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Issue 267 March 2019

# YOU'RE OUT!



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Published by  
The London Cab Drivers' Club Ltd.  
Unit A 301.3,  
Tower Bridge Business Complex  
Tower Point, 100 Clements Road  
Southwark, London SE16 4DG

Telephone: 020 7394 5553

E-mail for membership enquiries:  
E-mail: [thelcdc@gmail.com](mailto:thelcdc@gmail.com)  
Web: [www.lcdc.cab](http://www.lcdc.cab)

Editor: Grant Davis

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The views expressed in this publication are not  
necessarily those of the Editor or of the  
Management Committee of the  
London Cab Driver's Club.

Contributions for publication are welcomed  
and should be sent to the Editor at the  
above address.

The London Cab Drivers' Club Ltd.

Printed by Iliffe Print. T: 01223 656500  
[www.iliffeprint.co.uk](http://www.iliffeprint.co.uk)

## CUT OFF FROM 80% OF FUTURE TRAFFIC PLANS...

When you just think it cannot get any worse... it does. More roads being closed to taxis and the Mayor admitting to David Kurten at City Hall that under his Transport Strategy, the Cab trade is not included in 80% of his future traffic plans, which include cycling, walking and buses.

It is all well and good with our Mayor going to Brussels telling people London is open for business, but when people get here arriving by Eurostar it is costing them £12 before they can even get into the Euston Road. Does the Mayor really think business people are going to come to London and travel to meetings on a number 8 bus or rent a Boris bike or even walk?

### Parliament Square Protests

At time of going to print the protests are in week seven and are growing in numbers and determination.

Be under no illusions, these protests are working and the police are now

asking TFL to resolve this matter ASAP. I have seen an email sent by LTDA's Steve Mc who claims drivers attending are "throwing coins and making racist threats" - as someone who has been attending 90% of the protests I find his remarks both devious and insulting to working cab drivers... some of whom are his members.

### House of Lords

As you can read in the Badge, I attended a meeting with Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, Lord Clark and Dom Hyams to discuss the repercussions for our disabled passengers when taxis are removed from major roads under the Mayor's new transport strategy.

I am pleased to say that the meeting was very positive and I have since been contacted by several Lords in the House who now wish to get involved.

Grant Davis  
LCDC Chairman




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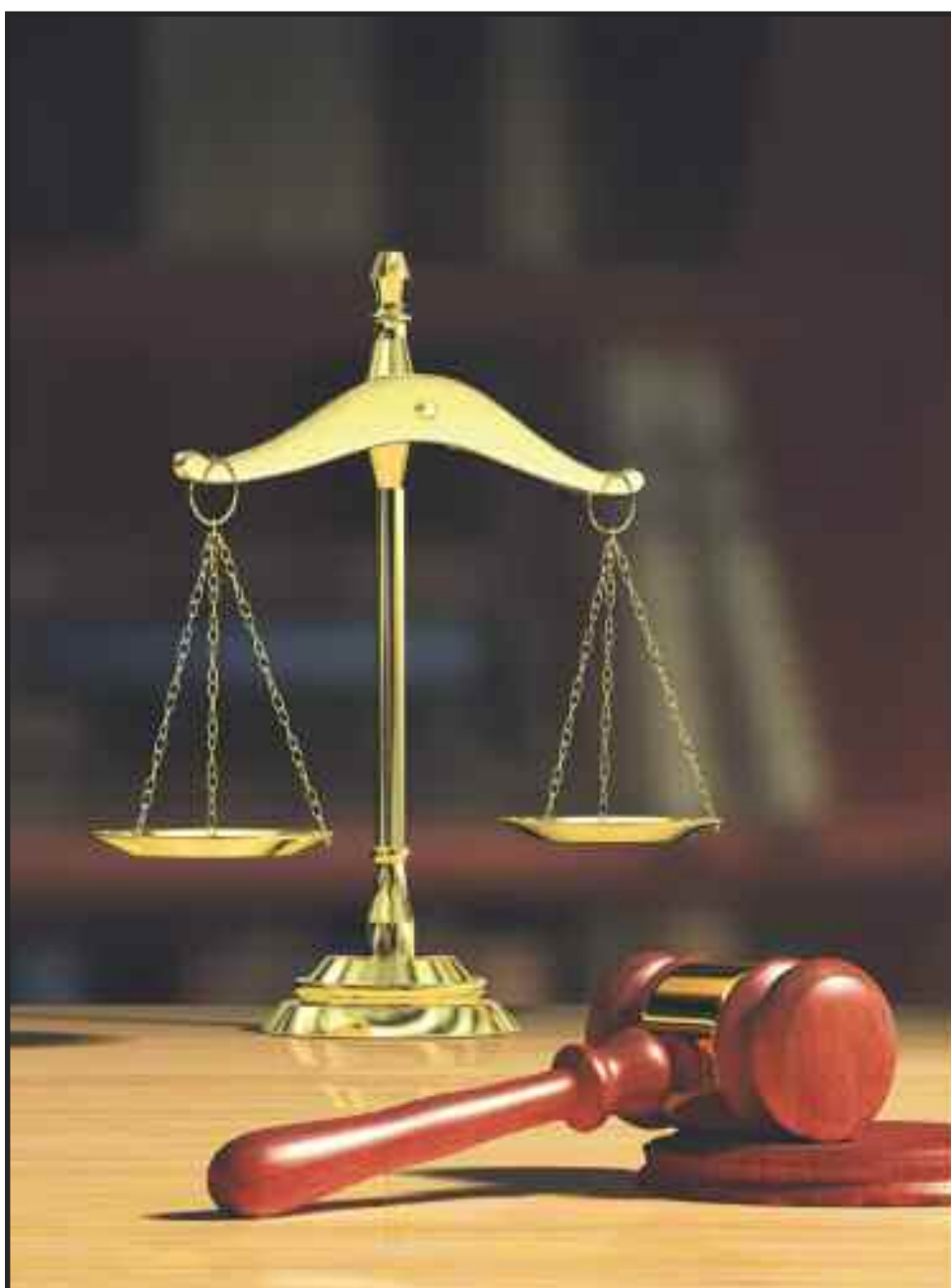
We at the LCDC don't often bang our own drum when it comes to helping our members with their legal troubles. A lot of the cases which come our way with members are quite sensitive and we respect their wishes to keep things in house and out of the paper which I can fully appreciate.

However, not only do Payton's Solicitors offer our members a 24 Hour Duty Solicitor 365 days a year, but since getting involved with the Club, our solicitor Keima Payton has the distinction of having a 100% success rate in all her cases which she has handled on behalf of the Club's members.

Keima Payton has a fearsome reputation in court and should ever the need arise you will find no one better able to fight your corner and save your Badge than Keima.

- Grant Davis, LCDC Chairman

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# KHAN PLANS TO CUT US OFF

**At the London Assembly Plenary meeting last month, UK Independence Party Assembly member, David Kurten, asked Sadiq Khan:**

“Mr Mayor, in your Transport Strategy, you say you want 80 per cent of journeys to be made either by walking, by cycling, or by public transport by 2041. That is your aim and your target. Does that 80 per cent figure include taxis?”

Sadiq Khan replied: “No it does not”.

Though some in our trade claim this is old news, due to the fact the Transport Strategy was published last year, an amendment of the original draft was published in 2017.

The significance of the Mayor’s reply is far from irrelevant; this can be quantified in a recent question submitted by Conservative Assembly member Andrew Boff at the Mayor’s question time in January:

Andrew Boff: “What is the reasoning behind the proposals to allow buses to travel east on Duke Street Hill and Tooley Street but not Taxis?”

Sadiq Khan replied: “My Transport Strategy sets out my intention that 80 per cent of journeys in London will be made through walking, cycling, or by public transport by 2041. The Tooley Street proposals were designed to support this aim by encouraging Londoners to utilise these modes of travel. There are six eastbound bus



routes that use Tooley Street, two of which operate at night time only, providing a high level

of bus service within this corridor. By reducing overall traffic volumes, the proposals

were developed to provide more reliable bus journeys, whilst also creating a safer and

more comfortable environment for those walking or cycling in the area”.

The importance of the Mayor’s reply is all too obvious; if the trade is not included in the 80 per cent target, we will be excluded when measures are introduced to reach that target.

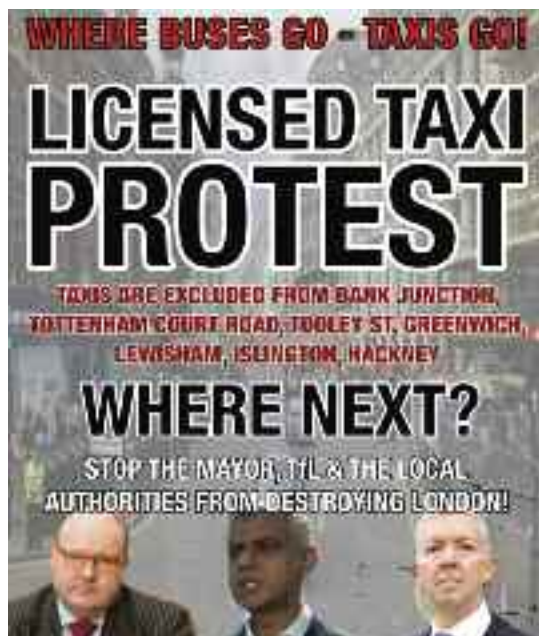
More recently, TFL announced a consultation to trail an app based demand responsive bus service using Euro VI vehicles provided by ViaVan Technologies B.V. who will operate in partnership with London General Transport Services Limited (Go Ahead London), stating: “In line with the commitments in the Mayor’s Transport Strategy (MTS) we want to explore how demand responsive bus services could complement conventional public transport services.”

Demand responsive services operate flexibly in response to local demand. These services can change routing and scheduling depending on when and where customers wish to travel. A quasi Taxi service! It remains to be seen if their drivers will be required to undertake a topographical assessment.

The Transport Act 1985 allows for the immediate hiring and advanced booking of taxis at separated fares, i.e. sharing.

We have regulated fares, a non refusal obligation, we are 100% wheelchair accessible, with now a zero emission capable requirement.

We should be included in the Mayor’s 80% target!





# PH drivers claim discrimination over new London C-charge

Minicab drivers are launching a legal action against the London mayor, Sadiq Khan, accusing him of discrimination against a largely ethnic minority workforce by making them pay the congestion charge while black cab drivers, who are overwhelmingly white, will be exempt.

Khan oversees Transport for London (TfL), which is planning to levy a £12.50 ultra-low emission zone (ULEZ) charge to drive in the city centre from 8 April as "a key part of our plans to both reduce congestion and to protect Londoners from harmful emissions". But the Independent Workers Union of Great Britain (IWGB), which represents many Uber drivers and other gig economy workers, claims it amounts to indirect discrimination and violates the human rights of its members.

Until now, minicabs and black cabs have been exempt from the existing £11.50 congestion charge. When the ULEZ charge is levied, the cost to about 18,000 minicab drivers estimated by City Hall to carry passengers in central London each day is likely to be more than £1.4m a week.

It could push down earnings for Uber drivers, which have been estimated by academics at about £11 per hour, by about 13% over an eight-hour shift. Many drivers say they already earn less than the London living wage of £10.55 per hour.

Black cab drivers will not have to pay the charge because, City Hall said, their vehicles were accessible to disabled people and because they had a legal obligation to accept fares and to take the shortest route.

Only 8% of private hire drivers are white British



Private hire drivers demonstrate outside the Palestra building



Private hire drivers stopped to pray outside Palestra

compared with 80% among black cab drivers, according to those who answered a survey by TfL. The IWGB has issued a pre-action letter to Khan giving him until 6 March to reverse the decision before it applies to the high court for a judicial review. It argues the

decision is in breach of the UK Equality Act and the European convention on human rights that protects property rights and which has been interpreted as protecting people's ability to carry out their profession.

The secretary of the IWGB's

private hire drivers branch, Yaseen Aslam, urged Khan to remember his heritage as the son of a Pakistani immigrant, and said: "I didn't imagine that I would be forced to take legal action against mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, for introducing a policy that discriminates against our community. We hope the mayor sees sense and scraps this policy that promises to push thousands of drivers into deeper poverty."

"It's completely discriminatory that we have to pay this charge while black cabs continue to be exempt," said Muhamed Ali, a minicab driver and branch committee member. "If Sadiq Khan doesn't reverse this policy we will continue to fight it in the courts and in the streets."

A spokeswoman for the mayor said: "The number of private hire vehicles

entering the congestion charge zone has shot up from 4,000 a day in 2003 to more than 18,000 now. Sadiq simply isn't prepared to ignore the damaging impact this has on congestion and increasing air pollution. Congestion has a crippling impact on businesses across the capital.

"At the same time, our toxic air in London is a major public health crisis that is stunting the lung development of our children, leading to thousands of premature deaths, and increases the risk of asthma and dementia."

City Hall said that private hire drivers who wished to avoid the charge could switch to a low-emissions vehicle or drive a vehicle that was accessible for wheelchairs.

Courtesy of The Guardian



# LCDC REBUFFS 'RACIST' TWEET CLAIM

TPH Senior Relationship Manager (SRM)  
Thu, Feb 14, 11:44 AM

Dear Grant,

I am writing to you concerning a recent tweet on the London Cab Drivers Club official Twitter feed which is now the subject of a complaint that was received by the Commissioner of Transport for London and the Deputy Mayor for Transport. The complaint cites the: "deeply offensive Islamophobic and racist rhetoric published by the London Cab Drivers Club (LCDC) in relation to both the Mayor of London and licensed private hire drivers."

The tweet in question was posted at 10:46am on 31 January 2019: [https://twitter.com/The\\_LCDC/status/1091044964245458944](https://twitter.com/The_LCDC/status/1091044964245458944)

I am aware, in the video, that you make a statement that the views expressed by Courtney Connell are not the views of the LCDC. However, Courtney is an LCDC representative as evidenced by the attached image. In any case this video was broadcast on the official LCDC Twitter feed to a potentially wide audience.

As you are aware, this isn't the first occasion where I have had cause to write to you, as Chair of the LCDC, due to complaints received of a similar nature. I feel compelled to remind you of the Conduct section of the Taxi Engagement Policy (<http://content.tfl.gov.uk/taxi-engagement-policy-april-2017.pdf>), which states:

"We are fully committed to open and honest dialogue with all parties involved in formal engagement. However, meeting attendees are expected to conduct themselves in a courteous and respectful manner. Any breaches of confidentiality, harassment (including sexual harassment, racial harassment, harassment on grounds of disability, age, religion or belief/non-religion or non-belief, and homophobic bullying/harassment on grounds of sexual orientation), or comments of a personal nature, including comments made either in meetings or externally (such as on social media), will be dealt with by exclusion from the meetings."

As Chair of the LCDC, and in line with the above section of TfL's Taxi Engagement Policy, I am now seeking your formal representations. Please respond by no later than 28 February 2019.

Yours sincerely

Dan

## LCDC RESPONDS:

Dear Dan,

Thank you for your email dated 14th February 2019.

I understand that a complaint (is that a singular complaint?) has been made with regard to my live streamed vlog with Courtney Connell on the 31st January 2019. You have stated that the vlog resulted in a complaint and that the complainant feels that comments made by Courtney Connell were "deeply offensive, Islamophobic and racist rhetoric". Noting within your email that at the point that the comments were made that I had made clear the views expressed were not the views of the London Cab Drivers Club.

I am sure that you are aware that my vlogs, which are designed to tackle subjects of interest to the Black Cab trade, include videos which are not just me talking and expressing my own personal views but also involve me speaking to other Cab Drivers and members of the public seeking their views and discussing what I trust are relevant issues. Interviews by their nature are always tricky on any social platform, but members seem to enjoy them and it is a way of reaching out and keeping them abreast of developments within the trade and the views of people, be they disability campaigners or those whom they consider to be their colleagues. The periscope app which is used to vlog is linked to our twitter feed automatically and is streamed "live". Interviews tend to be aired this way because we don't have the ability to professionally edit (seamlessly or at all) what people have said and because journalistic integrity establishes that people are entitled to hold views, even views that are not popular (subject to certain limitations).

I am not going to pretend that I am not a big supporter of Article 10 and the right to free expression. I ask people for their opinions because I am genuinely interested in their views and the very wide spectrum of views held by subscribers (I hope you saw my most recent interview with Mr. Dom Hyams on disabilities). I also hope you agree that the right to free expression would be meaningless if it only protected certain types of expression. So Article 10 protects both popular and unpopular expression – including speech that might shock others – subject as I say to the obvious limitations.

Whilst Public authorities may restrict the right to free expression they can only do so if they can show that their action is lawful, necessary and proportionate in order to:

- protect national security, territorial integrity (the borders of the state) or public safety
- prevent disorder or crime
- protect health or morals
- protect the rights and reputations of other people
- prevent the disclosure of information received in confidence
- maintain the authority and impartiality of judges

May I ask under which heading TFL seek to restrict the freedom of Courtney Connell from expressing his views?

Grant Davis



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# Uber pushed for UK congestion charges that would hit poor hardest

**Uber used a private meeting with the transport secretary to push for congestion charges that a senior civil servant warned would hit poorer drivers hardest, records have revealed.**

Chris Grayling was also lobbied by the Uber CEO, Dara Khosrowshahi, about opening up opportunities in Britain's public transport network, according to the minutes of a meeting in October, revealed after a freedom of Information request by the Guardian.

The details – which have prompted opposition parties and drivers embroiled in a high-profile legal battle with Uber over workers' rights to voice concern – have emerged at a time when Uber is preparing the ground for a long awaited initial public offering (IPO).

Under the heading "Future of Uber in the UK", the minutes reveal that Khosrowshahi lobbied Grayling against the introduction of legal licensed private hire vehicle (PHV) quotas, especially in London, which he described as "an inappropriate market intervention by government".

He pushed instead for "comprehensive congestion planning" so that vehicles with what he called "less utility" would be "disincentivised" to travel privately. At this point, the minutes state, an official whose name was redacted questioned whether Uber's preferred model "wouldn't be regressive and lead to higher costs for the less wealthy".

The official's concerns echo those of TfL's own impact analysis of such a change in congestion planning, which found that private-hire cab drivers would probably end up paying it and that 71% come from designated deprived London neighbourhoods and 94% are from minority ethnic backgrounds.



Dara Khosrowshahi

James Farrar, branch chair of the IWGB United Private Hire Drivers branch and one of the drivers who won an employment tribunal ruling against the company, said: "Uber is cynically proposing a congestion charge knowing full well that drivers on below minimum wage will end up paying it while Uber and its passengers continue to get a free ride."

Caroline Russell, national transport spokesperson for the Green party and a member of the London assembly's transport committee, said city streets were more congested as a result of Uber deliberately keeping prices so low that passengers could use the service for "trivial local journeys".

"There has to be a cap on private hire licences but I also think that congestion charging should not be paid by the driver but by the operator, who can pass it on to passengers if they wish," she said.

The minutes also state that the transport secretary invited Uber to test new technology in to the UK and was lobbied by the Khosrowshahi about opening up public transport opportunities.

Khosrowshahi, who had flown to London in October

to unveil an initiative designed to help Uber drivers buy electric cars, met Grayling and officers from the department on 23 October, days before Uber launched a court challenge to an employment tribunal finding that drivers should be treated as workers rather than self-employed.

The Uber chief, who was identified in the minutes as DK, "spoke about his vision for Uber as a full-scope transport platform, integrating public transport, with dynamic pricing and real-time travel info".

On the government side, the minutes state, "SoS [the secretary of state, Grayling] expressed excitement for

the future of mobility across the UK, and said he was particularly interested in exploring how operators like Uber can open up transport opportunities for smaller towns and rural areas that are less well served by regular public transport. SoS encouraged DK to explore this.

"DK spoke about Uber's expansion in developing markets, and alternative solutions it is trialling. He said some of these solutions might work in rural UK markets. SoS expressed strong interest in this."

The shadow transport secretary, Andy McDonald, said: "Chris Grayling's secret meeting with Uber is

concerning given the company's appalling record on tax, workers' rights and passenger safety.

"The transport secretary has thrown public transport into crisis and now wants to allow companies like Uber to profit from the chaos, hitting the poorest in society hardest. Successful public transport networks are publicly owned, accountable and run in the public interest – the complete antithesis of Uber."

Caroline Pidgeon, the Liberal Democrat chair of the London assembly transport committee, said: "For too long Uber executives have had easy access to 10 Downing Street and government ministers. When they wish to lobby it seems the door to Whitehall is always open to them."

"I am seriously concerned that at these meetings Uber are seeking to deny the excessive hours that many Uber drivers are forced to work, which put drivers, passengers and other road users at serious risk."

An Uber spokesperson said: "We want to be a partner to the cities we serve. Over time it's our goal to help people replace their car with their phone by offering a range of mobility options - whether cars, bikes, or public transport - all in the Uber app."

A DfT spokesperson said: "The transport secretary met Uber as a significant stakeholder to discuss a number of transport issues – just one of which was the government's work on the future of mobility grand challenge.

"During this discussion, the transport secretary made it clear that major transport organisations like Uber should be exploring how future technology can benefit and better connect people right across the country."

*Courtesy of The Guardian*



Chris Grayling

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# LTDA ENTERPRISES SELLS TAXI HOUSE

Only as recently as last week LTDA General Secretary Steve McNamara was asked by one of his members... "are you selling the building?". His response was, no, he was not. The same question was asked at last year's AGM in October 2018 and he gave the audience of members the same answer.

Now on social media, he has finally admitted that he has been in negotiation for the past two years to sell the building. In this week's TAXI magazine, he has finally taken the trouble to inform his members of the sale and the purchasing of new premises in Great Suffolk Street.

Funnily enough there is no mention of the money received from the sale of TAXI house, although he states it was 20% more than the original valuation. He also does not mention the cost of the new premises of 133 – 135 Gt Suffolk Street. Sources tell us that LTDA Enterprises received £21.5m for the sale of TAXI house and has paid £12m for the new property.

One of the reasons given for the move is the need for more space to deal with members' issues (PCN, Legal problems) - this seems rather strange given that the top two floors of TAXI house have been empty since early last year, as the company that was renting the offices went into liquidation.

The loss of rental income for this period would have had a serious impact on the financial affairs at the LTDA and possibly lead to the LTDA having a record loss for the accounts of 2018, if it follows the recent trend of results. In the last published accounts ending Sept 2017 the LTDA showed a loss of £1.2m, which took their losses for the last 5 years to just under £5m.



## LTDA Enterprise Directors: Steve Macnamara, Richard Massett, Paul Brennan and Anthony Street

Could this be the real reason for the decision to move premises? The purpose of the LTDA Enterprises has always been a mystery to many members.

In the period between 2004 – 2014 (when membership was growing) LTDA -

Enterprises' debt to the LTDA had increased from £384k to just over £2m. During this period the LTDA also sold their 20% stake in Computer Cab that netted them £2m. In 2011 the LTDA had £7.5m in the bank, by 2017 this had shrunk to just over £3m.

Many members of the LTDA have been quite shocked that this process could take place without the membership's knowledge. As reported in *the Badge* before, all the assets of the London Taxi Drivers Association were transferred back in 1987 to LTDA

Enterprises, which gave the directors of Enterprise carte blanche to use these assets as they deemed fit.

Whether this was a good move for the members of the LTDA is open to question, however the figures tend to suggest it was not.



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## Private buses be like...

It is quite astonishing to think that whilst TFL is cutting buses in a particular borough (Sutton) it is simultaneously lobbying and consulting for Viavan, a private company backed by Mercedes Daimler group who are worth billions. Routes 410, 433 were cut back earlier last year and the 154 this year.

According to TFL's own 2018 figures its buses are expected to cover only 283 million miles in 2019-2020 compared to 302 million miles in 2018 – a 6 per cent cut in service volume in two years.

More journeys are carried out centrally, so Sadiq Khan's Fare Freeze which has made these cuts necessary is essentially "Less well off" (Jeremy Corbyn quote) TFL customers having to subsidise more affluent customers in zones 1-3. Getting the bus is the most affordable motorized transport option available for Londoners who perhaps have to travel too far to cycle or have a disability that doesn't make cycling an option. Any reduction in bus services has a disproportionate impact on the lowest paid doing the most arduous jobs, not exactly what I would expect from a Labour mayor.



every 200 meters, "it is expected the cost of a fare would be more than a standard bus" and "we do not propose to integrate with the TFL Oyster card payment" and "during the journey to the customers



TFL's private bus consultation details include wheelchair accessibility (one space), six buses to be run from existing garages and an ability to stop

destination, other customers will be picked up if they are travelling in a similar direction, with minimal impact on journey time", leaving it up to a private

company to decide what "minimal impact" and "similar" is can only end in tears as London has seen with Ubers over supply of vehicles gridlocking virtually every transit hub.

This would mean that buses' low paid customer base would be priced out of bus usage, as would be pensioners and disabled "Freedom Pass" holders.

This is a slippery slope to go down. Private companies have no interest in servicing passengers with special needs or destinations out of the way that would interrupt their earning efficiency. Think of how many Uber vehicles are wheelchair accessible for example... virtually none. They would only be interested in the routes that would yield the most profit for the minimum investment. TFL and councils thinking the private sector will "do the right thing" is incredibly naïve.

How this will eventually play out is the very passengers who need the buses the most will be the exact ones whom this policy will let down the hardest and leave virtually cut off.

Last year when the trade learned of TFL's Duke St Hill proposed prohibition of Taxis, we demoed to be included in any future plans (being part of TFL's transport network). Allegedly Mike Brown gave the trade the wink and said "all we need to do is fill out the consultation". This is

nonsensical advice given the template of the Tottenham Court Rd consultation that wanted Taxis included but was ignored by Camden Council or that Mike Brown personally endorsed our exclusion from Bank junction which the majority were using simply to escape the Embankment CSH gridlock, cause a problem, displace traffic then shut off the roads... genius!

Mike Brown is essentially Gaslighting the Taxi trade - we predict why we are being excluded and he says it's all in our minds... really?

## Gaming Vital Junctions be like...

**Our exclusion from Bank Junction was under the pretence of #BankOnSafety suggesting that it was OK for buses to use the junction because they were safe (over 20,000 safety incidents in the last 3 years alone, an average of 4.3 people killed or seriously injured every week over the last 5 years) and exclude Taxis as we are unsafe (Ironically the safest form of Transport currently under the TFL umbrella by a huge margin).**

The detail of the bus routes using Duke St Hill is 6 routes (2 of which are night buses only), so suggesting that our exclusion would speed up these few buses is ludicrous - what is going on here? Remember my old mate Leon Daniels? His latest venture (fresh from his £440,000 Tfl payoff) is Optibus, you guessed it... a private company that will specialize in smaller dynamic buses just like Viavan. Stopping Taxis using Roads they've been using for hundreds of years will only hinder our competitiveness, fiscal viability and consumer allure.

Uber's next product to be unleashed on London is Uber Pool Express - you guessed it, minibuses that will qualify to use all the newly prohibited junctions.

These private high capacity Private Hire Vehicles are the next stage in TFL's "vision" for London, another product adding more vehicles to an already overburdened road network that will operate uncannily like Taxis.

Uber Pool Express has failed in every city it's launched in, but "rideshare" is how companies like Uber Jedi regulators into believing basic regulation is a hindrance.

## Our Cabs be like...

**We have seen the agenda over the last year to exaggerate our emissions footprint whilst simultaneously attempting to reduce the age limit of our cabs.**

A fact that all of the GLA, Mayor and all the media refuses to acknowledge is that at no stage did we have any say in what vehicle we drove and had to buy. TFL made this decision at every level - they are culpable, no one else, and to try and insinuate that we don't care about London's air quality is ridiculous. You would be hard pressed to find any other group of workers who are more exposed than London Taxi drivers. By trying to separate us from their transport network and attempting to class us as just another private car, TFL are trying to distance themselves from previous woeful decision making.

If TFL are adamant that the age limit has to be reduced then they need to reimburse drivers who have bought the vehicle that they dictated. A worrying rumour is that LEVC are struggling? I hope this is not true as this could leave any owners in the precarious position of not getting spares and not having a valid warranty. A recent TFL FOI revealed that in 2018 they licensed over 46,000 diesel PHVs (52%) and 8367 for the first time (18%), so in 2018 the cab trade was forced to buy a £63k vehicle without adequate infrastructure to clean up London whilst TFL licensed over 8000 new diesel PHVs.

Our market is now flooded, TFL's rationale for making us buy a £63k cab in this current climate that they created is a workers' abuse. They have been forced to introduce Congestion Charging and ULEZ on Private Hire Vehicles because there are now so many. James Farrar has been throwing some wild language around in reference to these charges. If you want your members not to pay it then simply get a WAV vehicle or better still invest 3 years of your life learning how to get around London.

The Knowledge is a meritocracy, just do the work and you will pass James.



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# Taking taxi exclusion to Lords

## LCDC Chairman meets Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson to discuss taxi exclusion

They say that the sun shines on the righteous and that is how it felt on a very hot Wednesday afternoon at the House of Lords where myself, Dom Hyams, Lord Clarke of Camden and Hampstead met with Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson to bring to her the outrageous situation the licensed taxi trade in London is now facing where our Mayor, Sadiq Khan, has publicly stated that under his new transport strategy, we are no longer involved or to be allowed in 80% of future transport plans.

Like everyone else in the cab trade, when we were told that we were officially not "Public Transport" anymore?... did you receive a TFL email? did you get something in the post?... me neither and unfortunately for us, I believe the legacy that this Mayor wants to be known for is the one of cleaning up London's air quality, at any cost. Whilst that has its merits, the fact that he has thrown the cab trade to the wolves over our so-called emission levels, is quite frankly a disgrace.



He has overseen a monopoly in vehicles we have to buy (1) and the fact he has continually allowed the PH to grow and flourish and register Euro6 diesel vehicles, whilst banning us from buying these for the last 14 months, to me, shows obscene bias from our Mayor. I attended a meeting at LEVC where once again the lack of charge points was at the top of the agenda. It just shows that the situation last year was far worse, but we had no choice...



If common sense had prevailed and TFL accepted that us having just one vehicle available (when we were told 5) was not acceptable and allowed us to still purchase Euro6 TX4 & Mercedes Vito & LEVC taxis until we had more of a choice and a better infrastructure, then we would be in a healthier situation where more older cabs would be coming off the road (2,000 last year) whilst the number of new, cleaner Euro6 and ZEC taxis increased dramatically on our fleet

numbers would mean that even through natural wastage, our fleet got greener by the month and there would be no need for any change to our age limits. At the time of going to press the trade is no nearer getting a second ZEC taxi into the market. This, I believe is far from healthy and will play a major part in the decimation of cab numbers in the capital.

## STOP PRESS



Lord Palmer will be delivering a letter to the PM demanding that the law be changed so that where buses go taxis must be allowed to follow



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# White saviours, citizenship and Spurs

**Will cabbies be donating to Comic Relief this year? I ask because David Lammy has set the cat amongst the pigeons with his comments about Stacey Dooley's social media post with a young black child for The charity.**

By saying "The world does not need any more white saviours" he has wielded a giant sized Zombie knife to slice open a wound that was already in need of stitches due to Brexit.

Using the word "WHITE" makes this a race issue and everybody feels obliged to dutifully fall into line. Both sides can be right in an argument.

One of the pioneers of Comic Relief is a black man, Sir Lenny Henry. In 20 years it has raised over a billion pounds for worthy causes, both here and in Africa.

In a time of austerity, it is even more necessary now, than it was then.

Put simply, they do fabulous work.

And yet, I too am fed up with the one image of Africa. A continent, consisting of 54 Countries, great natural resource and not just a jungle, full of nameless naked little children with flies on their faces.

Comic Relief and David Lammy must learn that the way the message is delivered is as important as the message itself, else two rights will make



a wrong.

Sadly, I worry that the message, the British public will hear is, "they don't want our money" and that's bad for everyone

## Baby Come Back?

**I've spent hours trying to convince people to be interested in Brexit. It is the single most important decision in our lives. It Will impact the lives of our children's children and will affect the way Brits are viewed and treated around the world.**

Before you fall asleep, this isn't about Brexit. (Which is supposed to be this

month)

It's about a 15 year old girl who, along with two of her friends was radicalised on line and seduced into flying to Syria via Turkey to meet and marry a soldier of ISIS.

Four years later, having given birth 3 times, she has given an interview to The Times saying she wants to come back and it has got people talking, reasoning and thinking.

Should she be allowed back in? Does she pose a threat? What about the child?

The debate has been fascinating.

What do you think?

She doesn't appear to show much remorse. She talks about

heads in dustbins.

If we don't take her back, we have effectively stripped someone of their citizenship without an investigation, trial or conviction. Is that ok with you?

Life is not black or white it is various shades of grey. Decisions do have consequences though and if it's not something she doesn't already know, it's something Shamima Begum is about to discover.

**Tottenham have done brilliantly to get to the last 8 of the Champions league. There you go, I've said it. And it hurts lol.**



# The Mayor's Taxi and

BY MARK WHITE

Last week, I attended the TOPS Meeting.



Walking back to where I parked my Cab, I bumped into Transport Commissioner, Mike Brown.

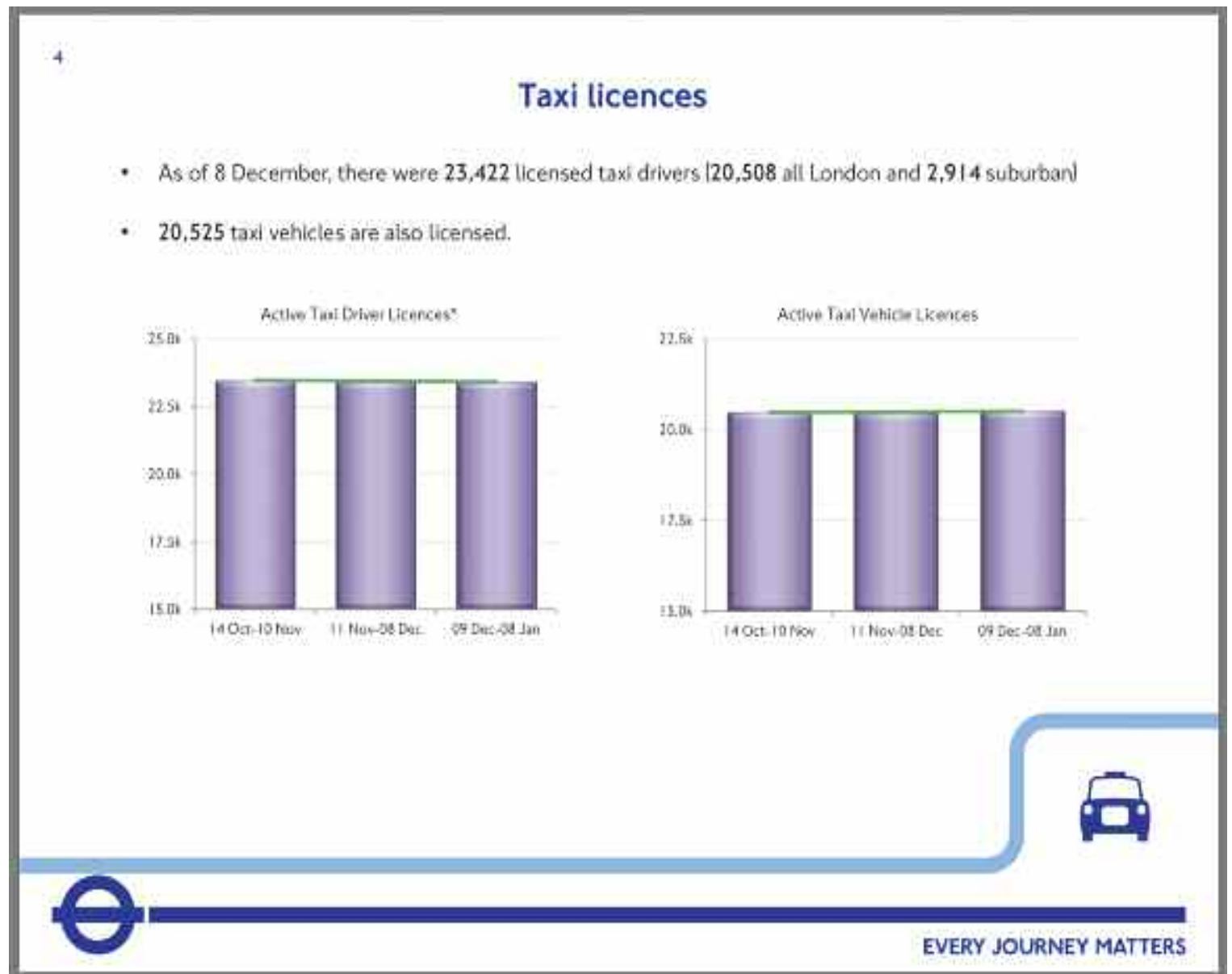


In a brief conversation, he told me he's meeting the CEO at Heathrow this week and acknowledged that there were not enough charge points and that the Motorway Service Station prices were too high. He promised to mention our exchange.

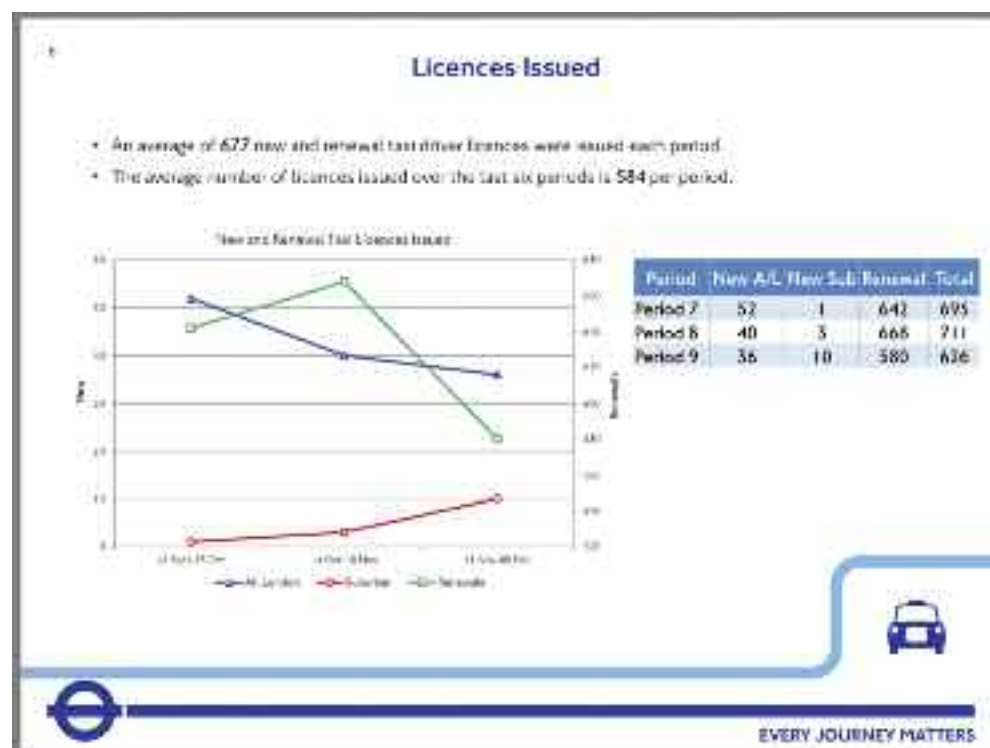
The Transporter Commissioner said he was also meeting London Councils Transport Member, Julian Bell (The Leader of Ealing Council) to get more Charging Infrastructure across



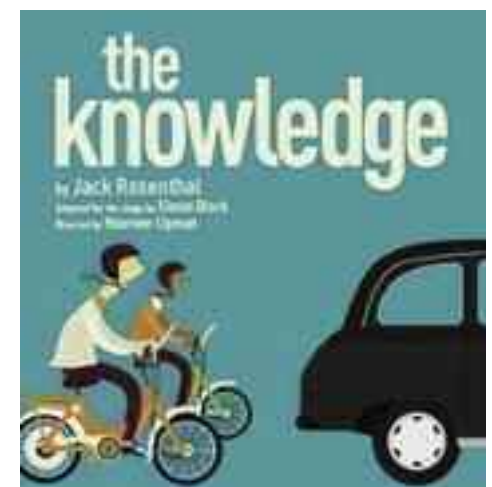
London. I told Mike Brown that I'd just left the TOP (Taxi Operation Performance) Seminar and that the number of Taxis in the Fleet have dropped by 10% in less than 2 years.



The Transport Commissioner promised me that he would go and see how the TOPS Meeting had gone, but the data is all very disappointing. In the last 3 recorded periods of their year, the number of people passing the Knowledge has dropped from 50 to 36!



Applications went up 5% after the LCDC highlighted that the Knowledge was dying. However, it must be pointed out it featured in a C4 programme and there was also the Theatre Show.





# PH Plan is failing

The issue was also debated at an event at City Hall which TfL refused to attend because it was hosted by UKIP.

In the same time period, PH has more than doubled with over 108,000 Drivers and 87,000 PHV's of which only 400 are Wheelchair Accessible.

One of the problems is that it now takes longer to get accepted on to the Knowledge than it actually takes to get a PH Licence!

The Mayor's Taxi and PH Plan is failing and when I told TPH that, and asked what improvements they had made after the failure to implement the 'Future Proof' Report recommendations, they said that they were introducing English Tests that an 11 year old can pass.

Everything else is 'coming'....but never seems to happen.

TfL say the Driving 'assessments' are coming but we fear that they will not be stringent enough.

The PH Topographical assessments are an absolute joke: 31 questions in 2 hours that a 9 year old Cub Scout would get a proficiency badge for! Less than 50% of PH Drivers pass 1st time.

If there were more meaningful tests applied to the PH Trade then the number of Drivers would drop and the standards would go up, giving a better safer service with less exploitation. Congestion would improve with lower numbers and the pollution levels would reduce. All Drivers need to pass Safeguarding and Disability Awareness courses and introducing an NVQ or City & Guilds would do that. There would be no need for new legislation to cap numbers and that is what the Government have been telling TfL.

It is clear from attending the TOP Seminar that TfL are scared of PH Operators

taking legal action against any new measures. Meanwhile PH Drivers have threatened the same which will just lead to more low standards and more exploitation.

The Task and Finish Report that the LTDA were Party to, was another can kicking exercise, just like the Law Commission Report before it. The Mayor has it in his hands to raise standards and Licence fees as the Club have continually said.

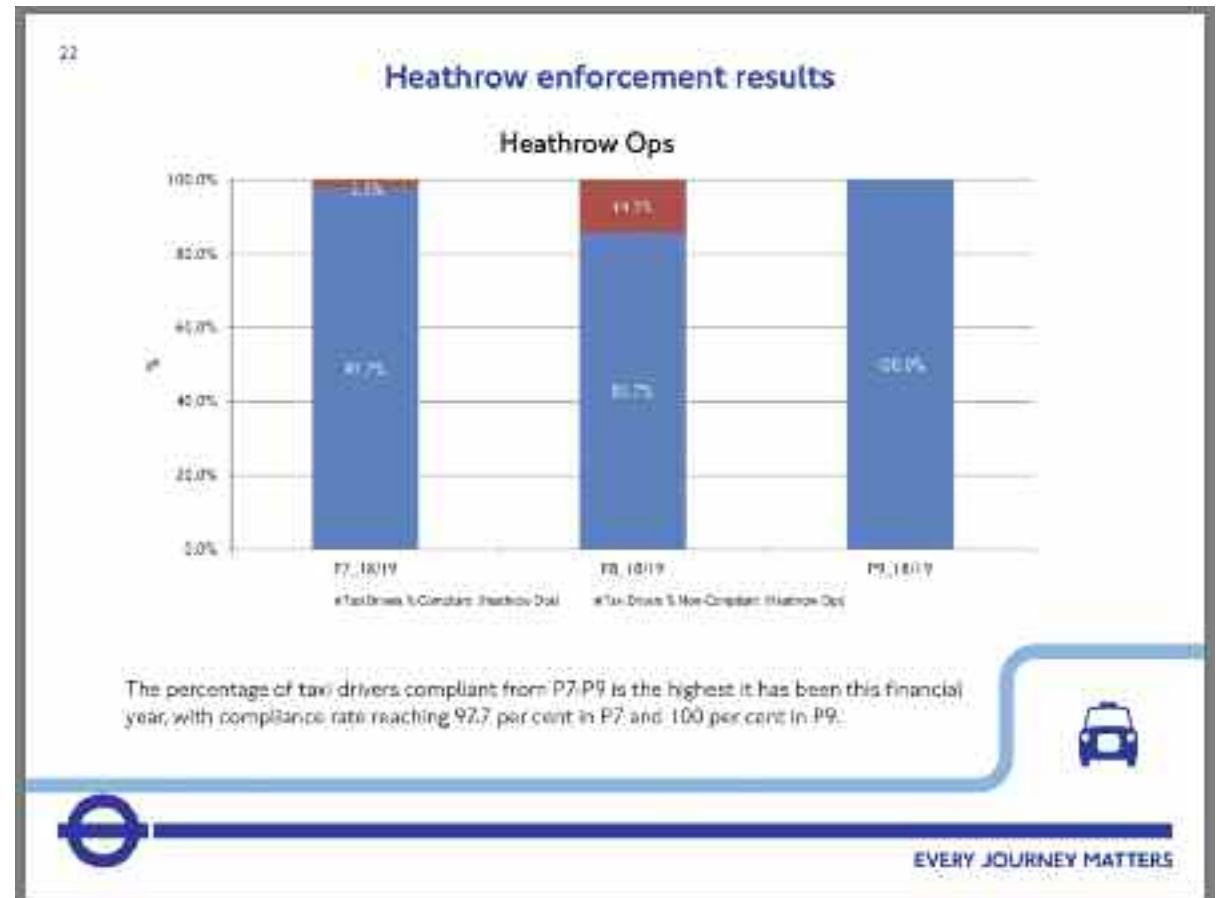
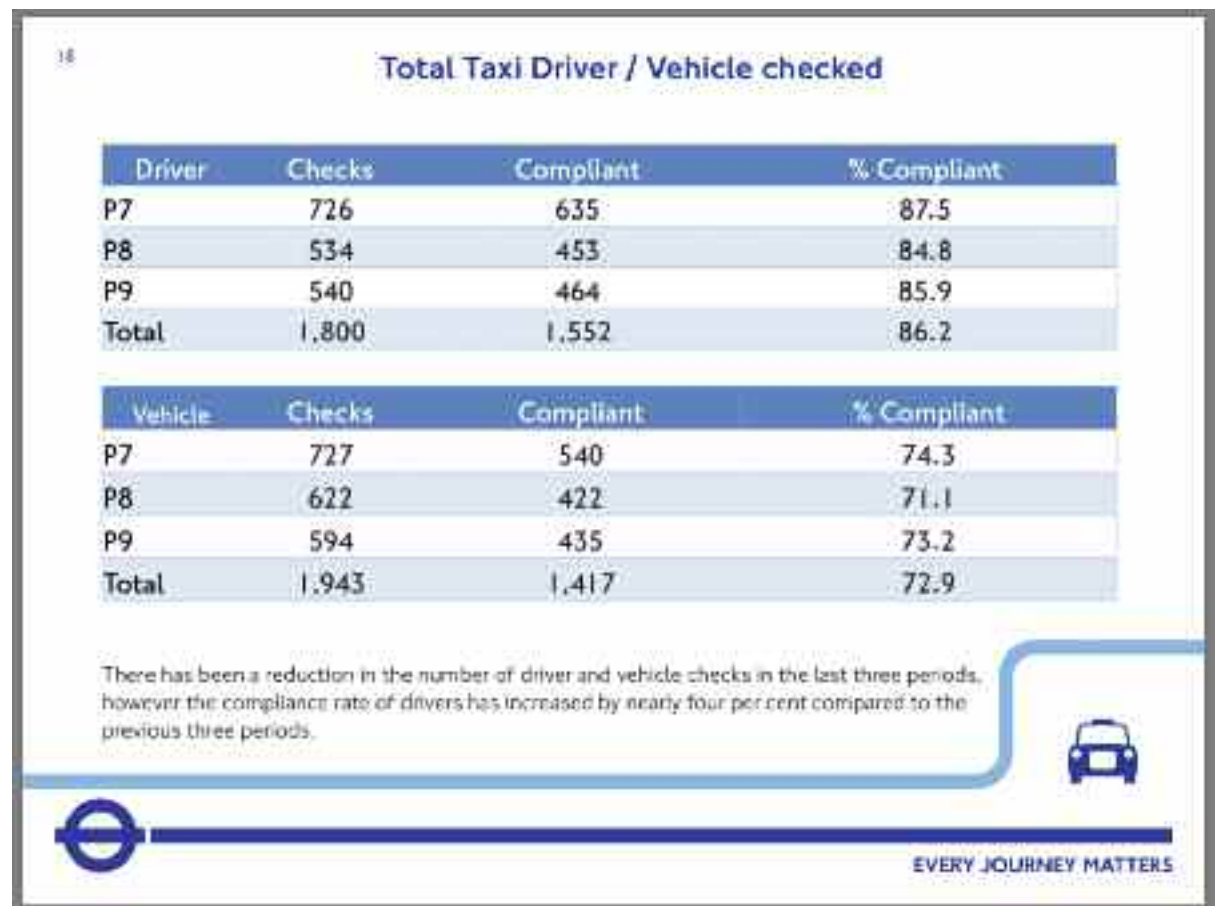
TfL's Head of Compliance, Anand Nandha, was asked about the number of Officers; he said that they had dropped slightly below 250, but that he was reviewing the numbers. When asked for a commitment not to cut numbers, he refused. When asked for his report to be made public, he, and TfL avoided answering.

If TfL spent more effort educating Drivers, the number of offences would fall. If a Licence has more value, then offences would fall. TfL could then think about reviewing their budgets.

Compliance of both Trades have dropped alarmingly, showing the effects of too much competition in the market place. Given how low standards are in Private Hire, this is not good. However, Taxis have also been badly affected dropping to 73%. This what happens when low standards undermine the whole industry. Both Trades suffer as Drivers literally cut corners and the safety of the public will be compromised in the long run.

There were 3 vehicles that had no insurance and were seized. Despite being reported as 'Taxis' they were ALL PHV's and TfL promised that this error will be rectified before the data is published online.

Taxis at Heathrow are the best they have ever been, which shows the value of actually holding regular operations and Meetings at



Heathrow. It was the LCDC that asked for these actions and we are now pushing for more activity to be taken on Terminal Forecourts by TfL at night where PH & Provincial Taxis congregate with impunity to avoid picking up in the Official Car

Parks.

The Supply/Demand Research which was released on Friday took so long to publish that it's already out of date. The figures about Taxi fares being 63% cash do not

reflect the Credit Card mandate. Most fares now pay by card, rarely do people use Cash.

*The two presentations (Taxi & PH) can now be found online.*





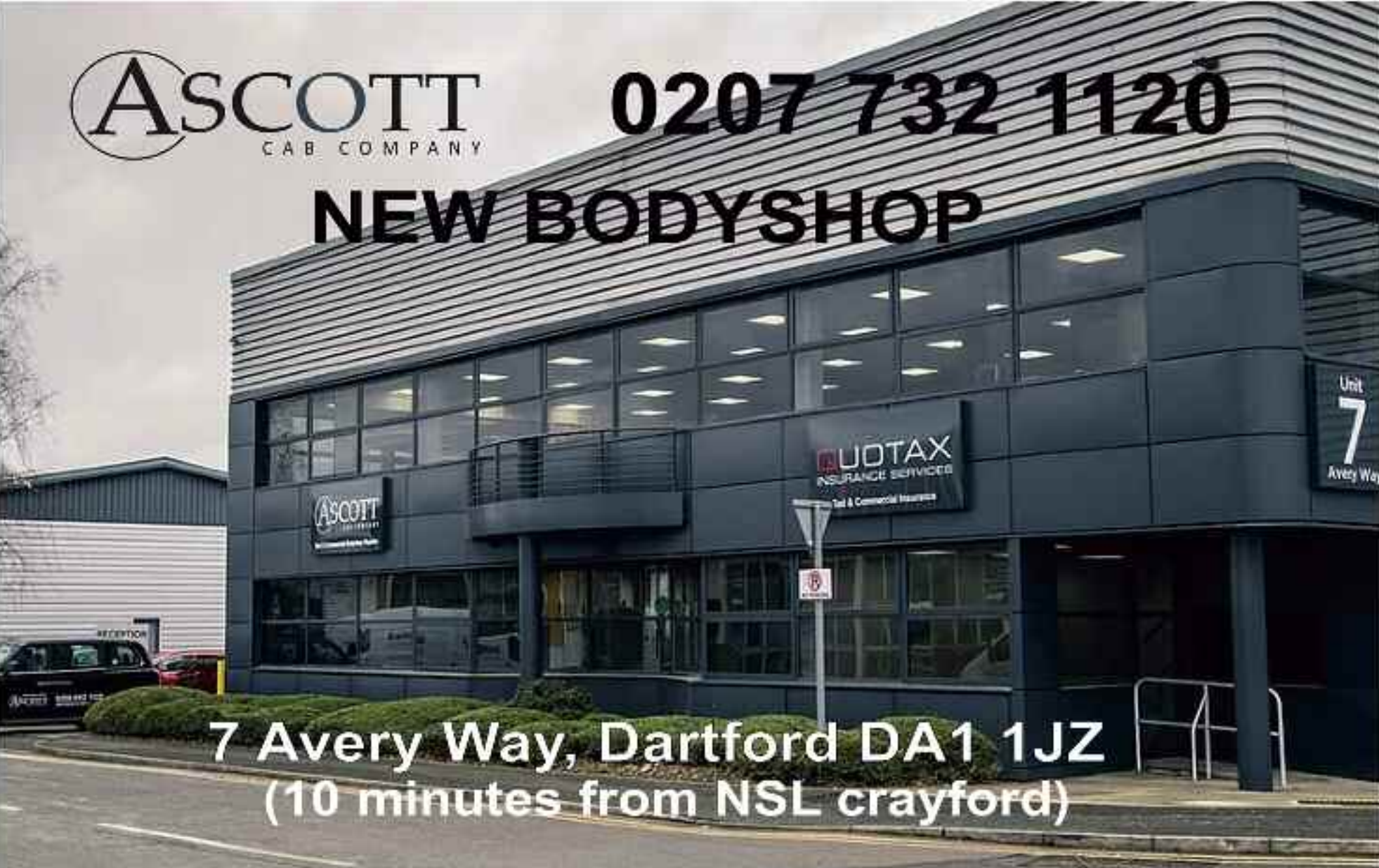
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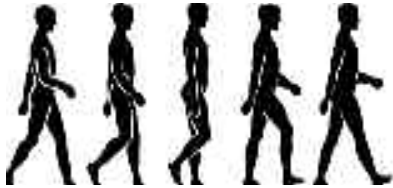
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# Walker on the March...

**THE STING (STARRING ROBERT REDFORD AS MAYOR JOHNSON & PAUL NEWMAN AS MAYOR KHAN)**

**What these two have perpetrated on us with regard to the vehicle we drive may not be illegal, but it still makes their actions questionable in my book. They have massively deceived and misled our trade.**

First, they peddled the garbage about how taxis cause most of the pollution in central London. Commonsense tells you that when you are sitting behind a lorry or van that's chucking out huge clouds of exhaust fumes, that your taxi isn't as polluting as them and there are more of them than there are taxis. You are right but you are also wrong.

When they test emissions, it's on vehicles entering the C zone and so your cab will be counted as several vehicles in a day.

## THE SET UP

Along comes Boris and tells us we have to have a ZEC cab in four years time. We are not to worry though as there will be five different models on the market and a ZEC taxi will cost around £45,000. No worries mate.

Four years later and the reality was that as usual, we've been sold a pup. There is one ZEC vehicle available, not five. It came in at £63,000, not the £45,000 we were told. Still, their estimate was only wrong by 40%. What did you expect from this shower? Even after the government grant (available for a while) of £7,500 it still cost £55,500. That's still 23% more than we were told and, of course, LEVC have already increased the price before a year is up, just as any Monopoly supplier should.

## THE SUCK IN

Mayor Khan Gets the hump when the ZEC goes on sale and it quickly becomes apparent that the sales estimate given by the leader of a driver organization of 9,000 new ZEC cabs in three years was a load of old pony. It shouldn't have been a surprise as there have never been sales even close to that figure in the past, far less after a 23% price hike.

So Khan gets the hump and has a light bulb moment and comes up with the bright idea of reducing the age limit to twelve years, clever little soul. The Mayor has a chat with LEVC who tell him they can supply the cabs, no problem

This new 12 year limit wheeze means that nearly 3,500 cabs are going to come off the road almost immediately and another 1400+ a year later Add the ones that came off in 2018 and that's probably two thirds of the 9,000 required. Two thirds is pretty close to accurate when it comes to the Mayor

# THE STING



and that's without even £1 being spent of the £42 million decommissioning fund. To shake things up, Khan doubles the decommissioning weigh -out to £10,000 on a first come, first serve basis to try and start a stampede of drivers trying to decommission their old cabs.

However, there are a couple of flaws in his cunning plan, whether or not he has seen them yet. The decommissioning bit is working fine but the sale of new cabs isn't. During January and February, LEVC sold just 92 cabs and made plans to get rid of 20% of their workforce. Meanwhile, drivers are taking the decommissioning dosh and either retiring or buying newer, more polluting, second hand cabs. Fleets are seeing it as an opportunity to get rid of some of their old dogs.

Also, who's to say that after you buy a £63,000 cab, it doesn't become an albatross around your neck when they decide, retrospectively, that cabs have to be completely electric in a few years time?

## THE STING

They promised us a choice of five ZEC vehicles; we got one and went back to a monopoly supplier.

They allowed us to keep buying cabs for more than a year, allowing us to

believe they were good for 15 years, not 12 years. I was one of the drivers.

I had a choice of buying a Euro 5 or paying an extra £3,000 and waiting three weeks for delivery of a Euro 6. I chose the Euro 5 but if I'd known for £3,000 the cab would have been good for an extra three years, I'd have paid the extra and waited. After all, running a cab for £1,000 capital cost per year is excellent value.

We've been sold down the river on misconceptions and misinformation, if not downright lies.

LEVC alone has already had an estimated £1 million knocked off the value of its stock of used cabs since the announcement and before the 12 year rule has come in.

## THE OUTCOME

The idea of retrospectively applying such changes may or may not be legal and we won't know without a court case but it is unfair, immoral and unworkable. Just imagine if Tesco's were suddenly told that all their financial budgeting for the last 12 years was wrong and all their sales were under-priced because landlords were allowed to say to them they have decided that they should have charged 20% more rent than they did and so were going to charge the extra and back-date it for 12 years.

That would be enough to turn 12 years of profits into losses and possibly bankrupt Tesco.

Well, that's exactly what they are planning to do to you and me. Khan, with the business sense of a gnat, has knocked around £90 million of the value of our fleet. That's about £3,500 - £4,000 for every cab driver.

A cab has a 15 year life and so it's value is written off over that time. In a straight line, that's around £2,700 a year. Now, it's looking like it should have been £3,350 so the trade and individual drivers have lost £650 on every cab, in every year for the last 12 years.

## CHINK OF LIGHT

At least some semblance of commonsense is showing up with regard to TX4 Euro 5s. Should the 12 year limit go ahead, it is now planned to give a grant of £5,000 for a conversion to LPG. There is currently a company that will do this for just shy of £12,000. This would bring the cab up to Euro 6 standard and so would still get 15 years, rather than 12.

Alternately, the grant could be foregone and instead, the TX4 would get a 20 year like as with converted TX1s and TX2s.

## TAXICARD

For those that don't know, Taxicard (TC) is a scheme partly funded by London Boroughs that allow disabled people to use taxis to get around. At least, that's how it begun life back when Livingstone was leader of the old GLA back in the early 80s.

By 2017, passengers paid between £1.50 - £2.50 for fares between £10.80 and £14.20, depending on the applicable tariff and the issuing Borough and can usually use the card twice on a single journey.

Comcab have just been awarded the new contract but to do so, they have had to introduce fixed prices (FP) to the account in 2018.

Since 1st January, all TC work is now FP. They pay £7.00 for the first mile and £3.50 thereafter. Now this may seem fair pricing but it is actually terrible for the driver. Here's a few example of the FPs advertised recently: New X to London Bridge - £10.50; Leytonstone to Clapton - £17.00; Charing X to Catford - £19.60. Most subscribers these days are on PAYG so pay Comcab 10% of these fares.

Local work is even worse. While £7.00 for the first mile looks good, it isn't. Customers are told to be ready 15 minutes before booked time. By the time they get in the cab, it is not unusual, especially at night, to have £6 - £7 on the meter before setting out so by the time a mile is travelled, the meter will often show £10-£12. Once customers realize it costs them nothing if they are not ready and waiting to go, the situation will worsen. I cannot see how they are going to cover this work when things get busy as they appear to have been struggling badly so far.



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### ■ HEATHROW AIRPORT REPRESENTATION

With our reps at the airport working

hard on the trade's behalf for a fairer, and more safer future at Heathrow.

### ■ 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

The Club works alongside LTC and Mercedes to deliver a vehicle that meets

our standard as a London taxi driver. Recently we have held meetings to work against the ULEZ strategy and the introduction of taxi age limits.

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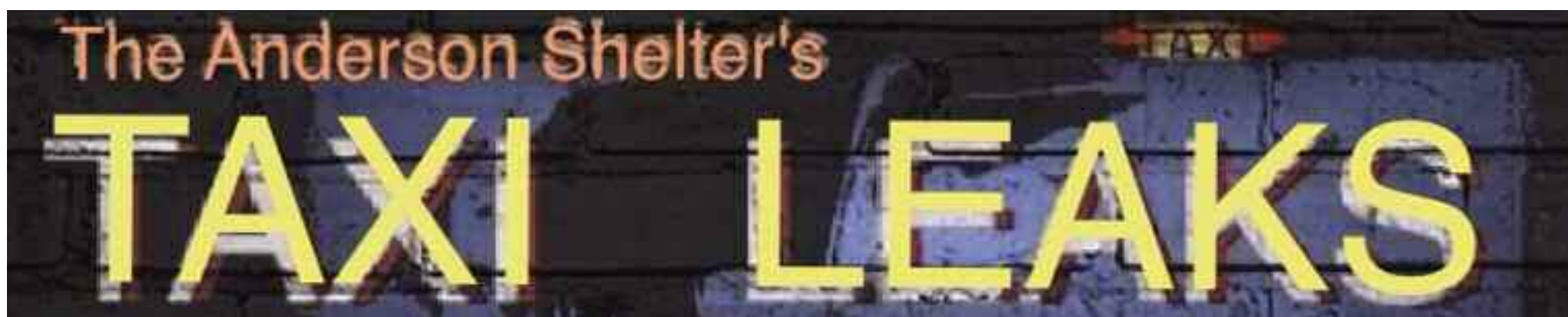
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# Stand beside drivers with the Dunkirk spirit

The trade is now more fragmented than any time in our past history. Our current orgs have recently tried to put their differences behind them, but it didn't take long for the back stabbing knives to come out. It appears our largest org are seemingly fearful of doing or supporting anything that goes against TfL.

When the groups recently asked for all meetings with TfL to be minuted, both the LTDA and Unite voted against this.... what is it they are scared of their members finding out? Is it what they've said, or what they've not said?

The trouble is they appear to have a strangle hold over the majority of drivers who bother to belong to a representative group. Who would have thought that drivers who fought so hard, over 3-4 years to become Cabbies, could be simply bought off with legal cover and a free diary!

But the tide is turning as more and more orange lanyards attend Parliament...

That's why umbrella groups such as the ITA and UTAG are so important.

Drivers can unite irrespective of the trade politics that have always held us back.

In the past, we've learned that the word of a certain org can't be trusted. Waiting and seeing and Mike Brown's on side did



the same for us at the Bank Junction, as the iceberg did for the Titanic. It's a lesson to be learned and no matter how sweet an offer looks, we must never make the same mistake again.

The Independent Taxi Alliance is exactly that....an alliance of drivers, independent of any org and completely driver led. As we've been told on many occasions, it doesn't matter what colour your lanyard, it's only the badge on the end of it that really matters.

Why wait till it's too late...come along and speak to the drivers taking part in the protests in Parliament Square.... be proactive not reactive, the time for waiting and seeing is well and truly over.

Our largest org doesn't



support our direct action, in fact they've referred to protesters as 'Loonies'. Don't let one man's collaborating agenda destroy our trade, plus be aware of his trolls spreading fake news and lies over social media.

"We have. No intention of selling, stop telling lies", they said, but now the truth is out. The next biggest lie is that drivers are being victimised for not sporting blue dots given out to drivers wanting to attend the protests. This again is fake news.... The blue dots were instigated at the request of the Met, to be able to recognise drivers wanting to join the protests at entry points accessing Tottenham Court Road, then Parliament Square. As soon as an officer spots the blue dot, he should remove cones and allow

access. This saves time interviewing and redirecting non-combatants. Being peelable, the dots can be removed after the protest and reattached for the next.

### Positive Action, Positive Impact.

Our actions are having a massive impact on the bus companies and Monday's protest is crucial. TfL are putting pressure on the Met, as so many routes are affected.

Having completed a record breaking 21 protests over the last 6 weeks, we can't rest on our laurels. It's time to escalate the action. With enough attendees, we could hit two or even three venues at the same time.

But on the other hand,if the

protests dissipate, it's very unlikely we will ever see anything like this again. It will be a case of just watching our historic trade disappear before our very eyes, destroyed by TfL's 'Project Horizon'.

I hear drivers argue at eateries saying "there will always be a Taxi trade", it reminds me of what the miners thought back in the Thatcher days".

We are very close to achieving our aims. The ITA through a supporting org Chairman, have met with members from both Houses of Parliament who have shown great support. Plus disabled groups have turned out to show support.

### TAXI LEAKS EXTRA BIT:

Read this piece below, the London taxi trade should try to look upon the blue dot protestors as the Americans looked upon the British Tommy during the war. When your back is against the wall, you want to stand shoulder to shoulder with troops full of the Dunkirk spirit, not Vichy collaborators.

In six weeks I have not spoken to a member of the public who has been against what we are highlighting. The licensed cab trade will not stand back and allow autocratic authorities to stamp over a hard working, tax paying, law abiding work force.

Help promote **your** trade





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# Micky Walker writes to Mike Brown over tariff

Dear Mr Brown,

We wrote to TFL in August last year to make a formal complaint with regard to the tardiness of recent tariff adjustment implementation.

To recap briefly, after the Taxi Cost Index and its implementation working well for more than 30 years, the implementation aspect has, frankly, fallen far below acceptable standards.

In keeping with tradition, we should have had the 2017 increase on 7 April, but this was delayed until 3 June. In 2018, we should have had the increase implemented on 8 April. At the time of writing to you in August, we had no date for implementation, far less the implementation itself.

As a result of our complaint, you used special measures in order to finally allow the implementation to go ahead on 6 October, a full six months late. Although we were promised an improvement in 2019, the situation has worsened considerably.

The meetings between the trade tariff group and Darren Crowson and Tom Moody of TfL were concluded during November last year. We had agreed the increase indicated by the Cost Index and the trade had put forward a suggestion as to how we wished the increase to be implemented. This left your initial internal procedures to be carried out before the proposed increase went to consultation.

We were dismayed to attend a meeting on Monday 18 February to be informed that no further progress had been made and no date has been set for the consultation on the fare increase. The traditional date for this year's increase should be 6 April. Instead, we find it will be several months late, yet again.

In order for this year's proposal to go before the Finance Committee meeting on 1 July, the



consultation must proceed by 18 March at the very latest. Should this date be met, the tariff adjustment will go ahead towards the end of August – another five months late. Should this date be missed for the consultation, the next Finance Committee meeting isn't scheduled until 22 October and the increase will not be administered until December at best.

This is unacceptable. While the taxi trade is seeing new costs heaped upon new costs, tariff increases are coming later and later. Even should the Finance Committee approve the tariff changes in July, it will mean that instead of three annual uplifts during 2017-19, we will actually

receive less than the equivalent of just 2 uplifts. Instead of being awarded a total of 9.8% over three years we will have received 5.9%, a reduction of 40% of the amount we should have received

We have been informed of internal problems that have caused these delays but with respect, advance notice of twelve months should be sufficient to implement a timetable that delivers tariff implementations on time. Should this not be the case, then TfL appear to need to look to its internal structures to correct such lassitude.

We therefore demand;  
1/ A speedy resolution to the problems with the current

implementation, with implementation taking place no later than August 2019.

2/ An increase added to this year's adjustment to compensate for the losses the trade have incurred due to the laissez faire approach of TfL, if not disinterest, towards tariff adjustments.

3/ A timetable set in order to ensure that the 2020 tariff adjustment is brought before the Finance Committee during January/February 2020, for implementation on 4 April 2020.

**Yours Sincerely,**  
**Michael Walker, on behalf of the joint trade tariff group (LTDA, Unite, LCDC, RMT, UCG).**

## Help promote **your** trade





# Access for All



London Cab Drivers Club

March 2019

A Taxi Manifesto



March 2019

1. Taxi & PH Plan Strategies & Policies. A distinct 2 Tier Taxi and PH system to include an impact assessment of how changes to the way PH operate impacts on the Taxi Trade. This has to include definitions of Plying for Hire and Pre-Booked via two distinct regulatory policies that explain e-hailing (TAXI only) and e-booking for a set time, in advance, instead of waiting for legislation from Government. This should involve geo-fencing for Licensed areas.
2. An independent Taxi Commissioner. Improvement of communication to Taxi Drivers. Exclusive use of a dedicated Taxi Logo (as pictured). Protecting the word Taxi\* both in the media and on the Internet with stiff penalties for abuse by PH Operators/Drivers. Taxi must mean Taxi as defined by London Cab Acts.
3. Independent inquiry into the Taxi & PH Directorate and a Review of the Surface Integration Plan (SIP). Review into how a licence was given to a PH Operator to 'ply for hire' (Boris Johnson, MQT, May 2015), using a business structure or architecture, which allows it to avoid its social responsibilities,

externalise its costs on to the public purse and encourages money laundering, tax avoidance and the potential to fund terrorism. Investigation in to how PH Operators have been involved in Regulatory Capture.

4. Safety Review into the use and approval of electronic devices by ALL Drivers. Implementing better regulation of the operation of dispatching equipment, so that Drivers have more time to stop safely before engaging with, or being distracted by, booking information whilst driving e.g. Accelerometer software which can only be used when stationary instead of only having 10 seconds whilst driving. Encouraging the use of innovative voice recognition software in despatching tools to avoid distracted driving by ALL (Taxi & PH) Drivers. A review of the decision to allow PH Operators to exhibit images of available cars on a smartphone app or electronically BEFORE the Driver has accepted a booking, thereby discouraging illegal plying for hire and touting.
5. Driving Tests for ALL Taxi & PH Drivers.
6. Knowledge of London. Investment for training and examination process to



include ALL Taxi and PH Drivers via a progressive Bronze/Silver/Gold scheme, meaning ALL Drivers start from the same 'Bronze' level of competent English, Driving, Safeguarding & Disability Awareness. National Vocational Qualification. Implementing an apprenticeship scheme for the Knowledge of London. Funding to come from Licence payers with an Annual fee for students in order to monitor numbers and progress.

7. Decent Minimum Standards for ALL Drivers in London to end the culture of fares being subsidised by the State via working tax credits & housing benefit







Heathrow Airport Liaison:  
3rd January 2019 at the  
Compass Centre 13:00 – 15:00.

Amongst those present were:  
HAL (Charanjit Brar, Katie Packer, Azmat Ramjaun, Colin Fox)  
LCDC (Alex White, Jamie Hawes),  
Electric Taxi Group (Brian Nayar)  
Wardens (Suzanne Sullivan)  
RMT (Lenny Riddell, Paul Walsh),  
LTDA (Sam Houston, Paul Brennan)  
UCG (Stephen Jones),  
UNITE (Stuart Hope, Daren Lewis)  
APCOA (Alison Crathorne, Sean Taylor),  
Marshals (Ben Ellis)  
Aviation Police.

When the various trade representatives that make up the HUTG (an unconstituted and unrecognised body that doesn't in effect actually exist) attend the regular Heathrow liaison meetings with HAL (Heathrow Airport Ltd) APCOA & the Police etc., there is a feeling amongst the group (especially those representing Unite) that some sort of equal dialogue is taking place and that these meetings are actually achieving something. It is a view my colleagues and I at the LCDC do not share for the following reasons. Let's take the two most recent liaison meetings as an example and break it down...

First on the agenda: Colin Fox made a presentation and stated that the entry fee would remain at £3.50 for 2019. The entry fee is set by HAL and HUTG has no control over pricing. LCDC Reps then asked that the £1 Fair Fares fee be dropped to encourage Drivers to do more. HAL said there would be no problem with dropping it if the figures are correct. This was one of the few things that came out of these meetings to actually benefit the drivers as APCOA agreed that if the figures add up that it should be implemented. Sean Taylor said he would give Colin Fox the most recent numbers and confirm. This was agreed by all Reps present. Unattended taxis: Sean Taylor of APCOA has made a polite parking notice and is awaiting feedback. He will then look at further measures of enforcement.....this could quite easily have been taken care of between the Wardens and APCOA via email and all that was needed were signs reminding drivers to park properly.

Emergency Exit Lane: The Taxi Trade was asked to go away and formulate a process and then come back to HAL's Charanjit Brar Singh and APCOA's Sean Taylor. The solution should really involve only the Right Hand Lane. This issue was parked until further notice at Unite's request. To my mind, so many things are kicked down the line at Liaison meetings



# Airport matters

by Jamie Hawes



that if anything was actually achieved there would basically be no need for any further meeting. What we have in effect, are meetings about meetings.

Marshals: The HUTG (minus the LCDC) agreed to Marshals doing double shifts and carrying rides over from the previous day. This contradicts information that was previously relayed to the LCDC that there were sufficient Marshals to cover Evenings, Weekends & Bank Holidays. It seems that it has now been agreed by Unite, LTDA, UCG & RMT Reps that a Marshal who books in after 19:30 at night and does a double shift (something also agreed by the HUTG minus the LCDC), can carry the rides over. It's now been decided that Marshals cannot do those rides the next day until after 9am.

Many of the marshalls may think that I am now 'onside' with the marshalling operation but this couldn't be further from the truth. I'm not 'onside' or 'offside'. I believe that the marshalling

operation is a necessary evil and the LCDC support a properly managed scheme although we would prefer to see the Authorities (HAL/Met.Police) doing their jobs properly. There are some Marshals who are doing a good job but we still have the problem of unaccountability and transparency. To be fair to Ben Ellis, the LCDC Reps feel that he does a decent job as spokesperson for the marshalls; that he wants to achieve a great service on behalf of drivers using the feeder park. However, my problem is this; we have never had an independent survey to see exactly what benefit the marshalling system brings to the trade. Does the marshalling operation cut feeder park waiting time or extend it? We have absolutely no idea.

At the Liaison Meeting, I agreed to the above in relation to Marshalls only signing in after 9am, having done a double shift the night before as one of the things I wanted to stop was the

'Cavalry Charge' to the terminals each morning, at the busiest time, when some drivers have been waiting in their cabs all night to afford themselves the same privilege.

If you had every early morning Marshalls taking jobs from the ranks in the morning between 6am and 9am and then added evening marshalls coming in to take their carried over rides (also between those times), it doesn't take a genius to realise that that is going to have a negative effect on the feeder park. So far, due to this new rule, there does seem to be less cabs waiting in Newall Road at this time in the morning, which suggests that the marshalling operation when not carried out correctly, can have a negative impact on the feeder park.

Offices: The LCDC brought up the fact that we have never been afforded office space at Heathrow. This is discriminatory baring in mind that others have far less members than the LCDC but seem to fare much more favourably when it comes to office space. The LCDC have asked that the Office space be made available to ALL TRADE ORGS. Unite, who have the least amount of Members in the Cab Trade are blocking this. Unite also continue to ostracise the LCDC from information related to the Heathrow Compliance Meeting. This appears to be supported by RMT, LTDA & the UCG.

Personally, I do not seek an advantage over my fellow drivers at Heathrow regarding signing in etc unlike some other Reps. All the other LCDC reps feel the same and we have no wish to bypass drivers queuing in newall road so that we can go to our

'business' and are all happy to queue with everyone else and carry out any business we need to do once parked up. However, we would like access to Office space (heat, light, Electric, WiFi,) where we can talk to members in private. HAL say they are talking to 'property' about the situation but if this matter is not resolved shortly it may be time to look at it from another perspective.

## Request for WIFI for the whole of the feeder park.

Interestingly the LCDC's own Alex White seems to know more about the technological side of the day to day running of Heathrow than Heathrow themselves. Atkins (a service provider) have done the scope and put the number of users into it...Scope sent through to Alex. Costing Approved. Question about 2Mbps speed, per connection or per user connection.

Hand driers: Need warm air coming out? (to update) with Hal engineering Update provided that the machines are blowing cool air due to fire concerns. Issue maintenance raised. HAL Engineering to take away as an action to investigate.

The issue of hand driers seems to be very important for some unknown reason and hours are spent discussing the temperature and health and safety issues surrounding them. Apparently the heating elements have been removed and it's turned into a power struggle to have them put back in again. We look forward to the summer when we'll probably have another power struggle to have them taken out again. Maybe the Air Conditioning in the



Canteen is linked to the hand driers as cold air blows out in the winter and warm air in the Summer?

**Electric charging units:** The cost is 25.5p (+ 20% VAT) per Kw. £7+ for full charge (24kw). No one will use the chargers at this price. HAL say the prices are set as other regulated charges and it's not HAL

Colin Fox explained more on charges/pricing and said he would take it away but there isn't anything we can do on the prices - even HAL pays the same. Sean Taylor has put signage on pricing in the Cab-in.

Charanjit Brar Singh said he would speak with Colin Fox over lack of communication, which speaks for itself. In spite of Brian Nayar (Electric Taxi Group) very eloquently stating his case for cheaper electric charging and having all the facts and figures to back it up regarding changing suppliers etc HAL in their wisdom have decided to ignore him.

Currently chargers stand empty. From the 20th of March, the Charge points in the AVA Car Park will be the same price as the TFP. Drivers with Electric Taxis will operate on petrol if there is no compromise.

It has been suggested that 5mph speed limit signs be put up in the feeder park in an effort to stop there being a serious collision. All trade reps agreed on . Personally I have no wish to see anymore signs anywhere telling me what I can or cannot do but in this case the drivers do need reminding to take their foot off the pedal, especially if it's a silent Electric one.

#### **The Police gave an Update:**

HAL to input details.

APCOA Report: 73k movements through the TFP this month (all time high) this is good news for the trade and we hope that in spite of a slow start in 2019 that this may continue.

T2/T5 toilets: Closed to just control room staff.

Sean has put a notice out - due to security risk. Sean to take away a 4-at-a-time process. Issue of facility being unclean and faulty. Charanjit BS to liaise with HAL Engineering.

**Wardens process:** All agreed new process and to be sent to Charanjit to final sign off. Recruitment and retention is an issue. What could be done do to incentivise?

Discussions involved refunding the £3.50 fee. Trade to make a plan and present to Chinny and Sean. Whilst I accept the wardens are doing a good job of keeping the feeder up to capacity and eliminating queues in Newall Road, I think we have to be very careful about the incentives that we offer. Offering wardens any more reductions in waiting time should be off the table, but it may not be a bad idea as an incentive, for reduced entry park fees. What we must resist at all costs is to have an ever expanding army of drivers that are doing less waiting

time than the average driver at Heathrow.

**Faults and Engineering Issues:** All faults need to be raised centrally with APCOA who will then support and review the progress to remedy.

#### **AOB:**

Forecourt Enforcement: The Marshall team would like an increase to the areas they cover and have concerns about current visibility of HAL Forecourt Management. Ben Ellis to his credit took HAL to task about the lack of enforcement by HAL and/or the police on terminal forecourts, telling them that most of touting issues stem from this area. Ben tried in vain to make HAL understand that it was imperative that marshalls be

aware of the issue around vaping and smoking that have been raised. There are no current plans to increase signage.

#### **Speed Matrix Signage:**

Following communications on social media the question around ANPR and image capture on the perimeter roads has been raised. HAL are not currently using the speed matrix signs for anything other than reminders to those driving of the speed limit.

**Parking at the feeder park:** HAL were advised that parking is an issue at the feeder park. Charanjit Brar Singh passed the buck again and tasked the Trade to provide a solution for sign off.

A Compliance Meeting was held at Unite's Building in February. The LCDC did not attend. The

news from HAL, who said the project will go ahead without them.

Unite also represent the LEVC Factory Workers in Coventry. Their support for the Vehicle has been unwavering despite the £65,000 price tag that puts it out of reach of most of their Members. They also represent TfL Compliance Officers and TfL Staff. Unite have often spoken up in favour of Bus Companies in Taxi Meetings as they also represent Bus Drivers. The Mayor's Father was a Bus Driver. Recently, Unite branches in London sent out messages of support to Uber Drivers blocking London Bridge.

Unite recently refused to attend a Meeting with TfL to discuss Age Limits; the RMT & LTDA followed

This last week has seen another smear campaign from the two Unions against the LCDC. Elias, who runs 'Fever Spares' has recently been taken ill. We wish him well. In his absence it was suggested by Unite and spread by the RMT, that the LCDC were both responsible for the absence of Fever and had stopped the RMT from having Office space. Neither is true. RMT Rep Paul Walsh took to Social Media to suggest that the LCDC were responsible for informing HAL that a shop was operating in the Canteen, when the Office space was discussed; something, according to Walsh, that HAL were not aware of for the past 20 years.

RMT Rep, Paul Walsh, had also put forward a daft proposal that, rather than allow all the groups to use the empty Office that HAL had occupied, a portacabin be put on top of Unite's Learning Centre. HAL did not object. Walsh then asked that it be funded by putting a £1 on the entrance fee, so that Drivers would pay £4.50. HAL refused and reminded him that they were not prepared to put any additional levy on the Gate.

The LCDC decided to write to both the UCG & RMT to suggest a compromise, that if the other two Orgs wished to pursue this issue, the LCDC would need them to pay a third each and we would get an estimate of the cost. Alex White wrote to both the UCG & RMT on the 13th of November 2018. He did not receive a reply.

The LCDC have wholeheartedly supported the UTAG initiative. Therefore, it was disappointing to see Drivers having to stand outside the toilets in the Canteen Block, in the cold, trying to sign up Members when there were two perfectly good Offices, locked and empty just a few feet away.

If Drivers want to know why the Orgs cannot work together at Heathrow, it is because HAL have stated that we need one properly constituted body to commercially represent all the drivers at the Airport. It must be democratically controlled and every TAG holder must be a Member. HAL have also said that they will not collect funds by way of a levy but they do not object to the Organisation being funded by subscriptions. The LTDA, Unite, RMT & UCG wish to continue as they are despite articles in 'Taxi' by the LTDA's Senior Rep Paul Brennan telling us we should all pull together to support a promotional campaign.

If you can hear the sound of a dull thudding whilst you read this, it is probably the LCDC Reps at Heathrow, who have continually told him that: WE NEED A DEMOCRATICALLY CONTROLLED BODY THAT IS PROPERLY CONSTITUTED TO REPRESENT THE WISHES OF EVERY LONDON TAXI DRIVER AT THE AIRPORT.

If you can hear snoring, that's probably the other Reps asleep in the Offices or their Cabs.



allowed to operate on the forecourt area only to be told by Charanjit Brar Singh (Ground Operations Manager HAL) that forecourts were off limits to marshalls. Ben stated that this would in effect render marshalls useless. Forecourts manager Katie Packer did however extend an offer to work with Ben to achieve a compromise .

4 years ago, HAL's Roy Tucker said that they were bringing in Civil Enforcement Officers. we are still waiting and watching PH and Provincial Taxis picking up from Forecourts. This also includes HAL and Airline Staff.

**Showers:** The issue of cleanliness has been raised. Footage was shown of the showers showing rubbish on the floor and general untidiness after use. Sean advised there may be a solution if APCOA record tag numbers of users. APCOA to confirm the process.

**Taxi Feeder park upgrades:** Questions were asked around tender process and end user involvement. Charanjit advised a meeting is pencilled in for Feb subject to confirmation.

**Canteen/Smoking:** The issue of gloves and food handling was raised. HAL to share concerns to their Commercial team. We are

Club's Office received a last minute email inviting the LCDC. However, we received no reply to our email asking for more information regarding the Minutes, Action Notes or the Agenda. Unite's Peter Rose and Stuart Hope have previously claimed that they have trouble receiving Club emails and/or do not bother looking. We look forward to the reasons this time and why we have not received Notes, Minutes or Agendas for over a year?

The LCDC have tried to explain to the other groups that, in order to properly represent ALL TAXI DRIVERS commercially at Heathrow, a properly constituted body needs to be set up via a steering group. The current HUTG is not a property constituted body. Unite & the RMT are Unions.

They cannot act for the Trade in any commercial capacity despite the fact that Unite have written to HAL asking to 'negotiate' on behalf of their Members, claiming they represent thousands of Drivers. They do not. Unite probably represent around 100 Drivers in London; about 30 at Heathrow. Two years ago, Unite blocked induction courses and a Guidebook for ALL NEW TAXI DRIVERS at Heathrow, without any valid reasoning. We still await

suit. The meeting was subsequently cancelled with the LCDC Rep en route. This means TPH can say that they asked the Trade for their views but that we refused to give them.

Unite have recently asked that Multi-Cultural Prayer Rooms and Toilets be put in the Canteen Block but have refused to allow other Trade Groups to use the Office space that was previously used by HALT. Neither the LTDA, HALT or Unite paid any rent for the facilities they hold onto. The Unite Learning Cabin, supposedly a facility for Further Education, is used by Unite Reps for a number of cottage industries including renting out vehicles for Sherbet Taxi Rentals and Licence Renewals. Unite charge for help to fill out the renewal form.

The UCG have said that they will not attend meetings with TfL for fear of being seen as 'complicit'. However, that did not stop them attending the two meetings at Heathrow.

The LCDC has asked that the Reps and Marshalls log books be made open for scrutiny. HAL refused and were supported by LTDA, Unite, RMT & UCG. Club Reps all go through the TFP except for when attending meetings.



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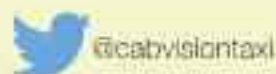
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# 200th Cab Chat show!

**By the time you read this the Team would have recorded the 200th Cab Chat Show, and how would they celebrate the occasion, well in traditional Cab Chat style by partaking of some good old London Grub, Pie & Mash!**

And not satisfied with just Pie & Mash, many of the team also took on the 5 Pie Challenge, 5 Pies and Double Mash with Liquor which must be eaten within 20 minutes, you will have to listen to the show to find out how they got on. On Sunday 7th April The Charing Cross Theatre will

host the Taxis Show Talent, described as "An Afternoon of Infinite Variety, Let the Cab Trade Entertain you with Comedy & Song" Those appearing are our very own Joe Lewis and Jon Cox, the Fantastic Phil Nelson & Mark Bird and many more with a special Guest Appearance by Maureen Lipman and of course the LCDC's Grant Davis as the compere!

Cab Chat's SuperCabby will also be making a guest appearance performing one of the many parody songs that we have produced. Tickets are £20.00 each, to get your tickets please visit [charingcrossstheatre.co.uk](http://charingcrossstheatre.co.uk) or call 0844 493 0650.



The Cab Chat Cheesy Boat Cruise will be taking place later in the year (date to be confirmed in the next issue of The Badge). The Cab Chat awards will be presented on the night, we

have many awards bestow on unsuspecting individuals but we will keep it short so that you can enjoy the night. Entertainment will be provided by the Jukebox Party Band of Joe Lewis and Jon Cox who are absolutely fantastic, if you have not seen them perform before then you are really missing out. The Cab Chat Team will provide additional entertainment as you would expect.

Tickets will be very reasonably priced, so if you fancy a very enjoyable evening cruising along the Thames then keep an eye out for the tickets when they become available, we promise you a great night.

The Cab Chat Team would like to welcome Dale into the fold, she will bring a little bit of variety to the show talking about her time as a lady driving a Taxi in London with a bit of veganism thrown in for good measure, we look forward to her contributions. If you are a listener to Cab Chat and you like what we do, please tell your friends about the show and teach them how to download and listen, and as always we appreciate each and every one of you who downloads and listens to the show. Until next time, stay safe out there on those means streets of London, keep those doors locked, earn well and be lucky.



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*— James Humberston*

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*— The Guardian*

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Taxi Spirit first opened doors in June 2018, produce premium White Rums and molasses based Gin for both the UK and international market. It is the first business of its kind in London that is responsible for the whole distillation process from cane molasses. Cabby's Rum recently been awarded Gold at the prestigious Spirit Business Rum and Cachaca Masters 2019,

judged in a blind tasting by highly regarded spirit industry gurus. This is a proud moment for Taxi spirit team to receive this award since eight awards at International Wine and Spirit Competition 2018; Rum and Cola trophy of the year 2018 and Silver Outstanding for their gin being two of them.

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# HEXAGON TAXIS



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