



MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT

Information Alert

23/04/2009

Dear Operator

Emergency Procedures & Reporting

ISSUE:

The recent floods in NSW highlighted an issue whereby a bus driver was unaware of the action to be taken in the case of a flood emergency. This failure caused the passengers to be unnecessarily placed at risk and resulted in the operator receiving a considerable number of complaints. In addition, the operator failed to advise the Ministry of Transport of the incident pursuant to Clause 88 of the Passenger Transport Regulation 2007.

NOTICE:

It is a Condition of Accreditation that operators develop and implement a Safety Management System (SMS), which complies with the Guidelines issued by the Ministry of Transport. In January 2007, the Ministry of Transport issued a handbook titled *Safety Management System (SMS) – A guide for bus and coach operators*.

An SMS is an integrated set of work practices and procedures for monitoring and improving the safety of your bus operation.

Central to the development and implementation of an SMS is a requirement that:

1. operators identify and document the risks and associated treatments associated with their bus operation in accordance with Element 3 of the SMS guide; and
2. operators develop procedures which outline how critical incidents or emergencies will be managed in their operation and ensure all staff and management are trained so that they understand these procedures. Element 7 of the SMS guide refers.

In addition to the SMS requirements, Clause 88 of the Passenger Transport Regulation 2007, requires that an operator of a bus service who becomes aware that a bus has been involved in a serious incident must notify the Director General, if the incident has:

1. resulted in a person being injured, or
2. prevented the bus from continuing its journey, or,
3. is, in the reasonable opinion of the operator of the service, otherwise likely to arouse serious public concern.

In the case of the flood related incident, the operator should have been of a view that the incident would have aroused serious public concern.

REQUIRED ACTION:

Bus operators are to:

1. review their SMS to ensure that the risks identified at Element 3 are relevant, the risk treatments are appropriate and if appropriate, new risks have been included in their risk matrix;
2. ensure that staff are aware of the operators identified risks and risk treatment strategies;
3. ensure that procedures which outline how critical incidents or emergencies will be managed are in place and all staff and management are trained so that they understand these procedures; and
4. comply with Clause 88 of the Passenger Transport Regulation 2007, with regard to reporting notifiable incidents; including those which in the reasonable opinion of the operator of the service, are likely to arouse serious public concern.



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