



Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Vehicles

Vehicle Inspection Standards

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<u>Contents</u>	<u>Section</u>
Introduction	
Lighting Equipment	1.0
Steering and Suspension	2.0
Brakes	3.0
Wheels and Tyres	4.0
Seatbelts	5.0
General	6.0
Mirrors	7.0
Fuel System	8.0
Registration Plates	9.0
Speedometer	10.0
Driving Controls	11.0
Windscreen / Washer Jets	12.0
Appearance of taxi	13.0
Appearance of private hire vehicle	14.0
Taxi meter testing	15.0
Licence plates	16.0
Fire extinguisher	17.0
First Aid Kit	18.0
Luggage	19.0

HACKNEY CARRIAGE / PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES

VEHICLE INSPECTION STANDARDS

Introduction

All vehicles must pass a compliance test at the Council's nominated contractor's garage before they can be licensed. The compliance test incorporates both Department of Transport MOT and Council condition criteria, including a test of the operation of the fare meter. The council requires vehicles to be submitted for compliance testing at 6 monthly intervals. The day after compliance testing, you must submit your certificate of compliance, vehicle registration document and valid insurance certificate to the council offices.

This standard shall apply fully to all vehicles licensed for the first time. This inspection standard will be applied to all vehicles [new and existing] by 1 January 2011. The Only exception to this rule will be 7 and 8 Seater Private Hire Vehicles which will be given an additional 12 months to enable conversion or phasing out. Thus all 7 and 8 Seater Private Hire vehicles must comply fully with this specification by 1 January 2012.

THE FOLLOWING STANDARDS SHALL APPLY IN CONNECTION WITH THE MECHANICAL, PHYSICAL AND METER TESTING OF TAXIS AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES LICENSED BY SOUTH HOLLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL.

1.0 Lighting Equipment

- 1.1 Operation of front side and rear lamps, stop lamps, front and/or rear fog lamps, hazard warning lamps, number plate lamps, direction indicators, interior lighting and reflectors.
- 1.2 Head lamp/head lamp aim.

2.0 Steering and Suspension

- 2.1 Security of wheel and free play in system. Security of column, box and ease of operation. Security of arms, ball joints, track-rod and drag link ends (wheel alignment).
- 2.2 Adjustment of wheel bearings, king pins.
- 2.3 Wheels do not foul.
- 2.4 Operation of power steering.
- 2.5 Springs for cracks or worn leaves, loose spring clip.
- 2.6 Security of holding-down bolts and brackets, shock absorbers and leaks.
- 2.7 Wear in shackle pins and bushes. Condition of torque rods, trunnions and balance beams.

3.0 Brakes

- 3.1 Operation and effectiveness of ABS System.
- 3.2 Operation and effectiveness of brake drums, shoes, linings, adjusters and expanders. Operation and effectiveness of discs, disc pads, holders/expanders and adjusters. Freedom from leaks (hydraulic, vacuum, air). Security and condition of hydraulic cylinders, servos and diaphragms, linkage, clevis pins, cables, hoses, feed pipes and connections.
- 3.3 Pedal reserve travel, creep under pressure, wear in pivot.
- 3.4 Hand brake lever, reserve travel, wear in pivot. Operation of pawl and ratchet.
- 3.5 Hand operated air/vacuum control valve.

4.0 Wheels and Tyres

- 4.1 Wheel discs for damage/fracture/wear. Flanges for correct bedding and fitting. Wheel studs and nuts for security. Axle shaft bolts. A full set of wheel trims in a good condition shall be fitted to the vehicle where appropriate.

4.2 Tyres for pressure, legal tread depth, pattern, mating, damage and correct size, including spare.

5.0 Seatbelts

5.1 All driver and passenger seats shall have a seatbelt fitted according to the requirements of the Road Traffic Act.

5.2 Mountings, condition and operation.

6.0 General

6.1 Drivers view of road.

6.2 Horn – operational

6.3 Exhaust and emissions – Operation and security of pipes, catalyst, silencer. Free from leaks etc. Emissions in compliance with UK and EC requirements.

6.4 General vehicle condition – internal and external.

6.4.1.i All passenger seats shall have a minimum cushion size of 400mm width and 350mm front to back and be fixed such that a minimum leg room of 660mm is provided, measured from the face of the backrest to the nearest part of the seat in front, measured in a horizontal plane, excepting that where seats face each other, ie conference seating, the distance between the faces of opposing backrests shall be not less than 1300mm and the gap between the front edges of opposing seat cushions shall be not less than 425mm.

ii. All seats shall have a minimum headroom of 900mm measured from the central point of the seat cushion where it meets the backrest, measured in a vertical plane.

iii. All seats shall have a minimum cushion height of 305mm measured from the floor of the vehicle to the top of the seat cushion at its forward edge.

iv. An allowed tolerance to the above dimensions will be allowed, as detailed in Appendix A to this document.

6.4.2 Condition and security of seats. Securing and operation of doors and other openings, hinges, bumpers, trim etc. The interior upholstery and seating should be free from grime and mud, the carpets clean and damage free. Seating should be firm and comfortable with no holes, tears or bad staining. Where seating is stained, use of good quality seat covers is permissible. The roof or covering must be watertight and sun roof operating effectively. Interior linings and upholstery to be free from burns, rips or tears.

6.4.3 Windows shall not be covered with any stickers or other materials so as to obstruct any field of view. The windows and windscreen shall be free from chips, scratches or any damage which would effect visibility of the driver or be a safety hazard.

- i. The vehicle shall have windows fitted throughout on both sides of the vehicle and to the rear of the passenger compartment. A minimum of one window on each side shall be capable of being opened for the purpose of ventilation and passenger comfort.
- ii. All windows shall comply with European Directive 92/22/EC (as amended).
- iii. Only original manufacturers approved glazing shall be permitted. Aftermarket additions, eg film or spray coatings, shall not be permitted. All windows and glazing must achieve a minimum of 70% light transmission except where otherwise required by the Road Vehicle (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986

6.4.4 The exterior should have no untreated or unrepaired body or trim defects. All rust spots and scratches/dents and repairs with a measurement in excess of 10mm to be prepared and repainted with matching colour to ensure they are returned to as near original condition as possible so that no visible evidence of repair or restoration is detectable. No panels to have dents, tears or creases or be of odd colour. This is to ensure that it does not affect the passengers reasonable enjoyment to using the licensed vehicle. Decals or stickers or

any other means must not be used to cover bodywork defects or damage. The vehicle tester reserves the right to ask that any such material be removed if he/she has reason to believe that any attempt has been made to cover up vehicle damage, so the vehicle bodywork can be properly inspected.

6.4.5 The boot/luggage area should be clean, tidy and sound, with tyre changing tools available or evidence provided of a contract with a tyre company in the event of breakdown. A spare wheel (where fitted) shall be fitted to and in accordance with the manufacturers original specification and carried at all times the vehicle is licensed. The spare wheel shall be to manufacturer original equipment specification. Both the spare wheel and tyre shall be serviceable and legal for road use at all times. The spare wheel shall be stored in accordance with the original design of the vehicle in its purpose-designed carrier and in all cases, outside of any contact with passenger(s) travelling in the vehicle or ingressing/egressing from it. Where this necessitates an alternative locating point, it shall only be with the prior consent of the Council in writing.

6.4.6 All interior lighting shall automatically luminate the passenger compartments upon the opening of the doors. Such lighting shall be of such a standard so as to enable passengers to safely access and egress the vehicle.

6.4.7 Mechanised passenger lifting equipment should be checked six monthly by a competent person and Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER) certification submitted every six months.

7.0 Mirrors

7.1 A minimum of two external mirrors and one internal mirror for use by the driver must be provided. An external mirror shall be fitted to the 'on' and 'off' side. All must be in good condition.

8.0 Fuel System

8.1 Tank, pipes and hoses should be checked for security and leaks. Operation of pump, injection/carburettor system.

9.0 Registration Plates

9.1 Registration plates of approved design, positioned and secured to meet the requirements of road traffic law including colour, font size and spacing. They should be undamaged and readable.

10.0 Speedometer

10.1 Operation of speedometer.

11.0 Driving Controls

11.1 Check operation/condition of all fascia instrumentation and warning lights, driving controls/systems including engine, clutch, gear-box, transmission and final drive. Checks to include condition and security of mountings, clutch adjustment. Freedom from oil and fuel leaks. Condition of fuel filters. Condition of linkages, couplings and drive shaft bolts, wear in universal joints and shaft bearings etc.

12.0 Windscreen / Washer jets

12.1 Check windscreen for damage. Operation and effectiveness of wipers, washer jets and rear wash / wipe systems.

13.0 Appearance of taxi

13.1 A hackney carriage (or taxi) shall be a vehicle capable of carrying not more than eight passengers. The vehicle shall have a minimum of two means of exit from the passenger compartment behind the driver for use in emergency situations. The means of exit shall be free of any obstructions, reachable from all parts of the rear passenger compartment. Any gap through which a passenger can be expected to pass shall be of a minimum width of 400mm through which an adult can pass freely in a normal manner without undue difficulty. A mechanism shall be fitted that positively holds the door in the open position whilst in use such that requires a deliberate effort to close. It should have

a roof sign fitted and capable of illumination. It should be positioned and secured and only show the word 'TAXI' to the front.

- 13.2 The taxi shall have a taximeter fitted, be calibrated with rates consistent with the Council's Table of Fares and such other rates as agreed provided they are not more than the Council's Table of Fares. Each taximeter shall be sealed by an appropriate seal after testing and seals checked at six monthly intervals for damage. Where a seal is found to be damaged or broken, the meter must be retested.
- 13.3 The vehicle shall be fitted with a standard roof light bearing the words "Taxi" only, and shall not display, neither internally or externally, any other sign, notice or advertising material, unless prior approval thereto has been obtained from the Council.

(NOTE: Under this paragraph, the Council has agreed that the proprietor's name, address and telephone number may be displayed on the side door panels; and on the rear of the vehicle in letters not exceeding 3" in height).

14.0 Appearance of Private Hire Vehicle

- 14.1 A private hire vehicle shall be a vehicle capable of carrying not more than eight passengers. The vehicle shall have a minimum of two means of exit from the passenger compartment behind the driver for use in emergency situations. The means of exit shall be free of any obstructions, reachable from all parts of the rear passenger compartment. Any gap through which a passenger can be expected to pass shall be of a minimum width of 400mm through which an adult can pass freely in a normal manner without undue difficulty. A mechanism shall be fitted that positively holds the door in the open position whilst in use such that requires a deliberate effort to close. It shall not display a roof sign nor give the impression it is a taxi.
- 14.2 A private hire vehicle may have a taxi-meter fitted or it may charge its own rate of fares which will have been previously agreed with and lodged with the Council.

14.3 The vehicle may display advertising but any form of advertising so displayed shall not be of such appearance or design as to lead any person to believe it is a hackney carriage.

(NOTE: Whilst there are no specific restrictions relating to advertising on private hire vehicles, operators/drivers should not place any form of advertising on windows which may impede the driver's or passenger's visual line of sight or cause discomfort. Similarly proprietors/drivers are expected to ensure that any advertising material displayed on or in the private vehicle is decent, non-controversial or non-offensive to any person or organisation).

15.0 Taxi Meter Testing

15.1 Taxi meters are required to be fully tested:

- When a vehicle is first licensed as a taxi or private hire vehicle
- When a licensed vehicle is changed
- When a taxi meter is changed
- When the Table of Fares is changed
- When the seal is found to be broken/irregular during a six monthly check
- When an irregularity is reported/found as a result of a customer complaint or enforcement spot check

15.2 Testing shall take place over a measured mile marked out by Trading Standards on South Drove, Spalding (off Horseshoe Bridge).

15.3 Taximeters shall be checked against the Council's/agreed Table of Fares over the measured distance and also for time against a stopwatch. Any meter fitted shall be of the type approved by the council and set in accordance with the councils agreed rates.. Once the meter has been tested it shall be sealed with an identifiable seal and must not be altered or tampered with.

15.4 The meter seal only requires to be checked for security on any other occasion.

16.0 Licence plates

- 16.1 All licensed taxis and private hire vehicles shall have fitted, in a visible and securely fixed position to the rear exterior of the vehicle, a licence plate issued by the Council. An additional smaller licence plate shall also be securely fitted internally so that the information upon it can be viewed both internally and externally (preferably on the windscreen).
- 16.2 Vehicle licence plates shall be of the Mogo type which will contain make and model of vehicle, registration number and licence expiry date.
- 16.3 Broken/unserviceable licence plates should be recorded on the inspection sheet so that replacements can be ordered by Council staff.

17.0 Fire Extinguisher

- 17.1 Each taxi or private hire vehicle shall be fitted with an efficient and effective fire extinguisher appropriate to the size of the vehicle. It shall be secured in a position readily available for emergency use by the driver.

18.0 First Aid Kit

- 18.1 Each taxi or private hire vehicle shall carry a basic first aid kit with contents appropriate to the number of passengers it is licensed to carry.

19.0 Luggage

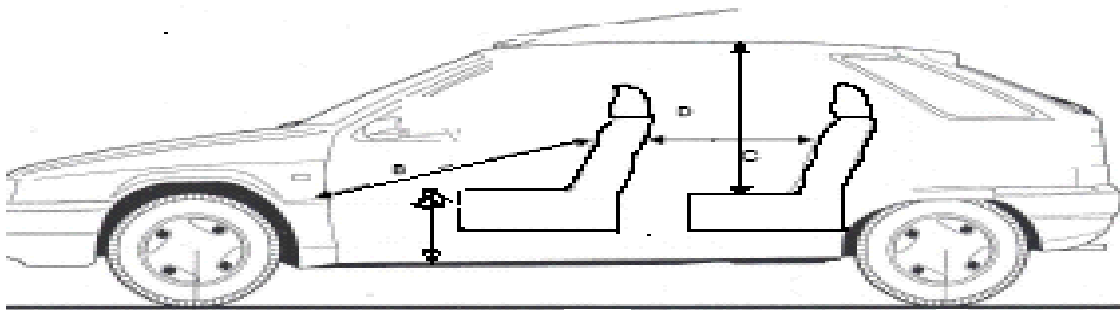
- 19.1 The luggage compartment shall have sufficient capacity to accommodate a reasonable quantity of luggage (eg a 20kg suitcase) for each of the maximum number of passengers that can be carried. The luggage compartment must be divided off by a barrier capable of preventing any luggage from entering the driving compartment or rear passenger compartment. A suitable restraint system shall be provided as to minimise any movement of luggage whilst in transit. The luggage compartment shall have a permanently fitted

light for illumination which operates automatically on opening the door/boot lid.

APPENDIX A

PRIVATE HIRE SPECIFICATIONS

ALL VEHICLES MUST HAVE THE FOLLOWING MINIMUM DIMENSIONS:



DIMENSION	DESCRIPTION	MM	TOLERANCE
A	CUSHION NOT COMPRESSED. FLOOR TO TOP FRONT EDGE OF SEAT	305	30MM
B	FRONT SEAT FULLY REARWARD	940	30MM
C	CUSHION NOT COMPRESSED	900	30MM
D	LEG MEASURED FROM THE FACE OF THE ROOM BACKREST TO THE NEAREST PART OF THE SEAT IN FRONT (NON FACING SEATS)	660	10MM

NOTE: Vehicles must comply with dimensions 'B' and 'D' together