

On 10th February 2010 John Mason, Director of Taxi and Private Hire issued PCO Notice 04/10 regarding Private Hire Vehicle Licensing.

A number of LPHCA Members who run the specialist types of vehicles affected by this notice contacted us to warn of difficulties and potential problems with these requirements as they stand.

The LPHCA has been in dialogue with the PCO alongside one of our members and **we are convening a meeting of Members affected**, which hopefully will be followed by a meeting and further dialogue with the PCO.

PCO Notice 04/10

If this notice affects you please contact us ASAP.

Supplementary Notice – Introduction of new VOSA IVA inspection scheme

Following discussions with members of the Private Hire Trade TfL is aware that there is some confusion with regards to the VOSA Individual Vehicle Approval (IVA) inspection scheme (PCO Notice 14/9: 30th April 2009) and the requirements for operators at the point of licensing for vehicles which have been constructed, modified or converted to carry passengers in their wheelchairs which, under the IVA scheme are defined as special purpose vehicles.

As a result TfL would like to provide further clarification on the certification requirements at the point of licensing such vehicles.

Special Purpose Vehicle definition

EU Directive 2007/46/EC defines a special purpose vehicle as: "a vehicle intended to perform a function which requires special body arrangements and/or equipment".

"Wheelchair accessible vehicle" is included within this category as defined by the Directive and "Wheelchair accessible vehicle" means: "vehicles of Category M1 construction or converted specially so that they accommodate one or more person(s) seated in their wheelchair(s) when travelling on the road".

Passenger vehicles of category M2 that have had modifications carried out such as reducing seating capacities, seating configurations or been converted to carry passengers in their wheelchair to bring them into the vehicle category M1 will also require the new VOSA IVA inspection certificate at the point of licensing in order to meet the licensing criteria.

It is worth explaining at this point why TfL requires the need to have all safety critical modifications certified (IVA) by a competent authority (VOSA). Modifications to vehicles do not normally come within the scope of the standard MOT roadworthiness inspections, it is therefore essential for the purposes of public safety that TfL is satisfied that all modifications to vehicles are inspected by a competent authority to ensure that the modification/s design and construction are safe, fit for their intended purpose and meet all relevant road vehicle and safety regulations. A good example of where a vehicle modification falls outside the inspection criteria of the MOT roadworthiness inspection is where a passenger lift is fitted to a special purpose vehicle. TfL would require that the lift is inspected and weight tested to LOLER (lifting operations and lifting equipment regulations) standards by a competent person and is certified as being safe and fit for service. The certificate is then presented at licensing inspection as evidence of the test having been carried out.

In order to assist operators who operate such vehicles and that fall within the IVA scheme TfL will implement the following revised licensing arrangements for special purpose vehicles of category M1 and M2:

Vehicles previously licensed under the VOSA Single Vehicle Approval (SVA) scheme will continue to be valid and no IVA certification is required.

From the **1st June 2011** all vehicles previously licensed under the SVA scheme that undergo further modifications will from this date require to be re-tested under the IVA scheme and will only be licensed by TfL with a valid IVA certificate the original of which must be brought to the test centre on the date of inspection.

With immediate effect special purpose vehicles of category N1, M1 and M2 which have not previously been licensed as a private hire vehicle will require an IVA inspection certificate to be presented at the point of first licensing inspection.

From **1st June 2011** all vehicles which fall within the N1, M1 and M2 descriptions above which were previously licensed without SVA certification will be required to be tested under the IVA scheme and IVA certification must be presented at point of licensing.

All vehicles which fall within the N1, M1 and M2 descriptions above will be required to be IVA compliant by **1st June 2011**.

The Private Hire Vehicle inspection manual will be amended to include the revised new IVA inspection standards. Additional guidance notes on the new standards will also be developed and circulated to the trade during February 2010.

For further information on the new IVA inspection scheme, contact the Vehicle Policy & Standards Team on **0845 6027000**.

More information about the new IVA inspection scheme and standards can be obtained from any of the VOSA testing stations or from their website at www.vosa.gov.uk



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