

Study Guide

Professional Bus Operators

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Motor Carrier Passenger Council of Canada is a strategic partner with school bus, urban transit, intercity carriers, tour and charter and accessible services along with labour, education and governments, challenging the bus industry to take a forward-thinking inclusive approach to professional development.

**NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL STANDARDS
ACCREDITATION & CERTIFICATION**

INTRODUCTION

Certification is a professional designation for bus operators that says "I meet a level of professionalism through my knowledge, skills, experience and conduct." Being a Certified Professional Bus Operator means you have earned an industry-recognized credential through a formal process of assessment.

BECOMING CERTIFIED

Eligibility Requirements

Knowledge

- Training received through an Accredited Training Program,
OR
- Evidence of completed training, which meets the National Occupational Standards



Career Experience

- Three (3) years bus operator experience with a consecutive or concurrent five-year period including the year of application
OR
- For specialized active bus operations personnel (e.g., Trainers, managers, safety, labour representatives), three (3) years career bus operator experience and must be on the road 80% of the time

Skills and Abilities

- Holds an applicable valid driver's licence for the sector to which Certification is being sought
AND
- Evidence of competence meeting the NOS

Consent to Code of Ethics

- Certification applicants are required to consent to abide by the [Code of Ethics](#) for bus operator practice

Application Process

Company Sponsored Applications

Companies granted Accreditation can apply directly to the MCPCC Certification Board on behalf of candidates seeking the designation of Certified Professional Bus Operators (CPBO). In this case, employers will provide a list of names and pertinent information verifying that the candidates have met the established criteria for CPBO or employers can attach individual applications for certification signed by each applicant. There is no certification fee required.

Companies must have a Registered Evaluator to support the integrity of an Accredited Company's recommendation of eligible bus operators for Certification. The Evaluator provides technical and quality assurance for the Program having been educated on the evaluative criteria of the National Occupational Standards (NOS). Prior to forwarding applicants for Certification, Accredited Companies must register one or more individuals as Evaluator.

Individual Applications

Individuals are required to access the Application Form, Certification Journal and submit the Certification Fee. This can be found on our website: <https://buscouncil.ca/certification/en/index-bus-operator.php>

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY GUIDE

Certification is awarded through a rigorous assessment process based on the Bus Operator National Occupational Standards (NOS). Applicants must meet the eligibility requirements, consent to the Code of Ethics and demonstrate thorough knowledge of the NOS through evaluation by a qualified MCPCC Registered Evaluator.

While a timed, sit-down examination is not required, there is still the requisite of a formal observed assessment and authorized recommendation.

The Purpose of this Study Guide is to aid in the understanding of all aspects of the NOS and assist both **Registered Evaluators and Applicants** in obtaining a successful outcome.

The Guide outlines the knowledge and basic skills which, when validated by testing and/or assessment, will enable the issuance of a Certificate recognized by the Motor Carrier Passenger Council. It also encompasses a broad range of Technical, Business, and Social classroom or virtual, and field instruction that is required to demonstrate the knowledge and skills of the Industry endorsed National Occupational Standards for Professional Bus Operator.

The Guide is presented as a course of study in Module format for each Core Block and Specialty Area of the NOS to support virtual and at home learning. You can download a copy of the Bus Operator NOS at https://www.buscouncil.ca/downloads/NOS_OPERATOR_2019_EN.pdf

For Bus Operators: each module includes topics for individual study, driving instruction (vehicle familiarization and operation).

For Evaluators: each module includes areas for evaluating and observing knowledge and skills.

Common Core Credit modules apply to all Industry sectors (Urban, Intercity, School, Tour & Charter, and Accessible Services). The Core Curriculum must be supplemented by one Sector Credit module in the area of intended focus. The Common Core Credit modules are:

- * Pre/Post Operations
- * Customer/Public Relations
- * Emergency Operations
- * Vehicle Operations
- * Administration
- * Legislation & Regulations

SECTION I



KNOWLEDGE OF NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL STANDARDS

NOS BLOCK A – PRE/POST OPERATIONS

Objective

To familiarize the applicant with a typical vehicle, and introduce Operator responsibilities regarding vehicle condition, maintenance, and operations administration.

Scope

1) Vehicle “Safe for Service” Inspection.

Applicant determines vehicle is operable and fully functional. Covers knowledge, assessment, and monitoring of overall vehicle condition, instrumentation and controls, all operating systems, fluids, communications, safety and emergency equipment, fare media equipment (if applicable), vehicle housekeeping, and essential “on board” supplies

2) Administration:

Module introduces use of damage/deficiency reports, work orders, logs, schedules, routing, fare media (if applicable), codes and trip reports

3) References related Legislation and policies/procedures common to the industry

Courses and Topics

Vehicle Mechanical Systems Classroom or Virtual/Field

- ◆ Types of buses
- ◆ Overview of bus systems
- ◆ Air brake systems
- ◆ Electrical systems
- ◆ Fluid systems
- ◆ Operator controls

Preparation for Service Field

- ◆ Role of Dispatcher
- ◆ Driver notices documentation (forms, logbook, records)
- ◆ Supplies
- ◆ Vehicle inspection (circle check, interior, safety)
- ◆ Safety equipment
- ◆ Fluids

Starting Field

- ◆ Operating controls
- ◆ Driver personal adjustments (seats, mirrors, etc.)
- ◆ Starting procedures
- ◆ Gauge checks (fuel, temperature, oil pressure, etc.)
- ◆ System checks (brakes, doors, communication, etc.)

SAMPLE VEHICLE INSPECTION REPORT

Pre-Trip Inspection of the commercial vehicle including the cab, engine compartment, and exterior. A pre-trip usually takes about 15-45 minutes to complete. It depends on the type of vehicle you are inspecting and your experience. After several years of driving, it's inevitable that your pre-trip is going to be quicker because you are better at doing it and you know what to look for.

COMPANY _____

ODOMETER READING _____

END MILEAGE: _____

DATE: _____

START MILEAGE: _____

TIME: _____

AM
 PM

INSPECT ITEMS LISTED – IF DEFECTIVE, NUMBER AND DESCRIBE IN "REMARKS"

FLUID LEAKS UNDER BUS	CONDITION OF FLOOR
LOOSE WIRES, HOSE CONNECTIONS OR BELTS IN ENGINE	EMERGENCY DOOR & BUZZER
OIL LEVEL	HEADLIGHTS, FLASHERS & 4-WAY FLASHERS
RADIATOR COOLANT LEVEL	RIGHT FRONT TIRE & WHEEL
BATTERY	FRONT OF BUS WINDSHIELD
TRANSMISSION	LEFT FRONT TIRE & WHEEL
UNUSUAL ENGINE NOISE	STOP ARM (SCHOOL BUS)
GUAGES & WARNING LIGHTS	EXHAUST SYSTEM
SWITCHES	LEFT SIDE OF BUS – WINDOWS & LIGHTS
HORN	LEFT REAR TIRES & WHEELS
FANS & DEFROSTERS	REAR OF BUS – WINDOWS & LIGHTS
WIPERS & WASHERS	TAIL PIPE
STOP ARM CONTROL (WARNING CONTROL)	RIGHT REAR TIRES & WHEELS
INSIDE & OUTSIDE MIRRORS	RIGHT SIDE OF BUS – WINDOWS & LIGHTS
BRAKE PEDAL & WARNING LIGHT	DRIVER'S SEAT & BELT
OPERATION OF SERVICE DOOR	DIRECTIONAL LIGHTS
EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT	PARKING BRAKE OR SERVICE BRAKE
FIRST AID KIT	CLUTCH
ENTRANCE STEPS	STEERING
CLEANLINESS OF INTERIOR	WHEELCHAIR LIFT

REMARKS: _____

CONDITION OF ABOVE VEHICLE IS: SATISFACTORY UNSATISFACTORY

DRIVER'S SIGNATURE: _____

ABOVE DEFECTS CORRECTED ABOVE DEFECTS NEED NOT BE CORRECTED FOR SAFE OPERATION OF VEHICLE

MECHANIC'S SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

DRIVER REVIEWING REPAIRS: SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

NOS BLOCK B – VEHICLE OPERATIONS

Objective

To expand practical applicant knowledge by correlating academic material with driving instruction in a training vehicle.

Scope

- 1) Driver fitness and image.
- 2) Driving Skills.
 - Safe and defensive driving techniques.
 - Hazard recognition and correctives.
 - Operating systems monitoring and “trouble shooting”.
 - Schedule conformity.
 - Related passenger communications.
- 3) Passenger Safety.
 - Accessibility and safety features.
 - Passenger management.
 - Safe boarding/exiting.
 - Special Needs Passenger recognition,
 - Service and security.
 - Passenger and interior monitoring.
- 4) Luggage & Freight.
 - Safe secure handling including dangerous/hazardous goods.
- 5) References related Legislation and commonly applicable policies/procedures.

Courses and Topics

Defensive Driving Techniques (Theory)

Classroom/Virtual

- ◆ Causes of accidents
- ◆ Rail crossings
- ◆ Intersections and crosswalks
- ◆ School zones
- ◆ Safe following distances
- ◆ Anticipation of hazards
- ◆ Awareness of other drivers
- ◆ Use of mirrors
- ◆ Use of signals
- ◆ Effects of personal well-being (stress, fatigue) on safe driving

Boarding and Exiting Passengers

- ◆ Signaling
- ◆ Stopping at curb
- ◆ Hazards at stop
- ◆ Door controls
- ◆ Passenger monitoring mirrors
- ◆ Aisle/door clearing
- ◆ Passenger safety
- ◆ Door closing procedures (checking for clearance, intending passengers)
- ◆ Merging into traffic (blind spots, signaling, judging speed and distance of oncoming traffic, etc.)

Operating Vehicle

Field

- ◆ Maneuvering (pulling out, gear changing, braking, turning, backing, etc.)
- ◆ City driving (turning, stopping and starting on hills, parking on grade, etc.)
- ◆ Highway driving (speed, lane changing, merging, exiting, etc.)
- ◆ Driving under adverse conditions (snow, rain, fog etc.)
- ◆ Ongoing monitoring of vehicle (warning lights, gauges, mechanical abnormalities)

Special Needs Passengers

Classroom or Virtual /Field

- ◆ Identification of Special Needs Passengers
- ◆ Bus Features for special needs passengers (kneeling, ramps, lifts)
- ◆ Securing wheelchairs
- ◆ Assisting other special needs passengers

Defensive Driving Techniques (Practical)

Field/Virtual

- ◆ Following distances
- ◆ Stopping distances
- ◆ Safety cushion
- ◆ Anticipating other's actions
- ◆ Use of mirrors

Driving Passengers

Field

- ◆ Schedules
- ◆ Passenger comfort
- ◆ Lighting, climate controls
- ◆ Monitoring passengers while driving

NOS BLOCK C – CUSTOMER & PUBLIC RELATIONS



Objective

To teach the applicant how image, self-confidence, knowledge, sensitivity, and diplomacy can be expected to produce superior customer satisfaction and diffuse most difficult situations.

Scope

- 1) Image counseling.
- 2) Expected services knowledge.
- 3) Providing service to special passengers.
- 4) People skills.
 - Special request and complaint handling.
 - Problem solving.
 - Conflict resolution.
 - Potential incident recognition and control.
 - Rules/regulations enforcement.
 - Policy, legal and third-party assistance options.
- 5) Related Legislation and common policies/procedures.

Courses and Topics

Customer Relations

Classroom or Virtual/simulation/role plays

- ◆ Professionalism (uniform, hygiene, grooming)
- ◆ Greeting passengers (attitude, demeanor, body language, etc.)
- ◆ Communicating with passengers (answering questions, informing of rules, special requests)
- ◆ Dealing with difficult passengers and situations
- ◆ Assisting passengers
- ◆ Handling complaints
- ◆ Active listening

NOS BLOCK D – ADMINISTRATION



Objective

To instruct the applicant in basic technical, documentation, and interpersonal activities of an administrative nature common to the Industry.

Scope

- 1) Technical. Basic computer skills and radio-communications techniques.
- 2) Reports. Inspections, defects, accidents, emergencies, incidents, expenses, payrolls, time sheets, trip reports, logs, waybills, and cross-border documentation.
- 3) Interpersonal. Establishment/maintenance of appropriate internal/external interface. References related social, cultural, Corporate-norm, and Legislated guidelines.

Courses and Topics

Company Policies and Procedures

Classroom or Virtual

- ◆ Dress code
- ◆ Alcohol and Drug policy
- ◆ Check-in Procedures
- ◆ Bus inspection procedures
- ◆ Record keeping, (forms, reports, logbook etc.)
- ◆ Radio operations
- ◆ Schedule and Route Instructions
- ◆ Special needs passengers' policy and procedures
- ◆ Accessibility practices
- ◆ Emergency procedures
- ◆ Check-out procedures

NOS BLOCK E – EMERGENCY OPERATIONS



Objective

To communicate the importance of knowledge-based self-confidence and self-reliance in emergency situations as the basis for exercising sound judgment while maintaining calm control.

Scope

Teaches applicant how to prioritize passenger safety and welfare. Encompasses accident, medical, emotional, fire, criminal, mechanical, environmental, and Public emergencies; “Safe Haven” concept; “Watch” programs assistance; safe vehicle evacuation; and recognition of when/how to access professional help. Relates content to legal rights and responsibilities, and representative Industry policies.

Courses and Topics

Classroom or Virtual /simulation/role plays

- ◆ Importance of record keeping and reporting in emergency situations.
- ◆ Passenger medical and emotional emergencies (responding, getting help, rights and responsibilities,).
- ◆ Criminal emergencies (hold-ups, bomb threats, hostage, etc.).
- ◆ Mechanical failures (securing vehicle, flares, emergency equipment, reporting).
- ◆ Fire (types, extinguishers,).
- ◆ Accidents (own vehicle, another vehicle.
- ◆ Passenger evacuation.

LEGISLATION & REGULATION



Objective

To introduce the applicant to the broad spectrum of Legislation and related controls which apply to the MCP Industry, particularly as applicable to the Operator's role.

Scope

Encompasses National, Provincial, Municipal, and cross-border (USA) content.

Courses and Topics

Accident Regulations and Police Requirements

Cross-Border Regulations/Documentation

Drug and Alcohol Legislation

Environmental Regulations

Hazardous Materials

Highway Traffic Acts

Human Rights Legislation

Licensing Requirements

Load Regulations

Logbook Regulations

Medical Requirements

Motor Vehicle Acts

Privacy Act

Safety Codes

School Bus Legislation

Legal Rights/Responsibilities -

Operations and Emergencies

Urban and Rural Bylaws

BLOCK F – URBAN OPERATIONS



Objective

To provide practical experience in an urban setting and describe the daily occurrences that an urban bus operator may encounter such as large numbers of passengers per day, diversity of cultures and temperaments, traffic congestion, weather conditions, while maintaining schedule without compromising safety.

Scope

In addition to all core blocks, urban operators have the following additional responsibilities.

- Monitoring fare payments
- Monitoring passenger loads, entrances and exits
- Maneuvering a variety of vehicles, frequently in congested situations.
- Following and managing scheduled routes

BLOCK G – SCHOOL BUS OPERATIONS



Objective

To provide the additional criteria required in transporting children which requires greater awareness of safety around the stop area and approaching traffic.

Scope

In addition to all core blocks, school bus operators have the following additional responsibilities.

- Following stopping procedures, activating overhead lights and deploying stop arm and crossing gate.
- Boards and exits students at designated stops, verifying all student checks are completed.
- Manages students maintaining order and safety.

BLOCK H – INTERCITY OPERATIONS



Objective

To provide the additional criteria required in transporting passengers on long haul trips.

Scope

In addition to all core blocks, intercity bus operators have the following additional responsibilities.

- Provides route information, designated stops, etc.
- Ensures vehicle and passenger documentation and adequate supplies on board.
- Transports unaccompanied minors.
- Handles luggage and freight.

BLOCK I – TOUR AND CHARTER



Objective

To provide the additional criteria required to ensure passengers enjoy a safe and comfortable experience.

Scope

In addition to all core blocks, tour and charter bus operators have the following additional responsibilities.

- Greets and orients passengers.
- Organizes passenger pick-up and drop-off.
- Points out sights of interest.
- Maneuvers large coaches, driving in unfamiliar territory.
- Operates media systems.
- Ensures vehicle and passenger documentation and adequate supplies on board.
- Handles luggage and freight.

BLOCK J – ACCESSIBLE SERVICES



Objective

To provide the additional criteria required in providing door-to-door service for passengers with special needs.

Scope

In addition to all core blocks, accessible bus operators have the following additional responsibilities.

- Plans most expedient route.
- Assists passengers to and from seating.
- Provides door-to-door service.
- Provides appropriate assistance safely.
- Maneuvers vehicle for safe access allowing space for lifts and ramps.
- Provides attention to special needs, establishing and maintaining professional relationships with passengers and attendants.
- Maintains awareness of passenger safety and security, monitoring for signs of passenger distress.

Now that you are certified...

Now that you are certified, you will receive a lapel pin, badge, certificate and the right to advertise yourself as a Certified Professional Bus Operator (CPBO).



SECTION II

DEMONSTRATION & OBSERVATION

Professional Bus Operators are hands-on, **realistic** individuals, enjoying working outdoors, and **social**, meaning that they thrive in situations where they can interact with, persuade, or help people.

Researchers identified five main personality factors deemed important to an individual's likelihood of success as an operator.

- emotional stability for coping with stressful situations;
- extraversion;
- intellect;
- agreeableness; and
- conscientiousness.

These specific personality characteristics appear to predict performance in time sensitive situations, such as keeping a bus on schedule. When combined with tasks, cognitive abilities and biographical information, these can be used in a model to predict operator performance. (Jacobs et al).

Being able to demonstrate your knowledge, skills and personality traits for this role is one of the best ways to *validate* that you possess the knowledge, skills and personality factors for this job.

Simulates Interest

Knowledge and Skills demonstrations provide visual support of your knowhow. Evaluators often need to see your ability in action to fully grasp your expertise, as you spend your workday primarily alone. This is especially true if features of your job rely on “showing” your knowledge, such as circle checks, vehicle manoeuvring, passenger interface, etc. The ability to see you in action is more valid than simply listening to a hypothetical response.

Conveys Ownership & PROVIDES PROOF

Benefits of demonstration is instilling a sense of ownership and responsibility in the job. Being able to prove your capability demonstrates the necessary proof of your credentials, skills and requisite abilities and provides a strong sense of accomplishment.

Combats Concerns

Your demonstration also helps you combat any preconceived notions or misinformation based on things anyone may have heard in the workplace.

SECTION III

COLLECTING & RECORDING EVIDENCE (FOR EVALUATORS)

All assessment requires the collection and recording of evidence of learning. For MCPCC Certification, evidence is focused on the demonstration of performance, backed by documentation that records, illustrates or confirms applicant demonstrations of meeting the NOS criteria.

Collection and recording of evidence are necessary for two reasons:

- Accountability — justification of the assessment judgments and being able to explain and defend those assessment judgments; and
- Verification — confirmation of the assessment judgments and being able to check their completeness, relevance and veracity.

While there are different ways to record assessments, such as video, audio, written documents, etc., a written record is most suitable as our process involves a Certification Board who may wish to review the assessment prior to awarding certification.

Written Documentation

The written record can take the form of an observation sheet or a logbook. Observation sheets can be structured as checklists of meeting NOS blocks and can contain broad categories for writing on-the-spot comments or annotations.

A logbook provides a record of critical incidents or key comments (sometimes referred to as an anecdotal record); for accuracy of recall, entries need to be made as soon after the demonstration as possible. The applicants name and the date also need to be clearly recorded.

Descriptive accounts can include written commentary on applicant performance under specific headings on an observation sheet; critical incidents or significant observations recorded in a logbook; and key performance features recorded in a logbook. Critical incidents and significant events are particularly noteworthy instances of the demonstration of particular performance, especially those observed for the first time or demonstrated in a particularly dramatic or unexpected way.

Planning for Evaluator Observation

Evaluator observations cannot be useful without planning. Different types of evidence require different types of planning. This is particularly important where observation is incidental and where judgments (rather than descriptions) are recorded.

NOS provide a framework for demonstrating knowledge, skills and abilities that serve as reference points for recognizing the applicant's performance. Knowing the structure, language and concepts of the NOS framework is a key aspect of planning for evaluation observation which is why the E-Tutorial for Evaluators was developed <http://ilearn.buscouncil.ca/>

We suggest preparing observation sheets in advance for the following reasons:

- ◆ opportunity to share expectations with applicants in advance
- ◆ encouragement of applicant self-monitoring and self-assessment
- ◆ clarification of the observation areas to be demonstrated
- ◆ having available an explicit and standard recording format
- ◆ ease of recording of applicant performance characteristics
- ◆ structured means of providing feedback to applicants

Factors Affecting Validity of Observations

Evaluator observations will be valid to the extent that the evidence is appropriately recorded and interpreted, that is, whether:

- ◆ the recorded evidence accurately represents the observed applicant performance
- ◆ the interpretation (judgment) of this evidence is justifiable.

Accurate recording requires transparent and unbiased perception of the applicant's performance. Justifiable interpretation requires careful consideration of what the applicant's performance signifies, in terms of knowledge and abilities. The use of the term 'justifiable' emphasizes that there may not be a single unequivocal interpretation of the evidence but rather that the interpretation should withstand challenge as being reasonable and defensible.

There also may be a requirement that the interpretation be consistent with the interpretations of other evaluators. The following discussion covers some factors that can affect the accuracy of the recorded evidence or the justifiability of the interpretation or both. These factors are indications about the need for careful deliberation and for using multiple sources of evidence in making judgments about demonstrations of performance.

Prejudgments and prejudices

Prejudgments are judgments formed in advance on the basis of prior information or initial impressions. Prior information may come from others with familiarity of the applicant's performance on previous occasions or in different contexts. The information may be irrelevant to the judgment being made (about performance on this occasion) but influences that judgment, in some cases to such an extent that the evaluator does not actually 'see' the true nature of the applicant's current performance.

Selective perception

Selective perception involves seeing and hearing what we are predisposed to see and hear. This is not a conscious choice. Rather, it results from our intuitive expectations and psychological preconceptions. Psychological research shows that sometimes these can produce very powerful distortions of our perceptions. For example, we can so strongly anticipate that the applicant will say or do something that we imagine that they have said or done it when in fact they have said or done something quite different.

Providing inadvertent clues

When the focus of an observation is a verbal interchange between the applicant and the evaluator, especially a question-answer sequence, it is possible for the evaluator to unwittingly provide clues to the applicant and to draw the wrong conclusions from the applicant's answers.

Inappropriate inference

Inappropriate inference means drawing the wrong conclusions. This can occur through focusing on the wrong features of the applicant's performance or through categorizing the performance under the wrong learning outcomes. Some examples of focusing on the wrong features of applicant performance are:

- ◆ accepting simple/closed answers as if they were open/complex answers
- ◆ interpreting non-verbal expressions (gestures, attention, eagerness) as indicating verbal proficiency
- ◆ confusing effort and involvement for performance and achievement.

Ensuring appropriate inference requires constant vigilance and clarity of understanding of the applicant's performance. Some useful questions are:

- ◆ Which observation am I spotlighting to gather evidence?
- ◆ Am I focusing on the appropriate features of the applicant's performance?
- ◆ Have I missed any important features of the applicant's performance?
- ◆ Have I matched the evidence to the appropriate learning outcomes?
- ◆ Am I clear about what are and are not appropriate demonstrations of performance?
- ◆ Can I defend my judgment by explaining how the evidence indicates demonstration of the particular performance?
- ◆ Can I confirm my judgments by sharing them with another evaluator?

Inconsistency

Inconsistency in assessment judgments means that evidence is interpreted differently in different circumstances. Such inconsistencies derive from errors of prejudgment or prejudice, selective perception, inadvertent clues, or inappropriate inference.

Improvements in consistency therefore depend on taking action to guard against such errors. It is also useful to make spot checks to see whether similar evidence (from different occasions, relating to different outcomes, and for different applicants) is being interpreted consistently.

CONCLUSION

This Guide sets out a justification for using observation as an important part of assessment strategies in assessment undertaken by evaluators. It also highlights the importance of ensuring that adequate evidence is collected in order to support the need for verification and accountability of assessment judgments.

A framework for thinking about different types of observation and different types of evidence has been provided, as well as some cautions about possible sources of inconsistency in evaluator judgment and how these might be reduced. What is needed now is for evaluators to try various methods of using evaluator observation as part of their assessment program and to share these with other evaluators.

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