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Dear Stakeholder,

## **NOTIFICATION OF UPDATED REQUIREMENTS FOR FIRE EXTINGUISHERS IN TAXIS, PUBLIC SERVICE VEHICLES AND MINIBUSES**

Current domestic legislation requires the fitment of fire extinguishers in taxis, public service vehicles (buses) and minibuses. However the approval markings required by current domestic legislative provisions are inconsistent with the current British Standard, which is known as the EN3 Standard.

The Department for Infrastructure (DfI) has therefore updated references in domestic legislation to the British Standard to which portable fire extinguishers fitted in such vehicles must comply.

It has been deemed that your organisation is involved at some level with the operation of either taxis, public service vehicles or minibuses and I am writing to you to provide advance notice of the changes in legislation to which your organisation must comply. You may of course already be compliant with the requirements since the British Standard we are referencing has been in place for some time.

The amending legislation provides that portable fire extinguishers fitted in taxis, public service vehicles and minibuses must comply with the BS EN 3-7:2004+A1:2007 Standard, have a minimum test fire rating of 8A or 34B, contain water or foam, and have a minimum capacity of two litres.

The legislation which has resulted in these changes being made is as follows:

- The Public Service Vehicles (Conditions Of Fitness, Equipment & Use) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 (S.R. 2017 No. 139);

- The Motor Vehicles (Construction & Use) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 (S.R. 2017 No. 140); and
- The Taxi Licensing (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 (S.R. 2017 No. 141).

Although this legislation was made on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2017 it does not become effective until **6<sup>th</sup> November 2017**.

The compliance of fire extinguishers with legislative requirements is checked by DVA during annual roadworthiness tests and may also be checked as part of a roadside inspection. Therefore from **6<sup>th</sup> November 2017**, DVA enforcement may check that any fire extinguishers fitted in a taxi, public service vehicle or mini bus is of the required 'EN3' British Standard, has a minimum test fire rating of 8A or 34B, contains water or foam, and has a minimum capacity of two litres. Those found in breach of the new requirements can be fined up to a maximum of £2,500 for vehicles that carry more than eight passengers or up to a maximum of £1,000 for all other vehicles. The absence of a fully compliant fire extinguisher may also lead to failure at the annual roadworthiness test.

Any fire extinguisher fitted in a taxi, public service vehicle or mini bus must be readily available for use (i.e. may be safely secured in the driver or passenger compartment of buses, or in the boot or driver/passenger compartment of taxis), clearly marked with the appropriate British Standards Institution specification number, and maintained in good and efficient working order.

If you require any clarification on what you need to do to comply with the statutory legislation, please contact [vehicle.standards@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](mailto:vehicle.standards@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk) and someone will respond to you.

Yours sincerely

**ALEX BOYLE**  
**HEAD OF VEHICLE POLICY BRANCH**