

Consultation on changes to bus registration in Scotland



RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM

Please Note this form **must** be returned with your response to ensure that we handle your response appropriately

1. Name/Organisation

Organisation Name

Passenger Transport Executive Group

Title Mr Ms Mrs Miss Dr *Please tick as appropriate*

Surname

Pedro

Forename

Abrantes

2. Postal Address

Wellington House

40-50 Wellington Street

Leeds

Postcode LS1 2DE

Phone

Email

3. Permissions - I am responding as...

Individual / Group/Organisation

Please tick as appropriate

(a) Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in Scottish Government library and/or on the Transport Scotland web site)?

Please tick as appropriate Yes No

(b) Where confidentiality is not requested, we will make your responses available to the public on the following basis

Please tick **ONE** of the following boxes

Yes, make my response, name and address all available

or

Yes, make my response available, but not my name and address

or

Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address

(c) The name and address of your organisation **will be** made available to the public (in the Scottish Government library and/or on the Transport Scotland web site).

Are you content for your **response** to be made available?

Please tick as appropriate Yes No

(d) We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Transport Scotland to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Please tick as appropriate Yes No

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

Question 1: do you agree with the proposal to extend the pre-registration notice period from 14 days to 28 days ?

Yes No

The current pre-registration period is a positive feature of Scottish bus framework, which we would equally like to see implemented in England. It allows transport authorities to be more actively involved in bus network planning, leading to more efficient and cost effective bus networks and better and more timely information being provided to passengers. However, 14 days is a relatively short period for meaningful consultation and it is likely to preclude transport authorities from being able to effectively influence the registration process in a positive way.

We believe that the proposed 28 day registration period will allow transport authorities to have a more constructive role in the bus registration process.

Question 2: Do you agree with the proposal to replace the duty to inform the relevant authorities before making an application for registration with a duty to consult with the relevant authorities?

Yes No

The proposed change will help cement a more positive role for transport authorities in the bus registration process.

It will also add greater certainty and clarity for both authorities and operators, potentially leading to more fruitful working relationships between the two.

Question 3: Do you agree that relevant authorities should be encouraged through guidance to draw potential concerns about new registrations to the attention of the traffic Commissioner for Scotland and/or Transport Scotland?

Yes No

Comments

Question 4a: Do you agree with the proposal to reduce the period of registration from 56 days to 42 days? What difficulties (if any) do you consider such a change might present and how might these be addressed?

Yes No

While it is important to ensure that the bus registration process is as quick and effective as possible, in order to ensure bus operators are able to respond to changing market conditions, some of our members have highlighted concerns that at particularly busy times a reduction in the registration period could lead to delays in getting printed information out to passengers. However, we understand that many authorities have, or are putting in place, automatic systems for processing this sort of information, which could minimise any potentially negative effects.

Question 4b: An alternative option would be to reduce the registration period from 56 days to 42 days only where Electronic Bus Service Registration (EBSR) is used. Do you agree with this?

Yes No

We have no views on this question.

Question 5: Do you agree that we should require operators to detail within registered hourly frequency bands any services that are registered as frequent services?

Yes No

While this measure may slightly reduce the scope for predatory behaviour this needs to be weighed up against loss of flexibility in responding to short term changes in market conditions (including, for example, large events, which may be arranged at short notice, weather conditions, etc) as well as the ability of new entrants to compete effectively.

Question 6: Do you agree that if the proposed changes set out above are adopted, they will improve the bus registration process in Scotland ?

Yes No

Subject to the caveats expressed above.

Question 7: It is possible that much of what is proposed above could be achieved through Guidance and/or a Code of Conduct to facilitate engagement between operators and relevant authorities rather than changes to the legislation. Do you have any views on this?

Yes No

Experience in English metropolitan areas suggests that, while Guidance and Code of Conducts can help increase stakeholders' confidence where there is already strong engagement and a close working relationship, this is unlikely to have a material effect

where bus operators openly engage in anti-competitive behaviour or fail to engage in constructive discussion with transport authorities. We believe that it is important that the role of transport authorities is formally recognised to strengthen their hand in discussions with operators. Moreover, the point of statutory rules is that they ensure consistency across the country where voluntary agreements have proved to be an insufficient incentive.