



WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE TAXIS

Wheelchair accessible taxis (WATs) are vehicles specifically designed for, or modified to transport, persons confined to a wheelchair.

When evaluating an application for a WAT licence, NSW Transport and Infrastructure (NSWTI) takes into account the issues outlined in this document. One of the most important is whether you can clearly demonstrate how you will operate your WAT in a way that gives preference to transporting people confined to a wheelchair.

If your application is successful, you will be issued with a WAT licence for a period of up to 12 months. You will need to reapply every 12 months for the licence and the amount of wheelchair taxi jobs that you undertake is considered in determining whether a licence should be reissued.

Putting a WAT on the road involves a significant commitment and the following information is provided to assist you with the application process and to inform you of your responsibilities. Applicants should note that both NSWTI and the Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) have responsibilities in relation to the approval and operation under each section of this document, the role of each agency is detailed.

SECTION A

APPLYING FOR A WAT LICENCE

- 1 Complete the Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Licence Application Form which is available from NSWTI's web site, www.transport.nsw.gov.au or you can get a copy by contacting NSWTI. See the final page for contact details.
- 2 You will need to provide details of:
 - a) the vehicle you propose to use as a WAT,
 - b) details of at least two WAT qualified drivers who will be driving the vehicle,
 - c) your proposed budget and/or business plan.

- 3 If applying for a WAT licence in Sydney, you must meet with Zero200, the wheelchair accessible taxi booking service, to discuss service level requirements and WAT driver radio hiring procedures. You will also be given a copy of the Zero200 handbook.

Zero200 will provide a letter to NSWTI, confirming that you have attended the meeting and that you have been made aware of the Zero200 requirements and procedures. Please call Zero200 on 9020 2222 to make an appointment.

- 4 Submit the application form with payment for the \$1,000 fee for licences in Sydney, Wollongong and Newcastle. No fee is payable in other parts of NSW.
- 5 If your application meets all the requirements, NSWTI will issue you with an in-principle approval of your application.

SECTION B

WAT CONVERSION

Only when you receive in-principle approval of your application you should then organise the vehicle you wish to use as a WAT.

You need to:

- a) decide what vehicle you want to use as a WAT, which must not be more than 10 years old,
- b) arrange to have the vehicle converted, if this has not already been done,
- c) have the vehicle inspected by an RTA engineering signatory, who will issue an engineering certificate which indicates that the vehicle complies with the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport. Note that the vehicle needs to be separately registered by the RTA.

Important Note: The engineering certificate must certify that the vehicle has been checked against, and complies with, the latest version of NSW Transport and Infrastructure's Wheelchair Accessible Taxi Measurement Protocol and the Commonwealth Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport (DSAPT).

- 2 If you are putting on a vehicle that has already been converted, it must have a vehicle engineering certificate no more than three months old. If your compliance certificate is more than three months old, you will need to get a new one from an RTA engineering signatory.
- 3 A list of RTA engineering signatories is available from the RTA website. Go to www.rta.nsw.gov.au and type 'Engineering Signatories' in the search box, at the top right hand corner of the page.
- 4 Take the vehicle compliance certificate to NSWTI which will issue you with a WAT licence and give you a letter for the RTA. This will enable you to register the vehicle as a WAT.

- 5 If you intend to operate in Sydney, you will need to join an authorised taxi network plus arrange for connection to the Zero200 Wheelchair Accessible Booking Service. Outside of Sydney you only have to join an authorised taxi network, if there is one operating in the area of your licence.

SECTION C

HOW DO I REGISTER MY VEHICLE?

- 1
- a) Take the vehicle to an Authorised Taxi Inspection Station (ATIS) for inspection. If it meets the required standards you will be issued with a blue slip (road worthy) and a magenta slip (comfort standards). To locate your nearest ATIS contact the NSW Taxi Council on (02) 9332 1266.
 - b) Then go to the RTA, who will require the following documents, before they register your vehicle as a WAT:
 - i. an engineering certificate, issued by an RTA engineering signatory
 - ii. a letter from NSWTI
 - iii. a blue slip and magenta slip, issued by the ATIS.

If all documentation is in order, the RTA will issue you with your taxi plates, which must be affixed to the vehicle, before it can commence operating as a WAT.

SECTION D

CHECK LIST SUMMARY

- Complete the WAT licence application form, available from NSWTI
- Meet with the Zero200 network (if operating in Sydney)
- Submit the WAT licence application form, the appropriate licence fee (\$1,000 in Sydney, Wollongong and Newcastle, nil fee elsewhere) and written confirmation of the meeting with the Zero200 network (if operating in Sydney) to NSWTI for approval
- When your “in-principle” application is approved, you may purchase your vehicle
- Convert your vehicle to a WAT (if not already converted)
- Obtain a vehicle compliance certificate signed by an RTA engineering signatory
- Submit all documents to NSWTI to obtain a WAT licence from NSWTI
- NSWTI will issue you with a WAT licence and a letter to the RTA for registration
- Get your radio installed and connected to the taxi network you wish to join (and to the Zero200 network, if operating the WAT in the Sydney Metropolitan area)
- Obtain a blue slip and taxi inspection certificate (magenta slip) from an ATIS

Go to the RTA and provide them with your:

- letter from NSWTI,
 - engineering certificate,
 - blue slip; and
 - taxi inspection certificate (magenta slip),
- to get your WAT registration and licence plates.

You can now operate your WAT for the duration of the licence.+-

SECTION E

WHAT MUST I DO WHEN OPERATING A WAT?

- NSWTI monitors the performance of all WATs operating in New South Wales
- If you are an operator or driver of a WAT and you fail to give preference to wheelchair jobs or fail to comply with the licence conditions or requirements of the *Passenger Transport Regulation, 2007*, NSWTI will take action to either cancel, suspend, vary or show cause your WAT licence, and may take action against you
- Your licence is issued for up to a 12 months and you will need to apply at the end of this period if you want to continue operating
- Your application will be assessed against the number of wheelchair jobs your taxi has done during the life of the previous licence
- NSWTI will not compensate you should your licence be cancelled or suspended.

SECTION F

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE TAXI LICENCE CONDITIONS

A WAT licence is subject to conditions prescribed by the Regulation and additional conditions imposed by the Director-General from time to time. The *Passenger Transport Act 1990* allows for penalties of up to \$110,000 to be imposed where a breach of a licence condition has been identified.

SECTION G**CONTACT DETAILS**

If you have any questions on NSWTI licensing issues, please contact the NSW Transport and Infrastructure.

NSW TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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INTERNET: www.transport.nsw.gov.au

For questions regarding vehicle registration, please contact the RTA.