

July 29, 2009

Industry Advisory

New Rule for Inter-city Buses and New Policies for Taxis

Publication Requirements for Inter-City Bus Applicants

The Board is improving the application process for inter-city bus applications relating to minimum route frequency reductions or discontinuance of a route or route point. Applicants must submit, with their application, an explanatory paper or rationale that the public can view. This rationale will be posted on the Board's website. This will enable the public to learn more details and background information about the applicant's proposal. The public will continue to have an opportunity to provide comment to the Passenger Transportation Board before a decision is made on the application. This rule can be found at:

<http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/ptb/bus.htm>

Transportation of Personal Baggage

Taxi licensees have asked for direction on when they can assess freight charges in addition to metered rates. The Board does not regulate freight. However, Board approved taxi rates (metered and non-metered) include the transportation of a passenger's personal baggage. Personal baggage includes items such as luggage, parcels and equipment that would fit in the trunk of a mid-sized, sedan-style taxicab. In circumstances where it is difficult to determine whether an item is personal baggage or freight, the presumption should be that it is personal baggage. No extra fees may be charged for the transportation of personal baggage, mobility aids or assistance dogs. This is Operational Policy V.3 and is available on the Board's website at: http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/ptb/operational_policies.htm#op_policies

Taxi Rate Harmonization and Equalization

At times, taxi operators in a common geographic area express an interest in having common rates. The Board has established a policy that clarifies two ways in which common rates may be asked for and established. "Rates harmonization" is a process where the current rates of two or more taxi companies are weighted and averaged. "Rates harmonization" requests are sent by licensees directly to the Board. A rationale for the harmonization request must be included.

"Rates equalization" is a request for parity with the rates of one or more other licensees in the area. A Change of Rates application must be sent to the Passenger Transportation Branch to propose "rates equalization". This is Operational Policy V.4 and is available on the Board's website at: http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/ptb/operational_policies.htm#op_policies