

TO: New York City Council Speaker Corey Johnson
FROM: New York City Taxi & Limousine Commission
RE: Commuter Van Safety Study for Calendar Year 2020
DATE: June 29, 2021

Pursuant to Local Law 007 of 2017, the Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) submits its annual report for calendar year 2020.

I. Number of Safety-related violations issued by the Commission committed by those operating a commission-licensed commuter van or an unlicensed commuter van

TLC issued 7 summonses to licensed commuter van owners and drivers for traffic-safety-related violations in CY 2020, in addition to 119 violations for unlicensed operation. Of these, 98 were issued to unlicensed owners, and 21 were issued to unlicensed drivers.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, TLC Enforcement shifted its focus since March 2020. Enforcement worked with TLC drivers in providing meals in NYC and with the New York City Sheriff’s Office to distribute COVID educational material to the public at bridge and tunnel crossings and doing COVID-related business inspections. TLC Officers resumed some enforcement activity on October 21, 2020, while also continuing to assist in COVID-related outreach and enforcement.

II. Total Number of collisions involving a licensed TLC commuter van, and to the extent known to the commission, such collisions involving an unlicensed commuter van, disaggregated by those resulting in a fatality, critical injury, or injury of any severity

In calendar year 2020, TLC-licensed commuter vans were involved in 16 collisions.

Collisions involving any injury	3
Collisions involving critical injury	0
Collisions involving a fatality	0

(To determine these numbers, TLC receives collision data from the New York City Police Department (NYPD) and compares that data with license plate numbers on TLC-licensed vehicles).

III. The number of commuter vans, commuter van drivers, and commuter van services licensed or authorized by the Commission, as of December 31, 2020

Commuter Van Authorities	43
Commuter Vans Authorized	635
Commuter Vans Licensed	73
Commuter Van Drivers	170

IV. The number of unlicensed commuter vans operating, to the extent known to the Commission or estimated

The number of unlicensed commuter vans in operation is unknown. In 2020, 115 unlicensed vehicles were summonsed, and 2 unlicensed vans were seized. These numbers reflect the redeployment of TLC Officers to the City’s COVID-related duties in 2020.

V. The Commission’s efforts to ensure commuter vans do not operate on bus routes, including, but not limited to, current enforcement efforts and future plans regarding such effort

In addition to targeted van operations and NYPD joint operations, taking vans off the street to the tow pound has been an integral part of enforcement, and TLC will resume these activities as it transitions from COVID-related duties. TLC will also continue conducting LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) enforcement along the Flatbush corridor in order to catch reckless van operators who speed. TLC Enforcement will also continue joint operations with the Sheriff and MTA police.

VI. The number of commuter vans seized by the Commission

During Calendar Year 2020, the TLC seized 2 commuter vans. TLC Enforcement stopped seizing unlicensed vehicles in March 2020, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There were no new vehicle seizures after March 2020, due to the COVID Pandemic, but these activities will resume in 2021.

As of December 31, 2020, 11 vans were forfeited after a state court proceeding and 15 forfeiture cases were awaiting a final decision by the New York State Supreme Court. Forfeited vehicles are permanently removed from service.

VII. The 20 most utilized commuter van corridors

Commuter vans are not equipped with trip recording data, but based on enforcement data and public comments, vans in the most utilized corridors operate between:

- Sunset Park, Brooklyn and Manhattan
- Flushing, Queens and Manhattan

- Downtown Brooklyn and Kings Plaza
- Parsons Boulevard/Archer Avenue and the Queens-Nassau border Far Rockaway along Mott Avenue and Beach Channel Drive

VIII. Available commuter van ridership, including information on whether commuter vans are being utilized to connect to other mass transit, to the extent known to the Commission

Through Local Law 006 of 2016, City Council eliminated the requirement for a passenger manifest, therefore precise ridership numbers are not available. However, based on a New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) study in 2017 of ridership in the three major markets (Central Brooklyn, Southeast Queens, and Chinatown, Manhattan), it is estimated that daily, 24-hour van ridership may exceed 90,000 passengers. According to DOT, Commuter Vans in the Southeast Queens market operate between predominantly residential neighborhoods and an MTA transit hub where travelers can transfer to bus or subway service. Commuter van services from Jamaica Center connect commuters from that station with Guy R. Brewer/147 Ave, Merrick Blvd, Liberty Ave, and Linden Ave corridors, as well as to Far Rockaway and within the Rockaways via Beach Channel Dr.

IX. The Commission’s efforts to reduce the number of unlicensed commuter vans operating and future plans regarding such efforts

As part of TLC enforcement against illegal vans, the TLC regularly partners with the NYPD and the NYC Sheriff as well. Although this is resource-intensive work, in 2020, TLC Enforcement conducted 99 operations targeting illegal vans, including 7 joint operations with the NYPD. These operations yield summonses against illegal van operators but also against for-hire vehicles doing illegal pickups, which also add to congestion in major van corridors. Removing these vehicles from their owners and keeping them off the road permanently is the best enforcement tool, and TLC has continued its van operations as the TLC officers resume enforcement operations.

X. The number of licenses for commuter vans and commuter van drivers and authorizations for commuter van service that were renewed and rejected, as well as any changes in the number of commuter vans affiliated with each authorized service

Commuter Van Application Totals in CY 2020

	Commuter Van Driver	Commuter Van	Van Authorities

New Applications	14	30	1
License Renewals	47	21	19
Application Denials	0	0	0

Changes in Affiliated Commuter Vans 2018 to 2019

Changes in Affiliated Commuter Vans 2019 to 2020			
Base License Number	Affiliated Base Name	# of Affiliated Vans 2019	# of Affiliated Vans 2020
B80070	EARLY BIRD TRANSPORTATION INC	1	0 (Failed to Renew License)
B80152	ABRAHAM'S TRANSPORTATION SERVICE INC	1	2
B80169	ROYAL ROSE TRANSPORTATION LLC	5	1
B80028	CITY EXPRESS CORP	13	3
B80215	FLEXIBLE LINE INC.	2	0
B80253	PRESTIGE CHOICE TOURS INC.	0	0 (Failed to renew license)
B80012	MONTEGO VAN SERVICE INC.	2	1
B80087	COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS, CORP	15	3
B80025	DESTA TRANSPORTATION	4	0
B80145	ALEXIS VAN LINES INC	2	1
B80179	CITIVAN LINES, CORP.	1	0
B80211	RED COLOR VAN SERVICE INC	6	3
B80195	MILLENNIUM TRANSPORTATION INC.	2	0 (Failed to Renew License)
B80266	E Z AMERICAN VAN LINES INC.	0	0
B80107	FLUSHING VAN SERVICE INC	27	7
Base License Number	Affiliated Base Name	# of Affiliated Vans 2019	# of Affiliated Vans 2020
B80139	SCARLET GIRL VAN LINES INC	2	0
B80140	CONFIDENCE TRANSPORTATION	2	0

B80271	FLUSHING COMMUTER VAN MANAGEMENT CORP	3	3
B80182	EIGHT STAR INC.	13	2
B80191	JAH LOVE	3	0
B80104	J & HE TRANSPORTATION INC	1	1
B80111	HUMMER TRANSPORTATION INC	3	0
B80132	EASY TRANSPORTATION CORP	3	0
B80148	CEDI TRANSPORTATION INC	2	0
B80197	GUYMACK EXPRESS INC	1	0
B80080	PEBBLES TRANSPORTATION INC.	1	1
B80098	SUNSET SERVICE TRANSPORTATION INC	14	2
B80108	L & W EXPRESS VAN SERVICE CORP	23	10
B80267	KOLANJI TRANSPORTATION INC	5	0
B80102	G & E EXPRESS INC	7	3
B80220	HENG TONG TRANSPORTATION INC.	3	1
B80260	LUNAU GROUP LLC	3	3
B80157	YOURS 'N MINE TRANSPORTATION SERVICE, INC.	3	2
B80256	CALLAVAN TRANSPORTATION LLC	4	0
B80100	CITY LINK CORPORATION	3	1
B80101	GRAND APPLE TRANSPORTATION CORP.	9	5
Base License Number	Affiliated Base Name	# of Affiliated Vans 2019	# of Affiliated Vans 2020
B80094	ALPHA VAN LINE	2	0
B80196	B.Q.E BUS SERVICE INC	2	0

B80201	L & H (NY) TRANSPORTATION, INC.	8		3
B80255	ACE-VIP TRANSPORTATION INC.	0		0
B80039	MARIO'S TRANSPORTATION INC.	5		2
B80224	HCWC INC.	2		0 (Failed to Renew License)
B80258	FELLOWSHIP COMMUTERS INC.	1		1
B80272	BROOKLYN VAN LINES, INC.	0		0 (Failed to Renew License)
B80270	YARDIE LINK	0		0
B80276	GOGO BUS TOURS	NA		0
TOTAL VANS			215	65

XI. A discussion of how commuter van service areas are selected

When applying for commuter van licenses, van authorities submit their potential areas of operation to the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT), and DOT approves the commuter van territory based on whether or not there is a public necessity. This process involves mapping and reviewing locations requested by applicants and comparing travel times to other modes, if applicable. The DOT also determines if there are existing bus routes, subways, heavily trafficked areas, or other currently-operating commuter van services along the requested route.

XII. Whether, in the judgment of the Commission, there is a need for commuter vans in a number exceeding the number specified in subdivision r of section 19-504.

Between January 2020 and December 2020, the number of Commuter Vans affiliated to Commuter Van authorities decreased from 215 vans to 65 vans. Accordingly, the TLC does not believe that there is a current need to increase the number of authorized vans specified in section 19-504 (r).