

Passenger Service Contract Standard Conditions

Operational guidelines for general access
interchanges for long distance and
regional services



Operational guideline for general access bus operators and drivers – interchanges for long distance and regional services

Authority

This guideline is issued under clause 3.5 of the Passenger Service Contract Standard Conditions.

Nothing in this guideline supersedes an operator's requirements under legislation or the Passenger Service Contract Standard Conditions. Safe working practices should always be the priority.

Scope

This operational guideline applies to **general access** bus services only. The guideline is aimed at long distance and regional services.

Notwithstanding this guideline, operators and drivers must comply with any **specific restrictions** listed on the Approved Timetable for the service.

Operators and drivers need to ensure that all workplace health and safety requirements are met, including *Heavy Vehicle National Law* and regulations and the *Passenger Vehicle Transportation Award 2010*.

Period

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

Objective

Where an **interchange between services** is nominated in an Approved Timetable under the Passenger Service Contract, this should be as smooth and seamless as possible.

Wait times for interchanges

If your Approved Timetable indicates an interchange with another service, **and that service is running late**, you need to comply with the maximum wait time. The default maximum wait time is **15 minutes** - unless a different wait time is specified in your Approved Timetable.

You must wait for the connecting service at the designated interchange point (bus stop) listed in the Approved Timetable.

Communications with passengers

The operator of the service must ensure when they are communicating to passengers either through the production of written materials, including marketing or verbally that the interchange between services is **not** guaranteed.

Communications for interchanges between operators

Where the Approved Timetable provides for an interchange, operators must have an **agreed method to communicate with the operator of the connecting service**. This allows operators to quickly share information about late running with the other operator and driver.

Clause 3.5 of the Passenger Service Contract Standard Conditions requires that the Approved Vehicle must have **appropriate communication equipment**. Examples include a mobile phone, or short-wave radio, or where available - access to real time tracking.

When an interchanging service is running late

If the driver or operator reasonably expects that their service is going to be later than the maximum waiting time, they must communicate this with the operator of the interchanging services as early as possible. **Early communication** allows the operator of a connecting service to make an early decision to 'not wait' - and then for this decision to be communicated to passengers so that they can have time to make alternative travel arrangements.

Early communication is a minimum of **half an hour** before a service is timetabled to arrive, unless:

- there is no mobile phone coverage;
- there is an outage of the mobile phone network;
- a driver would be in breach of the operator's policies for using mobile phones or other communications equipment.

Operators must have plans in place for two situations where an interchanging service is running late:

Interchange passengers are on bus A, which is running late for its connection with bus B.

- If bus B has already left or is planning to leave after the maximum wait time, the driver of bus A must advise interchanging passengers **if there is a later connecting bus service** and if so, **how long** they will need to wait for it.
- Alternative travel options: If there isn't another connecting bus service that day, the driver of bus A should advise interchanging passengers if there is **another nearby on-demand option**, such as a taxi or ride-sourcing service, and if so, how to contact it.
- Operators can also discuss with the Department of State Growth in the development of their plans:
 - options for bus A to run through to the final timetabled destination, if possible;

- an alternative interchange location with the connecting service that could be used;
- provision of tokens to pay for the passenger to get to the timetabled destination through on demand options such as taxi or ride-sourcing services, especially where there would be no other viable option for public transport travel.

Interchange passengers are on bus A, which is on time. However bus B is running late for its connection with bus A.

- Waiting at the interchange point under these conditions can be stressful for passengers, especially if they don't know when the connecting bus will arrive.
- The driver of bus A must advise interchanging passengers that **bus B is delayed**, and its estimated **time of arrival**.
- Alternative travel options: If passengers do not want to wait, the driver of bus A should advise interchanging passengers if there is **another public transport option or nearby on-demand option**, such as taxi or ride-sourcing service, and if so, how to contact it.

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