

Controlled Access Buses (Buses longer than 12.5 metres)

This information sheet tells you:

- where you are permitted to drive a bus or coach that is longer than 12.5 metres and up to 14.5 metres long.

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Regulations

Your job as a driver or owner/operator of a bus or coach is to make sure you know what these regulations are and that you follow them. If you don't follow the regulations you will be breaking the law. This could cost you a lot in fines.

Safe travel

For the safety of others, yourself and your vehicle, you must make sure that you operate your vehicle in a responsible way at all times. Ignoring safety regulations could result in loss of life and income.

What is a controlled access bus

A controlled access bus is a rigid bus or coach that is longer than 12.5 metres but not longer than 14.5 metres. So for example, a 13.5 metre bus is a controlled access bus.

These buses are harder to manoeuvre than standard length buses and so are not suitable to drive on all roads. This is why they are restricted (controlled) access vehicles. They may only travel on roads that have been assessed as suitable for controlled access buses.

If you drive a bus or coach that is up to 12.5 metres long, you may drive on any road, unless there is a load restriction on that road.

Planning your route

First

→ Decide what road or roads you want to travel on.

Then

→ Look up the road or roads on the RTA lists "Routes suitable for controlled access buses" or "Routes NOT suitable for controlled access buses". (These lists are available from the RTA Technical Enquiries Section phone 1300 137 302).

If the road is:

→ On the list "Routes NOT suitable for controlled access buses", you must not use that road.

→ On the list "Routes suitable for controlled access buses", you can use that road.

→ Not on either list, you may assess the road yourself according to RTA guidelines.

What to do if the road is listed as suitable?

Before you set out on your journey, you must notify the RTA Regional Route Co-ordinator, for the region the road runs through, in writing that you are going to use the road. It's important to do this so that the RTA knows who is operating on which roads. If the road conditions change, they will need to let you know.

You only have to tell the RTA before you use the road for the first time — you don't have to tell them every time you use that road.



What to do if the road is not listed?

If the road you want to use is not on either of the RTA lists, "Routes NOT suitable for controlled access buses" or "Routes suitable for controlled access buses", the bus/coach operator has the option to assess the road or roads, according to the RTA guidelines.

Regardless of whether you are a charter operator using the route only occasionally, or whether you are a regular user of the route, you must assess the route.

First

- Assess the road according to the guidelines in the RTA booklet Route assessment for 14.5 metre buses, or
- Ask the RTA to assess the road if it is a State road, or the appropriate local council if it is a local road. The RTA's Regional Route Co-ordinators will be able to tell if the road you want to assess is a State road or a local road.

Then

- If you assess the road yourself and decide the road is suitable, notify the RTA (State roads) or the local council (local roads) in writing 28 days before you travel that you are going to use the road.

You only have to tell the RTA or Council before you use the road for the first time — you don't have to tell them every time you use the road.

You should note that the RTA or local council may still refuse to permit controlled access bus travel on any road.

Essential documents

If you are going to use a self assessed road, carry in your bus/coach, a copy of your route assessment notification. You may be asked to show the document to a Police officer or RTA Inspector Vehicle Regulation (IVR). This is important so that RTA Inspector Vehicle Regulators or the Police know you have complied with the requirements of the controlled access bus notice and route assessment guidelines.

Cost of road and traffic works

Bus/coach operator wishing to make changes to roads, intersections, or traffic devices in order to meet controlled access bus requirements may have to pay for the cost of changes. RTA and councils will not pay for such changes.

If there is a disagreement

If there is a dispute between a bus operator and the RTA or council about the suitability of a road or section of the road, it will be resolved by the relevant Regional Traffic Committee. Regional Traffic Committees are made up of representatives of the RTA, the Police, and local councils.

Detailed information

→ Notice and route assessment guidelines

For detailed information about these regulations, refer to the Interim controlled access bus notice 1998.

You can get a copy of the notice and the booklet "Route Assessment for 14.5 metre Buses" from the RTA Technical Enquiries Section phone 1300 137 302.

You can get a copy of the notice and extra copies of this information sheet from the RTA website www.rta.nsw.gov.au/heavyvehicles or from your local RTA Motor Registry or the RTA Permits Section, Ground Level, 260 Elizabeth Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010.

All previous editions of this information sheet are invalid.

→ Lists of assessed routes

To get a copy of the lists "Routes NOT suitable for controlled access buses" or "Routes suitable for controlled access buses" or to ask whether a route is suitable for a 14.5 metre bus or coach, phone the RTA Technical Enquiries Section (see phone numbers below).

→ Route 'self assessment'

To find out more about how to self assess a route, speak to RTA Technical Enquiries Section. To enquire about making changes to roads, intersections or traffic devices, contact the RTA Technical Enquiries Section phone 1300 137 302 (State roads) or council (local roads).

→ Region boundaries

To assist you determine which RTA region you need to contact the map above shows the boundaries of each RTA region.

Technical enquiries and further information

To find out more about Controlled Access Buses or if you have any questions about the new regulations, or the contents of this information sheet, contact:

The Roads and Traffic Authority
Technical Enquiries Section
 PO Box 1120
 Parramatta NSW 2124

Phone 1300 137 302
Fax 02 9843 3821
Email tech-enq@rta.nsw.gov.au



For further enquiries:



1300 137 302
8am-5pm Mon-Fri and 8am-12pm Sat



www.rta.nsw.gov.au
