



Ministerial Statement to the House of Assembly

Policy for Public Service Vehicles Window Tint
By
The Hon. Shawn G. Crockwell, JP, MP
Minister of Tourism Development and Transport

Friday, 14th March, 2014

Mr. Speaker,

I rise in the House today to announce a new policy under the Transport Control Department for window tint on public service vehicles.

Currently, the statutory prescribed visual transmission for light specifications for vehicles is not less than 70% for the windscreen, not less than 35% for the visor along the top of the windscreen and the forward passenger window and driver side window and not less than 30% for the rear passenger window and rear windscreen; for the avoidance of doubt, the higher the percentage, the greater the light level that can be transmitted through the window.

Mr. Speaker,

Between 2004 and 2008 Toyota Alphard vehicles were imported for use as motor taxis. It was discovered that the vehicles had factory tint that exceeded the statutory requirements. In 2008 the Transport Control Department advised the dealer that although the vehicles had been granted approval for licensing several

years prior, no additional Toyota Alphards would be permitted to be imported since the model was not in compliance with the Motor Car Regulations.

Currently Alphards account for 104 or approximately one fifth of the total number of taxis licensed on the road. The factory window tint on the Alphard is 78% on the windscreen, 73% on the forward passenger window and driver side, and 24% on the rear passenger window and rear windscreen. The rear passenger window and rear windscreen tint are 6% greater than the legal limit.

Mr. Speaker,

The tinted windows give owners of the Alphard vehicles an advantage when servicing certain passengers. They are called upon when there are celebrities on island as well as business sector visitors who are seeking privacy. This puts the other taxi owners at a disadvantage. To compete, they have tinted their windows with an affixed film to the same tint per cent as the Alphards; resulting in the vehicle owners having to remove the film when stopped by the authorities or for licensing. The same per cent of window tint is applied by mini bus owners who also have to remove the tint when confronted by the authorities.

Mr. Speaker,

There are several known advantages of tinted vehicle windows, especially in warmer climates with greater sun exposure. The tinted rear and back windows reduce the ultraviolet light as well as heat and glare from the sun which lends to a more comfortable environment for drivers, who are traversing the roads several hours a day, and their passengers. Owners of Alphards claim that besides protection against heat intrusion, the air conditioning system does not have to work as hard and the vehicle also cools off more quickly, reducing fuel consumption

levels during the summer months. We also know that there are disadvantages to having tinted vehicle windows.

The darker tinted windows could pose security challenges because it could be difficult seeing the occupants of the vehicle. However, the new policy will not impact the current levels of light transmission through the windscreen, forward passenger window and driver side window. Therefore, the driver and front passenger will continue to be clearly visible.

Mr. Speaker,

Since the tint level of the Alphard has been accepted in Bermuda for the last ten years, under Section 20A(1)(c) of the Motor Car (Construction, Equipment and Use) Regulations 1952, which makes provision for the Minister in his discretion to exempt any class of motor car from complying with all or any of the requirements relating to window tint, the Ministry now introduces a policy to allow public service vehicles, namely; mini buses, taxis and limousines to be imported with factory tint, or have tint affixed, to the rear passenger windows and rear windscreen, that are not less than 24%.

Mr. Speaker,

I reiterate that the current prescribed levels for the front windows of the vehicle will not change.

The Policy will come into effect on 1st April, 2014.

Thank You, **Mr. Speaker!**