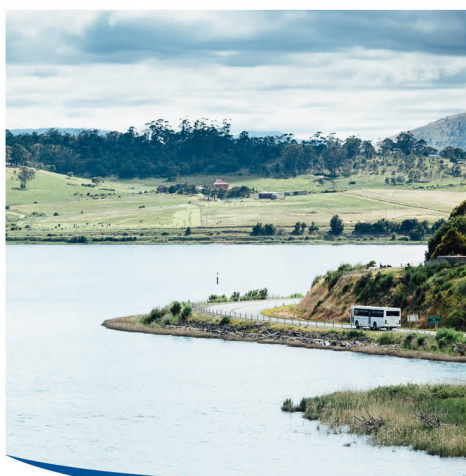
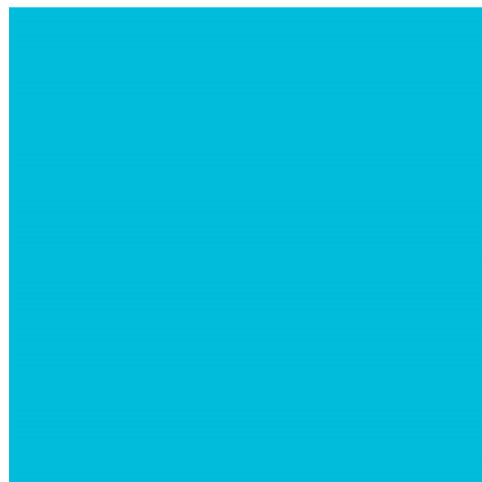


Operational guideline for creating
pick up and drop off points for bus
services

Passenger Service Contract Standard Conditions



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Authority

This guideline is issued under clause 3.5 of the Passenger Service Contract Standard Conditions, this is supported by clause 3.5(a) and 3.5(d).

Nothing in this guideline supersedes an operator's requirements under legislation or the Passenger Service Contract Standard Conditions, including the *Passenger Transport Services Regulations 2013*.

Under the *Passenger Transport Services Regulations 2013* there are requirements for not placing drivers or passengers at unreasonable risk (section 8), setting down of passengers (section 14) and there are also safety considerations under section 21. The regulations can be found at www.legislation.tas.gov.au.

Scope

This operational guideline applies to **school and general access** bus services.

Period

This guideline applies to the new contracts **commencing in or after 2020**, until further notice.

Purpose

The Department of State Growth is aware that, on occasion, bus operators are requested to add bus stops to their route, or to pick up or drop off passengers at locations other than at contracted bus stops.

The purpose of this Guideline is to provide bus operators with discretion about where they can stop to pick up and drop off passengers, other than formal stops when travelling in rural and regional areas.

Often in rural and regional areas, the distance between formal bus stops can be large and pick up and drop off points can change as students move in and out of the area and through the school system.

Once a service enters an urban area, services are required to only stop to pick up and drop off passengers at formal bus stops specified in their Approved Route and Approved Timetable. The operator must not also add a pick up or drop off passengers prior to the first bus stop or after the last bus stop on an Approved Route and Approved Timetable.

Passenger service contract requirements

Bus operators are required to deliver services in accordance with the Passenger Service Contract Standard Conditions, including the Approved Route and Approved Timetable. The Approved Timetable specifies bus stops where the service must stop to allow for passengers to get on and off the bus.

Under clause 3.5 (a) there may be restrictions as to the locations of bus stops where a service is to stop to allow passengers to be picked up or dropped off. The bus operator must comply with any such restriction unless a passenger cannot be picked up or dropped off at a stop because of an emergency, for safety reasons or on other reasonable grounds.

Types of bus stop

There are two types of bus stops where a bus can stop to pick up or drop off passengers. They are:

- Formal, also known as contracted stops.
- Informal, also known as pick up and drop off points.

These are detailed below.

Formal bus stops

Formal bus stops are listed in the Approved Timetable and Approved Route.

State Growth determines the location of formal bus stops, in conjunction with operators and local Councils. State Growth must approve of any new formal bus stops, or any changes to existing formal bus stops before a bus operator can use them. This includes changes initiated by the relevant road owner including local Councils, State Growth itself or by the operator.

It should be noted that the location of existing bus stops is largely based on historical circumstances, where a particular location has always been used as a bus stop and it has been formalised over time.

As long as it is safe, an operator must always stop to pick up and drop off passengers at a formal bus stop listed in their contract when hailed by a passenger, or when asked.

Formal bus stops can include:

- **Interchanges** such as Hobart CBD, Rosny and Glenorchy interchanges, St John Street in Launceston, Rooke Street in Devonport and Cattley Street in Burnie. Interchanges can also

include locations where the transfer of students takes place such as Glenara Lakes in Launceston and Squibbs Apple Shed in Spreyton.

- **Major bus stops** where there are high volumes of passengers. These stops are often located in urban areas or near major attractors, like schools and shopping centres. Major bus stops will usually be listed on an operator's public timetable which lists key stops from the Approved Timetable, but will not show the full set of stops. Major bus stops will usually be signposted, and will often have supporting bus stop infrastructure, such as seating or bus shelters or if it is a general access bus stop, a road-side timetable.
- **Minor bus stops** where there is lower passenger demand. These stops are usually located between urban areas or in suburban areas with low population density. Minor bus stops may not always be displayed on an operator's public timetable. Often minor general access bus stops are signposted, but minor school bus stops are generally not.

Formal general access bus stops

Under Australian Government legislation all new formal general bus stops must be *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA) compliant. All existing general access bus stops are required to be DDA compliant by 31 December 2022. The standards applying to this are outlined in the *Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002*.

As part of the Bus Service Review project, general access bus stops were reviewed and all formal stops have been included in the relevant contract timetable and route report. State Growth generally only considers requests for new formal general access bus stops based on:

- Route changes.
- Ability to achieve DDA upgrades and safety.
- Passenger demand.

Formal school bus stops

For school bus services, State Growth assesses formal bus stop requests against the [School Bus Service Eligibility Guidelines](#) which are available at www.transport.tas.gov.au. This is to ensure a consistent approach in responding, transparency of decisions, and equity in the use of the resources available for the provision of school bus services.

Bus stops which are used only by school services are not required to be DDA compliant.

Informal pick up and drop off points for both general access and school bus services

In certain circumstances, a school or general access bus operator may agree to pick up or drop off passengers at locations other than formal bus stops in rural and regional areas. These locations are known as informal pick up and drop off points.

An informal pick up or drop off point is not a formal bus stop and is not listed as a bus stop in the relevant contract timetable and route map. It is a location identified by the bus operator as being a suitable place for a bus to stop to pick up or drop off passengers.

Informal bus stops are usually created because a passenger has asked to be dropped off or picked up at that location. The operator has the discretion where to set informal pick up and drop off points in line with the requirements below and may choose to deny a request for any reason.

Informal pick up and drop off points are not signposted and do not generally have supporting bus stop infrastructure. State Growth does not set informal bus stops and there is no requirement for the bus operator to tell State Growth before they decide to stop at an informal pick up or drop off point. However, it is up to the bus operator to make an assessment of the suitability of the location and comply with the requirements set out below.

Assessing the suitability of an informal bus stop

It is up to each bus operator to assess whether they will agree to pick up or drop off passengers at a requested pick up or drop off point. The operator must take into account the following before they agree to stop at an informal pick up or drop off point:

- **Contractual and service delivery considerations** - the act of stopping at informal stops must not affect an operator's ability to meet the Approved Timetable or alter the Approved Route.
- **Safety considerations** - an operator should not pick up or drop off passengers at any location they consider unsafe or unsuitable.

Contractual/service delivery considerations

The operator must consider the following before agreeing to stop at informal pick up and drop off points:

- **Impact on on-time running** - the total number of pick up and drop off points must be managed by the operator so that the Approved Timetable for the service is not affected.
- **No extensions or diversions to the Approved Route** - the operator must not add a pick up or drop off point prior to the first bus stop (start point) or after the last bus stop (end point) on an Approved Route and Approved Timetable. An informal pick up or drop off point may not be considered if it means that bus is required to divert off the Approved Route or travel a less efficient route.
- **Limitations within urban areas** - the operator may not pick up and drop off passengers within any urban or town boundary unless it is at a formal bus stop on their Approved Route and Approved Timetable. Urban and town boundaries are usually denoted by a change in the speed limit to 50 or 60 kilometres an hour.
- **Spacing of bus stops** - a pick up and drop off point should ideally be located at least 400 metres from the nearest formal bus stop, or other pick up and drop off point.
- **Encouraging active travel to school** - the operator may not pick up and drop off passengers within 1.5km of any contracted school or school listed on their Approved Route and Approved Timetable unless it is at a formal bus stop already on their Approved Route and Approved Timetable.

Safety Considerations

The operator must be confident that the pick up and drop off location is safe for the purpose for which it is to be used. If uncertain, the operator may seek advice from the relevant road authority or decline to use that location as a pick up and drop off point.

The operator should use the following safety considerations as a guide:

- **Sight lines** for both the bus driver and other road users on the road:
 - **Higher speed limits** require longer sight lines.
 - **Curves and crests and roadside vegetation** affect sight lines.
 - **Proximity to intersections** can affect sightlines.
- **Road width** and provision of road shoulders can affect how far the bus can pull off the road and also affect sightlines. For roads which carry high traffic volumes and freight and have higher speed limits it is desirable for the bus to fully pull off the road.
- The **availability of passenger waiting areas** to ensure that passengers can wait in an area well clear of traffic, particularly if there are more than five passengers waiting at a stop at one time.

- **Sufficient space for car parking**, either near the stop or close by if there is a likelihood of passengers being dropped off or picked up by cars.
- **Pedestrian safety** the ability of passengers to safely get to the bus stop and cross the road if they are required to do so.
- **Location of obstacles** such as power poles, signage or trees which may affect the ability of a bus to safely pull in or out of a bus stop.
- **Potential weather conditions** such as rain, fog and ice which can affect the safety and visibility at a stop.
- **Location of nearest bus stop**, the proximity and relative safety of the nearest available bus stop or pick up and drop off point.

Communication regarding informal bus stops

The operator is responsible for communicating to passengers the location of an informal bus stop. As the informal bus stops are not on the Approved Timetable and Approved Route they will not appear on Google transit data or public timetables.

If a passenger has requested a new pick up or drop off point and the operator decides that the stop is not suitable or safe, it is the operator's responsibility to explain to the passenger that they have decided not to stop at the requested location and give the reasons why the pick up or drop off point is not considered suitable.

Responding to complaints about the location of informal bus stops

Operators are responsible for responding to any public complaints about informal bus stops.

If an operator receives a complaint from a member of the public about the location of an informal stop, they must explain that the stop is not a formal bus stop and that they have decided to stop there independently of the Approved Route and Approved Timetable contracted by State Growth. The operator may take public complaints into consideration when deciding whether to continue stopping at an informal bus stop.



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