



Department  
for Transport

Department for Transport  
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Web Site: [www.gov.uk/dft](http://www.gov.uk/dft)

Our Ref: 252612

Your Ref:

DATE: 17/04/2019

Dear Mr Fowler,

Thank you for your email of 17 March to the Department for Transport regarding wheelchairs on public transport.

Buses provide a lifeline for many disabled people, and it is essential that they are accessible to everyone who needs to use them. Since 2000 the Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations (PSVAR) have revolutionised bus travel for disabled passengers. The PSVAR require buses and coaches designed to carry over twenty two passengers on local and scheduled routes to incorporate features to enable disabled passengers to board, alight and travel in comfort and safety. Such features include a wheelchair space suitable for a standard 'reference' wheelchair, with around 98% of buses in Great Britain now incorporating a designated space and boarding facilities for wheelchair users.

However, according to the Road Vehicles Regulations, an unoccupied and stowed wheelchair or mobility scooter could be classified as a load and would be subject to the provisions of Regulation 100. This states that 'The load carried by a motor vehicle or trailer shall at all times be so secured, if necessary by physical restraint other than its own weight, and be in such a position, that neither danger nor nuisance is likely to be caused to any person or property by reason of the load or any part thereof falling or being blown from the vehicle or by reason of any other movement of the load or any part thereof in relation to the vehicle'. Regarding your concern raised whether an unoccupied wheelchair is viewed as a wheelchair or an object or luggage, most decisions regarding the carriage of luggage is mainly a matter for individual bus operators.

In relation to the carriage of mobility scooters on public transport, provided there is the space available, individuals can travel in their wheelchair on buses and trains, so long as those vehicles are constructed or adapted to carry a 'reference' wheelchair, and that the mobility vehicle being used fits within the dimensions. However, a mobility scooter may not have the same capacity as a wheelchair to manoeuvre into a wheelchair space.

Finally, the point that you raised regarding weight limits is not our area of expertise. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) may be able to address your concerns and you can contact them directly on 0300 003 1647.

I hope you find this response useful and I would like to thank you again for taking the time to write.

Yours sincerely,

Caitriona Moore

**Buses and Taxis Division**