



POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR BUS/COACH CHARTERS

Policy aim

The aim of this policy is to outline the responsibilities and procedures to perform bus or coach charter in a safe and comfortable manner, which is satisfactory to all parties, involved, and presents a basis for a continuing amicable business relationship. This policy shall be carried in the vehicle for ready reference by all parties as required, placed on the Compass Tours website and issued or referenced on confirmation of booking.

Responsibilities - The Company.

Compass Tours will ensure;

1. That its operations, its vehicles and its drivers conform to all licensing, accreditation, and insurance requirements as defined in the *Passenger Transport Regulation 2009 as amended*.
2. To provide the Hirer with a clean, well presented, roadworthy and reliable vehicle to meet the standard required by the booking.
3. To ensure the Driver is licensed, authorised, trained, sufficiently knowledgeable and competent to perform the charter to the standard required by the booking.
4. To ensure the Driver is in Company uniform, tidy, groomed, well presented, fit and capable of performing the duties required of him or her.

Responsibilities - The Driver.

Prior to leaving the depot;

1. The Driver will ensure that he/she knows all the details of the charter as per the drivers work ticket and customer movement details, e.g., Tour Itinerary, Vehicles, Customer, times, locations and destinations.
2. The Driver will ensure that he/she is competent and capable of carrying out the charter to the hirer's expectations.
3. The Driver will ensure that he/she is fit, well, rested and able to undertake the charter allocated.
4. The driver shall ensure he/she has been allocated a vehicle with correct seating capacity and additional facilities as required by the Hirer.

5. The Driver will perform the Vehicle Safety Management Inspection as per the Charter Management Sheet to ensure that the vehicle is free from visual defects and damage, and that it is suitable and capable of performing the charter requirements.

6. The Driver will pay particular attention to ensure that the vehicle is clean, full of fuel, oil and coolant, shall visually ensure all wheel and wheel nuts are secure, that tyres are correctly inflated and have sufficient tread depth.

7. The Driver shall ensure all additional requirements required by the hirer (such as air conditioning, toilets and toiletry provisions, audio visual, microphones, hot water, morning tea provisions and tables) are available and functioning correctly.

8. The Driver will ensure that regulatory accreditations or authorities are displayed and that he/she carries and compiles and/or completes any necessary resources such as itinerary, maps, reference material, GPS, Phone, Two way Radio, logs, log books, and/or Tachographs as required by law and/or Compass Tours.

At the commencement and duration of the Charter

1. The Driver will make contact with the Hirers nominated responsible person, identify the company, driver and vehicle are in attendance then confirm all details of the charter are correct before departure.

2. The Driver will have a friendly disposition, treat all passengers with respect and make every effort to ensure that the passengers enjoy a safe and comfortable journey.

3. The driver will assist any persons requiring assistance to board or disembark the coach at the reasonable request of the nominated responsible person as per manual handling guidelines set out in Compass Tours OH & S Policy.

4. The Driver will assist the Hirer with any reasonable request for assistance or may, to seek clarification, contact the company's operations for assistance or authorisation with respect of such requests. (These include changes to vehicle requirements, the itinerary, time extensions or matters arising which may involve additional services or charges)

5. The Driver will ensure that all passengers are seated in accordance with the legal seating capacity of the bus, that all passengers are, and remain seated and belted, safely and properly, and that all luggage is stowed and secured correctly.

6. The Driver may direct "without prejudice" passengers to allocate different seating positions during the charter to comply with the vehicle manufacturers mass and weight limits and those of the state regulatory authorities (EG Roads and Maritime Dept.).

7. The Driver will load and unload reasonable sized luggage,
(Refer to "Carriage of Luggage ")

8. The Driver will load luggage starting at the rear of the vehicle's luggage compartment working towards the front luggage compartments with hard or large luggage on the bottom and soft or fragile items on top to comply with Compass Tours Luggage handling and OH&S procedures, the manufacturers mass and weight distribution limits and those set by the states regulatory authority. (E.g. Roads and Maritime Dept.)

9. The Driver may ask for the assistance of the Hirer to handle large, awkward or heavy objects of luggage as identified in the section "Carriage of Luggage"

10. The Driver will separate Day Bags from Overnight luggage. Day Bags will be accessible by passengers at each stop by asking the Driver. Overnight luggage can generally only be accessed on arrival at final destination or by the “Responsible Person”. (Refer to “Carriage of Luggage”)

11. The Driver will abide by all road and traffic rules, and shall not under any circumstance breach any laws in relation to driving hours.

Responsibilities - The Hirer(s)

All Hirers

Prior to commencement of the Charter

1. The Hirer must compile a manifest listing the names and addresses and emergency contact of all passengers, a copy of which must be carried by the Hirer’s nominated “Responsible Person” travelling with the group on each vehicle. This manifest must be carried for the duration of the charter in case of emergency as required by the Passenger Transport Act 2009.

2. The Hirer or Group must nominate at least one adult person (over 18) to be the “Responsible Person” for each vehicle during the charter and identify themselves to be that “Responsible Person” and point of contact for the Driver.

At the commencement and duration of the Charter

1. The Hirers nominated “Responsible Person” will make contact with the Driver, identify the total number of passengers, and then confirm all details of the charter are correct before departure.

2. The “nominated” responsible person shall exchange name and contact phone number with the driver at the commencement of the charter, to be immediately recorded on the driver’s charter management sheet for reference by an authorised officer.

3. The “nominated” person shall be responsible for the acceptable behaviour and well-being of the passengers both in and around the vehicle and shall ensure all passengers that board and disembark from the vehicle, proceed quietly, timely and in an orderly manner, once the vehicle is stationary, and it is safe to do so. Provision must be made for calculating the passenger manifest by the hirer and driver before entering the vehicle and for the subsequent allocation of seating. (E.g. lines or grouping)

4. The nominated “Responsible Person” in the case of any reasonable request concerning any aspect of the charter, must first notify the driver of such request for assistance. Should the Driver deem the request be outside their scope or capabilities to assist, that the “Responsible Person” ask the Driver to report the matter immediately to the Compass Tours, or to immediately report the matter to the hirer.

5. **Smoking, drug use, eating** (including lollies and chewing gum) or **drinking** (including tea, coffee and alcohol) are not permitted, to be taken on, or consumed on the bus/coach. (The drinking of bottled water or eating strictly for the provision of legal medicinal purposes that cannot be performed during stops is exempt from this rule).

6. The seating capacity of the bus/coach must not under any circumstance be exceeded, with only one adult person to each adult person space. (For children seating capacity refer to School and Youth Groups section).

7. If toilet facilities are required for passengers the company must be informed at the time of booking the bus/coach, in order to ensure that a suitable vehicle is supplied.

8. If luggage needs to be carried with the passengers, the Company will be informed at the time of booking the bus/coach, in order to ensure that a suitable vehicle is supplied.

9. Should the bus/coach be seat belt equipped, all passengers must wear the seat belts at all times except when utilising on board toilet facilities.

10. Standing passengers are not permitted.

11. Passenger must remain seated and wholly within the bus/coach, whilst in transit at all times with the exception of, the responsible person may stand to supervise, conduct business, collect monies or one passenger at a time using the toilet facilities on the vehicle

12. The aisle of the bus/coach, or emergency exits must not be obstructed by any means.

13. Excessive noise or behaviour that could distract the driver from the safe execution of his duties as driver will not be tolerated. Any disruption will be reported by the driver to the "Responsible Person" and must be dealt with immediately. Should the behaviour continue, the driver reserves the right to deal appropriately with the matter by refusing to carry such persons; an Authorised Company representative may terminate the charter or requesting the assistance of the Police.

Under 18's Groups.

In addition to the above stated responsibilities and policies, the following apply.

1. School students, or groups with any persons under 18 years of age, must have at least one adult travelling, who will be the nominated "Responsible Person" for the behaviour and well-being of the passengers.

2. The nominated "Responsible Person", should they be solely responsible, be seated in a position to directly observe and monitor the behaviour all passengers in the vehicle.

3. If the nominated "Responsible Person" is required to occupy the front seats or downstairs of a two level vehicles, they must delegate this authority to another supervising adult/s that is in a position to observe and monitor all passengers coach including the rear or upper decks of the vehicle.

4. Children less than 12 years of age may be legally accommodated in buses with bench seats only, (Not coaches) at the ratio of 3 children to a seat designed to accommodate 2 adults.

5. If an adult is occupying one place in a 2 adult designed seat, then one only additional person may occupy that seat.

6. The rear seat, where designed to accommodate 5 adults, may be occupied by 7 children less than 12 years of age.

7. The bus must not exceed its legal adult seating capacity.

8. If luggage needs to be carried with the passengers, the Company will be informed at the time of booking the bus/coach, in order to ensure a suitable vehicle is supplied.

9. Standing passengers will not be carried, excepting in the case of a charter for a school sports or similar for a short distance not exceeding 10 km, and where the bus does not exceed 80 kph. The bus must not exceed its legal standing capacity. Coaches cannot carry standing passengers under any circumstance.

Note: The above mentioned points are a requirements of Compass Tours and as required by the Passenger Transport Act 2009 as amended.

Carriage of Luggage.

1. Luggage (other than soft hand luggage that will fit wholly within overhead luggage racks or compartment), must only be carried in specifically designed and designated luggage areas under the coach.

2. Soft Hand luggage placed within overhead luggage racks or compartments must not contain any food (including lollies or chewing gum) or drink (including tea, coffee or alcohol) that can, or is likely to be consumed on the bus/coach.

3. Day bags containing daily provisions and/or food supplies are to be identified by the nominated “Responsible Person” to the driver so it can be separated from Overnight Luggage. Day bags placed under the coach during the charter can be accessed at any time the vehicle stops by asking the driver.

4. Overnight luggage placed under coach by the Driver can only be accessed on request of the *nominated Responsible Person* for the reasonable necessary purpose of emergency retrieval of personal effects to assist in loss prevention, damage, excessive handling and displacement of large multiple amounts of luggage. The Driver may ask for the assistance of the “Responsible Person” to perform this task.

5. The maximum weight of any personal luggage carried shall not exceed 15 kilograms, and its dimensions shall not exceed those that can easily be carried by hand by the passenger conveying the luggage.

6. Large items of luggage must not be carried loose in the saloon of the bus/coach

7. The aisle of the bus/coach or emergency exits or air conditioning ducts must not under any circumstance be obstructed.

8. Once designated luggage areas are full or the vehicle has reached its manufacturers vehicle mass or weight distribution limits, alternate arrangements must be made by the hirer or by contacting Compass Tours to organise transport of the excess luggage. (Charges may apply)

9. Luggage containing any food (including fruit) must be declared to any authorised State or Federal Officer if requested.

10. For any special luggage requirements (such as fragile, awkward or breakable items) the Company must be informed at the time of booking the bus/coach, in order to ensure that a suitable vehicle is supplied or alternative freight forwarding is organised.

Emergency Procedures.

Evacuation of Vehicle.

The company / driver may alter any part of the itinerary including vehicle direction and time to provide a safe location, for the provision of emergency services or infrastructure to commence an evacuation.

The bus/coach may be required to be evacuated under the following circumstances:

1. At the instruction of the Driver, an authorised Company officer, a police officer, or any other person having reasonable cause and authority so to instruct.
2. If there is a risk to passengers whilst any repairs or adjustments are made to the bus/coach.
3. The vehicle suffers an unforeseen mechanical defect or breakdown.
4. If there is a risk of fire or explosion.
5. If a suspicious package is found or believed to be on or attached to the Bus / coach.
6. Post incident or accident.
7. Natural disaster

Procedure for Evacuating Bus.

Evacuation of the bus/coach may be instigated by one of the afore mentioned events, should proceed quietly, quickly and in an orderly fashion once the vehicle is stationary, and it is safe to do so.

On coach evacuation may be instigated by;

1. The direct instruction of the Driver or if incapacitated, the nominated responsible person or person delegated by the responsible person.

Evacuation will be by;

1. The bus/coach door(s) if they are able to be opened, unobstructed and it is safe to do so.
2. If evacuation is not practicable by the door(s), thence by an available marked Emergency Exit.
3. Once out of the vehicle, assembly shall be at a safe location sufficient distance from the vehicle, this distance being dependent on the circumstances.
4. The nominated person responsible in charge, will account for all the passengers, attend to their needs, and keep order.
- 5., The Driver will be the last person to leave the vehicle, and will oversee the safe assembly and accounting for the passengers. This task may delegate to the "Responsible Person" if the Driver incapacitated or involved in essential emergency activity.
6. The Driver will render such assistance as he is capable of, if requested.

7. The company shall if circumstances permit effectively deal with the event or if available find a replacement vehicle as soon as practicable thereafter to allow the journey to continue unless directed otherwise by Police or Authorised Officer.

8. The Driver must report all incidents involving evacuation to the management of Compass Tours, by medium of either two way radio or mobile phone, followed up by a written incident report, to the Company's office, at the end of the charter.

9. This incident report shall include all details, such as, where, when, why, who the hiring group is, person in charge, person instructing evacuation, and names of persons injured or under duress, names, addresses and phone numbers of witnesses or involved parties.