



This policy is developed pursuant to the Transport Coordination Act 1966.

Omnibus Licence Policy

1 Overview:

All vehicles operating for hire and reward in Western Australia must hold an appropriate licence issued by the State Government. The Department of Transport – Passenger Services Business Unit (PSBU) manages the issuing of all licences for all passenger vehicles used for hire and reward. PSBU issues four types of licences:

- Taxi Licence (Country and Metropolitan)
- **Omnibus Licence**
- Small Charter Vehicle Licence (SCV) - Metropolitan area
- Private Taxi (PT) - country areas

The **omnibus licence** applies to a wide range of vehicle types and operations undertaken by the operator. An omnibus licence is only required where the vehicle is operated for 'hire and reward'.

There are no limits placed on the number of omnibus licences that will be granted. PSBU does not protect existing omnibus operators from competition nor does the granting of a licence indicate service viability. However, applications will be assessed to ensure that they do not compete against government provided or supported transport services eg. Transperth.

Vehicles will need to meet a number of vehicle standards to be registered to carry passengers for reward. In particular, small bus and van type vehicles may require modification to meet access standards. Please see page 3 for additional information on access. It is recommended that operators wishing to purchase a vehicle to operate under an omnibus licence contact the Department – Passenger Services Business Unit to discuss any particular requirements that may apply.

Left-hand drive vehicles are not generally eligible for an Omnibus licence.

2 Omnibus Licence Types:

The government regulates the industry to differentiate it from the Taxi, SCV and Private Taxi industries.

- The licensee or driver of a vehicle licensed as an omnibus shall not operate from taxi ranks, ply for hire or tout on roads or other public places for the purpose of hire.
- Omnibuses must not display signage that presents it in a manner resembling a taxi.

Listed below is a range of commercial transport operations that are eligible for an omnibus licence from the government. Operators may apply for any number of licence types for their vehicles. Additional information on each licence type is to be found below. All vehicle licences under this omnibus policy will receive a TC plate which must be affixed to the vehicle.

- (1) Tour and Charter Licence
- (2) Safari Tour and Charter Licence



- (3) Regular Passenger Transport Licence
- (4) Shuttle Service
- (5) Tourism Transfer
- (6) Specialty/Novelty Vehicles

Operators or owners who would like to operate under an Omnibus licence but do not feel they fit within the nominated categories should contact the Department of Transport - Passengers Services Business Unit on 1300 660 147 to discuss their proposal.

All vehicles licensed as omnibuses will be required to attach 'TC' plates to the vehicle. Vehicles that are used primarily as school buses may apply for an omnibus licence to allow them to undertake additional work outside of their school duties. School bus vehicles will receive an omnibus licence sticker which should be affixed to the front windscreen. Courtesy vehicles where the passenger does not pay a fee to use the vehicle do not require an omnibus licence.

2.1 Tour and Charter Licence

This form of licence is available to vehicles that have 12 or more passenger seats and enables the operator to undertake both tours and charters.

A "tour" is usually a planned or packaged trip to various places of interest for business, pleasure or instruction for a predetermined individual fare. It can be of any duration. Short tours of less than one day would normally be expected to start and finish at the same location. Individual fares can be charged.

A "charter" is usually where the vehicle and driver are hired or leased for the exclusive use of one or more travellers and it has not been publicly advertised, announced, notified or otherwise made known with a view to securing the patronage of the general public. Group fares apply to each individual charter.

2.2 Safari Tour and Charter Licence

This form of licence is available to vehicles that undertake operations in remote areas and in particular off-road.

There is no minimum number of passenger seats required for this vehicle type. The vehicle must be a 4 wheel drive and have depot communication equipment installed (Royal Flying Doctor Service compatible or satellite telephone). There is a detailed list of safety equipment that must be carried by vehicles licensed in this manner.

2.3 Regular Passenger Transport Licence

This form of licence is available for vehicles that operate a regular passenger transport service on an identified route with established pick-up and drop-off points. This service is operated in accordance with a regular timetable. Applications will be assessed against established government provided or supported services. Passengers pay an individual, predetermined fare.

Transperth and private operators providing 'public transport' bus services are licensed in this manner.

2.4 Shuttle Licence

This form of licence is available to vehicles that have 12 or more passenger seats that provide a regular service with either a pre-defined origin or destination and a general geographical area of coverage for the opposite end of the service. They may also undertake the reverse trip. For example a service providing a pickup at the airport and drop-off within



the CBD and subsequently pickup in the CBD and drop off at the airport. Operators may nominate a number of locations within their pre-defined origin or destination but cannot have general geographical areas at both ends of the trip. For example an operator could nominate the Perth Zoo and the South Perth foreshore as their destination/origin points and the CBD as their geographical area of service.

This type of licence could apply to a service that nominates a series of entertainment venues as one end of the trip and a geographical area for the other end. It could also apply to a operator picking up guests from a number of accommodation sites and transferring them to and from a activity/event/tourist site.

For trips with a pre-defined origin, operators may not undertake pickups outside of this origin. Conversely, for trips with a pre-defined destination, drop-offs may not be made outside of this destination. For example an airport shuttle that transports passengers between the CBD and the International Airport on its way to the airport could not undertake a drop-off at any point other than the International Airport.

In their application, operators must define their proposed service including origin and destination, frequency and time/s of operation. Applications will be assessed against established government provided or supported services. Passengers pay an individual, predetermined fare

2.5 Tourism Transfer Licence

Tourism Transfer is a passenger transfer service using a vehicle with less than 12 passenger seats where the transport provided is part of a tourism business, but is not the primary focus of the business. For example, a hot air ballooning business may want to provide transport to and from the hot air ballooning site. Another example would be a winery or shopping tour. A hotel business may wish to use this licence to transport their guests to and from the airport or tour operators may use it for a feeder service to connect to a fixed tour.

2.6 Specialty/Novelty Licence

A Specialty/Novelty licence is issued to passengers tour and/or charters using specialised novelty vehicles with special limitations or requirements, such as motorbikes. This group covers vehicles where it is considered that the nature of vehicle means that a 'transport experience' is provided to the passenger.

3 Accessibility requirements for holders of an Omnibus Licence

The document ACCESS REQUIREMENTS FOR SMALL OMNIBUSES is located at www.transport.wa.gov.au details the accessibility standards that apply to all small omnibuses. The licensee must ensure compliance with the accessibility requirements for small omnibuses where appropriate.

4 Driver Licensing

To drive an omnibus, an F or T extension on the Motor Drivers Licence is required. This is additional to holding an appropriate category of MDL applicable to the type of vehicle being driven.

5 On-line information

Further information regarding Taxis, Omnibuses, Private Taxis and Small Charter Vehicles is available on the Transport website at www.transport.wa.gov.au