




Secretary of State for Transport



The Rt Hon Mark Harper MP

Biography
Mark Harper was appointed Secretary of State for Transport on 25 October 2022.


Previously, he served as

- Chief Whip (Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury) from May 2015 until 14 July 2016.
- Minister for Political and Constitutional Reform from May 2010 until September 2012.
- Minister for Immigration from September 2012 until February 2014
- Minister for Disabled People from July 2014 until May 2015.

He was elected Conservative MP for the Forest of Dean in May 2005.

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Parliamentary Under Secretary of State



Richard Holden MP

Biography
Richard Holden was appointed Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Transport on 28 October 2022. He was elected as the MP for North West Durham in 2019.

He served on the Public Accounts Committee from 2019-2021 and on the European Statutory Instruments Committee until his appointment. He has been part of UK parliamentary delegations to international bodies for democracy, such as the Council of Europe and the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

He was a parliamentary private secretary to DCMS, then briefly at DfT and DfE.

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Taxis and PHVs (Safeguarding and Road Safety) Act 2022


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Overview of the Act

The Act seeks to improve information-sharing between licensing authorities.

The Act does two things:

1. Requires licensing authorities to report serious safeguarding and road safety concerns about a driver to the authority that issued the licence so they can consider whether to suspend/revoke the driver's licence.
2. Mandates the recording of driver licence refusals, suspensions and revocations on a database.



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Next steps...

The Government will commence the second part of the Act in due course.

- The Secretary of State will announce the designated database provider for the Act. Using the database will become mandatory for all licensing authorities in England once the Act is commenced.
- The Department will update the statutory guidance for the Act on GOV.UK before commencement. The guidance will help licensing authorities understand the new legal requirements upon them when assessing each taxi or PHV driver licence application.

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Taxis and PHVs (Disabled Persons) Act 2022

Department for Transport

Overview of the Bill

The Act, which commenced on 28th June 2022, amended the taxi and PHV sections of the Equality Act 2010.

- In amending the Equality Act 2010, the Act expanded the rights and protections for wheelchair and assistance dog users so that any disabled person has specific rights to access and receive assistance when using a taxi or PHV, with the protection of not being charged extra.
- The Act also placed duties on PHV operators not to refuse a booking from, or on behalf of, a disabled person because they are disabled.




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Next Steps

The government will continue to review the accessibility of the taxi and PHV sector so that disabled people can travel easily and confidently in these services. In particular:

- We will amend the Equality Act 2010 (Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles) (Passengers in Wheelchairs – Notices of Exemption) Regulations 2017
- We will also legislate on mandating disability awareness training, when Parliamentary time allows. And, as part of this, we will continue to promote the Department’s REAL Disability Awareness Training modules for taxi and PHV drivers, which are available on gov.uk.

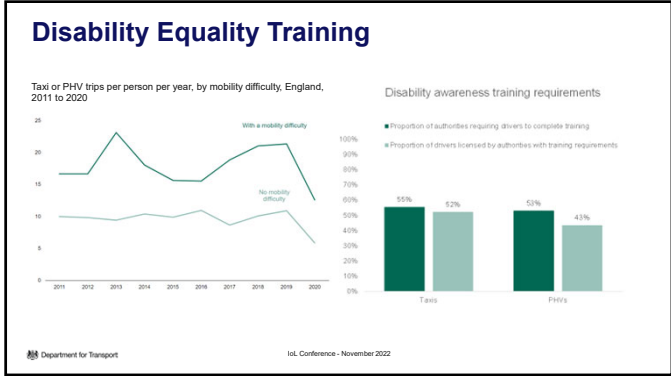


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REAL Disability Equality Training Programme

Department for Transport



REAL Disability Equality Training Programme

The REAL disability equality training programme has been created on behalf of the Department for Transport to improve the sector's confidence and skills in delivering inclusive journeys for disabled passengers.

REAL is the DfT's ready-made package of training content designed to help make travel inclusive and accessible for everyone using all modes of public transport.

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Best Practice Guidance Consultation

Department for Transport

Overview of the Best Practice Guidance

The Department has consulted on revised Best Practice Guidance to support licensing authorities and bring greater consistency.

- Sector has changed significantly since the last version in 2010 and so there are significant changes too.
- Consultation was launched on 28 March and ran until 20 June.
- We received over 500 responses and provided detailed argument both for and against many of the proposals.
- The responses are being considered and the final version of the Guidance will be issued in due course.
- Sits alongside the Statutory Standards - these are unchanged.



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Levelling Up White Paper

Department for Transport

Taxi and PHV licensing powers

The Levelling Up the United Kingdom white paper published in February included a commitment to explore whether changing the level of licensing in England would be beneficial.

“The UK Government will also explore transferring control of taxi and private hire vehicle licensing to both combined authorities and upper-tier authorities. Taxis and private hire vehicles are a key part of local transport systems, so this would allow LTAs to fully integrate these modes into their Local Transport Plans.”



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Looking ahead...

- Publishing final version of the Best Practice Guidance
- Taxis and PHVs (Safeguarding and Road Safety) Act 2022
- Taxis and PHVs (Disabled Persons) Bill 2022
- Reviewing the level of licensing
- The commitment to introduce national standards, increased enforcement powers and establish a national licensing database remains.

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Questions

There is a new page on GOV.UK which collates guidance and other useful material in single place to help the sector find this information.
www.gov.uk/government/collections/licensing-of-taxis-and-phvs-for-local-authorities-in-england

Further questions may be sent to taxis@dft.gov.uk

We are unable to give detailed legal answers to any questions. Licensing authorities should seek their own legal advice.

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