



Rental Vehicle Operators

Code of Practice for Informing Overseas Drivers

Introduction

The New Zealand rental vehicle sector, in partnership with Tourism Industry Aotearoa (TIA) and Rental Vehicle Association New Zealand (RVA), has developed a Code of Practice for rental operators in New Zealand.

The aim of this Code is to establish a set of agreed standards and practices for operators to follow when educating and assessing visitor preparedness for driving in New Zealand.

While the responsibility for safe driving remains primarily with the hirer, the rental sector recognises that it has a role to play in informing visiting drivers and preparing them for road conditions in New Zealand.

The Code provides a set of minimum standards that can be applied to any rental vehicle company in New Zealand. Also provided are Good Practice suggestions that support the implementation of the minimum requirement.

Implementation

All rental operators within New Zealand that provide rental vehicles to visiting drivers will be asked to sign up to the Code of Practice. As this is a voluntary code, there is no legal mandate for enforcement. It is envisaged that long-term membership/affiliation of industry bodies including TIA, RVA, Tourism Export Council, Qualmark and Tourism New Zealand will be subject to the operator's compliance with the Code of Practice.

A quality assurance system will be developed to assess operators' compliance against the Code.

Operators should make all company policies regarding Visiting Drivers available to hirers by having available on request and/or placing on their website.

Operators are expected to be compliant with all legal requirements relating to Visiting Drivers including certification to operate and checking of overseas driver licences.

By signing up to the Code of Practice operators agree to be an active advocate and supporter of safe driving in NZ, including a commitment to safer vehicles through adoption of technological improvements over time.

This Code of Practice will be effective from 1 October 2015.

Code of Practice - Definitions and Interpretations

<i>Good Practice</i>	Provides supporting information to assist operators to implement the Code
<i>Operators</i>	Any organisation providing rental vehicles for hire to international drivers and operating under appropriate licence from NZTA.
<i>NZTA</i>	New Zealand Transport Agency
<i>Third Parties</i>	Agencies such as wholesalers who act as booking agents for the rental operator

Code of Practice Stage One: Pre-Arrival

Rental operators will provide pre-arrival information to visitors on New Zealand road rules and what is different about driving in New Zealand.

- 1.1. Operators will make information on NZ road rules and driving conditions available in a prominent position on their .nz homepage/landing page. The information will be visible and promote the DriveSafe logo. Minimum requirement is a direct link to www.DriveSafe.org.nz

Good Practice:

- Put the information on the organisation's home page
- Use the DriveSafe tile to link through to the website (tile available from TIA/RVA).
- Provide the information in the language of the hirer
- Encourage the hirer to consider if self-drive is an appropriate option for travel
- Provide direct links to videos on safe driving in New Zealand
- Provide direct links to the ten key road rules and NZTA's 'Driving in New Zealand' (<http://www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/driving-in-nz/docs/driving-in-nz.pdf>)

- 1.2. Operators will provide educational information to the hirer upon booking confirmation. Minimum requirement is a link to www.DriveSafe.org.nz. Operators must encourage visitors who are arriving on long-haul flights to stay overnight in that destination.

Good Practice:

- Advise the hirer of the requirements for driver's licence translation (<http://www.nzta.govt.nz/licence/residents-visitors/driving-nz.html>)
- Advise the hirer to investigate the driving conditions in NZ before arrival
- Provide hirer within 3-14 days prior to arrival information to re-emphasise the New Zealand road rules, plus what the hirer may need to prepare for at the vehicle check-out on arrival in New Zealand.
- Provide the information in the language of the hirer
- Provide information in a welcoming and friendly manner
- Use videos, pictures, and diagrams to provide the messages

- 1.3. Operators will provide educational information on safe driving to Third Parties (wholesalers) to pass on as part of the booking confirmation process.

Good Practice:

- Provide the same information as to a direct hirer (refer 1.2 above)

Code of Practice Stage Two: Vehicle Check-Out

The vehicle check-out is a critical stage. Operators are able to confirm directly with the hirer they have been informed of New Zealand road rules and driving conditions, and undertake an assessment of the driver's preparedness.

- 2.1. Operators will have a mandatory policy to assess the driver's preparedness. Operators will require at-risk hirers* to acknowledge the receipt and understanding of road safety material provided to them which must include NZTA's 'Driving in New Zealand'¹.

*At-risk hirers include all first time visitors with the exception of those driving on Australian and UK licences

Good Practice:

- Use the recommended questions (refer appendix) for assessing driver preparedness
- Hand out road rules to all visiting drivers
- Ask hirer to sign a declaration they have received road safety material
- Provide suitable training to staff re providing advice and information

- 2.2. Operators will have an internal process for managing situations where there are concerns about driver preparedness, from providing more information through to denying hire and suggesting alternative transport.

Good Practice:

- Ensure staff have the ability to escalate concerns to a supervisor and/or are provided sufficient support to make decisions as required

¹ Available Free from NZTA

Code of Practice **Stage Three: On-Road**

- 3.1. Operators will, within all hire vehicles for overseas drivers, place 'Keep Left' stickers in a location that is visible for the driver and include the NZTA brochure 'Driving in New Zealand' (if not already provided at Check-out Desk).

Good Practice:

- Attach steering wheel tags to the wheel of the hire vehicle

- 3.2. When contacted by Police in relation to poor driving behaviour of a visitor, operators should consider cancellation of the hire contract as a response.

- 3.3. When advised by the Police of a driving complaint about the hirer (as reported through the *555 network), operators will forward the information to the hirer as soon as practicable and provide further information/material on New Zealand road rules.

Good Practice:

- Contact the hirer by phone prior to forwarding information by email, as the hirer may not be checking emails frequently
- Advise the hirer that the operator and the NZ Police take unsafe driving practices very seriously and the potential consequences of further complaints or direct observation by the Police e.g. risk of having their rental agreement terminated
- Have a procedure for suggesting alternative forms of transport to the visitor in the event that their contract is cancelled at check-out or when on-road

Appendix - General Information

1. Resources & Educational Material

A wide range of educational material and resources for educating drivers is available. These resources have been developed by government agencies, industry bodies and commercial operators. Information on the material and resources is available in the New Zealand Rental Vehicle Operator Guidelines for Communicating with Visiting Drivers developed by TIA and RVA.

<https://tia.org.nz/advocacy/tia-projects/visiting-driver-safety/>

<http://www.rentalvehicle.co.nz/>

2. Recommended assessment questions

a.	I am familiar with NZ road rules	Yes	No
b.	I am familiar with the DriveSafe website	Yes	No
c.	I have driven regularly in my home country in the past year	Yes	No
d.	I feel well prepared to drive in NZ	Yes	No
e.	This will be my first time driving on the left hand side of the road	Yes	No
f.	I have driven a vehicle of similar size or in the same transmission (auto/manual)	Yes	No

The recommended questions are available in English, Mandarin, German and French. Please contact TIA/RVA for copies.