Passenger Transportation Board
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Operating areas

Context

Section 28(3) of the Act allows the Board to establish the terms and conditions of licences for passenger directed vehicle authorizations (PDVAs) and transportation network services authorizations (TNSAs), including the geographic areas in which licensees may pick up and drop off passengers. The Board regulates operating areas to balance adequate service levels that meet public need while maintaining a sustainable passenger transportation industry.

The Board's Operating Areas policy describes the acceptable ways in which applicants for a new or amended special authorization should provide the Board with proposed passenger pick-up and drop-off locations. These originating and destination areas should be easily understood by licensees, passengers, and enforcement officers. This allows the Board to clearly specify operating areas in the terms and conditions of licence of approved special authorizations.

Applicability

This policy applies to:

- New or amended applications for PDVAs and TNSAs.

This policy does not apply to:

- Applications for inter-city bus authorizations

Policy

Passenger directed vehicle authorizations

Applicants or licensees for a PDVA must indicate in their applications the operating areas they propose to provide service in. Clearly defined operating areas help the Board consider factors such as public need and sound economic conditions in its decision-making process.

Acceptable ways of describing operating areas include municipalities, regional districts, and highway corridors. Electoral boundaries, improvement districts, water districts, or other less common geographic references will not be accepted to define an originating area or destination area.

Highway corridors

The Board prefers this approach for operators providing transportation services in communities outside the Lower Mainland. Most services operate from a hub and its surrounding areas. Thus, operating areas may be expressed as covering points on a highway corridor between certain communities or other readily identifiable landmarks.

When an operating area includes reference to a highway corridor, the originating or destination area will include pick-up and drop-off points at locations and places located on or accessed directly from a specified section of highway.

For example, “transportation of passengers may only originate from City X and the surrounding area which extends south to Highway A where it intersects with Highway B; east on Highway B to where it intersects with Highway C; north on Highway C to where it intersects with Highway D; and west on Highway D to where it intersects with Highway A.”

Municipalities and regional districts

For many existing licences, originating areas are expressed as a “municipality and X number of road kilometers from the municipality.” Under such circumstances, using the name of a village, town, city,

regional district, or any other identifiable place means an area within the legal boundary of that place. If a boundary changes, the new boundaries are deemed to apply to any existing licences.

If the term “road kilometers” is used to describe an originating area, it means the maximum distance that a licence holder may travel by highway and by a ferry that crosses a body of fresh water. It does not include any distance travelled by a ferry that crosses a body of salt water, unless specified by the Board. Expressing operating area borders through intersection highways or roads is preferred over the “road kilometers” approach.

When reviewing an application from an existing licensee or new applicant, the Board may re-write the originating area using the highway corridor or regional district approach. Generally, licensees will be given an opportunity to comment on the wording before it is adopted.

Originating areas

An originating area of “anywhere in British Columbia” will not be accepted. The Board requires applicants to propose specific originating areas so that it can properly assess and balance adequate supply to meet public need while maintaining sound economic conditions for the passenger transportation industry in a given operating area.

Destination areas

A destination area of “anywhere in British Columbia” will be accepted, though applicants may choose to define their destination areas more specifically. Licensees may not pick up passengers outside of their defined originating areas unless they have terms and conditions of licence that allow for either return or reverse trips, which are described below.

Transportation hubs

If an applicant wishes to serve an airport, ferry terminal, or other transportation hub, they must confirm it is in the operating area(s) being proposed. If not, it must be included separately as an originating or destination area (or both).

Return Trips and reverse trips

Applicants may also apply for terms and conditions that allow them to offer return trips and reverse trips. The application package should explain why the applicant requires these authorizations.

Return trip means that the same passengers may only be returned from where their trip terminates in the destination area to any point in the originating area if the return trip is arranged by the time the originating trip terminates.

Reverse trip allows licensees to pick up passengers in a destination area under either limited or unlimited circumstances, subject to Board approval. This term and condition may state, for example, that the transportation of passengers may only originate in the destination area if the transportation terminates in the originating area and the cost of the trip is billed to an active account held by the licence holder that was established before the trip was arranged.

An unlimited reverse trip authorization is not a common term and condition of licence, especially for vehicles operating in urban areas.

Transportation network service authorizations

The Board has established five Passenger Transportation Regions for persons applying for a new or amended licence to operate vehicles under a TNSA licence. These Regions are also used to support the Board in conducting regional-level policy and statistical analysis for all passenger transportation sectors.

TNS operating areas are described in the Passenger Transportation Regions policy.

TNS applicants must clearly identify the Passenger Transportation Region or Regions they wish to serve as originating areas.

Transportation of TNS passengers may terminate at any point in B.C. Applicants wishing to cross the B.C. border into another province, territory, or U.S. state must apply to do so in their proposed terms and conditions of licence, as part of an application package.

Legislation

28 (3) The board may establish terms and conditions that apply to a special authorization included in a licence, if issued, including, without limitation, terms and conditions respecting any of the following: …

(c) if the licence is to include a passenger directed vehicle authorization; …

(iv) the geographic region in which motor vehicles may be operated under the authorization

(d) if the licence is to include a transportation network services authorization; …

(iii) the geographic region in which motor vehicles may be operated under the authorization

Related topics:

- PT Board Form 2: Proposed Terms and Conditions of Licence for Passenger Directe…
- Transportation network services application package
- Passenger transportation regions policy