

# Commercial Passenger Vehicles Information Bulletin – CPV47

## Substitute minibus licence

### Introduction

The purpose of this information bulletin is to provide a consistent and transparent process to the minibus industry and Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics (the Department) staff for the requirements and use of a substitute minibus.

A substitute minibus licence is available to accredited minibus operators who require a vehicle to be on stand-by to substitute for an existing standard or wheelchair accessible minibus (the primary minibus) at times when the minibus is being serviced, maintained, repaired, or is otherwise unavailable. An operator applying for a substitute minibus licence must hold accreditation and a current standard or wheelchair accessible minibus (WAM) licence.

### Requirements

The primary minibus licence must be current at all times during the substitution, however the primary minibus does not have to be registered during the period of substitution.

A substitute minibus must comply with the [Minibus In-Service Vehicle Maintenance Standards](#) (the Standards) and must meet the same requirements as the minibus being substituted, unless otherwise exempt in writing by the Department.

A substitute minibus must be fitted with an approved security camera (onboard) system that is tested and certified to the vehicle by an Authorised Person in accordance with the Standards. Refer to [Information Bulletin CPV28 – Security cameras in taxis and minibuses](#) for further information.

The holder of the substitute minibus licence is to ensure that any injury to a person arising out of, or in the course of the person's engagement to drive the substitute minibus, is covered by a policy of insurance.

During substitution, the licence conditions of the primary minibus apply to the substitute minibus, in addition to any conditions specified in the substitute minibus licence.

The primary minibus must not be operated while being substituted. The primary minibus cannot have more than one substitute minibus operating under its licence at any one time.

The operator of a substitute minibus must not allow the vehicle to be made available for hire or reward if the vehicle is unsafe. A vehicle is considered unsafe if it is likely to compromise the safety of any person, the public or any property. Some examples of where a vehicle may be considered unsafe include; frayed seatbelts, dislodged or damaged panels, faulty airbags, bald or damaged tyres and misaligned or damaged door seals. Operators should have appropriate systems in place to ensure their vehicles are maintained in a safe condition.

Drivers also play an important part with monitoring vehicle condition and must check the vehicle prior to commencing each shift. Where the vehicle is found to be unsafe, the driver must immediately report the issue to the operator for rectification and cease operating.

Substantial fines apply to both operator and driver found operating an unsafe vehicle for hire or reward. The vehicle may also be defected, necessitating a full roadworthy inspection.

## Wheelchair accessible substitute minibus

A substitute minibus that has been modified to convey a passenger seated in a wheelchair must meet the identical requirements of the primary WAM.

## Substitution process

A standard substitute minibus can be used to substitute for a standard minibus, but cannot be used to substitute for a WAM, unless otherwise exempted in writing by the Director. Please refer to *Information Bulletin CPV36 – Substituting a wheelchair accessible taxi or minibus* and application form *CPVF36 – Substituting a wheelchair accessible taxi or minibus*.

A wheelchair accessible substitute minibus can substitute for either a standard minibus or WAM, however an operator must provide a priority service to passengers travelling in a wheelchair at all times when operating for hire or reward. Priority service means immediately proceeding to the hiring on becoming available, or, when at a rank, must offer the hiring of the vehicle to any potential passenger travelling in a wheelchair before being made available to potential passengers who are not reliant on a wheelchair for mobility.

A driver of a wheelchair accessible substitute minibus must not refuse a request from a network to undertake a hiring involving the carriage of a passenger travelling in a wheelchair.

## Annual licence fee

The annual licence fee for a standard and wheelchair accessible substitute minibus is \$300 and is not transferable or refundable.

## Record book for substitute minibuses

Once a substitute minibus licence is approved and the vehicle is registered, the operator must maintain a record of when the vehicle was used for substitution on a form approved by the Director. *CPVF29 - Substitute Minibus Record Books* are available online at [nt.gov.au/driving/industry](http://nt.gov.au/driving/industry).

The record book must be kept in the substitute minibus at all times when operating and is to be made available to an Inspector on request. A record must be made each time a substitute minibus is being used in place of a primary minibus as follows:

1. date and time the substitution commenced;
2. date and time the substitution finished;
3. registration number plate of the primary minibus;
4. name and signature of the accredited operator of the primary minibus;
5. the name of the accredited operator of the substitute minibus authorising the substitution; and
6. reason for substitution.

Substitution records must be kept for not less than three years.

## Vehicle age requirements

A standard and wheelchair accessible substitute minibus must not be older than the corresponding age limit for a primary minibus.

## Substitute minibus number plates

All substitute minibuses will be issued with plates starting with three numbers followed by the lettering 'SUB' – refer diagram 1:

**Diagram 1 - substitute minibus plate sample:**



Minibuses with five digit plates will be issued with one minibus identifier plate (half plate) that is required to be displayed on the substitute minibus when being substituted. Refer diagram 2.

Only minibuses with three numbers following the lettering 'MB' on the plates, e.g. MB000, can be substituted.

**Diagram 2 - minibus identifier plate (half plate) sample:**



When substituting, the primary minibus identifier plate (half plate) must be displayed on the substitute minibus in accordance with the Minibus In-Service Maintenance Standards i.e. must be securely attached over the lettering 'SUB' – refer diagram 3.

Minibus operators with four numbers following the lettering 'MB', or operators with a personalised minibus plates, e.g. 'MB1234' or 'MBJAMES', will be required to change their plates to the five digit style if they wish to operate a substitute minibus. Contact the [Motor Vehicle Registry](#) about changing to a set of five digit minibus plates.

Diagram 3 – example on the use of a minibus half plate



## Resources

Further information and forms can be accessed through the following link: [nt.gov.au/driving/industry/cpv-information-bulletins-and-forms](https://nt.gov.au/driving/industry/cpv-information-bulletins-and-forms)

## Important

This Information Bulletin is a guide only and contains general information and requirements in relation to the CPV industry. This document should not be regarded as a strict interpretation of Northern Territory law or In-Service Maintenance Standards.

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