



Vehicle Off Road & Defect Reporting Policy

Purpose

This policy sets out how Peters Travel ensures that vehicle defects are identified promptly, reported accurately, assessed correctly, and rectified before a Public Service Vehicle (PSV) is used.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that no vehicle is operated in an unsafe or unroadworthy condition, in accordance with:

- The Public Passenger Vehicles Act 1981
- The Road Traffic Act 1988
- Traffic Commissioner Statutory Guidance and Directions
- DVSA expectations regarding defect management and vehicle control

Defect reporting and Vehicle Off Road (VOR) control are recognised as fundamental safety barriers protecting passengers, drivers, and the public.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All PSVs operated by Peters Travel
- All drivers, including relief or agency drivers (where applicable)
- All journeys, including service, private hire, positioning, and non-service use

It covers defect identification, reporting, assessment, rectification, and return-to-service procedures.

Principles of Defect Management

Peters Travel operates on the following principles:

- Defects must be identified before use wherever possible
- Drivers are encouraged and expected to report defects honestly and promptly
- Safety-critical defects result in immediate VOR
- Vehicles are not returned to service until defects are fully rectified and signed off
- Commercial or scheduling pressures never override safety decisions

Defect reporting is treated as a positive safety behaviour, not a disciplinary issue.

Roles and Responsibilities

Operator Licence Holder

The Operator Licence Holder is responsible for:

- Ensuring effective defect reporting systems are in place
- Providing resources to support timely rectification
- Supporting decisions to remove vehicles from service on safety grounds



- Reviewing defect trends and compliance performance

The Licence Holder remains accountable for vehicle condition at all times.

Transport Manager

The Transport Manager is responsible for:

- Operating and monitoring the defect reporting system
- Assessing reported defects and determining VOR status
- Ensuring defects are rectified appropriately
- Reviewing defect trends and recurring issues
- Escalating serious or repeated concerns to the Licence Holder
- Ensuring no vehicle returns to service without authorisation

The Transport Manager must exercise effective and continuous control over defect management.

Drivers

Drivers are responsible for:

- Conducting daily walkaround checks before first use
- Reporting all defects accurately and without delay
- Immediately reporting any safety-critical defects
- Refusing to operate vehicles they believe to be unsafe
- Cooperating with defect investigation and rectification processes

Drivers must never be pressured to operate a vehicle with an unresolved safety concern.

Daily Walkaround Checks

- Drivers must complete a daily walkaround check before first use of the vehicle
- Checks must cover all safety-critical items, including:
 - Brakes, steering, tyres, wheels
 - Lights, mirrors, windscreen, wipers
 - Doors, steps, handrails, emergency exits
 - Seatbelts and passenger safety equipment

Findings must be recorded clearly and accurately. If a defect is identified, the vehicle must not be used until the defect is assessed.

Defect Reporting Process

- Defects are reported using approved defect reporting systems (paper or electronic)
- Reports must clearly describe:
 - The nature of the defect
 - When it was identified

- Whether it affects safety
 - Defects must be submitted to the Transport Manager without delay
- Incomplete or unclear reports must be clarified before decisions are made.

Defect Categorisation -

Defects are categorised as:

➤ **Safety-Critical Defects**

Defects that affect safe operation, including but not limited to:

- Braking system faults
- Steering or suspension defects
- Tyre damage
- Door or emergency exit failures
- Seatbelt defects

Safety-critical defects result in immediate Vehicle Off Road (VOR).

➤ **Non-Safety-Critical Defects**

Defects that do not immediately affect safety but require rectification, such as:

- Minor body damage
- Interior trim issues
- Non-essential equipment faults

Non-safety-critical defects must still be rectified within an appropriate timescale.

➤ **Vehicle Off Road (VOR) Control**

When a vehicle is declared VOR:

- It must not be used for any purpose
- Keys may be removed or controlled where necessary
- VOR status must be recorded
- Rectification must be arranged without delay

Only the Transport Manager (or authorised deputy) may remove VOR status.

➤ **Defect Rectification and Sign-Off**

- Defects must be rectified by competent persons
- Repairs must meet legal and safety standards
- Evidence of rectification must be provided
- The Transport Manager must confirm the defect has been resolved
- The vehicle may only return to service after formal authorisation

Temporary repairs are only permitted where lawful, safe, and documented.



➤ **Monitoring and Trend Analysis**

Defect data is reviewed to identify:

- Recurring defects
- Vehicle reliability issues
- Driver reporting trends
- Maintenance provider performance

Findings are used to improve maintenance planning and training.

➤ **Escalation and Intervention**

Issues must be escalated where:

- Repeated defects occur
- Safety concerns are ignored or disputed
- Maintenance standards are inadequate
- There is risk to passenger or public safety

The Licence Holder may intervene directly where necessary.

➤ **Records and Retention**

The following records are maintained:

- Daily defect reports
- VOR logs
- Rectification records
- Authorisation to return to service

Records are retained in line with GMTR and DVSA requirements.

Review and Continuous Improvement

This policy is reviewed:

- Annually
- Following serious defects or incidents
- Following regulatory updates or guidance changes

The defect reporting system will evolve as operational experience increases.

Position: Company Director - Peter's Travel Ltd

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