

TO: New York City Council Speaker Adrienne Adams
FROM: New York City Taxi & Limousine Commission
RE: Commuter Van Safety Study for Calendar Year 2023
DATE: June 28, 2024

Pursuant to Local Law 7 of 2017, the Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) submits its annual Commuter Van Safety Study for calendar year (CY) 2023.

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 a total of 75 safety-related violations to commuter vans, including 5 summonses to licensed commuter van owners and drivers for traffic safety violations in CY 2023, in addition to 70 violations for unlicensed operation.

II. Total number of collisions involving a TLC-licensed 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 2023, TLC-licensed commuter vans were involved in 4 collisions.

Collisions involving any injury	1
Collisions involving critical injury	0
Collisions involving a fatality	0

III. The number of commuter vans, commuter van drivers, and commuter van services licensed (meaning the license is active and not suspended) or authorized by the Commission, as of December 31, 2023.

Commuter Van Authorities	11
Commuter Vans Authorized	310
Commuter Vans Licensed	34
Commuter Van Drivers	60

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 2023, 70 violations for unlicensed operations were issued, and 4 unlicensed vans were seized.

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 efforts.

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 continue to engage in these activities. TLC will also continue conducting LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) enforcement along the Flatbush corridor in order to catch reckless van operators who speed. Additionally, TLC Enforcement will continue joint operations with the Sheriff and MTA police.

VI. The number of commuter vans seized by the Commission.

During CY 2023, TLC seized 4 commuter vans, and all 4 were returned to their respective owners after a vehicle retention hearing before an Administrative Law Judge at OATH.

VII. The most utilized commuter van corridors.

Commuter vans do not record trip data. Based on enforcement data and public comments, vans in the most utilized corridors operate between:

- Sunset Park, Brooklyn, Flushing, Queens, and Chinatown, Manhattan
- Downtown Brooklyn and Kings Plaza, along Flatbush Avenue
- Jamaica and Far Rockaway, Queens, including Parsons Boulevard/Archer Avenue and the Queens-Nassau border, and in 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 6 of 2016, the 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 was estimated that daily, 24-hour van ridership may have exceeded 90,000 passengers at that time. 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 unlicensed vans, TLC continues to partner regularly with NYPD and the NYC Sheriff. This resource-intensive work yields summonses against unlicensed van operators as well as unlicensed for-hire vehicle operators illegally picking

up fares. Unlicensed vans and for-hire vehicles not only add congestion in major van corridors but pose a threat to public safety. Removing these vehicles and keeping them off the road permanently is a strong enforcement tool, and TLC continues its van operations to further public safety.

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 2023

	Commuter Van Drivers	Commuter Vans	Van Authorities
New Applications	14	8	0
License Renewals	20	17	5
Application Denials	5	1	0

The total number of vans authorized by TLC grew from 30 vans to 34 vans between 2022 and 2023. This change is similar to fluctuations seen in the previous year. From 2021 to 2022, the number of authorized vans fell from 35 to 30. The chart below contains more information on changes in licensing and van affiliation for each licensed commuter van authority.

Changes in Affiliated Commuter Vans 2022 to 2023

Base License Number	Affiliated Base Name	# of Affiliated Vans 2022	# of Affiliated Vans 2023
B80087	COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS, CORP	1	2
B80107	FLUSHING VAN SERVICE INC	1	2
B80145	ALEXIS VAN LINES INC	0	0
B80164	TRANSXPRESS SERVICES, INC.	1	0
B80271	FLUSHING COMMUTER VAN MANAGEMENT CORP	4	5
B80182	EIGHT STAR INC.	2	2
B80108	L & W EXPRESS VAN SERVICE CORP	19	20
B80100	CITY LINK CORPORATION	1	2
B80276	GOGO BUS TOURS	1	0
B80028	CITY EXPRESS CORP	0	1
B80169	ROYAL ROSE TRANSPORTATION LLC	0	0
TOTAL VANS		30	34

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. 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.

The number of licensed commuter vans grew to 34 during 2023, up from 30 in the previous year. In previous years, the number of vans has been decreasing with the number of commuter vans affiliated to commuter van authorities decreasing from 35 vans to 30 vans in 2022, which was in line with declines seen in previous years. Accordingly, TLC does not believe that there is a current need to increase the number of authorized vans specified in section 19-504 (r).