



Communication in the Taxi Trade

It is in every taxi owner and driver's interest to be aware of changes and what is happening in the trade. There are a number of different organisations which represent members' interests and they are normally kept aware and involved in any policy or operational matters under consideration or authorised by the Local Authority Licensing Board.

The following details the different organisations which represent the trade and can raise issues directly with the Local Authority Licensing Board.

- **Aberdeen Taxi Federation (ATF)** – Represents independent taxi operators and drivers. Issues a quarterly newsletter to keep members updated on trade matters.
- **Aberdeen Taxi Office Group (ATOG)** – Represents the larger Taxi Offices. Together with representatives from Taxi Inspector's Office and the Licensing Board, forms a consultation group which reports to the Licensing Board.
- **Airports** – Represents views of Airport Taxis.
- **Railway** – Represents views of Railway Taxis.
- **Non-Aligned** – Represents mainly owners and drivers not connected with any of the above organisations.

The above organisations work together under the umbrella of the Aberdeen Taxi Trade Representatives (ATTR). If you wish further information about any of these organisations the Taxi Inspector's Office can supply the names and addresses of the chairpersons and secretaries.

Business Requirement / Tax Obligations

If you are an employee with one of the Taxi Offices or a larger independent Taxi Operator, they may put you on a PAYE scheme and deduct and process your tax and National Insurance payments.

If you are not in the PAYE scheme or are Self Employed, there is a business requirement to keep proper income and expenditure records and complete tax returns to the Inland Revenue. This is especially true with the introduction of self assessment.

If you are not in the PAYE scheme or are Self Employed, it is highly recommended that you seek advice about keeping proper records and submitting tax returns. The Taxi Inspector's Office can give details about approved organisations who can help and give advice.

For more information about anything in this leaflet, or any aspect of the taxi trade, contact the Taxi Inspector's Office on 01224 489300 or write to:

**Taxi Inspectors Office
Kittybrewster Works Depot
Powis Place
Aberdeen AB25 3RF**

**Aberdeen Taxi Centre, Burnside Drive,
Dyce, Aberdeen, AB21 OHW
Tel: 0845 241 22 33
Email: info@aberdeentaxicentre.co.uk
www.aberdeentaxicentre.co.uk**

Useful information

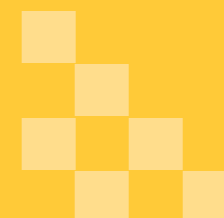
for Taxi Drivers

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Now You Are A Taxi Driver



Introduction

Now that you have a Taxi Driver's Licence, you are authorised to operate a taxi vehicle. The conditions and rules for operating a taxi vehicle are detailed on your licence and you should adhere to them at all times. This leaflet gives information which will help you in your new career.

Things to Remember

Taxi transport is a public service industry and as such comes under the control of the Local Authority Licensing Board. The Licensing Board has delegated the day to day administration, supervision and operation of taxis to the Taxi Inspectors Office, which is run by the police authority. If you want any more information about any aspect of the taxi business you should initially contact the Taxi Inspector's Office.

As a taxi driver you will transport many customers, from the very young to the very old, and provide services to many different categories of the community, e.g. people on social outings, oil workers, business people and the disabled to mention a few. Whilst safe driving ability and street knowledge are key essentials for your job, temperament and personality are just as important.

When working, you should be of smart appearance and be helpful, courteous and polite towards all customers at all times. Inevitably there may be times when a customer is awkward or rude, but you should remain calm and courteous and try to diffuse and resolve any difficult situations. Some training on how to deal with difficult situations is available and if you want more information about this you should contact the Taxi Inspector's Office.

Taxi Licences

A Taxi Licence is necessary to put a vehicle on the road. There are different kinds of licence, each of which sets down different conditions and rules including the maximum number of passengers and how and where a taxi vehicle can operate. The following identifies the different kinds of licence, the associated colour of licence plate and how different taxis may work.

- Full Taxi Licence (Yellow Plate) – Permitted to pick up passengers at any public rank, pick up casual passengers from the street and to carry out pre-booked hires usually through a licensed radio office. Cannot sit at private ranks at the airport or railway (unless displaying special permits for these ranks).
- Private Hire Licence (Red Plate) – Permitted to carry out pre-booked hires only, usually through a licensed radio office. Cannot sit at public ranks, pick up casual passengers from the street, or sit at the private airport or railway ranks.
- Airport Licence (Green Plate) – Permitted to pick up passengers from the airport private ranks and to carry out pre-booked hires, usually through the airport radio office. Cannot sit at public ranks, pick up casual passengers from the street or sit at the private railway rank.
- Disabled Licence – Vehicles which have been adapted with wheelchair access for the disabled can be granted a licence. Usually a full taxi licence (Yellow Plate) which in addition to normal conditions allows the vehicles to participate in special schemes for disable persons.

The Local Authority Licensing Board limits the number of taxi licences and mostly they are granted only to vehicle owners.

If you want more information or details about how to apply for a Taxi Licence, contact the Taxi Inspector's Office.



Taxi Ranks and General Rules

- Public Ranks – Situated at Back Wynd, Chapel Street, Dee Street and Hadden Street. Only taxis with Yellow Plates may sit at these ranks.
- Casual Street Hires – Only taxis with Yellow Plates may pick up casual passengers from the street. Taxis with Red or Green plates cannot operate from public ranks or from the street.
- Airport Private Ranks – Situated opposite the main airport terminal and at Bristow's heliport. Only taxis with Green Plates may sit at these ranks, for which they pay a special permit fee to the airport authority. Where taxis with Yellow or Red plates have pre-booked hires within the airport area, they must locate passengers at separate pick up points, away from the airport ranks.
- Railway Private Ranks – Situated in front of the railway station. Only taxis with a special permit purchased from the railway authority may sit at this rank. Taxis without a permit cannot sit at this rank but when the rank is empty and passengers are waiting, they may pick up passengers.

The appropriate licence plates must be displayed on each taxi on each taxi vehicle.

Taxi Vehicle Responsibilities

The Taxi Licence and Taxi Driver's Licence both set down conditions and rules for taxi owners and drivers, including responsibilities associated with the taxi vehicle. The following paragraphs indicate some of the important vehicle responsibilities which must be adhered to at all times.

The Taxi Licence Holder is responsible for:

- Ensuring the vehicle is in serviceable and roadworthy conditions at all times. The vehicle will be inspected at least twice a year by the Taxi Inspector's Office.
- Advising the Taxi Inspector's Office immediately if the vehicle is involved in an accident or otherwise damaged.
- Displaying a disc on the vehicle confirming that registration and insurance documents have been seen by the Taxi Inspector's Office. This is in addition to the Road Tax disc.
- Ensuring the Taximeter is sealed and operates in accordance with the current fare structure. Where applicable, illuminated roof signs should work in conjunction with the taximeter indicating when a taxi is for hire.
- Displaying a sign advising passengers of their obligation to use seat belts.
- Providing a properly fitted fire extinguisher and first aid kit.

The Taxi Driver is responsible for:

- Ensuring that licence plates, discs and signs required of the Taxi Licence Holder are evident on and in the vehicle.
- Ensuring that the bodywork and upholstery in the vehicle are clean and tidy at all times.
- Displaying a licence photograph in the vehicle and another on their person.
- Locating and knowing how to operate and use the fire extinguisher and first aid kit in case of emergency.

Taxi Fares

The Local Authority Licensing Board are responsible for setting taxi fares. The current fare structure should be displayed in the taxi and you must familiarise yourself with them to ensure that you always charge the proper fare and do not overcharge customers.

Taxi Offices and Taxi Operators

Taxi Offices and independent Taxi Operators control most of the taxis operating in this area. This section indicates how offices and independent operators may work together to meet customer demand and identifies possible employment opportunities for the taxi driver.

Taxi Offices – Generally larger companies who are licensed to operate with radio transmitters. These offices normally have fixed contract hires and can accept pre-booked or immediate hires from telephone customers. Details of individual hires are then passed through to individual vehicles and drivers via transmitted radio or computer messages. Whilst Taxi Offices employ their own drivers, they can also pass work through to independent operators who choose to hire radios of computers from them.

Taxi Operators – These range from one-taxi one-man firms to multi-taxi multi-driver firms. Independent operators can have their own business contract work and can also choose to work through a Taxi Office by hiring a radio or computer which allows work to be transmitted to them. Independent operators do not have to work this way and may prefer to work from public ranks, from the street, or from private ranks, without association with a Taxi Office.

The Taxi Offices and Independent Operators can offer employment opportunities to the taxi driver. The conditions and terms offered by these companies and firms can differ and you should contact them directly if you wish further details. If you have a suitable vehicle and can get a Taxi Licence, there may be an opportunity to be self employed. Lists of Taxi Offices with radio licences, and larger independent operators, are available from the Taxi Inspector's Office.

Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures

Complaints against a taxi driver can come from customers, members of the public or other taxi drivers. These complaints can for example relate to improper personal behaviour, using abusive language, erratic or improper driving, breaking licence conditions and rules, and for overcharging. Complaints are dealt with initially by the Taxi Inspector and where serious complaints are upheld, details may be passed to the Local Authority Licensing Board for consideration. Where disciplinary action is considered necessary, the driver may be suspended from work until a hearing is called. Any disciplinary procedures will be in accordance with the condition laid down by the local licensing authority.