy Act may be breached if we require the details set out in the proposed "Exemption" criteria; unless, that is, the changes we seek are made for our very specific type of Small Passenger Service.

Likewise, we see only negative possibilities arising from giving drivers' addresses to passengers.

Our Proposal

We submit that the easiest way to accommodate solely-pre-chartered services such as ours would be to prepare a specific list of operating requirements to be set out in our exemption applications. This would enable the NZTA to produce a standard form for use by operators in the industry segment currently known as "Private Hire".

We would be very pleased to discuss our submission with representatives of the

Ministry.

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Jim Martin, Regency Limousines, Auckland

Ross Mead, Elite Limousines Ltd, Tauranga

Rene de Boed, Amberley Transfers & Tours Ltd, Auckland

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