

FACT SHEET

Operator Accreditation Requirements for School Bus Services

Under the *Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994*, certain operators of school bus services are required to hold Operator Accreditation.

Operator Accreditation was introduced to ensure transport service providers are held accountable for complying with legislative requirements, thereby raising the standards of operators in the areas of safety and service delivery.

The following table outlines the category of Operator Accreditation **required by the school** for different types of school bus services.

| Type of Service | Category of Operator Accreditation Required By The School |
|---|--|
| Government Funded School Service - when Queensland Transport pays the bus operator to transport school students to and from school. | None [The bus operator would be required to hold Operator Accreditation for Scheduled Services.] |
| School bus services arranged by the school - when the school itself has a private arrangement with a bus operator to provide to and from school services. Defined in the Act as "Restricted School Services". | None [The bus operator would be required to hold Operator Accreditation for Scheduled Services.] |
| Schools operating their own bus service - when a school operates the bus/es to transport school students to and from school. | School Scheduled Services (For the purposes of administration, these services would be viewed as 'Restricted School Services'). |
| Schools that operate their own bus solely for school related activities, eg. excursions - when the school (government or private) owns and operates a bus that is used only to transport school students and staff on school excursions, etc, but does not provide a to and from school service. | None [While these services are classified as community transport, the service being provided is not considered to be 'available to the general community' and therefore does not require Operator Accreditation and Driver Authorisation.] |

In some cases, schools provide transport for non-school related activities (for example, transport to a community group or hiring the vehicle to a second party). Whether Operator Accreditation is required, and if so, the type of Operator Accreditation, will depend on the relationship between the school and the party being transported (and the size and number of the vehicle used).

In the event of the school providing transport to a second party, or hiring/chartering its bus/es to an external party (including other schools), the following Operator Accreditation requirements apply:

| Type of Hiring/Transport | Operator Accreditation Requirements |
|--|---|
| The school receives government funding to provide transport to another school, institution or specific and limited group of people. | Exempt from Operator Accreditation - considered to be "not available to the general community". |
| The school receives government funding to provide transport to a broad based community group (eg older persons).* | Operator Accreditation (Community Transport Services) |
| The school can demonstrate it raises funds to provide transport to another school, institution or specific and limited group of people. | Exempt - considered to be "not available to the general community". |
| The school can demonstrate it raises funds to provide transport to a broad based community group (eg older persons).* | Operator Accreditation (Community Transport Services) |
| Bus and driver provided free of charge to an independent second party (petrol money or any other consideration is not permitted). | No Operator Accreditation required - not considered to be a public passenger service. |
| Charge for both bus and driver to an independent second party. | Operator Accreditation (General Services) |
| Charge for bus, but driver provided free to an independent second party. | Operator Accreditation (General Services) |
| Bus provided free, but a charge for driver to an independent second party. | Operator Accreditation (General Services) |
| Bus provided (fee or no fee), but NO driver supplied | No Operator Accreditation required - is considered to be a vehicle hire arrangement. The second party may require Operator Accreditation depending on whether the second party is providing a public passenger service. |

* The services are exempt from Operator Accreditation and Driver Authorisation if they use only one or two vehicles with 12 or less seats to provide the service.

This information has been produced as a guide to assist in the understanding of the legislation and policy. It is an interpretation of the relevant Acts and Regulations and should not be used as a reference to a point of