

Driving a Minibus in the Republic of Ireland

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Introduction

Driving a minibus in the Republic of Ireland differs considerably from Northern Ireland. Section 10B Permits do not apply in the Republic of Ireland, therefore any individual taking a minibus across the border, on a hire or reward basis, is required to have passed a driving test for D or D1. Legislation currently in operation complies with all other European Member States except the UK.

All information relating to compliance with European Regulations can be found in the CTA's advice leaflet "[Minibus to Europe](#)".

This fact sheet aims to summarise the above document and look at the most relevant issues for Community Transport Operators who may be required to send a minibus to the Republic of Ireland.

Under UK and EU regulations, a minibus is a vehicle constructed and adapted to carry more than eight but not more than sixteen passengers (in addition to the driver). If it is being used on journeys outside the UK to or from Europe (including the Republic of Ireland), it comes within the scope of rules governing international bus and coach journeys, which apply to all minibuses, whether private, S10B Permit Minibuses or PSV's.

Summary of vehicle documentation

The driver should make sure the following documents are available for inspection at all times:

- Waybill (EU and/or ASOR) or Own Account Certificate (EC only)
- Vehicle Registration Document
- Green Card (International Motor Insurance Certificate)
- Insurance Certificate
- European Accident Form (available from your Insurance Broker)
- GB Plate

Own Account Certificate

By far the best way to avoid the paperwork of waybills is to get an Own Account Certificate instead. These Certificates are valid for up to five years and are available free of charge from the International Road Freight Office, using Form GV279.

In order for a Community Group to qualify for an Own Account Certificate they must either:

- i) be the owner or full-time operator of the vehicle.
- ii) be a fully paid up voting member of a non-profit organisation that does own the minibus
such as a Community Transport Group.

Vehicle Registration Document

This must be available for inspection at all times (carry the original, not a photocopy). If the vehicle is hired, you will not have this book and instead you should always carry the hire form that you signed when you collected the vehicle from the hire company.

Motor Insurance and the Green Card

In most countries insurance against third risk is compulsory. Domestic motor insurance policies issued in the UK automatically provide UK level of third party cover only in EU member states. Within the EU a Green Card, although advisable, is not strictly necessary. But outside the EU a Green Card should be sent to your insurance company at least one month before departure. You should also carry your UK Insurance Certificate. If you wish to have comprehensive cover whilst abroad, this will have to be arranged in advance with your insurers. **NB** Insurance cover is dependant

on the driver holding current entitlement for the vehicle. See below for driver licensing requirement.

The European Accident Form

Like the Green Card this is not essential but is strongly recommended as a recognised form of suitable documentation in the event of an accident. Your insurer should provide the form.

GB Plate

The GB plate must be of the approved oval type with black letters on a white background displayed at the rear of the vehicle.

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Driver documentation

The driver should have the following documents available for inspection at all times:

- Current driving licence with appropriate entitlement.
- International Driving Permits or translation of licence (for certain countries).
- Full Passport.
- Letter of authority to drive the vehicle.
- Certificate of experience (old style driving licences only) INTP5.

Appropriate Licence Entitlement

To drive a minibus abroad drivers must hold a current driving licence and be at least 21 years of age. However, there are specific problems for most UK drivers once they take a minibus abroad.

In the rest of the EU it is standard for all minibus drivers to take a further test to drive minibuses. This is known as a PCV (Passenger Carrying Vehicle) test. Exemptions from this test in the UK do not apply in the EU. The difficulties for drivers will depend on when the driver passed his/her test and whether the trip is or “hire or reward”!

Driving test taken before January 1997

These drivers automatically receive category D1 (minibus) entitlement but with a restriction (coded1 or 101), that allowed them to drive a minibus, but not “for hire or

reward". (Drivers with licences issued before 1990 may have the letters A and E on their licence: an entitlement includes restricted D1).

In the UK there is a system of permits (Sections 19 and 22 Great Britain: Section 10B in Northern Ireland) which overrides the restriction and does in fact allow these drivers to operate for hire and reward, providing no profit is made. **These permits have no validity outside the UK. The driver is therefore qualified purely in terms of what is on his/her licence document.**

Hire or Reward

"Hire or Reward" embraces any payment (in money or kind), which gives a person a right, or expectation, to be carried regardless of whether a profit is made or not. This payment may be a direct payment made by the person them self, or on their behalf – such as a fare, a grant or even a donation to the operator. It may include other things in addition to the cost of travel eg membership fees, grants, payments for access to specific events etc.

This definition covers the majority of trips by schools, colleges, community and sports groups. In such cases, therefore the driver(s) will need to take a second driving test on a minibus, known as a PCV or Passenger Carrying Vehicle Test, in order to remove the restriction on their D1 entitlement.

The cost of PCV tests can be in excess of £1000 and since two drivers may be required, trip organisers may have to consider a number of alternatives:

- Using on or more vehicles with than 9 passenger seats (excluding the driver).
- Finding existing PCV drivers to participate on the trip.
- Using public transport in Republic of Ireland.
- Cancelling the trip.

Driving test taken after 31 December 1996

On 1 January 1997 new driver licensing rules came into force. Drivers who have passed their first test from that date no longer automatically receive Minibus Category D1 (restricted) on their licence. Exemptions that exist in this country do allow these new drivers to drive minibuses in limited circumstances do apply outside the UK. **To drive a minibus abroad "new" drivers must sit a PCV test for either Category D (vehicles having more than 16 passenger seats, excluding the driver) or D1 (vehicles having no more that 16 passenger seats, excluding the driver).**

[Back up](#)

Useful contact numbers

Community Transport Association

Northern Ireland Office
Room 109, City East
68-72 Newtownards Road
Belfast BT4 1GW
Tel: 028 9094 1661
Fax: 028 9094 1662
e-mail: gerry@ctauk.org

Driver Vehicle Licensing Central Office

County Hall, Castlerock Road
Coleraine
BT51 3TB
Tel: 028 65 41469

Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT) [CPT](#)

Imperial House
15 – 19 Kingsway
LONDON
WC2B 6UN
Tel: 020 7240 3131
Fax: 020 7240 6565
Note: the CPT was previously known as the Bus and Coach Council.
International Road Freight Office (IRFO)

DETR

Westgate House
Westgate Road
Newcastle-upon-Tyne
NE1 1TW
Tel: 0191 201 4090
Fax: 0191 201 4040

Govt Publication Office

Dublin
Tel: 003531 6793515

Irish Wheelchair Association

Blackheath Drive
Dublin
Tel: 003531 8335366

About the Community Transport Association

The CTA is a national charity giving voice and providing leadership, learning and enterprise support to member organisations, which are delivering innovative transport solutions to achieve social change. CTA UK promotes excellence through providing training, publications, advice and information on voluntary, accessible and community transport.

Voluntary and community transport exists to meet the travel and social needs of people to whom these would otherwise be denied, providing accessible and affordable transport to achieve social inclusion.

Membership of the Community Transport Association is open to individuals, community and other voluntary groups, local authorities and other statutory bodies. Full details are available on the CTA website.

The CTA provides training on many subjects, either as pre-booked training days, or tailor-made to suit your organisation. CTA organises MiDAS Training, which includes Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme, Passenger Assistant Training and Car & MPV Driver Training. CTA has introduced CommunityDriver - The minibus driving test solution for non-professional drivers, i.e. teachers & youth workers, who needs to undertake their PCV D1 driving entitlement.

If you would like any addition information, please contact us at:

Community Transport Association
Highbank, Halton Street, Hyde, SK14 2NY
Phone: 0161 351 1475
Fax: 0161 351 7221
Email: info@ctauk.org

About the Community Transport Association's Advice Service

The CTA's Advice & Information Service is funded by the Department for Transport, the Department for Regional Development (Northern Ireland), the National Assembly for Wales and the Scottish Government. The Service offers information and support on any aspect of non-profit transport operations.

CTA Advice & Information Service Contact numbers

Northern Ireland Advice Line

Phone: 028 9094 1661

Email: AdviceNI@ctauk.org

UK Advice Line

Phone: 0845 1306195

Email: AdviceUK@ctauk.org

Web page: www.ctauk.org

Disclaimer

The Community Transport Association has made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this leaflet, but it should be noted that this is only a guide, and should be treated as such. ©CTA 2010