

30 June 2006

To: All Staff

From: Personnel (Services) Branch

## **STAFF TRAVEL POLICY- TAXIS**

The purpose of this minute is to remind staff of guidance contained in the NICS Handbook together with details of Departmental policy on the use of taxis for official travel.

This follows a recent review that showed an upward trend in the use of taxis.

Travel by taxi is expensive and contrary to the Department's Green Strategy which encourages use of public transport. Taxis should therefore only be used in the most exceptional of circumstances.

Before a request for a taxi is made staff should consider alternative options including the use of public transport, the availability of the NICS car pool or the use of a private vehicle. Essential car users who have access to car parking facilities should only require taxis in exceptional circumstances.

Taxi fares may be reimbursed **only** in the following circumstances:-

- (a) for journeys for which there is **no other suitable method of transport, including public transport** and walking is not an option (e.g. travel within City Centre should normally be excluded). Staff should note there have been major improvements to the public transport system with the introduction of the high frequency Metro bus service within Belfast City Centre and surrounding areas, and buses on all routes covered by the service are now guaranteed, every 7 minutes, on average.

- (b) when heavy luggage or equipment has to be transported to or from the place of departure or arrival;
- (c) where the saving of official time is important.

**If it is necessary for an officer to use a taxi, prior approval must be sought from the Head of Branch (HOB), who is responsible for ensuring that the request is in accordance with Departmental policy, before a formal request is forwarded to Personnel (Services) Branch on the attached pro-forma. Personnel (Services) Branch is normally responsible for booking taxis for travel within Northern Ireland.**

**Staff may only book directly, where arrangements have to be made out of hours, at short notice or where travel by taxi is necessary on official business in Great Britain or abroad. In these circumstances the travel will require line management approval and a receipt, must accompany the claim form. It should also be noted that whoever makes the booking is responsible for paying the bill. (NICS Staff Handbook Chapter 3 Para 3.2.3 refers)**

Personnel (Services) Branch will continue to monitor usage and the costs incurred and will advise Heads of Division accordingly.

MAUREEN DOONAN  
Personnel Services Branch

# TAXI REQUEST FORM

## 1. PASSENGER DETAILS

NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE(S) \_\_\_\_\_

BRANCH \_\_\_\_\_ COST CENTRE \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT NAME (IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE) \_\_\_\_\_ CONTACT No \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. REASON FOR TRAVEL

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 3. DETAILS OF JOURNEY

FROM	To	DAY	DATE	TIME

## 5. APPROVAL ( GRADE 7 LEVEL OR ABOVE)

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_