



**Queensland
Government**

Industry Information Paper

Taxi Driver Standards Reform

A review of taxi driver standards, licensing and training requirements in Queensland

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1 Background

Under the *Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994* a person must hold an appropriate driver authorisation issued by the Department of Transport and Main Roads (“the department”) to drive a taxi.

To be eligible to hold a driver authorisation an applicant must:

- have an entitlement to work in Australia as an Australian Citizen, permanent resident or New Zealand citizen holding a Special Category Visa; or be entitled, under a visa issued under the *Migration Act 1958* (Commonwealth), to work in Australia;
- have a satisfactory criminal history record having regard to the safety of children, other vulnerable members of the community, personal safety of passengers and their property;
- hold a current Australian open driver licence or a restricted (work) driver licence of the appropriate class;
- have satisfactory driving experience having held a driver licence (either in Australia or overseas) for a period of at least three years. In special circumstances a person may request exemption from this requirement and nominate to undertake a practical driving competence test administered by the department;
- have a driving history (record of driving infringements) which the Director-General considers is suitable to hold driver authorisation;
- complete a taxi driver training course;
- pass an English assessment administered by an approved assessor; and
- be medically fit to drive.

The current standards for training and licensing of passenger transport drivers have been in place since 2000.

There are presently over 15,000 taxi driver authorisations issued in Queensland servicing the 3232 taxis operating in Queensland on a regular basis.

To ensure the currency and relevance of taxi driver training, licensing and industry service standards, and in response to growing community and industry concerns regarding falling industry standards, the department is reviewing its policy, legislation and programs relating to taxi drivers and taxi industry standards.

2 Objective

This paper outlines identified key issues of concern surrounding the issue of taxi driver authorisations, taxi driver training and service standards for the taxi industry and identifies a range of policy or legislative responses that will be implemented to address these concerns.

This paper seeks to inform industry of the range of reforms being proposed and timelines for their progress.

3 Research

In considering the appropriateness of current practices and standards, a scan of eligibility and training requirements for taxi driver authorisation holders in other jurisdictions has been undertaken.

- Attachment 1 provides a comparison of eligibility requirements by State/Territory.
- Attachment 2 provides a comparison of training requirements by State/Territory
- Attachment 3 provides a comparison of English assessment requirements by State/Territory

In May 2009, the Department established a taxi complaints hotline to gather feedback from the general public and taxi industry about issues prevalent within the taxi industry. A summary of reported complaints and issues received via the hotline by number and type is provided as Attachment 4.

In June and July 2009, the Department engaged “Mystery Shopper” services to provide feedback on driver standards, charging practices, and general service standards.

Driver licence and driver authority statistics have been extracted from the department’s database.

Taxi industry compliance data has been extrapolated from quarterly compliance reports and licence cancellation and suspension reports produced within the department.

A detailed examination of key issues is undertaken below.

4 Issues

4.1 Inexperienced drivers

4.1.1 Outline

There has been a recent increase in complaints and reports of poor driver standards attributed to inexperience of drivers.

In particular, drivers who have initially obtained their driver licence and accrued their driving history overseas may not have been subject to an appropriately high licence assessment standard or comparable driving conditions or road rules as a driver who obtained their licence in Australia or another country with recognised driver licence standards¹.

In Australia the minimum age that a driver can obtain an open driver licence is generally 20 years and therefore that would be the minimum age that a person could obtain a driver authorisation. A recent check of departmental records identified that there are 31 driver authorisation holders under the age of 20. All of these driver authorisation holders have obtained their authorisation after an open Australian licence was issued based on their overseas driver licence history. Although in each case the driver was required to successfully undertake a practical and written driving examination before being issued with a Queensland driver licence, in some cases the applicants had to take these tests multiple times before passing. In one case, an applicant undertook the driver examination seven times before passing.

¹ Established by the Austroads Registration and Licensing Reference Group in 2002. (Austroads is the association of Australian and New Zealand road transport and traffic authorities.)

4.1.2 Proposed policy or legislative solutions

4.1.2.1 *Pre-requisite period for an Australian Driver Licence*

The majority of States and Territories require an applicant for a driver authorisation to hold an open Australian issued driver licence and to have held that open licence, and/or an Australian provisional licence, for a minimum of at least 12 months. Some jurisdictions go further so as to require that the person have held an open driver licence issued by the particular State in which a driver authorisation is being sought for at least 12 months.

In Queensland, there is no requirement for a taxi driver to have held an open Australian licence for a minimum period. However, applicants for driver authorisation for General Services (a category for bus drivers) must have held an Australian licence for at least two years before applying for driver authorisation. This requirement was introduced to alleviate concerns about the driving competence of bus drivers providing long distance or charter services.

It is considered that requiring a minimum period of driving experience in Australia ensures that applicants for driver authorisation are familiar with Australian driving conditions and road rules before being eligible to carry passengers.

It is recommended that the present eligibility requirement for a person to hold an open Australian driver licence be extended to include an additional requirement that a person also have held an Australian issued open, provisional or probationary driver licence for at least one year immediately preceding the application.

4.1.2.2 *Introduce a minimum age for eligibility to hold a driver authority*

There is presently no minimum age requirement for eligibility to hold a driver authorisation (including taxi) in Queensland.

There has been a general reliance that the requirement to hold an open Australian driver licence would effectively impose a minimum age of 20 years on any applicant for a driver authorisation, however, because of the present arrangements for the recognition of overseas driver history, this has not been effective.

Currently, New South Wales, Western Australia, Tasmania and the ACT all require applicants for driver authorisation to be at least 20 years of age while the Northern Territory require applicants to be 18.5 years. Victoria and South Australia do not have a minimum age requirement.

A minimum age requirement of 20 years will be established for eligibility to hold a driver authority (taxi) in Queensland. This is consistent with the minimum age at which a person who first obtained their licence in Australia could progress from a learner to a provisional and then open licence in Australia.

4.2 English Standards

4.2.1 Outline

The ability to understand and follow directions is a key requirement for efficient taxi driving and forms part of the eligibility criteria in every state and territory.

There has been a recent increase in complaints and reports of drivers who have poor English standards and that this poor understanding of English is resulting in excessive fares due to an inability to follow directions.

Under the legislation a taxi driver must be able to ‘speak and understand English’. In practice, applicants must provide an English Assessment Certificate issued by a person who has been authorised to issue these certificates by the department. This means that the driver would generally undertake the English assessment at a taxi company during the recruitment process and present their certificate to the department as part of their driver authorisation application. Drivers are required to meet the following standards in relation to the four modes of English communication that are assessed:

- Follow verbal instructions – “can generally follow a conversation and instructions”
- Explain a situation – “can describe and tell about familiar things”
- Read address/message/instructions – “can read a limited range of short simple texts or instructions”
- Fill in a form/docket – “can write basic, factual information”.

Assessors do not currently need any formal accreditation or training to become an approved assessor. They generally work for a taxi booking company and conduct the English language assessment as part of the overall training process.

4.2.2 Proposed policy or legislative solutions

4.2.2.1 Review English standards required of a taxi driver

The current English language standard requirements for taxi drivers are relatively low and feedback from the public suggests that some authorised taxi drivers have poor English skills. This may be due to the standards being too low, or because assessors employed by taxi companies are not properly trained and accredited as English assessors.

A national review of English standards for taxi drivers is presently underway and being led by Western Australia. As part of this review process a consultant is being engaged to identify the English standards required of a taxi driver against the established English assessment methodology (International Second Language Proficiency Rating – “ISLPR”). Timing for the development of a national standard is November 2009 for ratification by the Australian Transport Council.² However, this timeline is contingent on the conclusion of the benchmarking field study being completed.

Queensland will introduce mandatory ISLPR assessment, to the level determined by the National Review. As the national review will comprehensively map the tasks required of a taxi driver against the ISLPR methodology, it will provide clear advice regarding an appropriate minimum English standard for the vocation of taxi driver.

All applicants will be required to successfully undertake ISLPR assessment before being eligible to hold driver authorisation. This will replace the existing requirement to provide an English Assessment Certificate issued by the taxi company.

Notwithstanding a national ISLPR rating for taxi drivers being approved, this requirement will be introduced from 1 January 2010.

² The Australian Transport Council comprises Commonwealth, State, Territory and New Zealand Ministers and it provides a forum to consult and provide advice to governments on the co-ordination and integration of all transport and road policy issues.

4.2.2.2 Review English assessment practices

The English assessment practices in Queensland need to be reviewed as they are not based on an established methodology and the assessors are generally not qualified to undertake English assessments.

The ISLPR methodology that is proposed as part of the review being undertaken by Western Australia was developed by academics and is recognised nationally. The ISLPR methodology will be introduced in Queensland to assess taxi drivers by either:

- Taxi companies where they employ an assessor who is accredited to use the ISLPR methodology; or
- TAFEs: most TAFEs employ accredited ISLPR assessors who administer the Adult Migrant English Program and use the ISLPR methodology to teach and assess those students; or
- the ISLPR headquarters in Brisbane.

The introduction of this requirement will impose an additional application cost on persons applying for driver authorisation (taxi). The TAFE English Language and Literacy Service have estimated assessment costs of approximately \$150 per hour for an assessor. This would mean that the maximum cost for a single assessment would be \$150, however this amount could be reduced if group assessments were undertaken. TAFE providers do offer scheduled assessment times that would facilitate group assessments for a lesser charge.

4.3 Training of Taxi Drivers

4.3.1 Outline

Under section 9 of the *Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Standard 2000*, an applicant for taxi driver authorisation must have knowledge of common destinations and major connecting roads within the taxi service area and have either successfully completed:

- a taxi driver training course covering the following nationally recognised competencies: Follow occupational health and safety procedures; Drive a taxicab; Apply customer service skills; Apply quality procedures and Transport persons with disabilities; or
- the TaxiPlus training course that was developed for the department by the University of Queensland in 1996 in conjunction with the Queensland Government, the Taxi Council of Queensland and taxi industry members.

Both taxi operators in the Brisbane area, Black & White Cabs and Yellow Cabs (Qld), provide driver training in accordance with the legislation however they both deliver training at a more comprehensive level than that which is presently required. The companies have extended the training content to include instruction in anti-discrimination laws; understanding the travelling needs of people with a disability; health and stress management; and building a career in the taxi industry.

4.3.2 Proposed policy or legislative solutions

4.3.2.1 Review training requirements for new taxi drivers

The training requirements for taxi drivers are being reviewed at both the state and national levels. In May 2008, the Australian Transport Council agreed to the development of a national minimum taxi driver training standards and assessment framework to be led by Western Australia. The department contributes to this project through the National Taxi Regulators Group (a forum for representatives of government taxi regulators from each state and territory). The national framework will significantly influence the review of taxi driver training in Queensland.

Based on stakeholder feedback, some of the main areas of focus of the review include improved customer service training, particularly in dealing with the elderly and people with a disability; assessment of the quality of the training currently being delivered; the assessment methods for competencies such as English language proficiency; and the need for refresher training for existing taxi drivers. Individual competencies being considered for incorporation in a new training package include: occupational health and safety; customer service; access/mobility for disabled passengers (wheelchair training included); driver skills instruction when in charge of a cab; and managing financial transactions.

Queensland will adopt the national training framework in place of TaxiPlus as soon as possible after it is endorsed by the Australian Transport Council. Implementation is likely to occur in mid 2010.

4.3.2.2 Review training assessment practices

Currently, any entity authorised by the Taxi Council of Queensland can deliver the TaxiPlus course to new drivers however only Registered Training Organisations can deliver the five nationally recognised competencies.

Yellow Taxis is currently the only Registered Training Organisation among the taxi booking companies providing this training.

The implementation of the national competency based training will require delivery by Registered Training Organisations for the competencies to be recognised.

Introducing a requirement that only Registered Training Organisations can deliver taxi driver training would have the benefit of ensuring independence of training and assessment and allowing for independent audit of trainers and assessors however it could present challenges to accessing training and increase the costs of training.

4.3.2.3 Refresher Training

There is presently no requirement for refresher training to be undertaken in Queensland. In other states there is no general requirement for refresher training but some jurisdictions require individual drivers to undergo additional training to address an identified problem.

The Taxi Council of Queensland is lobbying strongly for the government to impose a requirement for drivers to undertake refresher training at regular intervals. The Taxi Council of Queensland is concerned that without appropriate refresher training being provided to drivers, taxi booking companies and owners could find themselves vicariously liable for the acts of their drivers.

It is proposed that the department work with the taxi industry and taxi drivers to identify the possible elements of refresher training and options for delivery and that this proposal be referred to the National Taxi Regulators Group to consider whether refresher training should be included in the national training framework or if it is an issue for individual states and territories to determine.

4.4 Industry and Public Engagement

4.4.1 Outline

The taxi industry is presently represented by a single peak industry body; the Taxi Council of Queensland. The Taxi Council of Queensland represents the interests of the booking companies, taxi managers and owners.

In the past taxi driver representations have been ad hoc and disorganised. From time to time, driver associations have emerged however have failed to gather sufficient support from individual drivers to be recognised as a peak industry body.

The views and interests of taxi drivers and those represented by the Taxi Council of Queensland are sometimes at odds; drivers want better working conditions, operators want maximum return for minimal cost to support the investment they have made in the licence, booking companies are the face of the industry with limited control over the behaviour and attitudes of drivers etc.

In addition, there is a need for the broader community to have a greater input into the levels of service and standards provided by the taxi industry, particularly those parts of the community that are highly reliant on door to door passenger transport services such as the aged and the disabled.

Recent media reports and issues and complaints raised through the Taxi Hotline indicate that there is a high level of community interest in maintaining high level standards for both service and safety for the industry.

There would appear to be a community perception that taxi standards in Queensland are not adequate and that more needs to be done by the government and the industry to work cooperatively to improve these standards.

4.4.2 Proposed policy or legislative solutions

4.4.2.1 *Establish a Taxi Industry Consultative Committee*

The department presently chairs three committees involving representatives from the taxi industry, taxi drivers and the community which help guide decision making regarding regulated issues affecting the taxi industry:

- The Strategic Planning Committee – Taxi; which includes representatives from Taxi Council of Queensland, booking companies and owners. The Strategic Planning Committee meets quarterly and is presently chaired by the A/General Manager (Passenger Transport).
- The Disability Discrimination Act Reference Group; which includes representatives from the Taxi Council of Queensland and consumer groups representing people with disabilities. The Disability Discrimination Act Reference Group meets quarterly and is chaired by the department's Passenger Transport Division.

- The Taxi Industry Health and Safety Committee; which includes representatives from the Taxi Council of Queensland, Queensland Police Service, Transport Workers Union and two taxi drivers. The Taxi Industry Health and Safety Committee meets quarterly and is chaired by Passenger Transport Division.

The Strategic Planning Committee looks more broadly at issues affecting the taxi industry and guides the work of the Disability Discrimination Act Reference Group. The Taxi Industry Health and Safety Committee focus more on specific operational issues.

To ensure that the government is fully informed on the spectrum of taxi industry, driver and community views on issues affecting the taxi industry, the government is forming a Taxi Industry Advisory Committee to guide issue identification and prioritisation of the Taxi Strategic Plan and provide advice to the Minister on specific policy and legislative proposals.

The committee will be comprised of invited representatives from:

- The Transport Workers Union (1)
- The Taxi Council of Queensland (4)
- Cab Driver's Association of Queensland (1)
- Independent driver (1)
- Ethnic Community Council (1)
- Disability Sector (1)

Committee membership will also need to provide both regional and south east Queensland representation as well as gender and ethnic balance.

The taxi industry advisory committee once formed will work directly with Passenger Transport Division on progressing priority initiatives determined by the Taxi Strategic Plan.

4.5 Driver and Industry Compliance

4.5.1 Outline

One of the most significant and concerning issues identified through existing audit and compliance programs and supported from anecdotal evidence provided by the industry itself, is a growing trend in unauthorised drivers or inappropriate use of driver authorisations.

While the department undertakes regular compliance activities at taxi ranks and on road inspection of vehicles, there would appear to be a perception among drivers that the risk of being caught breaching transport laws is relatively low.

The department cancelled or suspended 1072 driver authorisations in the past 12 months. These actions were most commonly taken as a result of accumulated traffic or criminal history.

Beyond reactive compliance actions, it is important that the department is seen to be proactively promoting compliance within the industry through a combination of education and targeted enforcement activities.

The need for an increased and more targeted enforcement presence is considered integral to ensuring attitudinal change and longer term improved compliance rates for drivers.

4.5.2 Proposed policy or legislative solutions

4.5.2.1 Targeted compliance campaign

The department will undertake an extensive compliance campaign targeting taxi drivers across the state. The campaign will target regulatory compliance with driver requirements and seek to establish service standard benchmarks.

The campaign will have the following key elements:

- Random taxi rank visits by enforcement officers in locations across the State
- Secret shoppers gathering information on standards
- Review of taxi company records
- Taxi company audits in conjunction with Department of Immigration and Citizenship

The campaign will focus on the following key issues:

- Current and appropriate use of driver authorisation
- Driver hours and fatigue
- Driver operations, appropriate meter tariffs, logged onto booking company system
- Driver standards, English standard, cleanliness, local knowledge and compliance with road rules
- Service standards, including driver demeanour and baggage handling

Targeted compliance campaigns will utilise the compliance resources of the department's regions and officers from the federal Department of Immigration and Citizenship.

To focus compliance efforts, specific taxi compliance units will be established with Inspectors allocated to identifying problem areas within the taxi industry and undertaking random and targeted enforcement activities.

5 Potential Impacts

The following impacts have been broadly identified. The extent of impacts will be more closely examined as part of further policy and legislative development work.

5.1.1 Availability of drivers

The introduction of more stringent eligibility requirements for taxi drivers may result in a reduced pool of drivers. The present economic climate has resulted in a large number of people seeking work as drivers and the introduction of more stringent requirements is unlikely to impact on driver availability in the immediate to short term. However, historically in times of economic prosperity, the taxi industry has struggled to recruit sufficient drivers to meet service requirements. It is during times of peak demand that the industry will call for a relaxation in driver eligibility requirements to maintain service levels.

5.1.2 Retrospectivity of requirements

It is not feasible to retrospectively apply more stringent eligibility criteria. Any future enhancements to eligibility requirements will apply to new applicants only.

5.1.3 Costs to industry

The introduction of increased training and English assessment standards and competency assessment approaches will have a cost implication for drivers. While the costs of training and assessment are determined at the discretion of individual service providers, average costs for an English assessment conducted in New South Wales is approximately \$90.00 while the cost of attending a training course offered through a Recognised Training Organisation in Victoria is approximately \$700.00. The costs of training and English assessment are borne by the individual drivers and are likely to increase for Queensland applicants when higher standards are introduced.

5.1.4 National Uniformity

Any change to training or licensing standards for taxi drivers will need to be developed consistent with current national reform agenda. Both licensing and training are the subject of national reviews and any changes proposed in Queensland may be superseded by national reforms.

6 Summary of initiatives and timelines for implementation

6.1 Driver Authority Eligibility Criteria

6.1.1 Applicant for driver authority (taxi) to hold an open Australian driver licence and have held an Australian issued licence for at least 1 year

Progress of this initiative will require amendment to the *Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Regulation 2005*. The introduction target date for this new eligibility requirement is 1 November 2009.

6.1.2 Introduce a minimum age requirement for applicants for a driver authority (taxi) of 20 years.

This is consistent with the minimum age at which a person who first obtained their licence in Australia could progress from a learners, to a provisional and then open licence in Australia.

Progress of this initiative will require amendment to the *Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Regulation 2005*. The introduction target date for this new eligibility requirement is 1 November 2009.

6.1.3 English proficiency assessment using ISLPR

Progress of this initiative will require the establishment of taxi industry specific ISLPR rating assessment and roll out of the assessment methodology to accredited assessors across the state.

No legislative change is required.

The introduction target date for this new eligibility requirement is 1 January 2010.

6.2 Training Standards

6.2.1 Introduce the national training framework for taxi drivers

Progress of this initiative will require the development of new training material and model assessment tools. This work will need to be undertaken in close consultation with the Transport and Logistics Industry Skills Council to ensure course accreditation is achieved.

The introduction target date for the introduction of an enhanced driver training course is 1 July 2010. However this timeline is dependent on the national training package being approved by the Australian Transport Council in late 2009.

6.2.2 Require taxi driver training to be provided by a Registered Training Organisation (RTO)

Progress of this initiative will require considerable further industry consultation as only one of the existing training providers (Yellow Cabs Pty Ltd) is presently a RTO. While the introduction of this requirement will ensure a consistently high level of training delivery and assessment, it is important that access to training is not negatively impacted. The Department of Transport and Main Roads will need to work closely with current training providers and other RTOs, such as Queensland TAFE, to ensure access to training is available across the State.

The target date for the introduction of the requirement for taxi driver training to be delivered by RTOs is 1 July 2010, in line with the timeline for the introduction of the national driver training package.

6.2.3 Develop a national position on refresher training

Progress of a refresher training package will be dependent on the support of other jurisdictions as part of the National Taxi Regulators' Group. If there is limited support at a national level for this project, Queensland will examine this issue independently with the taxi industry.

This issue has been referred to the National Taxi Regulators' Group for discussion at its next meeting in November 2009.

6.3 Industry Engagement

6.3.1 Establish a Taxi Industry Advisory Committee

A Taxi Industry Advisory Committee will be established to assist the department in issue identification and prioritisation of the Taxi Strategic Plan and provide advice to the Minister on specific policy and legislative proposals. The committee will be comprised of invited representatives from:

- The Transport Workers Union (1)
- The Taxi Council of Queensland (4)
- Cab Driver's Association of Queensland (1)
- Independent driver (1)
- Ethnic Community Council (1)
- Disability Sector (1)

Committee membership will be determined so as to provide both regional and south east Queensland representation, gender and ethnic balance.

6.4 Industry Compliance

6.4.1 Introduce targeted taxi compliance unit in Queensland.

Mobile taxi compliance units dedicated to undertaking random and targeted enforcement activities will be established.

Further information about community perceptions of taxi standards will be gathered to guide future compliance priorities by:

- continued monitoring of the taxi complaints hotline until 1 January 2010;
- Mystery Shopper feedback;
- Data from quarterly customer surveys conducted by independent agency (currently Nielsen's).

7 Progressing Reforms

This information paper has been released to advise the taxi industry and the general public on changes being made to improve safety and service standards for the taxi industry in Queensland. The information paper will be sent to peak industry bodies as well as being available from the Department of Transport and Main Roads website. Copies of the information paper will also be available from the department.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads will host a number of public forums across the State to provide further information on the implementation of these changes, and to identify potential impacts for industry. Public forums will be held during late August.

8 Providing comment

Comments on the information paper are invited from members of the taxi industry and the general public. Comments can be provided in writing either electronically or by post:

Email: taxi@transport.qld.gov.au

Post: Industry Standards and Taxis Branch
Department of Transport and Main Roads
PO Box 673
Fortitude Valley Queensland 4006

ATTACHMENT 1 – EXISTING ELGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR DRIVER AUTHORISATION

Jurisdiction	Minimum Age Requirement for DA	Current Licence required	Required Licence History	Competence Test Option for obtaining DA	Minimum Age of Australian applicant	Minimum Age of Overseas applicant	Note
QLD	No	Australian Open Licence	Open/Provisional Licence (Australian or certain overseas) for 3+ years	Where applicant does not meet the licence history requirement	20 (see Note)	17	While there is no age requirement, applicants must hold an Australian open licence. Age 20 years is generally the minimum age at which a person who first obtained their licence in Australia could progress from a learners to a provisional and then open licence in Queensland.
NSW	20+	Australian Open Licence, unrestricted	Open Australian licence for a total of at least 12 months in the 2 years immediately preceding the application	No	20	20	
VIC	No	Victorian Open Licence, unrestricted	Open Australian licence for at least 12 months or if less than 12 months, undertake an independent driving assessment.	Where applicant does not meet the licence history requirement	21 (see Note)	21	While there is no age requirement, applicants must have an open Victorian licence, which means the majority of applicants would be a minimum of 21 (ie. drivers licence at 18, with a 3 year probationary period, which has recently been extended to 4 years)
WA	20+	Australian Open Licence, unrestricted	Open Australian licence for at least 12 months	Compulsory on-road test in simulated taxi - conducted by Departmental driving assessors	20	20	

Jurisdiction	Minimum Age Requirement for DA	Current Licence required	Required Licence History	Competence Test Option for obtaining DA	Minimum Age of Australian applicant	Minimum Age of Overseas applicant	Note
SA	No	Australian Open Licence, unrestricted		Compulsory driving assessment - 30 minutes by approved training centre	19 (see Note)	19	While there is no age requirement, applicants must hold an open Australian licence which means the minimum age for an Australian applicant would be at least 19. In SA, applicants from overseas must be at least nineteen to be issued an open licence which means they would be a minimum of 19 years old before they could apply for DA.
TAS	20	Australian Driver Licence	If 20, held an Australian DL for at least two of the three years prior to application. If 21+ held an Australian DL for at least one of the three years prior to application.	No	20	20	
ACT	20	Australian Open Licence, unrestricted	Open/Provisional Licence (Australian only) for 3+ years	No	20	20	
NT	18.5	NT Open Licence, unrestricted	Open Australian licence for 2 years	No	21	21	

ATTACHMENT 2 – TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Jurisdiction	OH &S	Customer Care/Service - includes conflict resolution and communication skills	Disabled Passenger - Wheelchair access	Conduct Financial transactions - includes workplace calculations	Work in a socially diverse environment	Identify Major Roads and Locations- reading maps and route navigation	Drive a Taxi	COMMENTS
QLD	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
NSW	X	X		X		X		
VIC	X		X	X			X	see notes below about WAT training
WA	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	includes an aptitude test as part of proving driver competency
SA	X	X	X			X		
TAS			X	X			X	
ACT	X	X	X			X	X	
NT		X	X	X		X	X	

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

N.S.W.	The NSW Government maintains a strict overseeing role in terms of driver training and language proficiency. Through an English skills test, similar in style to ISLPR, drivers must prove their abilities before they are allowed to commence driver training. The NSW Government, as in Queensland, prescribes the competencies for inclusion in driver training and in the case of Sydney, the State Ministry conducts in-house testing of an applicant's knowledge of locality/landmarks and an assessment of rules and regulations before being issued with an authority. As with other jurisdictions throughout the country, retraining is required of drivers, at their own cost, to remedy the area of weakness in competency identified through customer complaint.
South Australia	The South Australian Government's role in attracting quality drivers to the industry is to provide a stamp of approval (or otherwise) to the taxi driver training package, a creation of the Taxi Council, the Registered Training Organisations, operators, drivers and the State Government. While the SA Government's role is important, the onus is on the Taxi Council to initiate continuing review and improvement of training course content to benefit the whole of industry.
Victoria	The main distinction between Victoria and other States is that the Victorian Government is active in the area of WAT driver training. No person is permitted to drive a WAT in Victoria without successful completion of an accredited course in WAT services. It is 40 hours in length and the Victorian Government provides the funds. With a further 330 WATs to come on line in Melbourne soon, the Victorian Government has committed more funds for driver training. The Government also requires taxis to be subject to special audits for safety compliance, with results to date revealing only 30% were passed on first inspection. The Victorian Government is currently taking the initiative in respect to driver safety, with a scheme to reimburse 50% of the cost of screens purchased before 31 December 2008. Conflict resolution workshops are also offered through the RTOs funded by the Victorian Government.
WA	In WA there is one distinctive contrast with other States in the approach to taxi driver training - the requirement of the WA Government that a driver must cannot proceed to the taxi driver training course without first undertaking the aptitude test. This test is conducted by the Government, using the services of a psychologist to test the proficiency of a driver to be charge of a taxi, and deal with customers. No other State has an aptitude test which in WA has the effect of serving as a pre-requisite to commencing formal training. The other area where WA distinguishes itself from Queensland is that the WA Government provides a full subsidy to 200 eligible students toward the cost of achieving taxi driver qualifications. The grants come on the condition that the successful applicants comply with the requirements of the grant for at least two years.

ATTACHMENT 3 – ENGLISH ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

	Queensland	New South Wales	Victoria	South Australia	Western Australia
Who is required to have an English Assessment	All taxi driver authorisation applicants	All taxi driver authorisation applicants in the Sydney metropolitan area	All applicants for Metropolitan taxi and hire car Driver Accreditation	All taxi driver authorisation applicants	All applicants for taxi driver authorisation in Perth metropolitan area
Is it required prior to beginning training	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Is it conducted independently of the taxi training company	No	Yes. NSW AMES* conducts assessments	No. Taxi training RTOs can extend scope to conduct English assessments	Yes. South Australian Taxi Council conducts assessments	Yes. Through one of two government accredited providers
Minimum requirements to pass	<p>Follow verbal instructions (score 3 = “can generally follow a conversation and instructions”)</p> <p>Explain a situation (score 2 = “can describe and tell about familiar things”)</p> <p>Read address / message / instructions (score 1 = “can read a limited range of short simple texts or instructions”)</p> <p>Fill in a form/docket (score 1 = “can write basic, factual information”)</p>	<p>Skills in arithmetic, reading, writing, spelling, speaking and listening are assessed through observation and set tasks. Assessment is based on the language competency level required to be able to complete the training course</p>	<p>ISLPR** rating of 2 for the skills of reading and writing and 3 for the skills of speaking or listening</p>	<p>Based on the ISLPR methodology and the proficiency levels are equivalent to level 3 for skills of listening, speaking and writing, and level 3+ for reading tests. They have also included a navigation skills assessment</p>	<p>Successful completion of a psychological aptitude test that has components of English language assessment. Language assessment is based on competency based measures of vocational abilities such as; map reading skills; a reading test; a word meaning test using words relevant to the taxi industry in Perth; a numeracy skills test using basic math problems a taxi driver would encounter; and an abstract reasoning test which is designed to assess a person’s problem-solving skills</p>

	Queensland	New South Wales	Victoria	South Australia	Western Australia
Accreditation of English assessor	No accreditation required. Assessors must be registered with the department.	Qualified and accredited in ISLPR**, English language literacy and TESOL****	Accredited in ISLPR**	Accredited with Certificate IV in Training and Assessment	Registered psychologist
Failure rate	Low	15%	around 25%	85-90%	35-40%
Cost	\$0 - \$25 (part of induction or assessed whilst training)	\$90 (half hour test)	\$75 to \$155	\$45 (fee includes a road law test)	\$175-189 (includes psychological assessment)
Evidence	English Assessment Certificate	English Assessment Certificate	Taxi driver training passport is endorsed	Taxi driver training passport is endorsed	Letter from accredited provider
Acceptance of alternative assessment?	No	No	Yes. Will accept IELTS*** certificate with min score of 5	No	No

ATTACHMENT 4 – TAXI COMPLAINTS HOTLINE SUMMARY

Summary of Category 1 - Taxi Service Complaint (a service delivery complaint that has not previously been reported to the relevant taxi company)

Taxi hotline - Category 1 complaints

	Didn't know where they were going	Ignored directions	English speaking standards	Acted discriminately	Foreign taxi driver	Hygiene	Poor driving standards	Refused fare	Poor service delivery	Overcharging	Inappropriate charging EFTPOS or credit card	Waiting times	Lost property	Other	TOTAL
Mon 11 May	10				1	1	1		1	1			1	1	17
Tues 12 May	2	1			1		2		1					1	8
Wed 13 May									1	1					2
Thur 14 May								1	2					1	4
Fri 15 May							2			1					3
Mon 18 May	2				1		1		3	11				1	19
Tues 19 May	4						2		1	2	1			2	12
Wed 20 May										2					2
Thur 21 May										1				1	2
Fri 22 May	1						1	1		1					4
Mon 25 May					1					1					2
Tue 26 May	1		1												2
Wed 27 May															0
Thur 28 May					1	1								1	3
Fri 29 May									1					1	2
Mon 1 June	1														1
Tue 2 June	1						1							1	3
Wed 3 June					1		1								2
Thur 4 June							1								1
Fri 5 June														1	1
Tue 9 June	4	1									1			2	8
Wed 10 June					1					1					2
Thur 11 June	1				1		1								3
Fri 12 June										1					1
Mon 15 June														1	1
Tue 16 June	2														2
Wed 17 June															0
Thur 18 June					1										1
Fri 19 June					1					1				1	3
Mon 22 June														1	1
Tue 23 June					1									1	2
Wed 24 June														1	1
Thur 25 June								1						1	2
Fri 26 June															0
Mon 29 June															0
Tue 30 June															0
Wed 1 July															0
Thur 2 July														1	1

Taxi hotline - Category 1 complaints

	Didn't know where they were going	Ignored directions	English speaking standards	Acted discriminately	Foreign taxi driver	Hygiene	Poor driving standards	Refused fare	Poor service delivery	Overcharging	Inappropriate charging EFTPOS or credit card	Waiting times	Lost property	Other	TOTAL
Fri 3 July															0
Mon 6 July															0
Tue 7 July										1					1
Wed 8 July															0
Thur 9 July										1					1
Fri 10 July															0
Mon 13 July				1	1										2
Tue 14 July	1							1							2
Wed 15 July															0
Thurs 16 July															0
Fri 17 July															0
Mon 20 July								1							1
Tue 21 July															0
Wed 22 July															0
Thur 23 July										1					1
Fri 24 July															0
Totals	30	2	1	1	12	2	13	5	10	27	2	0	1	20	126

Summary of Category 2 – Unresolved Taxi Service Complaint (a service delivery complaint that has been reported to the relevant taxi company but remains unresolved)**Taxi hotline - Category 2 complaints**

	Didn't know where they were going	Ignored directions	English speaking standards	Acted discriminately	Foreign taxi driver	Hygiene	Poor driving standards	Refused fare	Poor service delivery	Overcharging	Inappropriate charging EFTPOS or credit card	Waiting times	Lost property	Other	TOTALS
Mon 11 May					1					1					2
Tues 12 May	1						1	1	1	1					5
Wed 13 May													1		1
Thur 14 May															0
Fri 15 May															0
Mon 18 May										1					1
Tues 19 May															0
Wed 20 May															0
Thur 21 May											1				1
Fri 22 May															0
Mon 25 May															0
Tue 26 May															0
Wed 27 May															0
Thur 28 May															0
Fri 29 May															0
Mon 1 June															0
Tue 2 June															0
Wed 3 June															0
Thur 4 June															0
Fri 5 June															0
Tue 9 June															0
Wed 10 June															0
Thur 11 June					1		1								2
Fri 12 June															0
Mon 15 June															0
Tue 16 June															0
Wed 17 June															0
Thur 18 June									1						1
Fri 19 June					1										1
Mon 22 June															0
Tue 23 June	1														1
Wed 24 June															0
Thur 25 June															0
Fri 26 June															0
Mon 29 June															0
Tue 30 June															0
Wed 1 July															0
Thur 2 July														1	1
Fri 3 July							1		1						2
Mon 6 July														1	1
Tue 7 July															0
Wed 8 July															0

Taxi hotline - Category 2 complaints

	Didn't know where they were going	Ignored directions	English speaking standards	Acted discriminately	Foreign taxi driver	Hygiene	Poor driving standards	Refused fare	Poor service delivery	Overcharging	Inappropriate charging EFTPOS or credit card	Waiting times	Lost property	Other	TOTALS
Thur 9 July					1				1						2
Fri 10 July															0
Mon 13 July															0
Tue 14 July															0
Wed 15 July														1	1
Thurs 16 July									1						1
Fri 17 July															0
Mon 20 July															0
Tue 21 July															0
Wed 22 July										1				1	2
Thur 23 July															0
Fri 24 July															0
Totals	2	0	0	0	4	0	3	1	5	4	1	0	1	4	25

Summary of Category 3 – Taxi Industry Complaint about Industry Standards (a complaint regarding practices within the industry or systemic issues)**Taxi hotline - Category 3 complaints**

	Driver licence standards	Driver Training standards	Driver fatigue	Driver practices of overseas visa holders	Eligibility of non-Australian residents	Vehicle standards	Driver working conditions	Leasing conditions	Taxi company practices	Taxi Council of Qld	Taxi ranks	Other	TOTALS
Mon 11 May	3	1		1				1	1			2	9
Tues 12 May	1	2		1					1				5
Wed 13 May													0
Thur 14 May				1									1
Fri 15 May													0
Mon 18 May	1	2		3					2			3	11
Tues 19 May												2	2
Wed 20 May													0
Thur 21 May												1	1
Fri 22 May		1											1
Mon 25 May											1		1
Tue 26 May													0
Wed 27 May													0
Thur 28 May													0
Fri 29 May													0
Mon 1 June													0
Tue 2 June													0
Wed 3 June													0
Thur 4 June													0
Fri 5 June													0
Tue 9 June												2	2
Wed 10 June													0
Thur 11 June													0
Fri 12 June													0
Mon 15 June													0
Tue 16 June													0
Wed 17 June				1									1
Thur 18 June													0
Fri 19 June													0
Mon 22 June													0
Tue 23 June													0

Taxi hotline - Category 3 complaints

	Driver licence standards	Driver Training standards	Driver fatigue	Driver practices of overseas visa holders	Eligibility of non-Australian residents	Vehicle standards	Driver working conditions	Leasing conditions	Taxi company practices	Taxi Council of Qld	Taxi ranks	Other	TOTALS
Wed 24 June													0
Thur 25 June												1	1
Fri 26 June									1				1
Mon 29 June													0
Tue 30 June													0
Wed 1 July													0
Thur 2 July													0
Fri 3 July													0
Mon 6 July	2												2
Tue 7 July													0
Wed 8 July													0
Thur 9 July												1	1
Fri 10 July													0
Mon 13 July													0
Tue 14 July													0
Wed 15 July												1	1
Thurs 16 July													0
Fri 17 July													0
Mon 20 July									1				1
Tue 21 July													0
Wed 22 July												1	1
Thur 23 July													0
Fri 24 July													0
Totals	7	6	0	7	0	0	0	1	6	0	1	15	43

Summary of Category 4 Complaints – Reported Breaches of Transport Legislation and other Illegal Practices.

Taxi hotline - Category 4 complaints

	Illegal acquisition of DA or driver licence	Dangerous driving (collision or near collision)	Unauthorised use of DA (PIN misuse)	Sexual harassment	Excessive driving hours	Fraudulent Taxi Subsidy Scheme	Non compliance with contract requirements by taxi company	Bullying and harassment	Assault	Theft	Other	TOTALS
Mon 11 May		3	1					2			1	7
Tues 12 May		1										1
Wed 13 May		1								1		2
Thur 14 May												0
Fri 15 May												0
Mon 18 May		2		1					2			5
Tues 19 May												0
Wed 20 May		1									1	2
Thur 21 May		1										1
Fri 22 May												0
Mon 25 May		1							1		1	3
Tue 26 May		1										1
Wed 27 May												0
Thur 28 May		1										1
Fri 29 May												0
Mon 1 June			1					1				2
Tue 2 June												0
Wed 3 June												0
Thur 4 June												0
Fri 5 June												0
Tue 9 June												0
Wed 10 June		1										1
Thur 11 June												0
Fri 12 June		1							1			2
Mon 15 June												0
Tue 16 June												0
Wed 17 June												0
Thur 18 June												0
Fri 19 June												0
Mon 22 June		1							1			2
Tue 23 June								1				1
Wed 24 June											1	1

Taxi hotline - Category 4 complaints

	Illegal acquisition of DA or driver licence	Dangerous driving (collision or near collision)	Unauthorised use of DA (PIN misuse)	Sexual harassment	Excessive driving hours	Fraudulent Taxi Subsidy Scheme	Non compliance with contract requirements by taxi company	Bullying and harassment	Assault	Theft	Other	TOTALS
Thur 25 June												0
Fri 26 June												0
Mon 29 June												0
Tue 30 June												0
Wed 1 July												0
Thur 2 July									1			1
Fri 3 July												0
Fri 10 July												0
Mon 13 July		1										1
Tue 14 July												0
Wed 15 July									1			1
Thurs 16 July				1							1	2
Fri 17 July											1	1
Mon 20 July											1	1
Tue 21 July		1										1
Wed 22 July												0
Thur 23 July										1		1
Fri 24 July												0
Totals	0	17	2	2	0	0	0	4	7	2	7	41