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Speedscan bags NSW Transport technology contract

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NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell

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THE O'Farrell government has awarded one of its first technology contracts since it swept into power in NSW, picking a winner for a tender issued by the previous Labor government.

Sydney-based Speedscan has won a three-year, \$1.8 million contract with the Department of Transport to provide document and payment processing services for a wheelchair-related taxi subsidy scheme.

This includes help-desk support and the creation of a self-service portal for taxi companies to check the status of their claims, including rejected ones.

The use of online technologies means taxi companies can be paid in 14 days.

The move to hasten payments is in line with Premier Barry O'Farrell's aim to ensure the government pays small business vendors within 30 days.

Mr O'Farrell has also signalled transport as a critical area for public-sector reform.

Each year the NSW government processes 2.4 million taxi claims for 77,000 residents with severe or permanent disabilities.

The program was introduced in 1981 and qualified participants can claim up to \$30 per trip.

Taxi drivers and passengers complete a NSW Transport docket, which is then collated by taxi companies and delivered to the department for processing.

The department would then scan the dockets, which could total 200,000 per month, and make payment to taxi companies.

The manual process meant it sometimes took a few months to reimburse taxi companies.

The contract was awarded in April and implementation took six weeks. It edged out 12 bidders, including Cabcharge, Salmat and Toll Transport.

Speedscan chief executive Mark Josman said it was the company's first major government deal in Australia.

It counts Commonwealth Bank, Downer EDI, Zenith Optimedia, Tower Insurance, and Westpac-owned RAMS Home Loans as commercial clients.

Mr Josman said the taxi portal is hosted in Sydney with its data centre provider Macquarie Telecom.