



GENERAL LICENSING COMMITTEE

PROCEDURE FOR ENSURING ROADWORTHINESS OF LICENSED VEHICLES WHICH HAVE BEEN SUBJECT TO MODIFICATION

Procedure Number:

Introduction

South Ribble Borough Council has a responsibility to ensure that all vehicles operating as hackney carriage and private hire vehicles are fit for purpose. This is particularly important for vehicles which have been adapted, converted or modified to carry passengers who use wheelchairs or who have specialised needs.

South Ribble is home to one of the largest number of vehicles which have been self-converted from vans to carry wheelchair passengers. Whilst the current roadworthiness checks ensure that a vehicle is mechanically sound, they do not extend to checking that the modifications have been carried out to the required standard.

Typically the types of vehicles adapted or modified are:

- small vans (N1 vehicles); and
- minibus type vehicles (M2 vehicles) – although these could be classified as a standard M1 vehicle.

Further details on the relevant classifications are given below:

- M1** vehicles designed and constructed for the carriage of passengers comprising no more than eight seats in addition to the driver's seat
- M2** vehicles designed and constructed for the carriage of passengers comprising more than eight seats in addition to the driver's seat, and having a maximum mass not exceeding 5 tonnes
- N1** Vehicles designed and constructed for the carriage of goods and having a maximum mass not exceeding 3.5 tonnes

This policy will apply to **all** vehicles that have been converted, modified or adapted from the original manufacturer's specification since first registration and is intended to provide additional safeguards to ensure that the conversion, modification or adaptation has been completed to the required standard and remains in such state for the period that the vehicle is licensed by this Authority.

This policy will not apply to any vehicle including wheelchair accessible vehicles that are produced for licensing that have not been converted, modified or adapted since its initial registration.

Standards for modified minibuses/PSV's

Vehicles which are described other than M1 on the V5 registration document must enable passengers seated behind the driver to have access to at least 2 doors (side or rear opening) without having to climb over or fold down any seats. Such vehicles must also satisfy the following:

- all retro-fitted seatbelts must meet MOT installation and condition standards;
- the passenger interior floor area must be of a flat, non-slip, non-trip surface. Where wheelchair tracking is fitted, the Council recommends the fitting of blanking strips;
- partitioned rear passenger compartments must be heated and capable of variable control. Such heaters must be linked accordingly to the main vehicle heating system and be capable of variable control. All exposed piping and wiring must be secure and adequately insulated. Water leaks are unacceptable;
- no interior surface within the passenger compartment shall contain sharp edges likely to cause injury;
- all interior trim must match and be fitted to a professional standard. Evidence of obvious work or modification should not be on view;
- all modified seats must be of a matching type. On the initial inspection, seats must not be fitted with removable seat covers;
- all vehicles must be fitted with safety glass containing an approved marking to this effect. Any partition fitted with safety glazing (plastic) must be of a suitable material (e.g. shatter-proof);
- rear compartments entrance/exit areas must be adequately illuminated at floor and at higher levels. Such lighting must operate automatically when each rear passenger door is opened;
- all passenger doors must be capable of being restrained in the open position;
- each rear passenger door aperture must contain at least one grab handle to assist passengers while entering/exiting the vehicle. Each handle must be securely fixed using a substantial mounting such as machine screws that are capable of holding a reasonable force;
- each rear passenger compartment must contain at least two opening windows that can be opened from the interior for ventilation purposes; and
- the maximum height from the road surface to the passenger floor should be no more than 420mm at any point. Vehicles exceeding this figure must have some form of step incorporated into the bodywork (this may be of a retracting or folding type).

Additional requirements for wheelchair accessible vehicles:

- where the vehicle is fitted with a tail lift, a "LOLER" certificate must be obtained prior to the vehicle inspection;
- the rear compartment entrance/exit doors must be of a suitable size to allow access for a wheelchair;
- the vehicle must contain an adequate floor turning area inside the rear passenger compartment to allow a wheelchair room to manoeuvre and face rearwards;
- the vehicle must be capable of adequately securing a wheelchair to the vehicle floor using a suitable type of clamp or restraint;
- appropriate wheelchair restraint(s) must accompany the vehicle when it is presented for test;
- wheelchair ramps must be capable of being securely fixed to the vehicle during use. They must be of a type and length allowing safe and easy use by the person loading the wheelchair;
- wheelchair ramps must be safely and securely stored in a suitable area of the vehicle when they are not in use; and

- seatbelts must be fitted to restrain wheelchair occupants. A single seatbelt must not be used to restrain both the wheelchair and occupant.

Vehicle Certification

Within Europe two systems of type approval have been in existence for over 20 years. The first is based on European Regulations and Directives providing approval for whole vehicles, vehicle systems and components. The second is based on United Nations Regulations dealing with systems and components but not whole vehicles. "Type approval" is the process of ensuring that production of new vehicles, their systems and components have been designed and constructed to meet agreed standards of safety, security and environmental protection.

There are a number of vehicle certifications:

1. European Community Whole Vehicle Type Approval (ECWVTA)
2. European Small Series Type Approval for cars (ECSSTA)
3. National Small Series Type Approval (NSSTA)
4. Individual Vehicle Approval (IVA)

Requirements for initial licence application

With effect from XX/XX/XXXX vehicles of categories M1, M2 or N1 which have been converted, adapted or modified from the original manufacturer's specification (whether undertaken by the vehicle licence holder or a third party), and which have not previously been licensed as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle by South Ribble Borough Council, will be required to present appropriate certification at the time of application for a licence. **Requirements for renewal applications**

This part of the policy will apply to all vehicles converted, adapted or modified after the date of first registration irrespective of the date the vehicle was first licensed as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle.

With effect from XX/XX/XXXX all converted, modified or adapted vehicles must pass the extended roadworthiness test as detailed in Appendix 1 at the time of their next subsequent renewal.

This procedure adopted by General Licensing Committee on XX.XX/XXXX

Signed:



Interim Licensing Manager

XX.XX/XXXX

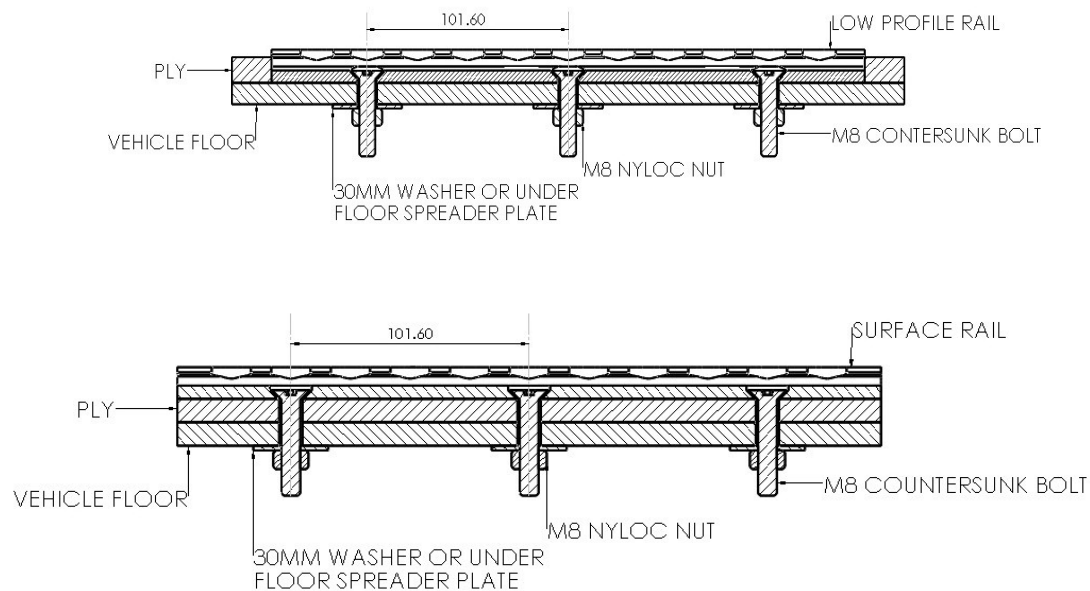
Appendix 1 – details to tests to be undertaken on modified vehicles

Lancashire County Council Test for vehicles supplied with wheelchair Accessible fittings

Tracking

1. Floor rails correctly fitted and secured with M8 fasteners, are capable of meeting the strength requirements of M1 load.

2. "Cant rail" for third point occupant restraint fitment or can be use as location for equipment stowage correctly fitted and secured with M8 fasteners, are capable of meeting the strength requirements of M1 load.
3. Correct 30mm washer or underfloor spreader plate fitted
 - Where the 30mm washer or underfloor spreader plate cannot be used, in such instances it is acceptable to use steel plate of equivalent strength and cross sectional area.



Note 1

1. The minimum acceptable length of rail that can safely be installed in a vehicle is 1300 mm. This will accommodate one wheelchair positioned centrally.
2. The rail must be fitted ensuring fasteners are fitted to the extreme end hole positions.

Note 2

1. For details of the space required within a vehicle for a wheelchair installation, reference should be made to the guidelines within the British or International standard ISO 10542-1 part 2, "Technical systems and aids for disabled or handicapped persons - Wheelchair Tiedown and Occupant Restraint Systems".

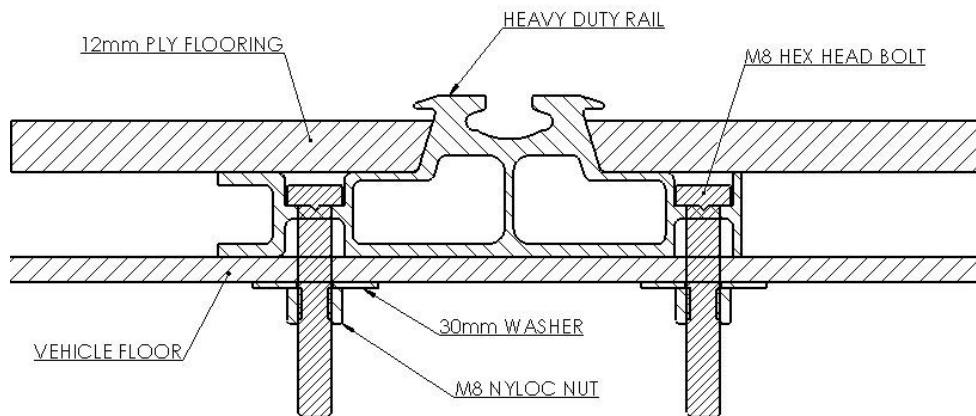
Note 3

1. Some vehicle layouts may have problems using Low Profile rail with pre-drilled countersunk holes due to under floor obstructions, such as box sections or angle brackets. In these situations where a hole is "missed", it is required to generate two new holes, one on either side of the original, with the maximum distance between them being 101 mm.
2. The original unused hole must finally be filled with a short self-tapping screw with a matching head.

Note 4

1. It is critical that the installed rail is flat along its length and correctly positioned relative to any other rail lengths fitted in the vehicle floor. Elements within a pattern of rails must also be parallel to one another. This is particularly important if fitting Unwin “Fixed Base Equipment” or manufacturing removable seats, to ensure they will fit universally along the rails.

Heavy Duty Rail



Available in 3.95 and 4.50 metre lengths, this rail profile can be installed with a maximum unsupported span of 600 mm under normal conditions. Additional fasteners must be fitted at the ends of the rail, in particular at the rear end.

Fasteners to be used on installation

Bolts:- M8 steel, hexagon headed grade 8.8, plated, guide length 40 - 50 mm.

Nuts:- M8 steel, nyloc, grade 8, plated.

Washers:- M8 steel, plain, plated.

Torque settings:- 20 nm (15 lbs/ft).

Under Floor Reinforcement on Heavy Duty Rail.

Contact manufacturer for specific recommendations.

Seats

Where the intention is seats are easily moved within or removed from the vehicle the following will apply;

1. If seatbelts are attached to the seat and the vehicle is to be sold within the EU, the vehicle builder will invariably require evidence that the assembly meets the appropriate Directives.

2. The removable seat fixture must have been successfully tested and VCA witnessed to M1 loads applied to a single seat up to 33kg with three fixing bolts. Evidence that seats are M1 compliant must be provided by the operator.
3. Removable seat fixtures should **ONLY** be fitted and used in accordance to the manufacturer's instructions.

Check specific to Wheelchair Tie down Restraints & Wheelchair Passenger Restraints

1. International standard ISO 10542-1, "Technical systems and aids for disabled or handicapped persons - Wheelchair Tie-down and Occupant Restraint Systems" must be complied with.
2. Evidence of equipment being International standard ISO 10542-1 compliant must be visible on equipment. This is usually via a label woven into the equipment. If the operator is unable to supply this evidence the equipment will be rejected.
N.B. The use of only a pelvic belt as an occupant restraint is unlikely to provide adequate safety to a wheelchair user in the event of a frontal impact.

Inspection List

Tracking/Wheelchair securing fittings (Floor) (Minimum wheelchair space of 1200mm long by 700mm wide with an internal saloon head room height of 1400mm available for each wheelchair to be carried)

- i. Check for ISO 10542-1 or equivalent
- ii. Check correct fittings are being used
- iii. Check spacing for securing bolts
- iv. Check correct washers are being used
- v. Minimum wheelchair space of 1200mm long by 700mm wide
- vi. Check maximum distance between securing cups or length of tracing.
(minimum 1200mm)
- vii. If tracking being used,
 - check rails are parallel.
 - Check minimum width between rails (minimum acceptable 300mm)
 - Check track for cleanliness and usability

Solo Anchorage Systems or similar (Minimum wheelchair space of 1200mm long by 700mm wide with an internal saloon head room height of 1400mm available for each wheelchair to be carried)

- i. Complies with ISO10542 standard requirements
- ii. Correct bolts and spreader washers used
- iii. Minimum wheelchair space of 1200mm long by 700mm wide

Wheelchair Tie-down Restraints & Wheelchair Passenger Restraints

- i. Check for ISO 10542-1 or equivalent markings
- ii. Check for maximum capacity markings on Wheelchair Tie-down Restraints
- iii. ISO 10542-1 or equivalent markings only present, assume maximum capacity 85kg
- iv. If ISO 10542-1 or equivalent markings present and additional maximum capacity shown on official labelling make note of capacity, e.g. 120kg.
- v. Check the retractors by pulling out the webbing to ensure they are locking properly
- vi. Ensure the webbing is not cut, frayed, damaged or contaminated by polishes, oils or chemicals
- vii. Check that metal parts are not worn, broken or cracked
- viii. Check connector parts to ensure they are not cracked, broken or missing
- ix. Check that mounting hardware, such as bolts, nuts, etc. are secure
- x. Check floor anchorages for proper securement and operation
- xi. Check lap and shoulder belt webbing is not cut, frayed or damaged
- xii. Check buckles/carabiners for damage

Seating

- i. M1 Compliant seating being used in vehicles of 8 passenger seats or less
- ii. Seat back secure
- iii. Seat cushion secure
- iv. Seat legs attached to the vehicle in such a way that the load path will be transferred back into the vehicle
- v. Seat belt stalks operating correctly
- vi. Compliant bolts and spreaders used
- vii.

Cant Rail (if used)

- i. Attached to a secure part of the bodywork
- ii. Correct bolts and spreaders used
- iii.