

Ports Direct Limited

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Code of Safety Practice

for

Passenger Transportation Service Providers

Contents

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Purpose of the Code of Safety Practice
- 1.2. About the Code
- 1.3. Auditing
- 1.4. Vehicle Inspections
- 1.5. Passenger Transport Industry – Code of Conduct
- 1.6. Sub-Contracting/Hired-in Vehicles
- 1.7. Vehicle Definitions

2. Code of Safety Practice

- 2.1. Operator Licensing
- 2.2. Vehicle Fleet Specification
- 2.3. Vehicle Roadworthiness
- 2.4. Drivers
- 2.5. Drivers Hours
- 2.6. Passenger Management
- 2.7. Emergencies/Telecommunications

3. Drivers Manual

4. Declaration of Undertaking

Appendix

- A.1 Drivers Daily Defect Report Form**
- A.2 Safety Inspection Test Chart**
- A.3 Use of Phones in Vehicles (DETR leaflet)**
- A.4 Eyesight Testing Requirements**
- A.5 First Aid Kit – List of Contents**
- A.6 Special Needs Minibuses**
- A.7 Guidance for Drivers of School Buses**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Purpose of the Code of Practice

In recognition of both legal and moral obligations to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its customers whilst being transported by road within the United Kingdom, Ports Direct Ltd (hereinafter referred to as the 'Company'), has developed this Code of Safety Practice (hereinafter referred to as the 'Code') for the guidance of contracted transportation service providers (hereinafter referred to as the 'Operator').

The Operator contracted by the Company to provide coach, bus or minibus, passenger transportation services, will be expected to comply with the spirit of this Code and the specific requirements contained herein.

1.2. About the Code

The safety standards addressed in this Code relate to operator licensing, vehicle specification and roadworthiness, the selection training and supervision of drivers, passenger management and emergency procedures. The manner in which the safety standards are expressed, will indicate the importance of cooperation by the Operator.

Full compliance with the mandatory aspects of this Code (which in the main relate to regulatory compliance issues and are shown throughout in *italic print*) is a fundamental requirement of the contract for service provision between the Company and the Operator. Compliance with other 'best practice' or 'preferred' safety standards will demonstrate a strong commitment to passenger safety.

All Operators are expected to manage their transportation services not only in strict compliance with all applicable UK safety/transportation related legislation, but also to comply with the safety performance standards outlined in this Code, which in many respects, will exceed statutory duties and responsibilities.

1.3. Auditing

Before entering into any contract for the provision of transportation services, the Company reserves the right to conduct an audit of the Operator's transportation safety

management systems in order to make an assessment of the Operator's ability to meet the required safety performance standards in accordance with the Code.

Throughout the duration of the contract, periodic audits may be conducted to ascertain that the required safety standards are being maintained. Failure to cooperate with these audit exercises and/or inability to demonstrate a suitable and sufficient degree of compliance with the Code may be considered a breach of the contract and may force the company to suspend you from the companies approved operators list with immediate effect.

1.4. Vehicle Inspections

The Company also reserves the right to conduct vehicle inspections on a random basis and will expect full cooperation from the Operator.

These inspections will normally be arranged to take place whilst the Operator's vehicles are out of service, at a depot or parked at a passenger embarkation point waiting for arrivals. No disruption to vehicle schedules is anticipated and inconvenience to passengers should be minimal.

1.5. Passenger Transport Industry – Code of Conduct

It is highly desirable for the Operator to be a member of a national passenger transport association, (displaying appropriate evidence of membership on vehicles) as the mark of a quality organisation committed to developing and maintaining high safety standards.

Irrespective of any such membership, Operators should nonetheless strive to comply in principle with a basic ethical code of conduct, in particular:

- The employment of appropriately trained and licensed staff of a calibre adequate to satisfy customer needs
- To train, supervise and manage drivers, requiring them to:
 1. be dressed smartly and behave in a friendly and courteous manner,
 2. obey all legal speed and safety requirements on the road and be considerate to other road users,
 3. inform the Operator of any breaches of operating laws and regulations and of any accidents,
 4. observe all driving hours and rest period regulations or other working time instructions given to them.
- Abide by all published safety guidelines and codes of Practice, including the Highway Code

- To conduct the business with professionalism, integrity and courtesy: ensuring that the safety, comfort and convenience of customers is of paramount importance
- To handle all customer enquiries, complaints and concerns in a polite and timely manner
- Ensure that all representations and promotions of the business are genuine and not deceptive or misleading
- Evidence that the Operators passenger transport business, including maintenance workshops (where appropriate), meet the Quality Standards recognised by the award of current BS5750/ISO9002 Certification will further demonstrate the Operators commitment to high standards.

1.6. Sub-Contracting/Hired-in Vehicles

1.6.1.

The Operator may only sub-contract services for the transportation of Ports Direct customers with the express permission of the Company and will be responsible for ensuring that other transportation service providers used in this capacity: -

- are properly licensed, holding a valid PSV Operators licence and complying with all statutory requirements
- meet the minimum safety standards specified within this Code in terms of vehicle specification/roadworthiness and driver competence
- are able to satisfy the standard insurance cover requirements demanded by the Company
- have a satisfactory accident record (details of which may be requested by the Company)

1.6.2.

Any vehicle temporarily hired in must: -

- meet the minimum specification requirements detailed in Section 2.2.
- whenever possible be subjected to a safety inspection by the Operator as defined in Section 2.3.3. *prior* to use
- be treated no differently to vehicles permanently on the Operator's fleet for maintenance, safety inspections, daily safety checks and record keeping purposes

1.7. Definitions

Vehicle definitions used in this Code:

Minibus (small)	-	Up to 8 passenger seats
Minibus	-	9 up to 16 passenger seats
Bus	-	17 or more passenger seats
Articulated Bus	-	A bus that can be divided into two vehicles (using workshop facilities), one being a motor vehicle, and in which passengers can move from one part to another.
Coach	-	A bus with a GVW over 7.5 tonnes and a maximum speed exceeding 60mph
Trailer	-	A vehicle drawn by a minibus, bus or coach (but excluding any part of an articulated bus)
Light Trailer	-	A trailer with a maximum gross weight not over 3.5 tonnes

NB All the above vehicle definitions (other than trailers) used in this Code are required to be classified as Public Service Vehicles, being used for the carriage of passengers for hire and reward. Vehicles designed specifically to operate on local services, permit operations or to take advantage of exemptions from PSV licensing are **not acceptable** for use on services provided to Ports Direct.

2. Code of Safety Practice

2.1. Operators Licence

2.1.1. Validity

The Operator must hold a current valid PSV Operator's Licence (National or International) issued by the appropriate Traffic Commissioner as required by law for the purposes of conducting business as a coach operator (carrying passengers for hire or reward) and be operating in accordance with the terms and conditions specified therein.

The use of vehicles under a Section 19, 22 or minibus permit is not acceptable for hire and reward services, including the provision of school transport.

Form PSV 421 contains a declaration which must be signed by the Operator that he/she will comply throughout the duration of the licence with the regulations concerning:

- (a) drivers' hours and records*
- (b) vehicle carrying capacity*
- (c) vehicle inspection, maintenance and servicing, driver reporting of defects, and record keeping*
- (d) maintenance of suitable financial resources for the safe operating and maintaining of vehicles*
- (e) reporting of relevant convictions of the licence holder, his transport manager and employees or agents*

The company will require written confirmation that the above licensing conditions (a-e) are being complied with, and the name(s) and contact details of CPC holder(s).

2.1.2. Competent Persons

At each depot or operating location there must be at least one of the Operator's Management Team holding a Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) in national or international passenger transport for Operator Licensing purposes. One of these CPC holders is to be the nominated person who will have ultimate responsibility for complying with this Code and liaising with the Company in all matters relating thereto.

2.1.3. Notification

The Operator must notify the Company immediately, in writing, of any:

- *action by the Traffic Commissioners which results in revocation or suspension of the Operator's Licence*

- *change of relative operating circumstances which may impair or detract from passenger safety standards*
- *use restrictions imposed by the Traffic Commissioners*

2.2. Vehicle Fleet Specification

2.2.1. Suitability for Use

All vehicles must be suitable for their intended use and must have been issued with a Certificate of Initial Fitness/Type Approval as well as a valid annual Test Certificate.

2.2.2. Age

*Vehicles used on behalf of the Company for coach, bus and minibus hire should generally be no more than **10** years old. Older vehicles may be used at the discretion of the Company where their specification and condition justifies continued use. Buses used for the provision of schools transport should generally be no more than 15 years old.*

2.2.3. Seats

2.2.3.1. Seat Belts

All seats on vehicles used for the transportation of the Company's customers should be permanently fitted with approved 2 or 3-point seat belts as shown in the following table:*

Vehicle Type	Drivers Seat	Front Passenger Seat	Exposed or Risk Passenger Seat	All Other Forward Facing Passenger Seats
Minibus (Small)	3 Point Belt	3 Point Belt	3 Point Belt	3 Point Belt
Minibus	3 Point Belt	3 Point Belt	3 Point Belt	3 Point Belt
Bus	3 Point Belt	2 Point Belt	2 Point Belt	2 Point Belt
Articulated Bus	3 Point Belt	2 Point Belt	2 Point Belt	2 Point Belt
Coach	3 Point Belt	2 Point Belt	2 Point Belt	2 Point Belt

Seat belts should be of an approved type and fitted in accordance with ECE Regulations.

Ideally, all seat belts should be of the retractable (inertia) design, and of the 3-point fixing (lap and diagonal) type in preference to 2-point fixing (lap only).

A sign requesting passengers to wear the seat belts provided must be prominently displayed.

Children up to 13 years old must be advised not to travel in risk seats⁺ and should wear the seat belts provided. Driver to advise the guardians of any risk factors.

When children under 3 years of age are carried, approved child restraints should be provided and used.

Children of 14 years and over may travel in risk seats so long as they wear the seat belts provided. Driver to inform the hirer It is their responsibility to enforce the wearing of seat belts.

Vehicles used for the transportation of adults with special educational needs are to be fitted with approved harness restraints for all those requiring them.

Vehicles used for the transportation of children with Special Educational Needs are required to be fitted with approved harness restraints on all passenger seats.

+A risk seat is defined as one with no high-backed seat immediately in front of it i.e. front seats (including the Guide/Rep seat), seats located immediately behind the emergency exit stairwell/toilet and the central rear aisle seat.

2.2.3.2. Head Restraints

Unless of the high-back design, seats should be fitted with head restraints.

2.2.4. Emergency Exit Doors/Windows

Single deck vehicles with 16 or more passenger seats must have at least one emergency exit:

- (a) either in the rear or front face of the vehicle, or in the roof of the vehicle*
- (b) with a minimum area of 4000cm² and not less than 70cm x 50cm in dimension*
- (c) able to be opened either from the inside or outside*

All emergency exits must be clearly marked (with pictograms and words) both inside and outside, be unlocked whilst passengers are aboard, and readily accessible. Emergency exits in single deck vehicles or on the lower deck of double deck vehicles must be situated so that passengers can step directly from the gangway to the outside.

Emergency exits on the top deck of double deck vehicles must not be smaller than 152cm x 45.5cm. If the top deck is reached by an enclosed staircase and has a permanent top, there must be an emergency exit, which may not be on the nearside.

Double deck vehicles should be fitted with a means of escape in both rear and front halves of the upper deck. In the absence of a second staircase, hammers or similar devices must be provided with which to break any side window in an emergency.

The means of operating emergency exit doors (which must not be power operated) must be clearly indicated and readily accessible externally to persons of average height.

Emergency exit doors must be fitted with 'Door Open' alarms, with visual or audible signalling in the drivers' compartment.

Vehicles of less than 16 passenger seats not having emergency exit doors must have some designated second means of escape, which may be a roof light, or a window/windows (on the opposite side of the vehicle to the main door). If the only designated second means of escape is via a window, a minimum of 2 window hammers (clearly visible and readily accessible) must be provided, and the windows so designated must be of toughened glass (not laminated glass or perspex) or other material, which will shatter under impact.

Where emergency exits are of the 'break glass' type, sufficient window hammers (clearly visible and readily accessible) must be provided. Windows designated as emergency exits must be clearly signed (pictogram and words) and must be of toughened glass (not laminated glass or Perspex) or other material, which will shatter under impact.

All emergency exits must open or be ejectable outwards.

All doors must be fitted with a means of operating them externally in an emergency.

2.2.5. Fire Extinguishing Appliances

At least one carbon dioxide extinguisher of a minimum capacity of 2.5kg (or equivalent water or dry powder) is to be fitted on all vehicles (minimum of two on vehicles of 30 seats or more or at least the minimum requirement as per current legislation). Extinguishers are to be sited in easily accessible positions, adequately secured and regularly serviced under contract (validated by a maintenance sticker).

2.2.6. First Aid

Each vehicle is to carry a First Aid Box suitably stocked with dressings - no items of medication are allowed.

(Refer to appendix A.5 for guidance on the suggested contents of a first aid box)

2.2.7. Reverse Alarms

Audible reverse alarms, activated automatically when reverse gear is engaged, are recommended to be fitted to all coaches and buses.

Video cameras giving drivers a view of the area behind the coach when reversing and activated only when in reverse gear are an added safety feature.

2.2.8. Luggage

All vehicles should have sufficient luggage stowage space in rear/side lockers and/or enclosed trailers towed by the vehicle. In the event that available space is insufficient for a reasonable amount of luggage (1 case/bag per person), it is the responsibility of the hirer to arrange for a second vehicle to transport the excess luggage (unless a request was made by the hirer prior to date of hire for additional luggage capacity to be provided).

All external locker doors must be capable of being locked and made secure at all times other than when access is required for luggage stowage and retrieval.

Under no circumstances should luggage (other than 'hand luggage') be allowed within the passenger compartment. Overhead luggage racks inside the vehicle should only be used to accommodate lightweight items that are less likely to cause injury to passengers if ejected during emergency braking or in the event of an accident.

Safe stowage of passenger luggage and subsequent retrieval is the driver's responsibility.

Buses used for school transport contracts are not required to provide external luggage stowage.

Buses and Minibuses used for the transport of school children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) or adults with physical handicaps must provide stowage for passengers' mobility aids.

2.2.9. Wheelchairs

2.2.9.1.

The Operator will normally be given advance notice of wheelchair users and will be responsible for the safe stowage/transportation of folded wheelchairs (refer para. 2.2.8.).

2.2.9.2.

Under no circumstances should disabled persons confined to their wheelchairs be conveyed on vehicles, which have not been suitably adapted for such a purpose (i.e. fitted with power operated lifts and restraint systems) or by drivers who have not had appropriate training.

2.2.10. Wheel Nut Security

Vehicles should preferably not be fitted with wheel trims which prevent physical/visual checking of wheel nut security and it is also recommended that high visibility wheel nut movement indicators should be fitted to wheel nuts showing visual indication of any movement.

Where wheel trims or embellishers are fitted it is imperative that drivers and maintenance staff follow the correct procedure for re-torquing all wheel nuts after the vehicle has

stood for 30 minutes and prior to re-fitting the wheel trims or embellishers (B.S.AU50 Part 2 Section 7a 1995).

2.2.11. Steps

Any steps necessary to assist passengers alighting or dismounting from a vehicle must be a permanent attachment. The use of portable steps is not permitted.

2.2.12. Emergency Equipment

Each vehicle should carry (in addition to fire extinguishers and first aid kit), as a minimum:

- *Spare wheel**
- *Vehicle jack**
- *Wheel chocks**
- *Wheel nut brace*
- *Warning triangle*
- *Spare bulb kit*
- *Spare fuse kit*
- *High visibility clothing*
- *Torch*

* not essential on school bus services or local journeys.

2.2.12. Speed Governors

All coaches should be fitted with road speed governors to restrict the maximum speed of travel to 100kph (62mph). All other vehicles capable of exceeding 112kph (approx. 70mph) should be fitted with a road speed governor limiting their speed to 112kph.

Speed limiters must comply with the technical and operational standards specified in Community Directive 92/4, and must be sealed by a person authorised to do so by the Secretary of State (SI 1992 No.422).

Every vehicle required to be fitted with a speed limiter must have a plate fitted in a conspicuous and readily accessible position in the driving compartment showing clearly and indelibly at what speed the limiter has been set.

2.2.13. Vehicle Markings

All vehicles must display externally on the vehicle the name and address of the owner, the normal place of business and the unladen weight. The maximum seating capacity must be displayed internally.

All vehicles being used to transport school children must display the prescribed black and yellow sign at the front and rear.

All signage supplied by Ports Direct must be displayed in a conspicuous position, but not to impede the drivers vision.

2.3. Vehicle Roadworthiness

2.3.1. Statutory Testing

The Operator shall ensure that all vehicles are subjected to annual statutory testing by the Vehicle Operator Services Agency (VOSA) as required by law.

Under no circumstances shall a vehicle be operated without a current Test Certificate.

2.3.2. Maintenance/Serviceing

There should be in place a planned vehicle preventative maintenance programme to ensure that vehicles are regularly serviced and maintained. The scope and frequency of servicing should generally follow the minimum requirements and recommendations of the vehicle manufacturers.

Vehicle Technicians (whether employed by the Operator or otherwise) must have formal qualifications and should be adequately supervised. Standards of workmanship should be checked periodically.

2.3.3. Safety Inspections

Safety inspections are to be conducted on every vehicle at least every 6 weeks or 6,000 miles/10,000 kilometres, whichever is the sooner – or otherwise as specified on the PSV Operators Licence.

The scope of a scheduled safety inspection must cover at least those items included in the VOSA statutory inspection as detailed in the current edition of the PSV Testers Manual (see Safety Inspection Report Form – Appendix A.2).

Where possible, all vehicle brakes should be tested on a roller brake test at each safety inspection and the results recorded on the inspection record.

Vehicle Technicians engaged in conducting safety inspections should be formally qualified and appropriately supervised (refer para. 2.3.2.)

A safety inspection should also be conducted on every new vehicle acquired and vehicles temporarily on hire or loan, prior to use.

2.3.4. Daily Safety Checks/Defect Reporting

Drivers should be made responsible for conducting comprehensive pre-shift vehicle safety checks and there must be in place a documented system for the reporting and

rectification of defects, which can differentiate between serious defects requiring immediate attention ('vehicle off road') and minor defects ('advisory').

The recommended 'Drivers Daily PCV Check List & Report' form is shown in Appendix A.1.

2.3.5. Vehicle Records

Individual vehicle records must be kept which shall include documentary evidence/details relating to:

- *the manufacturers certificate of type approval/fitness/conformity and/or associated registration documentation issued by the suppliers/manufacturers and licensing authority*
- *periodic statutory testing (annual test certificate)*
- *scheduled servicing/maintenance (service and repair history)*
- *safety inspections*
- *defects reported through the drivers daily safety check system (and remedial work completed)*
- *defects/remedial work resulting from roadside checks conducted by the enforcement agencies*
- *tyre condition/pressure checks and replacements fitted*
- *other such data as may be considered appropriate to demonstrate the history of roadworthiness.*

Such records shall be maintained chronologically throughout the service life of the vehicle and held thereafter for a period of 3 years and shall be made available to the Company on request within 24 hours notice.

There shall be a planned maintenance programme for all vehicles indicating all future (statutory annual testing, servicing, safety inspections, tachograph checking/calibration and speed limiter checking.

2.3.6. Vehicle Cleanliness

Vehicles should be washed externally and tidied/vacuumed as necessary internally on a daily basis. Full valeting to be conducted as necessary according to condition.

2.3.7. Security

Vehicles should be parked on the Operator's premises overnight or between shifts in a secure environment. When on tour, overnight parking arrangements should be predetermined whenever possible, utilising hotel car parks or other suitably secure facilities.

2.4. Drivers/Recruitment

It is a well-known fact that human error is the cause of far more accidents than mechanical failure. The Company places great importance on good driving standards.

2.4.1. Age/Licences

- *All drivers must hold a valid PCV driving licence for the relevant category of vehicle (and trailer where necessary) and without restrictions*
- *Driver's Licences and any counterpart document should be checked at 6 monthly intervals, copies of which should be retained in personnel files*
- *A minimum age requirement of 25 years and/or previous PCV driving experience of at least 2 years should be imposed for the recruitment of new drivers.*
- *Drivers should not be employed for work on behalf of the Company beyond the age of 70 years*
- *To qualify for employment, drivers should be able to show a record free of serious 'own-fault' accidents and convictions of a serious nature for a period of at least 3 years.*
- *Drivers and escorts/attendants employed on School Bus or Special Educational Needs transport must satisfy the vetting procedures required by Schools & Education Authorities.*

2.4.2. References

Satisfactory references from previous employers should always be obtained, confirming the applicant's accident record where applicable.

2.4.3. Driving Standards

All drivers must be capable of demonstrating satisfactory driving skills prior to employment (or during a defined trial/probationary period).

As part of the selection/recruitment process, a designated 'Competent Person' should make an assessment of driving skills. The assessment should incorporate a practical driving test on the road (to include motorway and slow manoeuvring skills) of sufficient duration to encompass the various conditions likely to be encountered on a daily basis.

During the course of employment, driving standards should be monitored by investigating accidents, responding to any unsatisfactory driving practices witnessed and customer complaints.

It is recommended that drivers should be re-assessed at least every 3 years. Drivers failing to demonstrate the required driving standards should be considered for retraining or otherwise withdrawn from Ports Direct work.

2.4.4. Health/Physical Fitness

All drivers should undergo a medical examination (which must include an eyesight test) at least once in every 5 years (annually above the age of 65). Eyesight testing requirements (based on the 'Snellen Scale') are provided in the Appendix.*

- Medical examinations* are to be conducted by a medical practitioner appointed or approved by the Operator
- Ideally, pre-employment medical examination* should be arranged as part of the recruitment process.

* Records should be held on personnel files.

2.4.5. Appearance/Demeanour

Drivers are to be literate, polite, and of smart appearance. They should be courteous towards the passengers at all times, having empathy towards young people when operating educational work.

The Operator's standard uniform (shirt, tie and jumper and/or other articles of wearing apparel supplied by the Operator) is to be worn as appropriate by drivers at all times whilst operating Coach Directs work.

2.4.6. Probationary Period of Employment/Training

Drivers shall complete a satisfactory probationary period (minimum of 1 week) under supervision before driving any vehicle unsupervised.

During this period, adequate induction training should be given, which must include:

- *being fully acquainted with any vehicle they may be expected to drive*
- *the provision of a copy of the Operator's Drivers Manual (see Section 3) with which the driver must be fully conversant*
- *specific instruction on the completion of the daily vehicle safety checks and the defect reporting system*
- *the recording of the induction training, signed off by the driver (records to be retained for a minimum of 3 years after the termination of employment).*

Drivers should receive at least basic first aid training and refresher training on a regular basis (minimum 3 yearly).

Where vehicles are equipped with passenger or wheel chair lifts, drivers must be fully trained in their safe operation.

2.4.7. No Smoking Policy

The Operator shall have a formal No Smoking Policy prohibiting smoking by the driver or passengers within the vehicles.

In addition, drivers shall not be permitted to smoke whilst dealing with passengers (including the loading and unloading of luggage) within the immediate vicinity of the vehicle.

2.4.8. Drugs/Alcohol Policy

The Operator shall have in place a documented policy relating to the use of drugs and the consumption of alcohol. Drivers must understand that to report for work under the influence of either alcohol or drugs, or the use/consumption thereof whilst on duty, will result in appropriate disciplinary action.

Drivers should be warned that random alcohol testing will be conducted from time to time and it is recommended that drug testing be conducted at the time of medical examination (see para. 2.4.4.).

2.4.9. Agency Drivers

It is preferred that 'agency' or other third party drivers (ie. not being directly employed by the Operator) should not be used.

Under circumstances in which the use of such drivers is deemed necessary, it is the responsibility of the Operator to ensure that the criteria specified in this Code relating to the recruitment and supervision of drivers are satisfied as far as possible.

2.4.10. Seat Belts

Drivers should wear seat belts at all times whilst driving.

2.5. Drivers Working Hours and Record Keeping

Current and forthcoming legislation governing drivers working hours is complex, and it is inappropriate that this Code should spell out the numerous statutory requirements, or attempt to summarise or highlight the more important issues.

Drivers' hours should be planned by the Operator to ensure conformity with the EC Drivers Hours Regulations (as amended) or Domestic Rules and the Working Time Directive for Mobile Operatives (when effective). The Operator should liaise with the CPC Holder, who should be fully conversant with the regulations, to ensure that all compliance issues are addressed and that other 'best practice' measures are taken to reduce the risk of tiredness/fatigue at the wheel, so far as is reasonably practicable.

2.5.1. All drivers of PSV's used on tours, excursions and private hire, including schools transport are currently required to comply with the following regulations

*Vehicles with up to 16 passenger seats - Domestic Rules
(Transport Act 1968)*

*Vehicle with 17 or more passenger seats - EU Rules(Tachograph Regulations)
(3820/85)*

2.5.2. Drivers will be expected to comply with any changes to the regulations from the date of their introduction and also the restrictions imposed by the Working Time Directive for Mobile Workers when these become effective (March 2005).

2.5.3. Tachographs are to be fitted and used in PSV's when required to comply with the EU Rules on Drivers Hours (see definitions above). Drivers exempt from the need to use a tachograph are subject to Domestic Rules.

2.5.4. Drivers of vehicles not fitted with tachographs should maintain a written record of all their duty and driving time, including breaks, rest periods and times of commencing/finishing duty. Operators should retain these records for at least 15 months.

2.5.5. Drivers of vehicles fitted with tachographs should complete a chart daily. Completed charts for the current week and last day of the previous week should be kept in the vehicle. Completed charts should be checked regularly by a suitably qualified person and retained by the Operator for a period of 2 years.

NB. Refer to paragraph 2.6.5. – Passenger Management regarding passenger comfort stops.

2.6. Passenger Management

Drivers have a responsibility for the safety and welfare of passengers whilst being transported (including vehicle access and egress).

2.6.1. Safety Procedures

2.6.1.1.

The driver(s) should secure all luggage in lockers/trailers prior to departure

2.6.1.2.

The driver must ensure that passengers are:

- requested to wear seat belts*
- made aware of the location of emergency exit doors (if fitted) or other means of emergency escape*

- *requested to secure arm rests in the horizontal position where fitted on aisle seats*
- *told that smoking is not permitted*
- *requested to remain seated with seatbelts secured whilst the vehicle is in motion*

2.6.1.3.

Passengers must not be permitted to use 'high-risk' seats (see paragraph 2.2.3.) if seat belts are missing, damaged or inoperable.

2.6.1.4.

The driver must ensure that all passengers are properly seated before moving off.

2.6.2. Passenger Assistance

2.6.2.1. Safe Access/Egress

It is the responsibility of the driver (in cooperation with a Guide/Tour Representative if present) to render such assistance as may be necessary to passengers mounting and alighting from the vehicle.

2.6.2.2. Passengers with Physical Disabilities

Under normal circumstances, ambulant wheelchair users will be independently capable (with or without the assistance of a travelling companion) of boarding and alighting from the vehicle. The Driver should only assist when requested to do so by the Guide/Tour Representative or disabled person, whose instructions should be followed.

Drivers should be made aware of the Code of Practice 'The Safety of Passengers in Wheelchairs' in Buses (VSE 87/1)' and adhere to this at all times when required to transport passengers with physical disabilities.

2.6.3. Vehicle Parking/Drop-Off & Pick-Up Points

2.6.3.1. Parking

Vehicles must always be parked as close as possible to the pavement kerb to enable passengers to get on and off the vehicle via the kerb-side door without walking on the road. Under no circumstances should passengers be expected to mount or disembark from the traffic-side.

2.6.3.2. Reversing

Vehicles must not be moved (particularly in reverse) whilst pedestrians are within the immediate vicinity.

2.6.4. Re-fuelling

Vehicle re-fuelling should never be conducted with passengers on board.

2.6.5. Comfort Stops

For the convenience of passengers on lengthy/long haul journeys, comfort stops of at least 15 minutes should be scheduled into the itinerary every 2/3 hours.

2.6.6. Temperature/Ventilation

Drivers should ensure that all heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems installed are maintained in good working order and that the interior temperature of the vehicle has been adjusted to an acceptable level prior to passengers boarding the vehicle.

2.7. Emergencies/Telephone Communication

2.7.1. Telephone Communication

Drivers must have direct radio/telecommunication access (ie. from the vehicle) to either the Operator's 24 hour manned Depot/Office or a nominated senior member of staff at all times.

2.7.2. Use of Vehicle/Mobile Phones

For safety reasons, the driver should be contacted as infrequently as possible and messages should be brief. Under no circumstances should a driver respond to an incoming call 'hands-on' whilst driving, and all outgoing calls must be made whilst stationary.

Ideally, all incoming calls should be diverted to a voice-mail/messaging service, to be accessed by the driver at the first suitable stop.

NB Guidance given by the DETR on the use of mobile phones should be followed as closely as possible (refer to leaflet "Switch it Off" in the Appendix).

2.7.3. Contingency Planning

Suitable contingency plans must be in place to collect passengers from any vehicle that becomes immobilised or rendered unroadworthy (for whatever reason) and to transport them immediately to the intended destination or a place of safety.

The 'back-up' vehicle(s) should be made available as soon as possible and will be expected to attend the original vehicle within 2 hours of notification.

2.7.4. Handling Emergencies

Drivers should be given instruction and guidance on procedures to be followed in emergency situations according to the circumstances, eg:

- *Illness*
- *Passenger intoxication/violent or threatening behaviour*
- *Road traffic accident*
- *Breakdown*
- *Fire*

Whatever the circumstances, it is essential that the driver should make contact with the Operator and/or the emergency services immediately. Whether or not passengers should remain on the vehicle for security/safety reasons will depend on the circumstances (for example, in the event of a motorway breakdown or suspicion of fire, the driver should lead passengers to a place of relative safety).

2.7.5. Accident Investigations

All serious accidents and 'near misses' must be recorded on an accident report form.*

If involving the Company's passengers, an accident investigation (including an interview of the driver) should be conducted as soon as possible. Verbal notification should be made to the Company immediately and a copy of the investigation report submitted within 72 hours.

*** A serious accident is defined as any vehicle or passenger accident causing (or likely to cause) personal injury and/or vehicle damage unless the damage is of a trivial nature (eg. vehicle not immobilised or rendered unroadworthy).**

2.8 Trailers

Towed trailers may be used for the carriage of passengers' luggage and other equipment where additional capacity is required. The following safety requirements will apply where trailers are used.

2.8.1 Trailers must be attached using approved coupling devices

2.8.2 The maximum permitted weight (MPW) of the trailer and the maximum payload must be clearly marked on the side of the trailer or towbar.

2.8.3 Trailers must be included in the preventative maintenance programme and inspected/maintained at the same interval as the towing vehicle. Drivers' daily checks and defect reporting procedures must include any towed trailer.

2.8.4 Maintenance standards, including the retention of records and annual test certificates (for plated trailers over 1020 kg unladen weight) are to be the same as for the towing vehicle.

- 2.8.5 *Trailers must not be towed where they obstruct any vehicle rear passenger doors or emergency exits.*
- 2.8.6 *Trailers must be equipped with a braking system appropriate to the maximum permitted weight (MPW) of the trailer that is fully functioning and maintained in good working order. Overrun braking systems must not be fitted if the MPW of the trailer exceeds 3500 kg.*
- 2.8.7 *Any towed trailer must not result in the vehicle gross train weight (GTW) being exceeded.*
- 2.8.8 *Drivers of passenger vehicles with trailers must hold the appropriate category of driving licence.*
- 2.8.9 *Loads within single axle or close-coupled trailers must be distributed carefully to achieve the correct loading on the towing coupling and to maintain safety.*
- 2.8.10 *Operating speeds must be reduced in accordance with statutory limits applicable to vehicles towing trailers.*
- 2.8.11 *Trailers must be fitted with a parking brake and stabilisers to maintain stability and security when detached from the vehicle.*

3. Drivers' Manual

Operators will be expected to communicate all necessary safety information, instructions and safety procedures to drivers, formally and in writing.

This may take the form of a Drivers' Manual (Safety Policy, Drivers' Handbook or whatever) a personal copy of which should be handed to each driver who should sign for receipt (it is recommended that a further copy should be held within each vehicle). A copy should also be made available to the Company.

The content of the Manual (which will include many of the issues addressed in this Code) should be the subject of detailed briefing at the time of induction training.

4. Declaration of Undertaking

I the undersigned, being the nominated ‘Competent Person’ (refer Section 2 paragraph 1.2.) hereby acknowledge and accept responsibility on behalf of the Operator as transportation service providers to Ports Direct Ltd to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health safety and welfare of passengers.

The requirements of this Code of Safety Practice are fully understood and we undertake to comply accordingly. Furthermore, we agree to cooperate fully with Ports Direct Ltd and/or any safety consultants appointed by them in conducting safety management systems audits and random vehicle inspections.

We also understand that non-conformance may constitute breach of contract and may result in removal from the Ports Direct approved contractors list with immediate effect.

Name:

Position:

Company:

Signature.....

Date:

Important:

Following full completion, a copy of this page should be sent to Ports Direct Limited along with current copies of your Vehicle & Public Vehicle Liability Insurance and Operators License documentation.

Appendix

- A.1 Drivers Daily Defect Report Form
- A.2 Safety Inspection Test Chart
- A.3 Use of Phones in Vehicles (DETR leaflet)
- A.4 Eyesight Testing Requirements
- A.5 First Aid Kit – List of Contents
- A.6 Special Needs Minibuses
- A.7 Guidance for Drivers of School Buses

A full list of the current Code of Safety Practice documentation can be viewed and downloaded from the Operators Section of the website at www.coachdirect.co.uk

Important:

The CoP Appendix documentation listed above and on our website has been made available purely as support material, and should be viewed and used as such by Coach Direct Quality Approved Operators