



June 23, 2008

PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION ACT AMENDMENTS

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. What will the amendments do?

The amendments will remove the requirement for Licensees to apply for, and the Registrar of Passenger Transportation to issue, vehicle-specific identifiers (e.g., plate/decals, as well as vehicle identification certificate) for commercial passenger vehicles operating under a General Authorization (GA) passenger transportation licence or the GA portion of a Hybrid licence (a licence for which the Licensee has both General and Special Authorizations).

2. Why are the amendments needed?

The new Passenger Transportation Act economically deregulated the charter bus industry in 2004 (no more regulation of fleet sizes, tariffs, schedules, etc.). Consequently, as vehicle-specific identifiers for General Authorization fleets (e.g., plate/decals) are redundant, and the application process for adding a vehicle to the fleet unnecessarily duplicates ICBC's process, they were recommended for elimination.

3. What part of ICBC's process was duplicated?

All vehicles licensed under the Passenger Transportation Act must meet National Safety Code standards for vehicle safety. To ensure carriers fulfill these obligations, ICBC requires proof of both a National Safety Code certificate and Commercial Vehicle Inspection Program certification for all commercial vehicles registering or applying for insurance. With these changes, GA Licensees wishing to add a vehicle to their fleet will no longer be required to apply to the Registrar of Passenger Transportation using these same documents. (Please refer to question number 14 if you have vehicles which are base plated outside of British Columbia.)

4. When do these changes come into effect?

These changes come into effect on July 1, 2008.

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5. How many companies/vehicles will benefit?

The proposed amendments will significantly reduce administrative process and costs for approximately 400 Licensees who collectively operate 1,600 GA vehicles.

6. How do these changes affect the vehicles used for SA vehicles?

These changes have no impact on vehicles operating under a Special Authorization.

7. What if I want to increase the number of vehicle(s) operating under my General Authorization?

Once these changes come into force, on July 1, 2008, vehicles can be added to a General Authorization fleet without any involvement of the Passenger Transportation Branch. Please refer to question number 24 for additional information.

8. How will Inspectors identify a vehicle without a “plate”?

In lieu of a “plate”, the Licensee will be required to display their unique General Authorization Vehicle Identifier (GAVI) on each vehicle operating under a GA licence. This will allow the Passenger Transportation Inspectors and other Peace Officers to continue to monitor these vehicles at roadside to ensure they are meeting all their obligations under the Passenger Transportation Act.

9. What is a General Authorization Vehicle Identifier (GAVI)?

A GAVI is a Licensee’s passenger transportation licence number that is prefixed with the letters “PT” (meaning Passenger Transportation). The licence number appears on the top right hand side of a Licensee’s passenger transportation licence.

10. What will the GAVI look like?

The GAVI will be your passenger transportation licence number, prefixed with the letters “PT” (meaning Passenger Transportation), and will be at least 5 centimetres (approx. 2”) in height. The GAVIs (i.e. PT70000) will not be supplied by the Branch, but rather each Licensee will be responsible for their manufacture and display.

11. Where on the vehicle will the GAVI be displayed?

Licensees will be required to display the GAVI (i.e. PT 70000) on the left hand side of the vehicle below the driver’s window or on either the rear window, or rear bumper.

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12. What will happen if I do not display the GAVI on the vehicle?

If you currently have a passenger transportation plate that is attached to a General Authorization vehicle you are required to return the plate, and corresponding vehicle identification certificate, to the Passenger Transportation Branch (Branch) no later than August 29, 2008. *Effective August 30, 2008*, it will be an offence not to display your GAVI on a vehicle while operating under a General Authorization.

After June 30, 2008, any new General Authorization Licensee must display a GAVI on each commercial passenger vehicle. It is an offence to operate a General Authorization vehicle without displaying a valid GAVI (PTA Sec.57).

13. Are safety requirements being eliminated or reduced as a result of these amendments to the Passenger Transportation Act?

No. The Registrar of Passenger Transportation will not issue a new GA licence, or renew an existing GA licence, until satisfied that each vehicle to operate under that licence has satisfactorily passed a Commercial Vehicle Inspection Program examination, and that proper insurance has been issued for each vehicle. (Please refer to question number 14 if you have vehicles which are base plated outside of British Columbia.)

14. How do these changes affect the vehicles which are registered outside of British Columbia?

Proof of Financial Responsibility and a current vehicle inspection report will still be required for each vehicle at the time of the issuance of a new GA or Hybrid* licence, as well as at the time of annual licence renewal. These vehicles will also be requested to display their GAVI.

*A Hybrid is a licence for which the Licensee has both General and Special Authorizations.

15. Do I still have to carry my Licence in the vehicle?

Yes, it remains the Licensee's responsibility to place a copy of the current Passenger Transportation "Licence" in its entirety in each vehicle operating under the licence.

16. What will happen if I do not carry my Licence in the vehicle?

It is an offence if you do not carry your Licence in the vehicle. (PTA Sec.57).

17. Do I need to return the PT Branch issued identifiers (e.g., plates/decals, as well as vehicle identification certificates) that I am currently using on my GA vehicles?

All identifiers currently on vehicles operating under a GA, and the associated VICs, must be returned to the Branch.

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18. When do I need to return the PT Branch issued identifiers?

All identifiers currently on vehicles operating under a GA, and the associated VICs, must be returned to the Branch *no later than August 29, 2008*.

19. How will I return the PT Branch issued identifiers that I am currently using on my GA vehicles?

The vehicle specific identifiers and Vehicle Identification Certificates (VICs) can be returned to the Passenger Transportation Branch, Suite 104 – 4240 Manor Street, Burnaby BC V5G 1B2, either by mail, courier or in person.

20. What if my PT identifier has not yet expired? Do I still have to return it?

All PT identifiers and Vehicle Identification Certificates for vehicles operating under a General Authorization must be returned to the Branch no later than *August 29, 2008*, whether they have expired or not.

21. Since my PT Identifier has not expired, will I get a refund for the unused time?

Annual licence renewal dates will not change, therefore the length of the licensing year which a Licensee has already paid for when these changes come into force remains the same. However, no refunds will be issued for the annual renewal licensing fees already incurred at the time these changes come into force.

22. Can a licence include both Special and General Authorization vehicles?

Yes, this will not change. For example, a Licensee operating charter buses and inter-city buses would have a hybrid licence that includes the authority for both General Authorization (GA) vehicles and Special Authorization (SA) vehicles. If a vehicle in the fleet were to “toggle” between uses, both types of identifier (plate/decal for SA & GAVI for GA) would be displayed on that vehicle.

23. Can you give an example of vehicle toggling?

“Toggle” means that you are moving your vehicle(s) between both Special & General Authorizations. For example, toggling of a vehicle between both Authorizations would occur when a passenger directed vehicle (PDV) is also being utilized for “carrier directed” sightseeing tours. The former falls under Special Authorization (SA), while the latter is viewed as being a General Authorization (GA) type of service. However, the number of PT plates you use as PDVs under your SA cannot exceed the maximum fleet size as detailed in your licence Terms and Conditions as established by the Passenger Transportation Board. Another example of “toggling” is when a Licensee moves vehicle(s) between Inter-City Bus and charter bus operations.

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24. What will I have to do to add a vehicle to my GA fleet?

You are not required to advise the Passenger Transportation Branch if you are increasing the number of General Authorization vehicles. However, it will be the Licensee's responsibility to ensure that the vehicle(s) being added to the fleet operate in accordance with the General Authorization licence. It is an offence to operate contrary to the General Authorization Licence.

As a Licensee with General Authorization, you will also be required to maintain the following vehicle safety, liability and/or financial responsibility requirements when adding on additional vehicles:

Vehicle(s) base plated in BC

- A current vehicle registration (i.e. "Owner's Certificate(s) of Insurance and Licence/Vehicle Registration" that:
 - i) shows the vehicle to be licensed/registered in the correct I.C.B.C. insurance category;
 - ii) shows the vehicle to be classified as "commercial type"; and
 - iii) displays the correct seating capacity.
- A current Commercial Vehicle Inspection Report(s) (CVIP), Form MV3104, that verifies the vehicle has been inspected and passed by an approved vehicle inspection facility (Inspections are required to be performed on a semi-annual basis unless your operation is part of a preventative maintenance program).

Vehicle(s) base plated outside of BC

- A current vehicle insurance document showing the vehicle has been properly licensed and insured as commercial passenger vehicle and displaying the correct seating capacity; and
- A current mechanical inspection report that verifies the vehicle has been inspected and passed by an approved vehicle inspection facility. (Please note that semi-annual inspections are a requirement in BC).
- A current apportioned cab card showing proof that the vehicle is registered with the International Registration Plan (IRP); **OR**

If you are not registered with IRP, you have purchased a non-resident commercial vehicle permit (NRSCV) or a non-resident quarterly commercial vehicle permit (NRQCV) from the Provincial Permit Center's toll-free vehicle permit line 1-800-559-9688 or at an Inspection Station, formerly known as a weigh scale, when entering British Columbia.

(For further information on IRP please call your local IRP office)

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- A current British Columbia Financial Responsibility Certificate (BC Insurance Filing) number (a valid BC Insurance Filing letter issued by the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia (ICBC)); **OR**

If you do not have a BC Insurance Filing number, you have purchased a non-resident single commercial vehicle permit (NRSCV) or a non-resident quarterly commercial vehicle permit (NRQCV), that includes an insurance certificate, from the Provincial Permit Center's toll-free vehicle permit line: 1-800-559-9688 or at an Inspection Station, formerly known as a weigh scale, when entering British Columbia).

(For further information on British Columbia Financial Responsibility Certificate (BC Insurance Filing) please call (604) 443-4624 or Toll Free 1 (800) 665-4336).

25. How do these changes affect the renewal process for GA Licences?

The renewal process for General Authorization licences will remain unchanged. Proof of appropriate insurance and a current vehicle inspection report will still be required for every vehicle operating under that licence. However, a flat fee of \$100 will replace the current fee structure of \$100/vehicle.

26. Now that I don't have to pay for the PT identifiers, is there an annual cost for the GA licence?

There will be a flat fee of \$100 at the time of annual licence renewal.

27. Will there be an increase in the annual cost of renewing a Passenger Transportation licence?

There will be significant annual cost savings for many Licensees (i.e. those who have a large GA fleet size) but there will be an increased annual renewal cost of \$100 for some Licensees.

For example, those Licensees who have a small fleet size and "toggle" the use of their vehicle(s) between both Special & General Authorizations will be required to pay:

- A fee of \$100/vehicle to renew vehicle specific identifiers (e.g., plate/decal) for the Special Authorization portion of their licence; and
- A flat fee of \$100 to renew the General Authorization portion of their licence.

28. How do these changes affect the application process for a new GA Licence?

The application process for a General Authorization licence will remain unchanged.

29. Where can I find out more information?

Please contact the Duty Inspector (Passenger Transportation Branch) at 604 453-4250, or toll free at 1-888-453-4280 (from within B.C. and Alberta).