

# Taking a Minibus Abroad



Item Code FS260008 Feb 07 Edition no 4

0845 300 1818

## Who Can Drive Our Minibus ?

A minibus is a motor vehicle, which is constructed or adapted to carry more than seven but not more than sixteen seated passengers in addition to the driver.

Vehicles that carry fare paying passengers are called Public Service Vehicles ( PSVs ).

Ordinarily, any organisation (operator) that accepts any sort of payment for the provision of transport to passengers - **known as hire or reward** - must obtain a PSV Operator's Licence and the driver would require a Passenger Carrying Vehicle ( PCV ) entitlement on their driving licence. However, under the Section 19 Small Bus Permit scheme, **non-profit making organisations**, such as Units of the Scout Association (as operators), can still make a charge to passengers for providing transport to the people whom the organisation serves ( i.e. Unit members) without the need to obtain a PSV Operator's Licence and , without having to comply with PCV driver licensing requirements. Please be aware that Section 19 Permits cannot be used to provide services to the general public **or on journeys outside the U.K.**

In the **United Kingdom**, unless the operation of your Scout unit minibus does **not** attract **any contribution** from the passenger(s), or on their behalf, either directly or indirectly - which is extremely unlikely - the minibus must be operated under the terms of a Small Bus (S19) Permit. The vehicle may then be driven by;

- (i) a licence holder with entitlement to drive cars prior to 1st January 1997 with an old style group A (B for automatics) or with a category B and D1(Restricted - not for hire or reward) entitlement on a new style licence - provided the licence holder is 21 or over; or
- (ii) a car licence holder who first held a licence after the 1st January 1997 - provided he or she is 21 or over, has held

a car (category B) licence for at least 2 years, drives on a voluntary basis and the minibus weight is not more than 3.5 tonnes (excluding specialist equipment for carriage of disabled passengers for which there is an extra allowance of 750 kgs). An application form for a Section 19 permit is available from this Department.

## Who Can Drive Our Minibus Abroad ?

The Section 19 Permit as referred above is not, and never has been, valid abroad. It is the advice of the DETR that a minibus which is being operated for hire or reward may not be driven abroad unless the driver has taken a further test to attain full PCV D or D1 (unrestricted for hire or reward) entitlement. This involves a theory test as well as a driving test. Further information may be obtained from any authorised PCV Driving School which may be found in e.g. the Yellow Pages telephone directory. Queries may be addressed to the DETR;

Mr. Gerry Sreenan, Road Haulage Division, Freight, Distribution and Logistics Directorate, 2/11 Great Minister House, 76 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DR and/or Telephone 020 7676 2773

Alternatively you may contact DVLA on Telephone 01792 772151,

or the Legal Department at Gilwell Park on 020 8433 7100

## TAKING A MINIBUS ABROAD

1. Minibuses which can carry 9 or more persons (including the driver) and are used on journeys to or from the continent or the Republic of Ireland, come within the scope of European Union (EU) and other international regulations governing international bus and coach journeys.

The Scout Information Centre

Gilwell Park Chingford London E4 7QW Tel + 44 (0)20 8433 7100 Fax + 44 (0)20 8433 7103 email info.centre@scout.org.uk www.scoutbase.org.uk

2. This note aims to explain to those wishing to organise privately operated, non-commercial minibus journeys what these regulations are and where to obtain further advice. When a vehicle is hired with a driver from a professional coach company which carries passengers for hire or reward and holds an international operator's licence, it is the responsibility of that operator to comply with these regulations.

## TRAVEL DOCUMENTATION

### Own account journeys

3. International journeys carried out within the EU by a non-profit making body for the transport of its members in connection with its social objective or by a body for its own employees fall within the category of own account operations. Provided that transport is not itself the main activity of the operator and that the vehicle used is the property of the operator and is driven by a member of staff or a member of the operator body, such journeys can be carried out under an own account certificate. These certificates are valid for up to five years and are available on application from the Department of Transport's International Road Freight Office (IRFO - address on page 3). However, certificates cannot be issued if a hired vehicle is used, even if the other criteria are fulfilled, and a waybill\* will be required.

### Journeys using hired vehicles

4. The travel documentation required on international journeys varies according to the service being carried out and the countries visited. Most minibus journeys tend to fall into the category known as an occasional closed door tour, where the vehicle makes a round trip back to its starting point carrying the same group of passengers throughout.
5. For such tours to or through other EU Member States (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden) and Norway and Switzerland, a waybill must be completed and carried on the vehicle during the journey. If travelling to Turkey, journeys are operated under an international agreement known as the ASOR Agreement and similar documentation is required in these countries. However, there are separate waybills for EU and ASOR journeys. In addition, for ASOR journeys only,

a set of translations will also be needed. The Confederation of Passenger Transport (address on page 4) can supply the following: Individual Waybills for EU countries, ASOR and Interbus countries - £6.46  
Books of 25 Waybills for EU countries - £15.28  
Books of 25 Waybills for ASOR and Interbus countries - £12.93  
and a Set of Translations for £4.30.

---

\*the term "waybill", as used throughout here, is the same as the term "control document", which is used in EC legislation.

---

6. In most other countries closed door tours are exempt from need for authorisation, but some, such as Poland and Ukraine, require a waybill. For journey documentation to non-EU/ASOR countries advice should be sought from Road Haulage Division or the appropriate embassies or tourist offices.
7. Within the EU, most other international journeys can also be carried out under cover of a waybill, apart from regular scheduled services, which can only be operated by professional hire or reward coach companies and which must be authorised by the Department of Transport. However, certain residual occasional services also require authorisation, for instance where passengers are set down or picked up in different countries during the journey or where they do not all return together. If you are travelling abroad on an exchange visit and wish to be joined by your hosts on tours entirely within the other country, the journey will fall into this category.
8. You should contact IRFO to check if your journey will require prior authorisation. They will, if necessary, seek approval for the particular journey from each of the countries through which the vehicle will be travelling and issue an International Passenger Transport Authorisation (IPTA).
9. All journeys to non-EU countries which are not closed-door tours must be carried out under an IPTA and you will need to contact IRFO. Operators from other countries wishing to make journeys in the UK will need to obtain the correct documentation from their own transport authorities.

## BREAKDOWN

10. We recommend all mini buses being taken abroad should have suitable breakdown/recovery cover. This can be obtained from most of the leading UK recovery services. It is advisable that cover includes repatriation of the vehicle and passengers. This will avoid major costs and logistical problems should a major failure occur.

## DRIVERS HOURS

11. EU Regulations concerning drivers' hours (Regulations 3820/85 and 3821/85) require a tachograph to be installed and in use for international journeys undertaken by passenger vehicles with nine or more seats, including that of the driver. All passenger vehicles with more than 17 seats also need a tachograph to comply with the domestic drivers' hours rules for journeys within the UK. The rules limiting the hours of driving for international and domestic journeys are explained in leaflet PSV 375 available from Traffic Area Offices.
12. EU drivers' hours rules also apply in countries which have signed the AETR Agreement (Belarus, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Moldova, Norway, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia). It is compulsory to use a tachograph in AETR countries. However, journeys to the Republic of Ireland are treated as domestic journeys, and therefore a minibus with up to 17 seats travelling there does not require a tachograph.
13. For journeys through another EU Member State to a country which is neither EU nor AETR (e.g. Bulgaria, Switzerland, Turkey), EU/AETR rules apply for the part of the journey within EU/AETR countries, and a tachograph must be used. Once outside the EU/AETR, drivers should follow local rules, if any, on drivers' hours, which should be sought from the appropriate embassy or tourist office.
14. From January 2006, any new minibus travelling in mainland Europe must be fitted with a speed limiter. If you are using a vehicle registered after that date, your local dealer should be able to adjust the vehicle computer to comply with this legislation.

## FINES

15. Drivers who infringe the rules on documentation, drivers' hours and other traffic regulations such as speeding may be charged with an offence by enforcement officials in the country concerned and may be liable to on the spot fines, which may amount to hundreds of pounds. You should be careful to obey all such regulations when travelling abroad.

## INSURANCE

16. In most countries insurance against third party risks is compulsory. Domestic motor insurance policies issued in the UK automatically provide the UK levels of third party cover only in all other EU Member States and the minimum cover required by the respective national laws in Norway, Iceland, the Czech and Slovak Republics, Hungary, Switzerland and Liechtenstein. However, drivers requiring the full cover provided by their UK policy (for example, against damage to their own vehicle, fire and theft) will need to arrange this with their insurers in advance. Even where additional cover is not required, it may be a condition of the policy that the insurer is notified in advance of any intended foreign use.
17. Although a British insurance policy is all that is legally required by tourists visiting those countries listed above, it is advisable to obtain a Green Card from your insurer, which may be more easily recognised abroad than a UK insurance certificate. For other countries, a UK motor insurance certificate is not sufficient evidence and a Green Card must be carried to show that you comply with the insurance laws of the country you are visiting.
18. Drivers visiting countries other than those listed above should consult their insurers in any event.

## USEFUL ADDRESSES

Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT)  
Imperial House  
15-19 Kingsway  
LONDON  
WC2B 6UN  
Telephone: 020 7240 3131  
Email: [cpt@cpt-UK.org](mailto:cpt@cpt-UK.org)

International Road Freight Office (IRFO)

Westgate House, Westgate Road  
NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE  
NE1 1TW  
Telephone: 0191 201 4038

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT TRAFFIC  
AREA OFFICES**

Eastern Traffic Area  
Terrington House  
13-15 Hills Road  
CAMBRIDGE  
CB2 1NP  
Telephone: 01223 358 922 Telex: 81373

Western Traffic Area  
The Gaunts' House  
Denmark Street  
BRISTOL BS1 5DR  
Telephone: 0117 975 5000 Telex: 44647

North Eastern Traffic Area  
Hillcrest House  
386 Harehills Lane  
LEEDS LS9 6NF  
Telephone: 0113 283 353 Telex: 557427

Scottish Traffic Area  
Argyle House  
3 Lady Lawson Street  
EDINBURGH EH3 9SE  
Telephone: 0131 529 8500 Telex: 72614

West Midland Traffic Area  
Cumberland House  
200 Broad Street  
BIRMINGHAM B15 1TD  
Telephone: 0121 608 1010  
Fax: 0121 608 1001

South Eastern and Metropolitan Traffic Area  
Ivy House, 3 Ivy Terrace  
EASTBOURNE  
East Sussex BN21 4QT  
Telephone: 01323 721 471 Telex: 87335