

Minibus In-Service Maintenance Standards

May 2023

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Version	Date	Author	Changes made
1.0	June 2019	Passenger Transport	Removed - A current approved CVL label is to be affixed on the front windscreen, passenger side, bottom corner and must be fitted outside of any glazing tint band. The fitted label is to be located so that any information on the label can be easily viewed by a person standing outside.
1.1	July 2019	Passenger Transport	Minor wording corrections
1.2	October 2021	Passenger Transport	Added substitute minibus section. Minor general wording amendments and revised formatting. Removed reference to multiple purpose vehicle and replaced with wheelchair accessible minibus.
1.3	November 2022	Passenger Transport	Added information regarding vehicle age limit extensions and information in relation to internal cosmetic standards as recommended in the 2021 CPV Review. Updated licence to carry diagram.
1.4	May 2023	Passenger Transport	Update vehicle age limit to 13 years and remove vehicle age limit extension guidelines.

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1. Introduction

The principal purpose of this document is to advise the Commercial Passenger Vehicle (CPV) industry of the minimum standards for minibuses that form part of the conditions of licence. These conditions are applicable to minibuses when being assessed for first registration as a minibus and to minibuses that are already in-service.

This document has been approved for the purposes of Section 38D (6) of the *Commercial Passenger (Road) Transport Act 1991* and section 9 (2) of the Commercial Passenger (Miscellaneous) Regulations 1992, and may be cited as the approved standard and the specified minimum maintenance requirements for minibuses. Relevant sections of the Northern Territory legislation include:

- *Commercial Passenger (Road) Transport Act 1991*
Section 38D (6) It is a condition of a minibus licence that the minibus endorsed on the licence is used as a minibus and is maintained to the approved standard.
- Commercial Passenger (Miscellaneous) Regulations 1992
Regulation 9 (2) If the Registrar of Motor Vehicles specifies minimum maintenance that is to be carried out on a commercial passenger vehicle, the operator of the vehicle must ensure that maintenance is carried out on the vehicle in accordance with that specified.

This document is intended for use by the Director, the Registrar, minibus operators, minibus drivers, minibus networks, Inspectors and Authorised Inspectors.

Please note all CPV industry participants including drivers, operators or networks, must be aware of the regulator's expectations and what it considers to be fit and proper. For further information refer to Information Bulletin CPV03 - Fit and Proper Assessments and Disqualifying Offences for the CPV Industry which can be found on the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics' webpage, www.nt.gov.au.

Operators and drivers must ensure their minibuses operating in the NT continue to comply with these standards at all times. Minibuses must also be serviced and maintained in line with the vehicle manufacturer's recommended periodic maintenance schedule, and comply with all applicable Australian Design Rules (ADRs) and roadworthy standards.

Any item that is fitted in compliance with these standards shall be deemed to have written approval unless otherwise written or instructed by the Director.

These standards are intended to ensure minibuses provide a safe and reliable transport option to the public. However where necessary, and in consideration to public and industry expectations, the Director may exempt in writing, a vehicle or class of vehicles from the requirement to meet part or parts of these standards, and an Inspector may exempt in writing, a particular vehicle from the requirement to meet part or parts of these standards. Where an exemption is granted by an Inspector, it should not exceed a continuous period of three months.

Cindy-Lee McDonald
Registrar of Motor Vehicles
Director of Commercial Passenger (Road) Transport

2. Definitions

Act (the) means the *Commercial Passenger (Road) Transport Act 1991*.

ADR means the Australian Design Rules for road vehicles.

Advertising / Advertisement means any advertisement, statement or representation of any kind displayed on or in a minibus, such as lettering, maps, plans, drawings or pictorial images and includes bumper stickers.

ARR means the Australian Road Rules as contained under the Traffic Regulations 1999.

Approved means approved in writing by the Director.

Australian Standards means documents that are published by the Standards Australia organisation which set out specifications and procedures.

Authorised Inspector means a person appointed under the *Motor Vehicles Act 1949* and approved by the Director to carry out inspections on a class or classes of commercial passenger vehicles.

CP(R)T Act means the *Commercial Passenger (Road) Transport Act 1991*.

Decal means a sticker or design transfer (whether decorative or otherwise), which can be attached to the vehicle either directly or via magnetic backing.

Director means the Director of Commercial Passenger (Road) Transport appointed under Section 5(1) of the *Commercial Passenger (Road) Transport Act 1991*.

In-service means a motor vehicle that is registered under the *Motor Vehicles Act 1949* and is endorsed against a licence that is granted or renewed under the *Commercial Passenger (Road) Transport Act 1991*.

Inspector means a person appointed or declared as such under section 64 of the *Commercial Passenger (Road) Transport Act 1991*, and includes the Director.

Licensed Carrying Capacity means the number of passengers an individual minibus is approved to carry and does not include the driver.

Luggage means any container for a person's belongings or any individual item.

NT means the Northern Territory of Australia.

OEM means Original Equipment Manufacturer.

Operate in relation to a commercial passenger vehicle means to drive or use, or to cause or employ another person to drive or use, a vehicle to carry passengers for hire or reward, other than only in the capacity of an employee or volunteer.

Operator means the holder of a CVL under which a vehicle is being operated.

Registrar means the Registrar of Motor Vehicles and has the same meaning as that defined in the *Motor Vehicles Act 1949*.

Regulations means any regulations made under the *Commercial Passenger (Road) Transport Act 1991* that are applicable to operating minibuses for hire or reward in the Northern Territory of Australia.

Roadworthy means a standard determined by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles for a vehicle to be registered as outlined in the “Northern Territory Inspection Manual for Light Vehicles” and the “National Heavy Vehicle Inspection Manual” as applicable.

Minibus has the same meaning as defined in the *Commercial Passenger (Road) Transport Act 1991*.

Minibus Area means a minibus area as gazetted under Part 5A of the *Commercial Passenger (Road) Transport Act 1991*.

Substitute Minibus has the same meaning as defined in the *Commercial Passenger (Road) Transport Act 1991*.

WAM has the same meaning as a wheelchair accessible minibus

Wheelchair Accessible Minibus (WAM) means a minibus which has been modified or constructed for the carriage of persons travelling in a wheelchair, and which has been approved for use as a WAM. A WAM must have a minimum licenced carrying capacity of eight passengers in addition to a passenger seated in a wheelchair, but not more than 15 passengers including a wheelchair passenger.

3. Vehicle type

The vehicle must meet the intent of all relevant ADRs and the below standards.

Description	Requirement for minibus
All minibuses (including WAMs)	
1. Passenger seating capacity (does not include driver)	9 to 15 passengers
2. Entry door step height from ground (may include access steps)	Maximum 410 mm
3. ELR lap-sash belt on outboard seat. (ELR = Emergency Locking Retractor)	All
4. Aisle width (for van type vehicles)	Min 300 mm

For safety reasons and to ensure vehicles are accessible to persons who are less mobile, vehicle design must allow a passenger to:

- be able to use a fitted child restraint anchorage point for at least two seating positions;
- be able to enter and leave a vehicle easily. This means the entry height of the vehicle measured from the ground is to not exceed 410 mm. Where entry step height is greater, an access step will be required to meet this requirement ensuring it does not create a protrusion hazard;
- be able to access the vehicle’s seating positions through the side doors (i.e. not through rear opening doors unless modified for wheelchair use); and
- have seating positions either forward facing or rear facing, i.e. no side facing seats allowed.

4. Vehicle age requirements

All in-service standard minibuses, WAMs and substitute minibuses must not be older than 13 years of age, unless otherwise approved by the Director.

Vehicle age is determined as being from the date of vehicle manufacture as indicated on the vehicle's original Compliance Plate or from information contained on the Commonwealth's [Register of Approved Vehicles](#).

5. Inspection requirements

All in-service minibuses must be inspected at intervals as determined by the Director which is currently once per year. Current inspection requirements are contained within Vehicle Inspectors Bulletin No 19, unless otherwise specified in a vehicle's CVL.

The Vehicle Inspectors Bulletin No 19 can be accessed through the Department's webpage via the following link: nt.gov.au/driving/industry/vehicle-inspector-bulletins

6. Equipment

All equipment that is required to be fitted to a minibus must be fitted in accordance with these standards, the manufacturer's recommended installation requirements and any applicable road law.

Equipment must not be located in a position that is likely to cause an injury as a result of an accident and must be maintained in a serviceable condition at all times. Equipment must be fitted in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. Where manufacturer's instructions are not available the method of fitment must be able to withstand a force equivalent to 20 times its mass.

The display of information and the correct functioning of equipment assists with protecting the drivers and public, and provides important information to all persons including persons living with disabilities.

A person must not fit any device or make any modification to the vehicle or a component used in or fitted to a vehicle, which alters the correct functioning of the vehicle or any vehicle component.

Where the item is of an electrical or electronic nature, it must be wired directly into the vehicle's electrical system (hard-wired) so that a person cannot easily prevent the item from functioning as originally intended, e.g. the installation of an on / off switch or an easily accessible wiring connector or fuse is not permitted.

All electrical wiring and repairs should be conducted by a suitably qualified person. Persons carrying out the fitment, modification and repair of onboard systems must first be approved by the Director.

All minibuses must be fitted with the following equipment:

- 6.1. An approved onboard system (security camera system) that complies with the Minibus Regulations 1998, the requirements of the Northern Territory Taxi and Minibus Security Camera Operational Requirements in Relation to Onboard Systems, and which has been certified within the previous 12 months.
- 6.2. An approved onboard system sign containing privacy information (refer Diagram 1) which is fitted to the outside of each passenger entry door of the minibus in a conspicuous place so that any potential passenger can readily see the sign and be aware that they may be under surveillance when in or near the minibus.

Diagram 1 - Onboard Camera System Sign

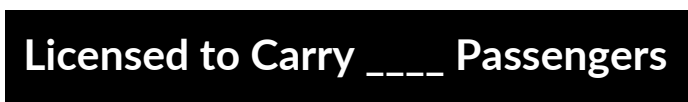


- 6.3. An approved onboard system sign containing privacy information (refer Diagram 2) which is fitted to the inside of the minibus in a conspicuous place so that any passenger in the vehicle can readily see the sign and be aware that they may be under surveillance when in the minibus.

Diagram 2 - Privacy and Freedom of Information Sign



- 6.4. A decal clearly identifying the minibus registration number which is affixed in a conspicuous position inside the vehicle. This decal must be clearly visible from all passenger seating positions – to fulfil this requirement a second plate may be fitted. The decal (or decals) is to have white lettering on a black background with lettering at least 15 mm high.
- 6.5. A device to hold and display a driver’s identification card (CPV ID Card) which is located in a conspicuous position and securely fitted. The device must be constructed and positioned so that a person sitting in any vehicle seating position is afforded a clear and unobstructed view of an ID Card when correctly held in the device.
- 6.6. A decal indicating the vehicle’s licensed passenger carrying capacity which is affixed in a conspicuous position inside the vehicle, and which is clearly visible from all passenger seating positions. The sign is to have white lettering on a black background with characters at least 15 mm high and is to display the following information:



- 6.7. Signage indicating the fare charged by the operator of the minibus, calculated by distance or sector, must be affixed in a conspicuous position inside the vehicle, which is clearly visible from all passenger-seating positions. A second sign must be carried in the vehicle which must be produced on demand by anyone.

It is acceptable to install a third sign externally to advertise the fares should an operator choose to do so.

- 6.8. All fitted tyres must conform to the tyre placard affixed to the vehicle and must be maintained in a roadworthy condition. Retread tyres are acceptable for use, however if fitted, must comply with the speed and load rating of the vehicle’s tyre placard.

Vehicles must be fitted with a suitably inflated spare wheel/tyre assembly and wheel changing equipment as originally supplied with the vehicle from new by the vehicle manufacturer (or to equivalent specifications). Spare wheel/tyre assemblies and wheel changing equipment must be in a serviceable condition as originally designed by the manufacturer and be easily accessible in the event of a vehicle tyre becoming deflated or unserviceable. The spare wheel/tyre assembly including any tools and equipment must be correctly located, secured and covered in line with the vehicle manufacturer’s original design or component requirements.

If a spare wheel/tyre assembly is relocated as a result of an approved vehicle modification (such as the fitting of a LPG system), the wheel must be adequately secured.

Where a new vehicle was sold onto the Australian market without a spare wheel/tyre assembly, the alternate device or system fitted to the vehicle by the manufacturer for managing tyre deflations must be maintained and serviceable; e.g. tyre inflation kit or “run flat” tyres. Any spare wheel/tyre assembly and wheel changing or inflating equipment must be secured in the vehicle as originally intended by the manufacturer.

NOTE: Emergency spare wheel/tyre assemblies (space savers) and deflated “run flat” tyres cannot generally be used when operating the vehicle for hire or reward. An exception to this is where the vehicle’s primary wheel/tyre assembly has deflated (e.g. punctured) during a journey involving passengers and the emergency spare wheel/tyre assembly (space saver) is needed to complete that journey; or the operator of the vehicle relies on the “run flat” tyre feature to complete the journey. In any event the driver must comply with applicable speed and distance ratings for that tyre and must not accept any new hiring until the vehicle’s primary wheel/tyre assembly has been repaired and refitted to the vehicle. An emergency spare wheel/tyre assembly (space saver) is defined as being different in size and construction than the vehicle’s primary wheel assembly and which is restricted in maximum speed and/or travel distance. Run flat tyres are tyres designed to allow continued vehicle operation upon becoming deflated (e.g. puncture), however have maximum speed and travel distance restrictions.

- 6.9. If there is a national safety recall on any equipment, accessory, vehicle etc, it must be fixed as soon as possible.

7. Exterior

Operators and drivers of minibuses should ensure that each vehicle is maintained to a high standard in keeping with public and industry expectations of a reliable, free of body damage and clean transport service. Well maintained and presented vehicles promote community confidence in the industry.

The display of information assists in protecting potential passengers from unlawful operations and also provides important information to individuals, including persons living with disabilities.

- 7.1. Braille decals of an approved type which displays the registration number of the minibus (refer Diagram 3), must be displayed on each passenger vehicle entry point and fitted in accordance with the requirements specified in these standards:

Size: Width – 15 centimetres
Height – 4 centimetres

Colour: White background with black letters and numbers with Braille

Text: Height – 5 centimetres

Locations: Placement of the Braille decals should be as close as possible to 2.5 centimetres in front of each pivoted door handle (refer the yellow circles in Diagram 4), and underneath and forward of centre for sliding doors (refer orange circle in Diagram 4).

Diagram 3 – braille label specifications

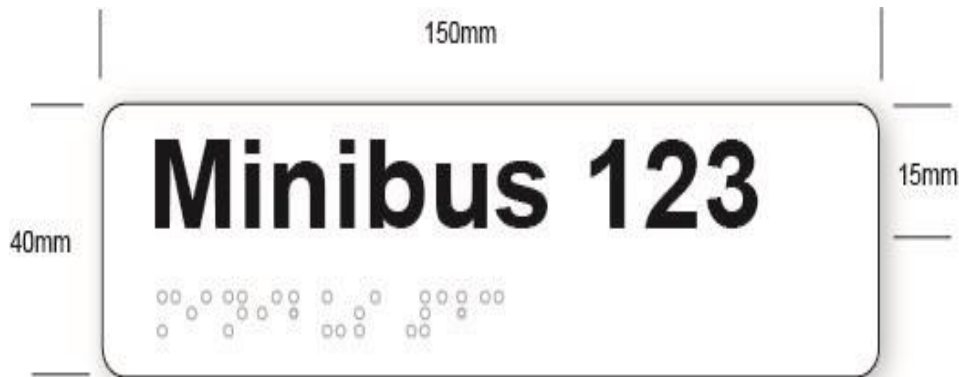
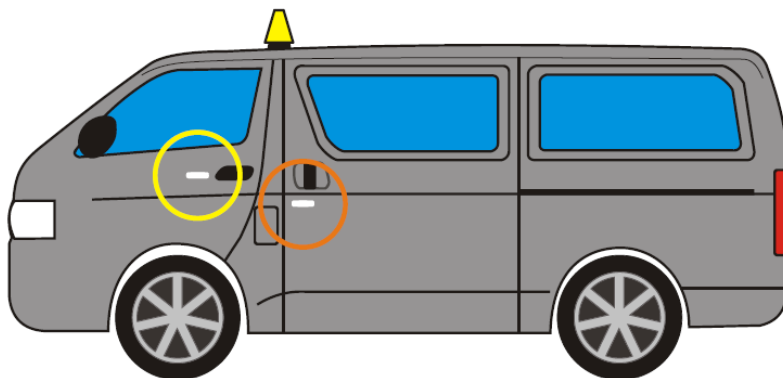


Diagram 4 – braille label locations



7.2. Any applied window tint film must have a minimum visible light transmittance (VLT) of 35% measured in combination with the glazing and must not be scratched, bubbled, peeling or deteriorated in any way.

8. Interior

Minibuses are to be maintained in a safe and reliable condition that does not present a risk of injury to a driver, passenger or other road user. Operators and drivers of minibuses should ensure that each vehicle is maintained to a high standard and in keeping with public and industry expectations of a reliable and clean transport service.

8.1. All seating positions shall be adjacent to a door or accessible via an aisle.

8.2. All seating including head rests must provide adequate support as originally intended.

- 8.3. All interior lighting (dome and courtesy lights) must be operational as originally designed. The fitment of interior novelty lighting or the carriage of ornaments in the vehicle is prohibited (e.g. on the dash, interior mirror, rear parcel shelf etc.).
- 8.4. All minibuses must have a factory fitted air conditioning system installed in the vehicle. The air conditioning, heating and ventilation system must operate as originally designed and deliver sufficient quantities of cool or warm air to maintain acceptable cabin temperatures for passenger comfort.
- 8.5. Any vehicle equipped with factory fitted airbag safety devices is to be free of stickers or any decal plates which may affect operation of the airbags. The vehicle must not be modified in a way, including the fitment of an accessory, which affects any vehicle safety feature or the correct functioning of a vehicle component.
- 8.6. All interior painted surfaces must be consistent in colour and lustre, with no significant scratching or wear.
- 8.7. Interior cabin space of the vehicle must be maintained in a clean and tidy condition, free of rubbish, loose objects and odours.
- 8.8. Any standard factory fitted items, such as arm rests and air conditioning vents, should be fitted and in sound condition.
- 8.9. All seats (including the drivers seat), with particular reference to seat cushions (the part a person sits on), must provide adequate support as originally designed.
- 8.10. Seat cushions and seat covers (if fitted) must be free of rips and tears.

9. Luggage compartment

- 9.1. Luggage must not be carried in a location or manner that may cause an injury in the event of an accident or emergency braking manoeuvre e.g. luggage carried in an aisle of a vehicle is not acceptable due to it potentially becoming a missile. Luggage must not be placed in any location that blocks the use of or operation of any emergency exit. One way to minimise the potential problems is to utilise a trailer to carry the luggage.
- 9.2. The spare wheel assembly, tools and equipment must be correctly located, secured and covered in line with the vehicle manufacturer's requirements. If a spare wheel is relocated as a result of an approved vehicle modification such as the fitting of an LPG system or a lift / hoist mechanism for wheelchair access, the wheel must be adequately secured.

10. Accessories and modifications

- 10.1. Bull bars, driving lights, non-safety related or any other vehicle accessory / option must not be fitted unless approved in writing by the Director.
- 10.2. Any accessory fitted must be maintained in a sound condition and must be fitted in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. Where manufacturer's instructions are not available the method of fitment must be able to withstand a force equivalent to 20 times its mass.
- 10.3. Aftermarket audio visual displays may be fitted to the interior of the vehicle provided:

- 10.3.1. the player or screen does not interfere directly or indirectly with any other vehicle system, the driver's view of the road, or the passengers' view of required information;
 - 10.3.2. no video display screen is in the view of the driver when the vehicle is in motion (this does not apply if screens display only geographic or vehicle data);
 - 10.3.3. no video is displayed unless at the request of a passenger or hirer;
 - 10.3.4. the player has an on / off switch and a volume control which are clearly identified and accessible to the passenger for controlling these functions;
 - 10.3.5. the video only displays material which is suitable for passengers of all ages;
 - 10.3.6. any video or audio content complies with all relevant legislative requirements that apply to the content of material being viewed; and
 - 10.3.7. the installation does not adversely affect compliance with the requirements of the ADRs and ARRs.
- 10.4. Where fitted, an electronic payment processing device (e.g. EFTPOS terminal) must be located in a position that does not adversely affect the operation of occupant safety systems or is likely to cause an injury as a result of an accident.

11. Advertising

Advertising on minibuses is permitted.

- 11.1. Advertisements displayed must be static and must not be reflective (e.g. must not be mirror like in appearance).
- 11.2. The Director may direct an operator to remove any advertising that is in compliance with these standards, if in the opinion of the Director, the advertising is not in keeping with public or industry expectations or the intent of these standards. It is a condition of the Commercial Vehicle Licence (CVL) that operators obey any direction to remove advertising if the Director Commercial Passenger (Road) Transport forms the opinion that the advertising is not consistent with public or industry expectations.
- 11.3. Restrictions on alcohol advertising:
 - 11.3.1. Advertising of take away outlets is not permitted.
 - 11.3.2. Advertising specific alcohol products, or alcohol related promotions such as "drink specials" is not permitted.
 - 11.3.3. Advertising of licenced venues such as restaurants, pubs and clubs is permitted, however the advertising should not draw attention to or glamorise alcohol or excessive drinking.
- 11.4. Operators will be directed to remove any advertising which contravenes the above rules. Operators who fail to obey such a direction risk prosecution for breach of operator licence condition, and suspension/cancellation of licence.

For further information on alcohol advertisement on commercial passenger vehicles, refer to Information Bulletin [CPV27 – Restrictions on Alcohol Advertising on Commercial Passenger Vehicles](#).

12. Trailers

- 12.1. Trailers are allowed as of right; however a minibus towing a trailer may only rank on a minibus rank if there is written approval by the Director.
- 12.2. The laden mass of the trailer is not to exceed the towing capacity of the minibus (as set by the manufacturer) or the towing capacity of the towbar, whichever is lesser.

13. Wheelchair accessible minibuses

Wheelchair Accessible Minibuses (WAMs) are vehicles that have been modified to carry persons seated in wheelchairs. The specialised equipment installed for this purpose such as lift or hoist mechanisms, wheelchair restraint systems and foldaway seats require certification to relevant Australian Standards and Australian Design Rules.

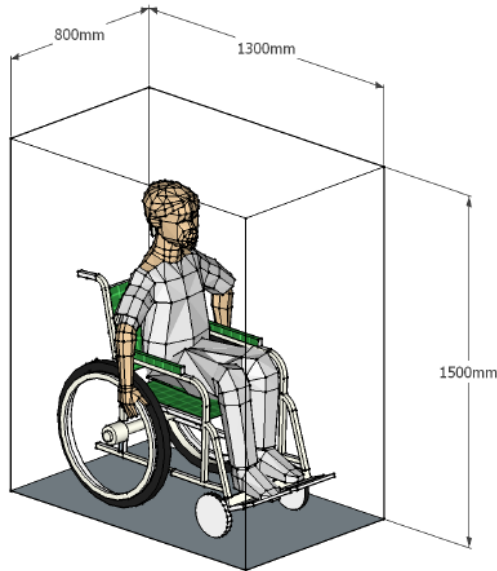
All WAMs must be fitted with the following equipment in addition to all other relevant requirements for a standard minibus. This additional equipment must be maintained in a serviceable condition and at all times comply with the manufacturers or approved installation requirements. All new registered WAMs must comply with the specifications set out below in addition to that specified in Section 3 of these standards.

Description	Requirement for minibus
Additional requirements for WAMs	
1. Minimum allocated wheelchair space of (to be measured as a prism, refer Diagram 5):	Length - 1300 mm Width - 800 mm Height - 1500 mm
2. Minimum door access for wheelchair entry points	Height - 1500 mm Width - 800 mm
3. Wheelchair access ramp gradient at least	1 in 6
4. Non-removable wheelchair access ramp or hoist mechanism (no removable/portable ramps to be used)	Yes

A vehicle will only be approved as a WAM on acceptance of the modifications by the Director and Registrar of Motor Vehicles.

- 13.1 A second plate or decal indicating the minibus registration number must be affixed in a conspicuous position inside the vehicle, which is clearly visible to passengers seated in any wheelchair position. The plate or decal dimensions must comply with the requirements as set out in section 6 of these standards.
- 13.2 The wheelchair occupant allocated clear-space (refer Diagram 5) must comply with the requirements outlined in the Commonwealth Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002 (as amended).

Diagram 5 - Wheelchair space allocation



- 13.3** A WAM must have a wheelchair hoist or lift mechanism that has been manufactured and installed to comply with the requirements of the Australian / New Zealand Standard (Hoist and ramps for people with disabilities – vehicle mounted) which is current at the time of first registration as a WAM, or a later standard.
- 13.4** The international symbol for accessibility (refer Diagram 6) must be clearly visible at each vehicle access point and on the front of the vehicle. The symbols must comply with AS1428.1 clause 14.2 and 14.3.

Diagram 6 -international symbol for accessibility



- 13.5** A WAM must continue to comply with the Australian Standards and all other conditions under which the Director originally approved the vehicle. As a minimum, all vehicles must continue to meet the requirements of the Australian/ New Zealand Standards that they were approved against at the time of initial registration as a WAM in the NT e.g. wheelchair and occupant restraint systems. Systems must be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications and guidelines.
- 13.6** Signage indicating the correct method of use for the vehicle's wheelchair restraint system must be displayed in a conspicuous position inside the vehicle. This signage must be clearly visible to persons involved with securing passengers in wheelchairs and must comply with the relevant Australian Standard in force at the time of first registration as a WAM, or a later Standard.
- 13.7** Any modifications that effect the vehicle's compliance to ADRs will require:

13.7.1 For factory new vehicles: a second stage manufacturer’s approval and the fitting of a second stage compliance plate to the vehicle or as contained on the Commonwealth’s Register of Approved Vehicles.

13.7.2 For In-service vehicles: Engineering certification describing all the vehicle modifications and affected ADRs, and contain detail of how continued compliance with all applicable ADRs is maintained.

13.8 Any modifications to a vehicle must not restrict or obstruct any person from using entry and exit doors, and emergency exits must be capable of being opened or operated from both the inside and outside of the vehicle.

13.9 Any additional or modified seats and / or seat belts must be fitted and certified as complying with applicable ADRs and National Codes of Practice. Any folding seats must continue to operate as originally designed.

Any vehicle components modified as a result of the vehicle’s conversion to a WAM must still comply with the intent of all relevant ADRs.

14. Substitute minibuses

14.1 Only an operator holding a minibus licence under the Act can apply for a substitute minibus licence.

14.2 A substitute minibus must meet all requirements of the minibus being substituted. This includes a wheelchair accessible substitute minibus only being substitutable for a wheelchair accessible minibus.

14.3 Only minibuses with five digit registration plates can be substituted e.g. ‘MB000’. Minibus operators with registration plates with six digits or more, or have a personalised registration plate, e.g. ‘MB1234’ or ‘MBJAMES’, will have to change their number plates to a five digit style if they wish to operate a substitute minibus.

Minibuses with five digit registration 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 to the examples in Diagram 7.

Diagram 7 - substitute minibus registration plates

Substitute minibus registration plate



Minibus identifier (half) plate



14.4 A substitute minibus must display the registration number of the minibus being substituted. The minibus number is to be displayed so that it covers the lettering “SUB” on the registration plate fitted to the rear of the substitute minibus.

The minibus half plate will be securely attached to the rear registration plate and located over the lettering ‘SUB’ on the substitute registration plate (refer Diagram 8).

Diagram 8 - example on the use of a minibus identifier (half) plate

