

Taxi and Limousine Industry Assistance Scheme Amendment Regulation 2017

Explanatory notes for SL 2017 No. 45

made under the

Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994

Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994

General Outline

Short title

Taxi and Limousine Industry Assistance Scheme Amendment Regulation 2017

Authorising law

Sections 11 and 44 of the *Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994*

Sections 155 and 155A of the *Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994*

Policy objectives and the reasons for them

On 11 August 2016, the Queensland Government announced its program for reform of the personalised transport industry, including taxi, limousine and ride-booking services.

The first stage of the reforms involved immediate amendments to legalise booked hire services operating without a taxi service licence while preserving the 'rank and hail' market for taxis. The second stage of the reform program involves comprehensive reform through primary and subordinate legislation amendments to introduce a new regulatory framework for personalised transport in Queensland. The Transport and Other Legislation (Personalised Transport Reform) Amendment Bill 2017 was introduced into Parliament on 21 March 2017 to implement the second stage reforms. Implementation is proposed to commence from mid-2017 subject to passage of the Bill.

To accompany the reform program, the Queensland Government announced a \$100 million Industry Adjustment Assistance Package (IAAP) to assist the existing taxi and limousine industry to adjust to structural change in the personalised transport market. Transitional assistance payments have been distributed to eligible holders of taxi service licences and limousine service licences. It is now proposed to distribute an industry hardship fund as the other main component of the IAAP in order to alleviate hardship

experienced by the taxi and limousine industry as a result of the recent changes in the market.

Achievement of policy objectives

The *Taxi and Limousine Industry Assistance Scheme Regulation 2016* provides a scheme for administration of transitional assistance payments. The Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority (QRAA), as specialist administrator of government financial assistance programs, has been appointed to administer the transitional assistance scheme as an approved scheme under the *Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994*.

It is proposed to amend the *Taxi and Limousine Industry Assistance Scheme Regulation 2016* to provide a scheme for administration of industry hardship assistance. QRAA will also administer this scheme. Payments will be made to holders of taxi service licences and limousine service licences, and operators of taxi services and limousine services, subject to eligibility criteria and other provisions of the scheme.

Consistency with policy objectives of authorising law

The amendments are consistent with the policy objectives of the authorising laws.

Inconsistency with policy objectives of other legislation

The amendments are not inconsistent with the policy objectives of other legislation.

Alternative ways of achieving policy objectives

It is appropriate to legislate elements of the IAAP to provide certainty and ensure the integrity of the administration of financial assistance. It is also necessary for the industry hardship assistance scheme to be approved under a regulation made under the *Rural and Regional Adjustment Act 1994* in order for QRAA to administer the scheme.

Benefits and costs of implementation

The provision of industry hardship assistance will assist existing licence holders and operators within the taxi and limousine industry to respond to greater customer choice in the booked hire services market.

One-off funding of \$100 million has been allocated for the IAAP, \$26.7 million of which has been allocated to the industry hardship fund.

The costs to government of administering the industry hardship assistance scheme will be met from existing departmental resources.

Consistency with fundamental legislative principles

The amendments are consistent with fundamental legislative principles.

Consultation

Following announcement of the personalised transport reform program, the Department of Transport and Main Roads established the Personalised Transport Industry Reference Group to ensure ongoing stakeholder engagement and input into implementation of the reform program, including the IAAP. Broad consultation was also undertaken by the Transportation and Utilities Committee on the IAAP in late 2016 during its examination of the Heavy Vehicle National Law and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. A series of workshops was also held in late 2016/early 2017 to ensure broader stakeholder engagement and consultation, including workshops on the IAAP. The industry hardship assistance scheme has been designed to reflect feedback from industry during consultation.

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