

## Motor Vehicle Registry Information Bulletin

# CPV08 – Taxi Meter and Roof Signs

### Introduction

In accordance with the Taxi Regulations each taxi operated in the Northern Territory must be equipped with an approved roof sign and an approved taximeter.

### Taximeters

A taxi driver shall not operate a taxi on the road unless it is fitted with an approved taximeter. The taximeter must comply with the specifications set out in Schedule 2 of the Taxi Regulations. The taximeter must be in good working order and be tested and sealed by an approved "testing officer". The taximeter is to be so adjusted that it indicates the fare payable in relation to the determination in force. Fares and charges must not exceed the gazetted "Maximum Fares and Charges".

### Taximeter to be Fitted

A vehicle used for hire or reward and operated, as a taxi must be fitted with a taximeter. Once the taximeter has been approved by the Director of Commercial Passenger Road Transport for use in a taxi, operators may fit that taximeter into their vehicles.

Each taximeter fitted to a vehicle is required to comply with requirements of Schedule 2 of the *Taxi Regulations*. This Schedule identifies the requirements which all taximeters are required to comply with. These are:

- Have tariff indicator capabilities.
- Be capable of displaying, in easily discernible letters and figures the hire charge, the distance rate and the prescribed tariff.
- Be capable of being effectively sealed.
- Be capable of being fitted in a position and manner that is approved.
- Have the capability of computing and displaying the proportion of the fare which is to be charged to each passenger when the taxi is used as a multiple hire vehicle.
- Once fitted the taximeter shall be tested by actual use of the taximeter and if accurate be sealed by an approved testing officer.

A taxi driver and/or taxi operator may only operate a taxi for hire or reward without a taximeter fitted, if the Director approves that operation. This approval must be in writing.

### Operation of Taximeters

The driver of a taxi shall, as soon as the hiring is accepted, but not sooner, set the taximeter into operation. That driver shall, immediately on completion of the hiring, stop the taximeter. The driver of a taxi must operate the taximeter in accordance with the determination in force whenever that vehicle is operated within the appropriate taxi area. Each taxi, which operates for hire or reward, must operate in conjunction with the commercial passenger vehicle licence (CVL), issued to that vehicle. This CVL will identify which taxi area that vehicle may operate in or from.

## Taxi Areas

There are three main journeys that can take place within a taxi area and an explanation of each is listed below. A taxi area is declared by the Minister and published in the *Gazette*. The taxi area is usually defined by a set radius from a known landmark or as in the Darwin taxi area, a specific point. Where a river and a road meet and then following the coast round until it joins an electoral boundary which then meets the first mentioned road. Each taxi is issued with a CVL and that CVL will have the taxi area identified. Taxis are not allowed to operate in another taxi areas, more information on this issue can be obtained from your local MVR or by reading the appropriate Act and Regulations.

### Journey 1, travel takes place wholly within a taxi area.

All journeys that start and finish inside a taxi area, where no part of that journey is outside that taxi area, the driver of that taxi must operate the taximeter in accordance with the determination in force for the full period of that journey. The maximum fare charged must not exceed the value indicated on the taximeter.

### Journey 2, part of which takes place inside the taxi area and part of which takes place outside the taxi area.

For the portion of the journey that takes place within the taxi area, the taximeter is to be operated in accordance with the determination in force. For the portion of that journey that takes place outside the taxi area, the taxi driver may negotiate the fare with the prospective passenger. This negotiation must take place prior to the journey taking place. The fare payable is the fare that has been agreed upon by both the passenger and driver.

For example, the passenger indicates to the driver the destination is 20 kilometres outside the taxi area. The driver states that the cost will be the metered fare inside the taxi area, in accordance with the determination in force and an additional \$30 for the journey outside the taxi area. If the passenger agrees, that is the total fare payable by the passenger for that journey.

The driver also has the option of leaving the taximeter on for the complete journey and charging a price up to the total value of the taximeter at the end of the journey.

### Journey 3, that take place completely outside the taxi area.

For any journey which takes place outside the taxi area and which no part is undertaken inside a taxi service area, the payment for that journey is a negotiated fare, which is agreed upon by both the driver and the passenger.

These journeys may be undertaken without the taximeter being engaged, but the fare for the journey must be pre negotiated prior to that journey starting. It should also be noted that the driver of the taxi may choose to engage the taximeter anyway and use that value as the required fare.

## Maintenance of Taximeters

The operator of a taxi shall keep the taximeter in good working order and have it tested by an approved testing officer at least once every 12 months, or as requested by the Director.

The taximeter must also be tested by an approved testing officer, if following any alteration of the taxi or its equipment or for any other reason the taximeter fitted to the taxi is not registering correctly. It is also the responsibility of the operator, to notify the Director immediately if this happens and must not permit that vehicle to operate for hire or reward until an approved testing officer certifies the taximeter as being correct.

Because the taximeter is required to be tested for accuracy by actual use of the taxi meter in the vehicle, certified taximeters must not be transferred to other vehicles without full re certification by an approved testing officer.

If the seal of the testing officer, which certifies that taximeter's accuracy, is for some reason broken, the operator must notify the Director immediately. If this happens, the operator must not permit that vehicle to operate for hire or reward until an approved testing officer certifies that the taximeter.

## Inspection of a Taximeter

The operator of a taxi shall present the taxi for a taximeter test, by an approved testing officer, whenever requested to do so by the Director or an inspector.

## Interference of a Taximeter

A person, other than an approved testing officer or a person who is an approved taximeter repairer, shall not interfere with a taximeter. The maximum penalty for such an offence is \$3000.

## Roof Signs (Dome Light)

A taxi shall not operate unless it is fitted with a roof sign, which complies with the *Taxi Regulations*. Roof signs have to be capable of being illuminated and have the word "TAXI" displayed on the front of it. It is also required to have 2 tariff indicator lights, which are operated by the driver when the taximeter is operated.

The roof sign is also required to have a device that indicates to the driver, when seated, which light is operating on that roof sign. The colour of a roof sign is required to be approved by the Director prior to it being fitted to a taxi. White has been approved as a standard colour.

The taxi driver must not operate a taxi available for hire or reward unless the word "TAXI" on the roof sign is illuminated. When the taxi is engaged in a hiring the word "TAXI" must not be illuminated.

The taxi driver shall not operate a taxi, in relation to a hiring, unless the tariff indicator lights are illuminated to indicate the tariff being charged by that driver.

It is the responsibility of each operator and driver to comply with all relevant legal requirements associated with the daily use of a commercial passenger vehicle.

### IMPORTANT

This Information Bulletin is a guide only and contains general information and requirements for/in relation to Commercial Passenger Vehicles. This document should not be regarded as a strict interpretation of Northern Territory law.

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