



More trade stories than all the others put together

Issue 247 March 2017

STOP PRESS

REVOKED!



**Shock
as Tfl
strip
Sean
of his
badge**

See
pages
4-5

INSIDE



PUTTING THE VAT
BACK INTO UBER

PAGE 9

NEWS



LCDC MEET GREEN
PARTY AT CITY HALL

PAGES 10&11

NEWS



LONDON TAXI CO SAYS
GOODBYE TO DIESEL

PAGE 23

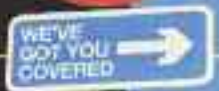
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and should be sent to the Editor at the
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The London Cab Drivers' Club Ltd.

SEAN STOCKINGS

As you can see from the front page, TFL has decided that Sean Stockings is not a "fit and proper person" to hold a taxi licence after his Leon Daniels tweet.

On pages 4-5 we publish the letter he was sent by Peter Blake. Sean can be assured that the LCDC will be backing him 100% on this, for in our opinion, it is a blatant case of discrimination.

If TFL are successful in this case, every taxi driver who dares to criticise our Regulator (whose wages we pay) could find their licence revoked.

THIS IS A LINE IN THE SAND - WHATEVER HAPPENED TO FREE SPEECH?

UBER COURT JUDGEMENT

As most of you are aware by now, UBER lost its appeal against TFL bringing in an English language test for PH drivers, which of course is good news as the LCDC

believes it is imperative that drivers should be able to communicate with their passengers in English.

Unfortunately, TFL were not so successful in its attempt to force PH drivers to have permanent H&R Insurance, as well as having a London land line

To say we are disappointed is an understatement, however, until we can read and decipher the judgement (which at the time of going to press is not yet published) we will be unable to pass comment yet.

JOLYN MAUGHAM

On a more positive note, the LCDC met with Jolyn Maugham, the Barrister who intends to prosecute UBER over their failure to pay VAT on its fares.

Many of you may have seen Jolyn on ITV recently explaining his case, if you go to page 6 he has written about his plans. Remember, the USA Authorities successfully prosecuted Al Capone over his tax evasion!

Grant Davis
LCDC Chairman



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Inquiry is launched into London's black cab future

London Black Cab What will happen?

Today a parliamentary inquiry has been launched and is inviting black cab drivers to have their say into the future of London's iconic black cab trade. This is being chaired by Ilford North MP Wes Streeting.

The All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) are meeting today for the first time. This enquiry will determine whether or not more can be done to protect the public and will look at the current regulations surrounding taxi's. Transport for London are the regulators for all PHV drivers and taxi's. The APPG are hoping that London's black cab driver community will get involved over the next month to help make this as effective as possible.

Streeting said: "The issues facing the taxi industry in London and right across the UK need serious action, and we hope that this inquiry will add to the debate about what the trade will look like in the future."

"I know that in London the black cab is an icon that everyone would like to see continue to serve our capital."

"We welcome submissions from Taxi drivers across the UK alongside the expert witnesses we will have contributing to the inquiry."

Today the APPG will hear three evidence sessions, today's is about public safety. After this the APPG will look at the current effectiveness on regulations on March 14. Their final session on the future of the taxi trade will take place on March 28.

The APPG can be contacted by email at:

APPGTaxi
@newingtoncomms.
co.uk



As you can see from this article, Wes Streeting needs everyone's support. On the lefthand side are the contact details - so have your say in the future of your trade!

It could be you next

As *The Badge* went to press, we received the alarming news that TfL had decided to revoke Sean Stockings' licence. It now seems that Peter Blake assumes he has the power to deprive a cab driver of his livelihood - simply because he had the temerity to question why a senior TfL manager was eating at a top London restaurant, the same day as the terrible bus crash at Ladbroke Grove. TfL are acting like judge and jury in whether they feel you are a fit and proper person to hold a black cab licence simply by what you put on Twitter. Make no mistake - as the letter below clearly shows - if we, the trade, lose this case, any one of us could lose our badge overnight if we dare to criticise TfL. We urge all drivers to back Sean Stockings in keeping his licence - and his livelihood.

Transport for London

London Taxi and Private Hire

Reference: 126770

Date: 3 March 2017

Mr Sean Albert Thomas Stockings



TFL London Taxi and Private Hire
PO Box 177
Sheffield
S98 1JY

Dear Mr Stockings,

London taxi driver's licence

Following the decision on 22 December 2016 to revoke your licence further consideration has been given to your conduct and whether you remain a fit and proper person to be licensed as a London taxi driver.

You came to TfL's attention due to the following tweet and associated video:-

<https://twitter.com/seanblackcab/status/799355684588580865>

Initial concerns were raised due to your conduct as you intentionally confronted a TfL staff member in a private restaurant which clearly demonstrates a failure to respect a person's right to privacy.

Further concern is raised due to your final statement to the general public/other licensed drivers, where you provide details of where Mr Daniels is situated and then state 'come and get him'. This video was immediately posted onto Twitter, a social media platform, where you have between 2,000 & 3,000 followers.

By confirming the name and address of the restaurant you provided personal information to the general public. Tweeting the identity and location of Mr Daniels was both unprofessional and inappropriate. There is also a risk that data protection laws may have been breached.

A thorough investigation has now taken place in order to determine whether you remain 'fit and proper' to be licensed.

Following the incident Mr Daniel's who is the focus of the video has confirmed what he experienced following the video being published. He highlighted that there were allegations of corruptions and threats of violence towards him and other individuals. His postal address was also published which led to further comments on social media about activities that could take place around his home.

I have also reviewed a number of tweets that you have issued recently. Whilst these do not warrant licensing action on their own they are derogatory in nature and show a contempt towards the Licensing Authority, which, I find unacceptable.

Having taken all of the points into consideration I believe the proper course of action is to **revoke** your licence. TfL has an obligation to maintain both public safety and confidence in the licensed taxi and private hire trades. This act is contrary to the professional conduct expected of all licensed taxi drivers. Furthermore such intimidating and threatening behaviour against any member of the public cannot be tolerated. You can therefore no longer be seen as a fit and proper person to be licensed.

Right of appeal

You may appeal our decision, information on how to do this is enclosed with this letter, please read the notice entitled 'Right of Appeal'.

If you do not appeal our decision, you **must** return your licence, identifiers and badge to us within 28 days. If you fail to do this you are committing an offence and maybe prosecuted.

Additional Information

Information regarding powers conferred on TfL and the standards applied in making this decision can be found in the enclosed notice.

Our licensing standards and guidelines are available online at tfl.gov.uk/tph. The guidelines provide an indication of timescales of when you may meet our licensing requirements. If you are wishing to reapply in the future, we would encourage you to check our guidelines before you submit a further application to us.

If you have any further queries regarding this decision, please contact us via the details contained at the top of this letter. **It is important you your reference number 126770 in all communication with us.**

Yours sincerely,



Peter Blake - Director of Service Operations - Transport for London
ENC: Revocation and Suspension Additional Information Sheet



Alan's Angle

Euston Gardens

This month I sat down with representatives from Euston Station regarding the HS2 upgrade and the movement of our taxi rank over the 15 years. During 2018 the underground drop off and ranking facility will go and we will be built a new rank in Euston Gardens.

We sat down to a presentation of about 9 rank designs, all a little bit different from the other one. We are trying to make the most rank space available to us in a limited space and something we believe will work for

us. We are looking at ranking facility for about 30 plus rank spaces with a feeder rank in Endsleigh Gardens, taking rank space to about 46. We raised many concerns regarding the feeder rank and monitor function and also dropping off and the problems we might get on exiting the station into Euston Road.

They took away all our points we raised and will present a new updated version to us by the end of March. I will keep you updated or post a picture of the new rank in the next issue.



Transport Minister sees future of connected parking at special Westminster event

The City of Westminster hosted a special connected parking event on Tuesday 21st February, where Transport Minister Andrew Jones learned about the latest technology and service ideas to improve parking and reduce harmful emissions.

Westminster has received funding from the Department of Transport to showcase connected parking technology, building on Westminster's investment in parking bay sensors to help other UK authorities realise the potential of new technology.

Some of the innovations from the demonstration included:

- A 'One Click' parking app from 'AppyParking,' featured on BBC Dragon's Den and developed by a London SME. This reduces circulating times by showing available spaces, speeds up payments and enables customers to pay just for the time they park.

- Optical sensors at taxi ranks. These collect real-time availability to help taxi drivers go to under-used ranks whilst helping customers find a taxi and reducing emissions from queuing.

- Big and open data approaches to make the best use of data Westminster City Council collects from their sensors.

During his visit, the Minister enjoyed a live demonstration of how the parking app works in Portman Square, including finding a space and accepting an electronic payment for the time parked.

He then greeted council officials at the Portman Estate offices and met a local locksmith who uses the parking app to find parking spaces quickly, saving money and time during call outs. Then he saw how black cab drivers benefit from the app by not leaving their engines running unnecessarily, which helps improve the environment and local air quality.

The Minister also announced the winners of the previous week's "hackathon", Transcoin. Developers were given free access to Westminster's sample data for the day to create concepts that will lead to new ideas, programmes or apps that could help reduce emissions and improve air quality through better on-road

systems for drivers in the future.

Minister for Transport, Andrew Jones said:

"My department is committed to supporting the development of new technologies to reduce emissions and make journeys easier for commuters. Westminster is a great example of how transport can benefit from smart data and technology.

"Today, I have seen this in action with smarter parking systems that automatically take payments and taxis using smart data to avoid full taxi ranks in favour of emptier ones. This means taxis can spread around London as services are targeted to the needs of commuters instead of waiting in unnecessary queues creating emissions." Speaking about the event Cllr Danny Chalkley, Cabinet Member for City Transport, Highways and Parking, said: "Parking bay sensors together with the ParkRight app will deliver benefits for people who need to use a car in Westminster - whether visiting, working or living here. It will also help contribute to our green ambitions by reducing emissions

Tanner Street changes update

I just recently received a email from TFL regarding changes to Tanner Street. It's not exactly what we wanted, but it's a compromise that hopefully we can make work.

This is their response to the consultation, which a lot of Taxi drivers replied to - well done.

Last autumn we consulted on revised proposals for a cycle scheme at the A100 Tower Bridge Road junction with Tanner Street, in the London Borough of Southwark. We received 1,260 responses. Thank you to everyone who took part. A report on the consultation has now been published on the consultation website, together with a document providing our response to issues raised during the consultation. Having considered the feedback received we have decided to proceed with the scheme.

One of the major concerns raised during the consultation came from Black Cab and Private Hire companies. They expressed concern about how they would reach destinations in the west, such as London Bridge Station or Guy's Hospital from Tower Bridge Road. We have decided to trial a complementary scheme which will help taxis access destinations west of Tower Bridge Road. We propose allowing a right turn for buses and taxis only from Tower Bridge Approach to Tooley Street for a trial period. If successful, it would be adopted full time.

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More tax problems loom on the horizon for Uber as GoodLawProject takes up the fight

Until now, it's Uber's corporation tax dodging that has come under public scrutiny. Its VAT liability - not so much. But all that's about to change.

Uber's VAT problem arises out of a basic tension in its business model. The Uber brand is all about selling to passengers. The very front page of its website invites passengers to "Ride with Uber." But its contracts pretend – as the Employment Tribunal found last year – that it is selling not to passengers but instead to drivers.

And facing in two directions at once is always going to cause you problems.

And the VAT problem it causes is this: Uber's contracts says its drivers are supplying passengers with transport services. And the Employment Tribunal agreed that passengers were being supplied with transport services. But it said that the passengers were being supplied with those services not by the drivers but by Uber.

And all of this matters because the drivers are below the VAT threshold. They earn, by and large, less than £83,000 a year and so, if they are supplying transport services to passengers, they don't have to charge VAT.

But if Uber is supplying transport services to passengers for VAT purposes, well, we know it earns more than £83,000 a year. And so it has to charge VAT.

And then something has to give. The drivers get paid less or fares go up or Uber's commission falls. And there's also a pretty big hit to Uber's balance sheet. It will owe HMRC very substantial back tax: all the VAT it hasn't paid over the last four years. And it will very

likely owe back taxes not just in the UK but all across Europe. Now, it's really HMRC that should be having this fight with Uber. But it's got a feeble record of taking on the big US tech companies. And at the Good Law Project – which is bringing this fight – we're not confident that it's up for this fight. And so we're going to take Uber on.

Our director is a Queen's Counsel, specialising in tax. And we've taken formal advice from another Queen's Counsel, also specialising in tax. And they both reckon Uber should be charging VAT.

So next week we're going to launch our challenge. Check it out over at www.GoodLawProject.org. The Queen's Counsel and solicitors who will act in the challenge will do so at very discounted rates. But Uber is a mighty beast – you don't need us to tell you that. And so, if we're going to have this fight, we'll need all the financial help you can give us.

So please, come on over, sign up for email updates, have a look and if you can – when we launch the case – make a contribution to the costs.



LCD C MEETS THE

Myself and @matthecab met with Green GLA member Caroline Russell at City Hall on Wednesday 01/03/17 to discuss amongst other thing the new Zero Emission Capable Taxi (ZEC) Prior to meeting Caroline I read her "How to deliver healthy streets" five point plan shown below and was very impressed and interested to meet her.

<https://www.london.gov.uk/ab-out-us/london-assembly/london-assembly-publications/publication-caroline-russell-prioritising>
In her five point plan Caroline Russell AM calls on the Mayor to:

1. Build a sense of common purpose

The Mayor must throw his energy into bringing Londoners and the boroughs along with him on this journey towards healthy streets.

2. Test it for real
'Cheap and cheerful' live trials should be the default approach to consultation on neighbourhood schemes. Live trials are temporary and give people a chance to experience any real positives and negatives without getting bogged down in fears about what 'might' happen.

3. Commit more money and resources

Mayor should commit to invest £1.55 billion in cycling and walking, equivalent to 15 per cent of the total expected investment in capital transport projects.

4. Abandon 'computer says no' thinking

TfL's decision-making processes will need to be overhauled if the Mayor is to make London's streets much better for walking and cycling.

5. Be smarter with data

It must become normal practice for TfL to gather data about how people navigate temporary road closures to learn about how Londoners alter routes and 'lock in' traffic reduction.

Cycling is great, everyone's a winner, safer for pedestrians, better for the environment, better for communities, gets cars of the road, any initiatives that encourage a modal shift are to be welcomed, London is growing and adding more motorized vehicles into the mix will only

worsen the situation.

If you live in central London choosing to not own a car is a no brainer, taking into account the cost of insurance, depreciation, hassle of parking and running costs and combined with car hire schemes like ZipCar used in conjunction with Taxis and PH car ownership just does not compute in an expanding city of 8.5 million.

*A pleasing side effect of decreasing car ownership would be more usage of Taxis

Freeing up road space (previously used for car parking) would also create more space for cycle schemes and allow road infrastructure to harmonise. Talking to Caroline it was obvious that she differed from Andrew Gilligans previous approach of cycle lanes at any cost and was concerned that any infrastructure modifications actually worked for all Londoners.

Caroline's second point "Test it for real" was obviously the blueprint for how any previous schemes should have been commissioned, not all projects work first time and require fine tuning and tweaking and to get it wrong costs millions and can adversely impact commuting and according to TfL statistics dissuades bus usage on certain routes which in turn impacts on other services.

Me and Matt (as an example) mentioned Bank Junction and how the congestion on Upper Thames St CSH was encouraging traffic to cut through the city.

Caroline's third point "Commit more money and resources" is also a no brainer, combined with doing things in an efficient and intelligent manner will translate into more 'bang for our bucks'. Finally Caroline's fourth and fifth points, from personal experience we know that TfL's decision making processes can be slow and reactionary rather than proactive, as we have seen with junction overhauls..

Elephant and Castle being a good example under the guise of making London more pleasant and cycle friendly the real aims have been to aid bus times, which is a good thing but this scheme has caused congestion, cost £27 million and has been

attributed to at least two deaths in the last twelve months (motorcyclist and a pedestrian pensioner who previously used the filled in subway), a common sight at this junction is nose to tail buses which create a 'wall of steel', mixed with pedestrians having no sight lines and cyclists unable to progress safely will only result in one outcome.

"Being smarter with data" is what TfL were proclaiming themselves to be over two years ago, a good example of this are buses, they are cashless, fitted with sophisticated GPS units and combined with TfL's multi million pound traffic nerve centre should be running with greater efficiency and not several of the same routes clustered together and virtually empty, which is a daily occurrence.

We also discussed unbiased/independent time and motion studies which are key to understanding the flow and ebb of London's travellers, a personal irritant is BBC's Tom 'Woodburner' Edwards dutifully parroting TfL's data without asking any questions. London as you may have noticed of late is deteriorating in terms of pollution and congestion, it is not sustainable and from a cab drivers perspective is literally killing us, electric vehicles are the future, whether we can afford them is another matter (rumoured to be £56000 plus battery leasing).

Why has there not been an inquiry into whether these new vehicles are economically viable?

Again the LTDA acting in an autonomous disconnected fashion from its members and deciding behind closed doors 'what the trade needs'.

Apart from a kudos soundbite for the mayor I fail to see why taxis have been singled out as having to be ZEC first. There are 21312 licenced cabs shared amongst 24564 cabbies, this equates to 1.15 cabbies per vehicle.

There are 86868 licenced PHV shared amongst 117000 PH drivers, this equates 1.35 drivers per vehicle, a higher frequency of usage combined with a fleet size over four times the size of taxis they pose a much more significant contribution to Co2 and diesel particulates.

*As PH has grown bus usage



has decreased
Another point to note is that London's taxi fleet has remained virtually unchanged in over a decade and PH has doubled in just 2 years with no sign of slowing down, not all PHV are Prius' either, Addison Lee for example fleet consists mostly of diesel MPV's and Ubers Exec platform consists mostly of gas guzzling luxury cars. Why is the trade being committed to a monopolistic supply to a mystery priced un-trialled vehicle in 2018 whilst PH has until 2023 to comply despite at present having 25 mainstream manufacturer produced options?

Another concern is shift impact, getting to the chargers, potentially queuing, and location of chargers and in the long term infrastructure being monetised (a good example is 4% on CC transactions).

We also discussed with

Caroline how we do not like our cabs in terms of cost, fuel economy (22 MPG) and engineering (TX's catching fire and steering boxes to name a few), an important point we felt to make that ever since TfL existed they have dictated and controlled what vehicle we drive (aided by LTDA's support of a not fit for purpose inefficient vehicle), it is not our choice to drive such an inefficient diesel vehicle, we also pointed out the pride we felt of being 100% WAV but having no support from TfL felt burdened by this cost which translates as 25% of the overall cost.

Moving on we discussed problems that arise when a minicab firm decides to ignore TfL'S own laws, ignores pre-booking and dispatches via a 'allocate by vicinity' basis, creating gridlocking any high demand areas and problems in residential areas (we

GREEN PARTY



referenced the well documented antisocial stories around Heathrow). We also discussed the problems the trade has with TFL management, General Manager Helen Chapman and Head of Licencing Peter Blake in particular and Sadiq's lack of any personnel changes at TFL has ground our trade into the ground, I also mentioned that 4 years of Boris, Osborne, Sajid, Hendy and Leon colluding with Uber had put our trades psyche and morale on the floor.

Problem with TFL is that any managers who have got decisions wrong are still doing the same well paid jobs and it is in their interests to downplay or hide previous mistakes. We mentioned the extraordinary volume of PHV's TFL has been processing. A Prius is 15ft long, add a 3ft gap, a mile is 5280ft divide by

18ft, every 293 vehicles TFL licence equates to 1 mile of lost road space. TFL has steadily been processing until recently 600 vehicles every week, London has been losing 2 miles of Roads every week for two years.

What can be done? We moved onto some brief ideas we had to try and ease London's congestion. We felt one of the easiest and cheapest ideas would be to reactivate the Western Congestion Zone (one of Boris' first acts as mayor was to sort out his chums in Kensington), all the infrastructure is still there, cameras, cabling, control room and even the mechanisms for collecting revenues at the cost of a few signs and road markings. Caroline suggested increasing the ULEZ zone, a no brainer given that pollution isn't static and all boroughs

have a right to clean air, we also discussed road pricing and I personally agreed with Caroline that I think this is the future of road usage.

Also discussed was an idea of a central 'works / utility database', a central resource where we could check what closures or problems there were in London but also check whether builders for example had permission for a skip, scaffolding lorry or road closure and if not we could report it and perhaps via a quick deployment team (motorbikes) could sort the problem out, get London moving and councils could enjoy a new revenue stream. Also touched upon was the paltry sum private developers paid local authorities for road space during developments, how badly they were managed reference a lack of marshals / banksmen and how when the road space was not being used these obstructions could be removed temporarily to resume normal road operation. We mentioned the City Of London in particular where developments run into hundreds of millions yet only charge tens of thousands for road space. Caroline shared her own frustrations and anxieties as an everyday cyclist commuter.

Club shared our trade's frustrations of being a unique resource that TFL never utilised, we pointed out our unique skillset of Knowledge of London combined with a daily interaction and assessment of London's shifting road network. As an



Caroline Russell, GLA member for the Green Party

random example I mentioned at the weekend on Kensington High St outside the Royal Garden Hotel there was parking for a handful of vehicles, these few vehicles result in west bound gridlock (three lanes squeezed into one) and if the road markings were simply changed it would stop, we suggested that there were many similar recommendations we could make.

Caroline asked would we as a trade be prepared to share our insights and knowledge, we agreed we would and would relish any input, I added that not for selfish interests but anything that made London work better

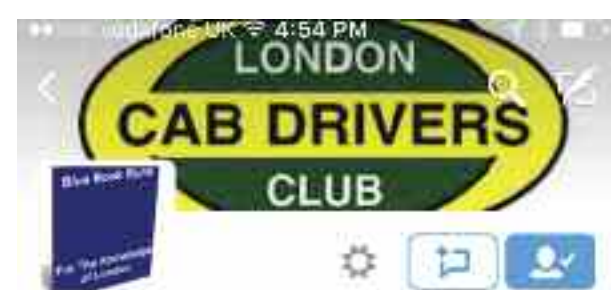
was a benefit for us all. I enjoyed meeting Caroline and was thoroughly impressed by the Greens vision for London, out of all the parties I feel that the Green Party has the most sensible, achievable and sustainable vision for London's future to the extent that I joined them. I was thinking of joining for some time, I have children and whilst sitting in gridlock have been terrified at what the pollution is doing to them and Londoners, a radical rethink is needed pronto. I am now a Green Party member and I think if you look into their policies you should be to.



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Green badge, father 2 girls, lover of vinyl & GBGV's, allotment teeing & grilled 'meats' Tunbridge the new Peckham, hates sad puppies #OKR mob-LCDC office boy



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Google sues Uber over 'stolen' driverless car technology

Google is suing Uber for allegedly stealing the technology behind its self-driving cars.

The search giant, which has been working on driverless vehicles since 2009, has filed a lawsuit claiming Uber stole trade secrets and is using them in its autonomous cars.

If the Google lawsuit is successful, Uber could be blocked from using the technology powering its self-driving cars, which are currently being trialled in Arizona.

Uber responded by denying it stole technology and calling the allegations a "baseless attempt to slow down a competitor".

The brains behind Uber's autonomous car fleet come from Otto, a self-driving truck startup founded by former Google employees, which Uber bought for \$680 million (£543m) last year. Google is claiming that before leaving Otto's founders stole designs for its proprietary technology.

"We're taking legal action against Otto and its parent company Uber for misappropriating Waymo trade secrets and infringing our patents," said Waymo, the driverless car division of Google's parent Alphabet. "Our parent company Alphabet has long worked with Uber in many areas and we didn't make this decision lightly."

"However, given the overwhelming facts that our technology has been stolen, we have no choice but to defend our investment and development of this unique technology."

Google alleges Otto's founder Anthony Levandowski, a former Google employee, downloaded reams of sensitive information

before his departure and used it to develop his own version.

"We found that six weeks before his resignation this former employee, Anthony Levandowski, downloaded over 14,000 highly confidential and proprietary design files for Waymo's various hardware systems," Google said.

"He downloaded 9.7GB of Waymo's highly confidential files and trade secrets, including blueprints, design files and testing documentation."

Google claims other former employees who left to join Otto took further documents.

Otto was founded in January 2016 and had sold to Uber within six months. The ride-hailing company began testing its fleet of self-driving cars less than four months after the acquisition in December last year.

Google said it was made aware of the possible copying when one of its suppliers mistakenly attached machine drawings of Uber's technology in an email.

"Its design bore a striking resemblance to Waymo's unique LiDAR design," Google said.

LiDAR is the radar system Google and Uber's autonomous cars use to build a picture of the obstacles around them.

Uber said: "We are incredibly proud of the progress that our team has made. We have reviewed Waymo's claims and determined them to be a baseless attempt to slow down a competitor and we look forward to vigorously defending against them in court. In the meantime, we will continue our hard work to bring self-driving benefits to the world."



ADVERTORIAL

UBER wins case against TfL insurance rule

Uber have successfully challenged the TfL's requirement for private hire drivers to hold hire and reward insurance throughout the duration of their vehicle's licence period.

The regulator hastily introduced the rule on July 11th last year for existing licence holders without consulting the insurance industry.

At Plan we don't actually think the outcome will have a massive impact. This is because TfL's measure had proved ineffective due to their limited ability to enforce it.

Can I get on/off cover?

The judge found in Uber's favour after they argued that drivers should not be forced to hold private hire insurance during periods when the vehicle is being driven for personal use or not being utilised at all. Plan immediately received a large number of enquiries from black cab drivers asking whether they can have "on/off cover?"

The cabbies were referring to Leon Daniels' incorrect use of the term "on/off cover" whilst addressing a London Assembly meeting. At the time TfL's MD displayed a worrying lack of knowledge and used the wrong

terminology. TfL have subsequently confirmed he was referring to drivers using monthly policies on an occasional basis.

As far as we're aware no hire and reward insurance provider is currently offering a policy that charges only for mileage covered when a passenger is on board. Though we do know that moped drivers for Deliveroo are able to obtain courier insurance for a set period of time when they are delivering of a package.

The rate for this is 65p per hour. Based on an 8 hour day a moped driver working 5 days a week would be paying £1352 per year for their courier insurance. Due to the higher vehicle values and increased passenger liabilities the rates charged for short term cab insurance would be significantly more. Those wishing to obtain insurance in this way will also still need to cover the cost of private car insurance for social, domestic and pleasure purposes.

In reality there a number of reasons why "on/off cover" would work out more expensive and time consuming for the vast majority of cabbies. The main one being it would prevent

drivers accumulating transferrable no claims bonus which can amount to a 65% discount. Any driver that is committed to the industry on a permanent, full time basis will still find an annual contract far more cost effective. We also tend to find that most drivers don't even like to think about insurance once a year, let alone every hour.

If "on/off cover" did become available it would perhaps be suited to older cab drivers looking to work very few hours. It might also suit private hire drivers who are looking to test how successful working in their part-time might be. However with the various additional costs such as licencing, vehicle hire and the English language test, the barriers to entry are mounting up for this type of speculative entry into private hire.

TfL must improve their systems for detecting uninsured drivers

The only negative impact TfL's ruling had for individual private drivers was to make those that used to go for extended holidays or take longer breaks from driving renew their monthly policy when they weren't using their vehicle. Though these drivers would have been best advised

to take out an annual policy and spread the cost on direct debit as this will allow the potential build-up of no claims bonus. TfL may now go all the way and ban monthly policies all together.

In our opinion the main impact of the ruling will be to place be a greater emphasis on TfL to monitor drivers' insurance policies throughout the duration of their vehicle's licence. TfL had already planned to increase their compliance officers from 80 to over 300. However we believe that in the modern world the most effective method would be for them to improve their technology.

Readers of our blog will be well aware that we have been lobbying TfL to create an online taxi and private hire insurance portal. We think it would be far wiser and more worthwhile for TfL to invest the money being spent on employing their new officers in the development a simple system that automatically notifies their team when a licenced driver's hire and reward cover terminates.

Then and only then will it be possible to remove uninsured or inadequately covered vehicles from London's roads.



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■ RANKS AND HIGHWAYS

The LCDC attend the Joint Ranks committee, working hard for more ranks and more access for the taxi trade in London.

■ CAB TRADE ADVICE

All members can call the office for any information or up to the date news on any trade related subject.

■ TRADE'S FUTURE

The Club worked tirelessly in bringing in the green & yellow identifiers to the taxi trade.
And are always working hard to protect our future.

■ CAB TRADE REPRESENTATION

We are working hard to work with members of the GLA and also politicians to fight our corner against TFL and was a major influence in the recent "future proof" document.

■ VEHICLE MANUFACTURERS

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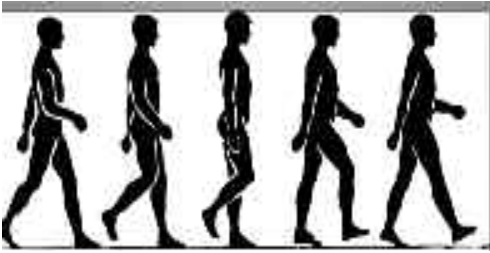
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Walker on the March....

THE ZEC TAXI IS COMING

According to Alan's Angle (Feb 17) TFL are commissioning fast-charging points for ZEC taxis. Charging estimated to cost £5-6; call it £5.50.

Last Summer the LTC chair, Peter Johansen, informed the world that the average daily mileage for a taxi was 150 – 200 miles per day and that with a single re-charge during its shift the ZEC taxi could run all day on electric. Good news eh? Your daily fuel costs are going to reduce to £5.50 per day. In your dreams!

I very much doubt that Mr Johansen will guarantee these huge savings on fuel costs.

In any event, even if the ZEC taxi can achieve these remarkable figures, in practise it ain't going to happen. This assumes that every driver can charge the cab when they get home so that they have it fully charged for the start of their shift. That isn't possible for many drivers for a variety of reasons.

Nevertheless, if LTC's contention that after allowances, the TX5 will cost the driver no more than a TX4 to purchase after government/TFL contributions have been taken into account, this could have a significant effect on our costs, ergo the cost index and would result in lowering our fares without lowering our take home pay.

Whether or not drivers can take the risk of purchasing a new cab, even at today's price, is another question. Is it viable in a business where the regulator has allowed the immediate hire market to expand from the original 25,000 taxi drivers to five times that figure when PH e hailing is taken into account? On top of that, the burden of regulatory cost on taxi drivers is much greater than that for drivers engaging in e hailing.

Even if we can be persuaded to buy the TX5 the trouble then is that there are no signs on the horizon that there will be sufficient charging points to cope with London's 23,000 taxi fleet, nor how they intend to keep those that are made available clear for taxi use. After all, at the moment TFL enforcement cannot even keep private cars and PHVs off of taxi ranks.

If TFL do not get on top of this, then the ZEC taxi will be a complete waste of time and money as the majority of taxis will be driving around for at least half a shift on fossil fuel rather than electricity.

So, its up to us to put pressure on TFL to provide sufficient charging points, along with effective policing. Without this the ZEC would be a



complete waste of time. On top of this, there could be war if we were to find Prius's in these charging bays.

FOOLS AND HORSES

Now that GETT have bought out Radio Taxis, drivers are complaining about the way they are operating on such things as fixed prices. Well, they have to pay for the buy-out somehow.

Drivers that were still around from the time RT became RTG did OK out of the take-over, receiving £1956 for their 1000 shareholding (196.5p per share). The real earners though were Riesel and Franks.

When RT demutualised the members were paid £1100 each plus 1000 shares in the new company. They were told those shares would be worth 300p per share (£3000) but that was an impossible price due to the way share trading was organised.

Shares could be traded internally every three months and any driver leaving the circuit had to relinquish his shares at the following auction or have them sold back into the company for their face value of 1p.

This system made the share auctions a buyer's market because the driver had to accept any offer over 1p per share.

The dubious reason given for this share trading system was ostensibly to prevent a hostile take-over from outside sources. I say dubious because in the first place the circuit was already being ostensibly sold to an outside force in McBride, who

while only owning just under 30% of shares, effectively owned the company in that he could do what he pleased with it, including selling to an outside source.

In fact, that's exactly what he did by selling the business to GETT.

Meanwhile, there were effectively only two buyers in the market – Franks and Riesel and the prices they were offering were nothing like 300p per share. They paid 212p in the first auction. This went down to 31p by 2006. By 2008, the price was just 22p and down to 15p and by 2011 they were paying a driver 15p – a total of £150 for the 1000 shares rather than the £3000 they intimated the members would be paid.

By this time, Franks had increased his holding 250% to 14,000 shares and Riesel had increased his holding 600% to 116,000 shares. All at a combined cost of around £35,000 instead of the £390,000 the member had originally been told they would be worth.

It gets worse. By 2013 Franks had further increased his holding by 550% to 77,324 and Riesel's holding increased another 120% to 140,873 shares. These shares were bought for an average of around 12p per share. So all these additional shares were bought from drivers for around £10,500.

Now it could be argued that these were a fair market price as while radio taxis consistently made profits, the 12 years that followed demutualisation didn't produce a bean in profit. However, it was

Riesel that was running the company and so he must take the lion's share of blame for RTGs horrendous performance.

Riesel also took a six figure salary throughout the life of RTG and Franks had almost reached six figures by 2013.

If Franks and Riesel were paid the same price for shares as the drivers – 196.5p – they have done very nicely indeed out of the deal. Franks purchased his shares for around £17,200 and sold them for a shade under £152,000 and showing a cool profit of around £134,000 on the deal.

Meanwhile, Riesel forked out a total of around £34,250 for his holding and sold it for £276,800, netting a profit of around £242,500.

Perhaps now RTG drivers may understand why they appear to be paying more and receiving less, now that GETT have taken over RTG.

This should send a message to all DAC members. They have agreed to a very convoluted and unnecessary procedure for demutualisation. None should be surprised if ordinary members end up with less than a fair share and current board members end up with more than a fair share.

WIN SOME, LOSE SOME

By now we have all heard about Uber's court case against new PH rules. On the down side they won the battle to retain on/off Hire and Reward insurance.

Although this decision is nonsense and encourages PH drivers to buy inadequate insurance for the safety of their passengers, this is the situation we now have.

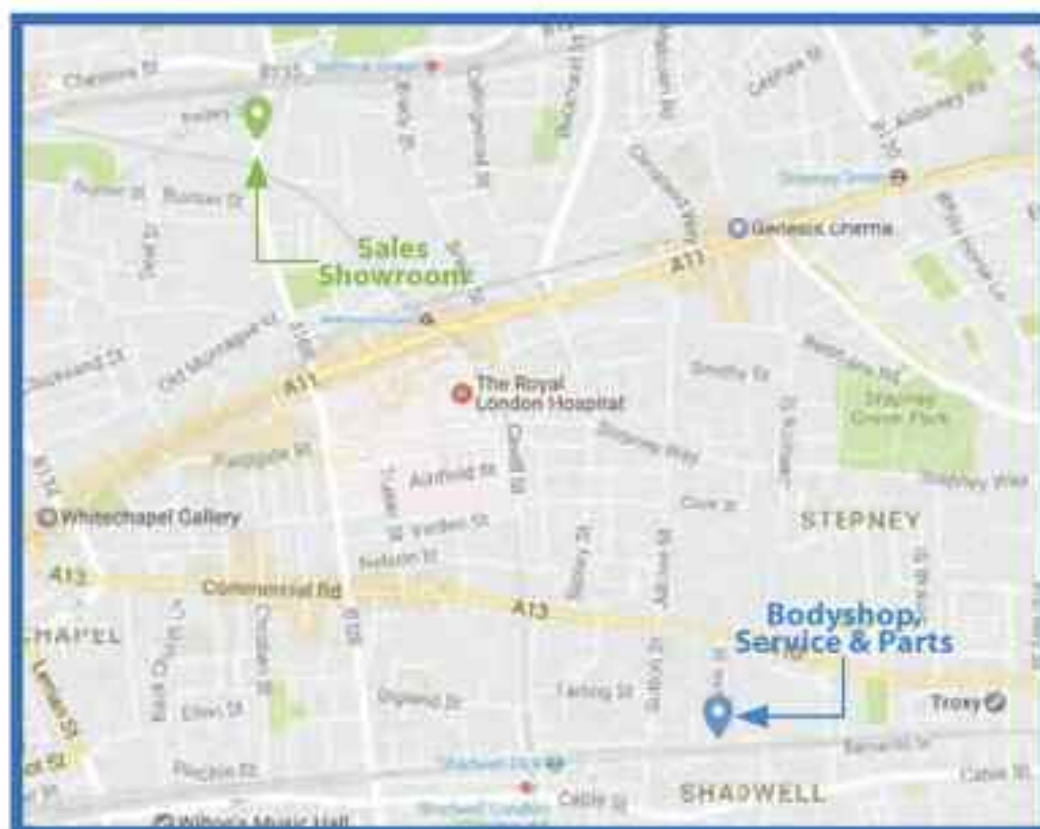
Well, it's been many years since taxis were taxed as such on the roads. Taxis are used for private purposes by drivers, just as PHVs are used in this way. So, there cannot be any reason stopping us from saving a fortune on insurance costs by buying the same on/off insurance, can there? Presumably, all we need is to find an insurer that will offer us such a policy. After all, the average taxi is only used for around 20 - 25% of the time it is insured for.

On the upside, Uber lost their appeal against the English language test. Better still, they claim that this will put 23,000 drivers out of work. Well, we can only hope, can't we?

It's coming to something though when Uber are effectively admitting that they have 23,000 drivers that aren't capable of conversing with their passengers.



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Airport matters... by Alex White

Out west (Heathrow)



Firstly let me introduce myself - my name is Alex I got my badge about 14 months ago (December 2015). Whilst on the knowledge I worked for WizAnn, I wrote the current two apps for the knowledge, WizAnn Points and WizAnn Books, I come from a long IT background.

I work Heathrow, it suits me like it does a lot of drivers for lots of different reasons. For me I need the breaks that the wait times give you, also I like interacting with other people. Working town for me is quite lonely, the airport is more social IMHO.

Recently I became a Rep (Representative) for The Club (LCDC) at Heathrow, I feel I have a lot to offer the trade out there in terms of my experience and ideas. My main goals are to work on making the wait times shorter, putting more money in the pockets of all drivers.

One thing that is noticeable at Heathrow is the lack party politics when it comes to issues there, all the reps genuinely want to do the right thing for drivers, we may differ in our approaches but collectively we agree on many things, we work as a group called the Heathrow United Trade Group (HUTG) we collectively negotiate with Heathrow Airport Limited (HAL)

on all things that matter to our trade at Heathrow.

Just recently the HUTG with agreement of HAL have produced a manual for working Heathrow, we want to drive standards up, we have a lot of competition these days and we want our customers to have the best experience possible, professionalism, consistency of service are key in a highly competitive market. We will be running induction classes to go through the manual with new TAG holders, these will be run by the reps in rotation.

Working Heathrow as a Taxi driver is not the same as working town, there are a lot of time restricted jobs that have to be completed within a certain timeframe so the use of Sat-Nav is encouraged for these jobs so you can see traffic on certain routes and plan accordingly. There is a lot more out of town work as well (compared to the town driver) so the meter is not a requirement for these jobs, so finding a happy balance between the customer expectation and driver can be more difficult. Every driver who has earned their badge is a individual business with the right to set their own prices out of the metropolitan area so keeping that in mind when trying to be consistent in the eyes of the

customer can be difficult at times.

The current growth of TAG holders is unsustainable (both feeder park full a lot of time), wait times are increasing all the time, there are also technical issues and costs associated with large numbers of unused TAGs, so old TAGs that have not been used at all for the previous 12 months will be deactivated, we would like these to be returned as they represent a cost to feeder park. We are cost neutral to Heathrow so everything we do has to be funded, so every time you go



through the barrier you are contributing to the costs of running things.

i

Important Notice

Heathrow

New Driver Policy

- Commencing 1st March 2017 a new procedure will be in place for all new drivers wishing to register to work at Heathrow Airport
- The process will require all new drivers to undergo a Heathrow Induction on working practices and procedures which will be hosted by the collective trade groups and bodies from the Taxi Trade.
- The purpose of the induction is to provide information in relation to the working practices that are in place at Heathrow, the bye laws that cover the use of the ranks and feeder parks and the roles and responsibilities of APCOA who manage the Taxi Operations on behalf of Heathrow Airport
- Unless a driver has attended an induction course they cannot be issued with a Tag and Booster which is a requirement to access the feeder park and ranks at Heathrow Airport.
- In addition new drivers will be required to pay for the Tag and Booster from that date and will need to sign the terms and conditions and provide a copy of their bill before the Tag and Booster will be issued. A refund will be issued to drivers who leave Heathrow against the return of the Tag and Booster pro rata to the time spent working at the Airport. (this will be set by Heathrow Airport limited and provided upon issue)
- Please Note this fee will only apply to new drivers and will not be set retrospectively to any drivers currently working at Heathrow.
- The issue of any new tags and boosters is suspended until that date. (please note this does not apply to replacement of damage or non functioning tags)
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London Taxi Company waves goodbye to diesel cabs

The London Taxi Company (LTC) has announced that it has started the final production run of its last TX4 diesel cabs for UK taxi drivers.

This instantly recognisable vehicle has been a hallmark for safe, dependable travel in cities around the UK for two decades, and LTC is ending production of its diesel vehicles ahead of the launch of a range-extended electric taxi later this year.

The TX1 model, first launched in 1997, was originally designed by Sir Kenneth Grange, the renowned industrial designer – once described as “the man who designed Britain”. There have been a number of design modifications since – most recently with the TX4 Euro 6 described by the taxi trade as the best taxi ever produced. Over 41,000 TX models have been produced over the past 20 years, of which 17,000 are TX4s.

These cabs have been sold into over 40 countries around the world, including Australia, China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and New Zealand. The cab even is even driven on the roads of Tonga. Closer to home these vehicles have appeared in an estimated 5,000+ films and TV shows – with the cab regularly used by James Bond, Doctor Who and Sherlock Holmes to get around the capital.

However, LTC now is investing £300m to produce a new range-extended electric taxi – intended to provide the renowned dependability and manoeuvrability of a black cab, whilst helping cities around the world to dramatically cut emissions from the transport sector.

To mark the changing of the guard and to celebrate a vehicle which has served passengers not just in Edinburgh and London, but Baku and Sydney, LTC is producing 300 Limited Editions for the final production run.

Although colloquially known as the black cab, this celebratory model will come in three new colours – starlight black, lunar silver and night sky blue. New paint technology has been used on these vehicles to ensure an even more durable finish which is more scratch and chip resistant. In addition, each bears an individually numbered badge on the boot lid and dashboard.

This edition will also feature an understated Union Jack grille, a gloss black dashboard and Rear parking sensors. Like all new TX4s, it will come with a Euro 6 engine which delivers an 83% reduction in nitrogen oxides when compared with older models.

“Thanks to investment in new processes and improved staff training by our parent company Geely - this is the best quality, lowest emission black cab we have ever



made, and is the perfect tribute to a car that has been a fixture of the UK's streets for 20 years." said: Steve Fitter, Head of Manufacturing for TX4 at LTC.

Notes:

- The vehicle will be available to

view at LTC's showroom on Brewery Road from 20th February, and there will be a private viewing of the vehicle on 22nd February.

- The Limited Edition Cab will also be on display at the SMMT's offices in Westminster for the week of the 20th

February.

- An image of the Limited Edition cab can be found here: <https://we.tl/yCJWCJBZZj>

- The new Limited Edition will be available on a range of attractive finance packages starting from £168/week.

Bothered by Uber's ethics? It's time to put your money where your mouth is...

By Alice Jones
Courtesy of i News

Where exactly does Uber founder Travis Kalanick rank in the monstrous boss stakes?

He's better than Gerald Ratner, I suppose, in that he uses the product he sells, so he can't think it "total crap". Last month, he hailed a ride with two female friends – UberBlack, the high end offering of his taxi app, naturally. There he sat, in the middle of the back seat, clutching his smartphone, chatting and flirtatiously shimmying his shoulders to Maroon 5 (which is arguably a crime in itself, but worse was to come). As he went to leave the cab – no tip – his driver, Fawzi Kamel, engaged him in conversation about the company. Their exchange was caught on his dashboard camera and has since gone viral. Kamel berated Kalanick for "raising the standards and dropping the prices", claiming that the company had rendered him "bankrupt"; Kalanick lost his rag. "There's an abusive pattern to it –

bad behaviour followed by apologies, promises to be better, followed by more bad behaviour" "Bullshit," he said. "Some people don't like to take responsibility for their own shit. They blame everything in their life on somebody else. Good luck!" He slammed the door. Kamel rated his passenger one star and passed the video to Bloomberg. Five stars for Kamel. So Kalanick is marginally better than Ratner in that he doesn't think his product is rubbish, just that the people he employs are – liars and lily-livered perpetual victims, all of them. And, once he has slashed fares, meaning that many drivers earn below minimum wage, he doesn't mind telling them that, aggressively, to their face. It's not his fault – the man who pays the wages, sets the fares, signs off, ultimately, on all of the company figures – that Kamel has seen his earnings plummet and lost \$97,000. Why should Kalanick take responsibility for that, when he can, well, blame it on somebody else?



First an online campaign saw more than 200,000 people delete their app after the firm was accused of breaking a strike of taxi drivers who were protesting Donald Trump's Muslim ban. Then, Susan Fowler, a former engineer with Uber, published a blog in which she accused the company of refusing to discipline her manager after he sexually harassed her. "Upper management told me that he 'was a high performer' and they wouldn't feel comfortable punishing him for what was probably just an innocent mistake on his part," she wrote. It turned out that it wasn't an innocent mistake, nor his first offence. Fowler listed several further

instances of discrimination (including a bizarre occasion where she and the other five women in her team were not given a leather jacket, but the 120 men were) and points out that when she joined Uber, the organisation she was part of was over 25 per cent women. By the time she

left, it had dropped to less than 6 per cent, she says, because of "organisational chaos", and sexism. Uber is now investigating Fowler, who has had to hire lawyers. And this week, Amit Singhal, newly hired as Uber's engineering chief, was forced to resign after just one month in the job after it emerged he had failed to disclose a harassment claim from his previous job at Google (he denies the allegations). All that, before you look at the working conditions. That's a lot of mis-steps from one company. Not to mention a company that lost \$3bn in 2016. And that's before one scrutinises the day-to-day working conditions of its drivers – many so stymied by low fares

that they dare not stop for toilet breaks, and work 19-hour days just to earn a decent wage. Kalanick has been quick to action each time – he resigned from the President's advisory council, having been criticised for apparently endorsing Donald Trump's agenda.

There's an abusive pattern to it – bad behaviour followed by apologies, promises to be better, followed by more bad behaviour. It's hard, isn't it, when the people you want to be the good guys – the disrupters of big business, the visionaries who want to save us all time and money – turn out to be the bad guys. It's the same with Apple and Amazon and countless other companies who have changed our lives. Kalanick must take a hefty share of the blame for his lofty treatment of those who keep his company running every day and night with little reward. But as long as we continue to give him our money in exchange for an unsustainably cheap ride, what possible motivation does he have to reform himself or his company?



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