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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
Web: www.lcdc.cab

Editor: Grant Davis

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CASE GROWS FOR EURO6 DIESEL REINTRODUCTION

Let me start by stating that the Club has had a very positive reaction to last month's edition of the Badge where we called for the reintroduction of Euro6 diesel vehicles being available for the trade to purchase.

London is the only Authority in the UK that prohibits the use of Euro6 vehicles being licensed as a taxi (but the same restriction does not apply to the 100k PH).

TFL's decision to restrict us to purchase only ZEC vehicles from Jan 2018 was based on TFL accepting the proposed emission standards from just one manufacturer.

The fall in numbers of licensed taxis in the fleet is dropping at an alarming rate and that is without the 12-year age limit coming into play. The Trade is at a cliff edge and we face losing

vehicles and drivers in equal measures - which is an absolute disgrace.

In this edition of the Badge we lay the issues out in more detail.

CHARITY SUCESS

On a lighter note, it was a really great day at the Charing Cross theatre last month to help raise money for both UTAG & Taxi Charity for Military Veterans, and enjoyed by all those who attended.

I am happy to say it raised £4,000.

This highlighted the talent and camaraderie that still exists within our trade and should be applauded.

Grant Davis
LCDC Chairman




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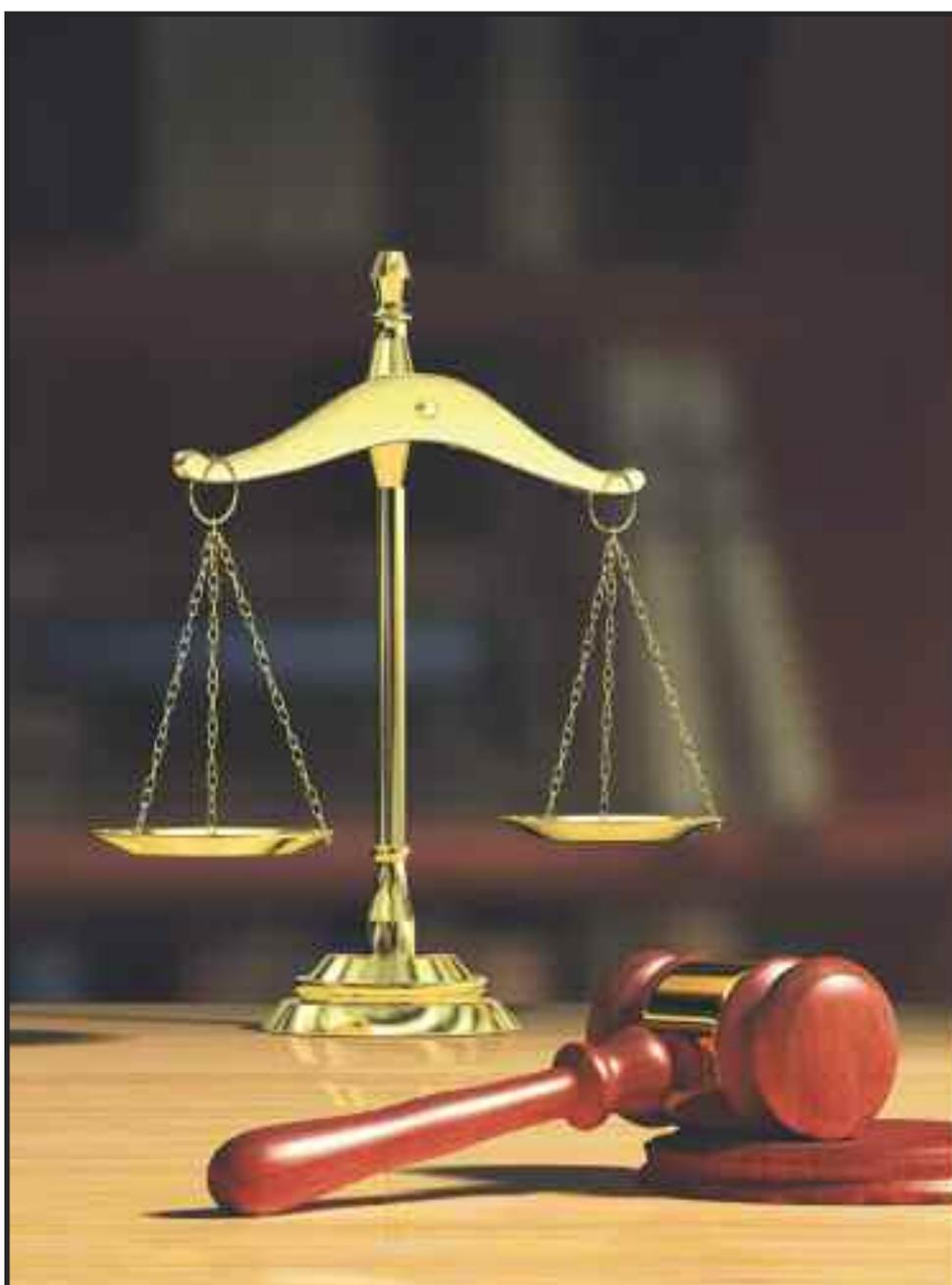
We at the LCDC don't often bang our own drum when it comes to helping our members with their legal troubles. A lot of the cases which come our way with members are quite sensitive and we respect their wishes to keep things in house and out of the paper which I can fully appreciate.

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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FAX: 0207 405 1991



SOLD DOWN THE RIVER?

LTDA GENERAL SECRETARY'S U-TURN OVER DIESEL CABS

In the latest edition of the LTDA magazine TAXI, ON the front-page Steve McNamara claims that retrofitting is the cleanest way forward for the taxi trade.

He claims that the way to maintain our 15 year age limit is to have all Euro V taxis converted by way of a retrofit system to a Euro VI, (haven't we been here before?)....

It seems incredible to think that only two years ago Steve McNamara stated to Londoners via the Evening Standard that by 2023 there would be no diesel taxis operating in London (SEE RIGHT)

The same Steve McNamara was the person in the Trade who assured TFL that within three years, LEVC would have some 9,000 taxis on the road - he said they would be flying off the shelves.

After almost 16 months we only have just over 1,500 ZEC taxis operating on the streets.

But what is most incredible and defies all logic is why suddenly he is supporting the introduction of a retro fit Euro6 diesel taxi when the right course of action - and the one which the LCDC has always followed - is that we should never have supported the introduction of ZEC only taxis until the trade had more than one vehicle to purchase and there was sufficient charging infrastructure to

charge these vehicles. Once again, we would argue that we have been completely sold down the

river by the trade's largest association. This sudden change in policy by the LTDA leads us to ask

whether he knows something about the future of LEVC that the rest of the trade doesn't?

Currently, the Trade is now in a situation where the decommissioning scheme is taking place at an alarming rate, with no substantial number of ZEC vehicles being purchased to replace the falling numbers.

It is very worrying to see the number of taxis in our fleet is at 19,800.

Information obtained by the club shows many small taxi fleets are just decommissioning ten to twenty vehicles and leaving the trade.

When one takes into account that there are currently some 2,700 taxis in the system to be decommissioned, we could see the number fall to around 17,000 taxis, but worse still for the trade is that if this Mayor instigates a 12 year age limit we could see thousands more taxis coming off annually, leaving us with a fleet around 12 – 13,000 in the very near future... which will be the end of our industry being able to serve Londoners to our usual standards.

The obvious solution to our predicament is what we wrote in the Badge last month and have been campaigning for, which is the trade to have still been allowed (just like the PH and the Buses, to purchase and use Euro6 diesel vehicles). We have had to endure a Monopoly situation for some 16 months, with catastrophic effect on the number of working taxis in London.

If McNamara truly believes that the Euro6 is the solution to the trade's problems, then why did he agree for the Trade to be limited just to buying ZEC vehicles?

UNITE AND LTDA HOLD MEETINGS WITH THE MAYOR & TFL OVER AGE LIMITS

As you have read on page 3, unfortunately for the Trade decisions and agreements have been made with TFL over the cab trade due to private cosy meetings with selected Associations. For too long the Club has felt that when we attend meetings with TFL to discuss important items such as age limits, we feel that they are just paying us lip service as an Org.

Back in January TFL held its first workshop to open discussions on a 12-year age limit. We have arrived at this juncture in the cab trade after Steve McNamara had made statements informing everyone at large, we would have 9k ZEC taxis on the road by 2020 and now we all know that there will not be anywhere near that figure. We have a situation where the Mayor and TFL will be taking the equivalent 45% of taxis off the road with a new age limit. At that very first workshop meeting attended by the Cub, Chairman Grant Davis had bumped into James Farrar from UPHD earlier in the day and he had informed us that just before Christmas James Farrar had received a call from a certain Ms Christina Calderato who was in fact Chairing the very same taxi trade meeting. He informed the Club that Ms Calderato informed him the PH were going to have to pay the CC but she also told him not to worry as"The cab trade is getting a 12 year age limit"

When Grant Davis mentioned this to her at the meeting, she denied ever saying it. After being pressed on the issue, she eventually conceded that she had in fact made the



Jim Kelly of Unite Union (above) and Steve McNamara of LTDA (left)

comments., so I ask you all, do you agree with the LCDC that a 12 year age limit is already a done deal with TFL and do you agree with the LCDC that instead of having cosy

chats with her and Helen Chapman, she should have been removed from any more age limit meetings due to these comments?

On January 26th there was to be another meeting to discuss age limits, but this was cancelled and the Clubs representative, Danny O'Regan was told that he would be the only in attendance. The following Monday 29th it appears that Jim Kelly from the Unite Union managed to gain a private meeting with the Mayor and subsequently invited Steve Mc along. The next day Helen Chapman emailed them asking to meet and discuss "their proposals". So much for the TFL engagement policy eh? No other trade organisation was asked to attend any subsequent meeting to discuss the 12 age limit proposals. What the trade needs to know is that when thousands of garages are decommission all their older taxis and not buying any new vehicles to replace them, alarm bells have started to ring at the Biscuit Factory as to how long the trade can carry on like this?

Smaller garages are now selling up their whole

fleets and leaving the trade for good. this decommission scrappage scheme has quite frankly been a disaster for the trade, rather than helping the trade to grow into greener and cleaner vehicles, it has had the opposite effect whereby the funding has enabled the trade to decrease and shrink at an alarming rate: We are now in the situation where we have shrinking numbers of vehicles available, but, at the same time we have a growing number of drivers who have scrapped their vehicles and are looking to rent a taxi. What are suburban drivers / part time / elderly drivers going to do when there are no older cheaper vehicles available to rent?

To survive and flourish We desperately need a change of policy i.e; Conditions of Fitness requirement for the turning circle. This would allow us to enable us to buy commercially viable vehicles to enable us to compete in the current marketplace.

Emails confirming LCDC story



Jacob Gemma

From: Chapman Helen (TPH)
Sent: 29 January 2019 16:19
To: Jim Kelly; Steve McNamara; Maskell Dan
Cc: [REDACTED]; Calderato Christina
Subject: Meeting tomorrow

Steve / Jim

As discussed yesterday, we are keen to meet with you as soon as possible to listen to the concerns you raised yesterday and to understand the ideas you mentioned to tackle air quality issues.

Christina, Dan and I can be free to meet at 10:30am tomorrow. Steve, you've confirmed you can make it.

Jim, I've left you a voicemail to see if you are available to either join us in person or dial in (or if you are content for it to just be with Steve initially). Can you let me know soonest?!

Many thanks
 Helen

Helen Chapman

Transport for London
 Director of Licensing, Regulation & Charging

TfL reply to LCDC enquiry

On 30 Apr 2019, at 15:51, TPH Senior Relationship Manager (SRM) wrote:
 Good afternoon Grant,

Many thanks for your email to Helen on Friday, I am responding on her behalf.

I appreciate you writing and I want to reassure you that we are not holding private meetings for the purposes of excluding other trade organisations. As you know, we first held an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) workshop with you and the other trade representatives on 17 January. At that meeting, there was a request from trade reps for a further meeting the following week, which we arranged for the 24th January. Other attendees cancelled their attendance at the meeting on the 24th, so we got in touch with Danny O'Regan (your nominated representative for that meeting) to ask if the LCDC wanted to go ahead with the meeting on consultation proposals, which we would happily have done. Danny decided, on reflection, that he would not attend and instead would prefer to submit a written briefing.

Separately, Unite arranged a meeting with the Mayor which was also attended by the LTDA on 28 January. The meeting was requested by Unite the Union and the LTDA in response to concerns raised by both organisations about the impact of the taxi age limit consultation proposals that had recently been announced by TfL.

Helen and Christina Calderato, Head of Transport Strategy and Planning, whose team is leading on the consultation proposals, were asked to attend the meeting alongside the Mayor. During the meeting the LTDA and Unite challenged some of the modelling assumptions made on taxi emissions that formed the consultation proposals. It was therefore agreed that Christina and Helen would follow up and meet separately with the LTDA and Unite on the specific questions raised during that meeting.

The meeting was arranged for 30 January due to limited diary availability and was held with Steve McNamara of the LTDA. The meeting isn't minuted but Steve went through the emissions modelling assumptions and asked a number of questions to understand the basis for them. Christina provided answers to these questions. Steve also wanted to understand further the rationale behind some of the proposals so he could consider alternative ideas and suggestions that might form part of the LTDA's response to the consultation.

All consultation responses, including those that may have been submitted by the LCDC, will now be considered by TfL.

As you will be aware, the engagement policy recognises the need for ad-hoc meetings from time to time to discuss topical issues.

I hope this helps to provide clarification. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any further assistance.

Kind regards
 Dan

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Literally running out of road...

I keep repeating myself over road space because well... there's a finite amount of it.

These following statistics are calibrated from TFL's own licensing data from over four weeks from 31/03/19 to 21/04/19 During this period:

Licensed Taxi driver's numbers reduced by 71

Taxi fleet shrunk by 110 vehicles (215 came off and 105 TXEs came on) 2:1

PHDs reduced by 201 drivers

PHVs increased by 704

Taking these statistics dividing by 4 (weeks) then multiplying times weeks left in year (34 at time of writing) this will give us a rough estimate of how we will be looking going into 2020.

At our current trajectory January 2020 will see:

603 fewer cab drivers

Taxi fleet will have shrunk by 935 cabs

There will be 1708 fewer PH drivers.

There will be 5984 more PHVs

Latest fleet size statistics available at the time of writing this article were 19'851

Taxis versus 88'252 PHVs, Taxi fleet will be down to 18'916 by the end of the year

whilst PHVs will have increased to 94'236, this increase in PHVs up to

Christmas represents almost a third of

the entire taxi fleet and as you all will

remember a recent FOI disclosed that

52% of all PHVs are diesels.

A prius (best case scenario) is 15ft long plus 3 ft from the vehicle in front equates

to 18ft, 5280 feet in a mile divided by 18ft equals to 293 Prius'.

5894 vehicles divided by 293 equals

OVER TWENTY MILES of lost road

space from now to Christmas.

Total road space occupied by all of the

PHVs licensed by TFL will stretch for 321

miles (M25 being 117 miles), as

disclosed by Helen Chapman at the

appeal hearing last March she stated that

two thirds of all PH drivers were Uber

drivers.

All the Uber drivers licensed by TFL nose

to tail would stretch around the M25

almost twice, let that sink in..

TFL be like...

Think of TFL's weasel words...."pre booked", "not a meter".

Uber allocates by vicinity, it always did, it operates exactly like a taxi without our

barrier to entry or burden of costs (now a £65k albatross), TFL has flooded our

market with an identical operating model and have told us to "get on with it", no

impact study, no care for workers, no acknowledgment of workers wellbeing or

mental health.

If you worked for TFL and had a mental

health issue the resources available to

you are astounding, paid time off,

counseling, cause investigation and so

on.

We are workers in all but name, TFL

dictate how we train, how long it takes,

what vehicle we drive, where we drive,

even down to the detail of what tyre's we

have to purchase.

Flooding our workplace with an identical

cheaper model that utilizes documented

predatory pricing is negligent to say the



least. TFL cling to the "we are legally obliged to license anyone that meets the criteria" mantra whilst scratching their heads at why London is gridlocked or why the cycling modal shift hasn't occurred as the modeling predicted or why the buses are empty.

TFL have had multiple opportunity to do mass culls on PH numbers via dodgy

topographical tests, medicals or the now

infamous Onfido 13'000, all of these

scenarios provided excellent

opportunities to whittle down numbers

Last year Mike Brown was overheard at

an industry meeting saying "Uber is great

for London", this is the same Mike Brown

who confidently proclaimed that "transit

revenues would increase by a third by

2021".

This the same Mike Brown of course

who according to Steve McNamara of

the LTDA is "onside".

*This is the same Mike Brown who

claimed he was "totally behind" the Taxi

trade reference access to Bank Junction

then wrote privately to CoL endorsing our

exclusion.

LTDA be like..

LTDA have recently sold Woodfield Rd and lied about it when queried by members.

Reports say in excess of £21million,

allegedly the new premises in Great

Sutton St (no parking weirdly) cost £13

million (Land registry search in the ether),

that leaves £8 million in someone's bank

account, maybe UTAG will take off,

maybe it wont, question is why doesn't

the LTDA ever criticize TFL or spend any

of that money now they are flush and

allegedly have 10'000 members.

Think about one instance over the last

several years where thee LTDA have

taken TFL to task?

If you are an org that has never criticized

the LTDA you are just another cheek of

the same bum.

If you remember during the Bank

Junction debacle the LTDA were "collating data", UCG were "happy" with what the LTDA were doing, RMT had "written a letter" and the LCDC were doing what they always do, asking questions via City Hall, periscoping, tweeting, publishing and attending / supporting all actions. Grant as usual has been very vocal and proactive.

Our exclusion from Bank Junction was the catalyst for a whole raft of

forthcoming exclusions due to poor representation.

If you feel that the odds are always against you maybe the deck is rigged,

maybe the LTDA is part of that rigged deck? How many failed initiatives or JRs

do you want?

What is their current plan, reading Taxi News you would never think our industry

is staring into the abyss or that we are almost outnumbered 5:1 whilst having to

buy a monopolized supplied £65K vehicle that "coincidentally" McNamaras

son sells.

Anyone that tells you to stop "being negative" is trying to sell you something

or is a fireman on £40k a year with benefits and this is their "side hustle"

(why haven't any of these guys ever blown the whistle on RTAs statistics, they've had long enough)

UTAG may work, it might not work but why are drivers having to scabble

around trying to crowdfund an initiative to merely get our regulator to do their job?

LTDA has literally millions sitting in the bank, why are they not perusing TFL

independently, is it because McNamara and now newly parachuted in "yes man"

Unites Peter Rose thrive on not rocking the boat with our regulator?

How do these guys still have a job? Name one success that these extremely

well paid non drivers have achieved? McNamara has driven the LEVC pitch,

its priced excessively and in this current climate makes zero sense with its paltry range, lack of charging infrastructure and

according to recent rumors imminent collapse.

Every week LEVC seems to be sacking

managers or scaling back its fiscal goals.

Why are there no ideas coming out of the

LTDA,?

What are they spending their members

money on apart from flash cars and fighting their own members simple requests for committee expenditure from 2016?

Sean be like...

It is becoming almost virtually impossible to make ends meet in this current climate.

Our market place is flooded with cheap unskilled labor (language test is now

delayed indefinitely), our workforce is aged (50% of all cabbies are over 55),

our costs seem to rising weekly, App jobs seem to be getting shorter and

shorter,streethails less frequent, our regulator seems to be more uncaring

hostile and distant weekly,being empty for forty minutes plus seems to becoming

the new norm.

I know am having to work harder and excessive hours just to keep my head

above water, this has impacted on my demeanor, relationships and state of

mind, going to work has now become thoroughly unpleasant.

I make a real effort not to bring work home with me and lately have made a real

effort to reconnect with my previous hobbies (not Arsenal though), I have also

started being very wary of alcohol (it is a depressant).

I always prided myself in being able to earn decently compared to other moany

cabbies but the harsh reality is that its just not there anymore.

I know lots of drivers who have left or are leaving the trade, bear in mind that

London's population has increased over the last few years, new developments

and population density is literally going up every week and then ask yourself

when was the last time you went to East Dulwich or Clapham?

Chris Johnson and Matt Newall have been recently seeking to highlight our

plight in conjunction with the mental health charity "Silence of Suicide", TFL

will not offer any support as it would expose their policies impact and would

suggest culpability and potentially liability. I know personally many drivers who

have emotionally unraveled as a direct result of TFLs failure to regulate and

allow our market place to become flooded with a subsidized alternative.

I find it incredible that the daily PHV carnage is tolerated against the fake

backdrop of TFLs "VisionZero" nonsense, do cabbie and PH drivers suicides count as a "fatality"?

I urge all cabbies to follow and support Chris Johnsons Crowdfund for a

professional film to highlight TFLs ineptitude,(its nearly there) you can find

him on twitter @InThePinkTaxi (Charlie Crocker)

I also urge all cabbies to continue to FOI TFL, they have proved invaluable in

exposing our "regulator" and giving us vital ammunition when dealing with the

lies and inaccuracies trotted out at City Hall.

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TfL commissioner told to consider job over Crossrail delays

Transport for London's commissioner should consider his position over his handling of the much-delayed Crossrail project, according to a damning City Hall report.

The London assembly transport committee accuses Mike Brown of downplaying risks about the £17.6bn flagship infrastructure scheme in weekly updates to the capital's mayor, Sadiq Khan.

An independent reviewer of the east-west railway through London reported "significant risks" nearly 12 months before last year's planned opening but they were not properly acted on, the committee's report also found.

Crossrail's leadership "fostered an overly optimistic culture, where risks were largely overlooked instead of escalated" and "the completion date overpowered any professional scepticism or critical assessment of risk", it added.

The report, entitled *Derailed: Getting Crossrail back on track*, calls for greater transparency and tighter controls on TfL, as well as singling out Brown for criticism. "Given the strong evidence presented in this report, we recommend that the Commissioner reflects on whether he is fit to fulfil his role in TfL," it says.

Brown, who was paid £375,000 in 2017/8, was appointed commissioner for TfL in September 2015. The launch date of Crossrail, which has been beset by delays and budgetary problems, was supposed to be in December last year but could now be as late as 2021.

Liberal Democrat London assembly member Caroline Pidgeon, who chairs the transport committee, said: "It is a complete tragedy that one of the most highly



Mike Brown, commissioner for Transport for London and the Queen at a Crossrail logo unveiling. The railway runs west-east through London and will be called the Elizabeth line.

anticipated engineering projects the world has ever seen has found itself in a mess of overspending, mismanagement and an embarrassingly long delay.

"Crossrail was supposed to be the beacon of modern, 21st-century engineering but its name is now tarnished with shame in the eyes of the London taxpayer who will have to foot the bill until its completion.

"The inability of senior figures in the project to push past their obsession with a December 2018 launch date is one of the main reasons why their dream did not become a reality."

Crossrail, which will be known as the Elizabeth line when it eventually opens, will link Heathrow and Reading in the west through new tunnels in central London to surface overground east of the capital to Shenfield and Abbey Wood.

Last year, Crossrail chief executive Mark Wild was

parachuted in to lead the project after delays were revealed in August. The project, funded by TfL and the Department for Transport, had a budget of £15.9bn prior to 2010, which was reduced as part of government cuts before again rising to £17.6bn with costs expected to go up again.

The City Hall report found that Crossrail's executive "did not have the skills required at the later stages of the programme to adequately assess and understand risk as the project moved from construction to operations".

It also states: "Evidence from emails between Crossrail Limited and TfL suggests that communications to the mayor were being managed by the TfL commissioner, Mike Brown.

"Instead of communicating risks head on, these were downplayed in the weekly updates to the mayor."

Despite claiming Khan was kept in the dark by Brown's

DfT. What is clear is that as joint sponsors, TfL and the Department for Transport should have been told much more, far sooner by the previous Crossrail leadership."

The report also points out that Jacobs Engineering Ltd, brought in to independently review the project, "reported significant risks to the December 2018 opening as early as January 2018" but TfL and DfT "did not sufficiently act upon these reports of risk", instead accepting "Crossrail's assurances that no threat existed to the planned opening of the central section".

If TfL couldn't make Crossrail run on time, what hope for HS2? A TfL spokesperson said: "It is clear that the responsibility for the delay to the Crossrail project lies with the former management of Crossrail Ltd. It is entirely incorrect to suggest the transport commissioner, or anyone at TfL, kept any information from the mayor.

"The commissioner works to ensure that the mayor is kept informed of everything going on in transport in London and to ensure the information he receives is clear, consistent and accurate.

"As the commissioner made clear to the Transport committee, it would not have been right to allow material to go to the mayor that was incorrect or inconsistent with information that the management of Crossrail Ltd themselves were presenting to TfL and the mayor in regular face to face meetings."

A Mayor of London spokesman said: "Sadiq has every confidence in Mike Brown. Responsibility for the inadequate information provided about the Crossrail delay lies squarely with the former management of Crossrail Ltd."

Courtesy of The Guardian



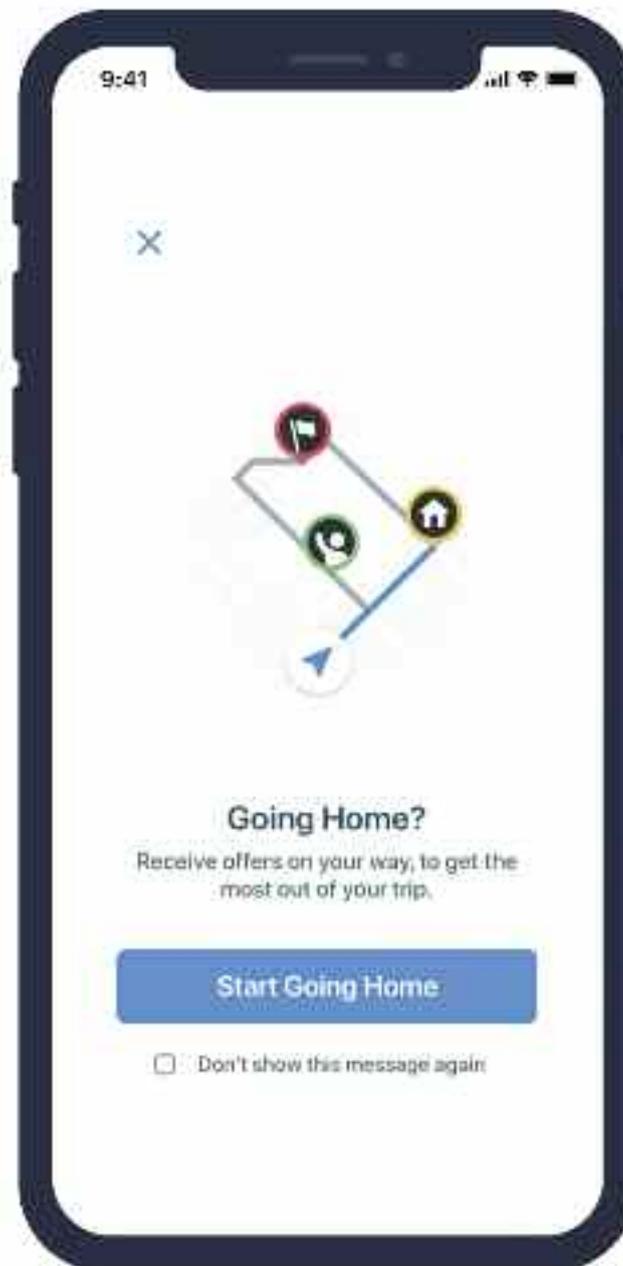
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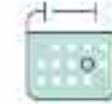
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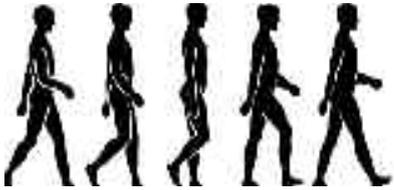


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Walker on the March...

'ERE JOHN, WANNA BUY A NEW MOTOR?

If you do want to buy a new motor, you're stuck with a single choice – the TXe at just shy of £60 large, even after grants.

Does this really make sense? Don't get me wrong; I hope everything works out tickety boo for those that have taken the plunge and bought a relatively untested vehicle from a manufacturer with less than a pristine reputation over the last 20 years (and some would argue a lot longer) in order to work in an ever more precarious business, while tucked up for an amount twice as much as I bought my house for.

Why though, should we have to buy this vehicle? And why does it have to be now?

The automotive industry has only just woken up to the possibility of producing electric vehicles (EVs) in a mass, profitable market. Most of the large manufacturers are now falling over themselves to produce EVs. Not only that, because EVs use less parts than petrol/diesel and easier to assemble, this is going to allow smaller producers such as Dyson to enter the market, challenge the big boys and increase competition. Increased competition will bring relative prices down.

THE PLAYERS

In addition to the current crop, there is a veritable stampede of big players entering, or about to be entering the market. These include Daimler-Mercedes, Renault, Peugeot, Citroen, Opel, Fiat – Chrysler, VW, Hyundai, Tom Cobley and all.

The trouble for us is two-fold, First, all of this is going to take up to six years.

Daimler-Mercedes plan a platform for electric –only (a platform is the basic architecture for building a car) and has committed 30 billion Euros to make 25% of its cars electric by 2025.

VW are going one better and committing 50 billion Euros over the next five years to make 70 new electric models and envisage sales of 22 million EVs over the next ten years. Its new mid-range EV to go on sale next year will be the same price as a fossil-fuelled Golf and expected to do between 250 – 370 miles per charge.

Consider this last sentence. The EV equivalent of a Golf for £26,000 that will do at least 250 miles per charge. Compare this with a TXe at £60,000

with a range of 70 miles, although admittedly you can drive the TXe on petrol and you cannot get a wheelchair in a Golf and the latter will not do a complete circle in a fictitious 25 feet.

BACK TO BLACK

Why do we still need the turning circle (TC) though? Let's face it, most of the streets we used to U-turn in are now closed off to us or narrowed to a point where a U'ey is impossible in order to give unfettered access to King Cycle.

Getting rid of the TC would open up a range of vehicles in the near future that would cater for wheelchairs, etc. Why should we have to carry on buying a vehicle that doesn't appear to be use-tested until we pay an exorbitant price for it and then find

ONE RULE FOR ALL

It seems to me that when it comes to rules, it seems that if something is onerous for the PH trade, it has to be applied equally to taxis, with the exception of bus lanes and to an extent, traffic charging zones. On the other hand, if a rule falls more heavily on the cab trade, it doesn't need to be applied equally. Heads PH win, tails we lose.

This started with the initial PH licensing. We had to have The Knowledge but they didn't. We had to take an advanced driving test but they didn't. I could go on but you already know all this.

Ah, but remember when two MOTs were introduced for PHVs. I remember distinctly being told by

word here.

Their vehicle operates exactly the same as us, even if mealy-mouthed words allow them to continually flout the spirit of the law in practice. They cruise looking for work the same as us and they rank the same as us. Their phone operates as a taximeter even if it cannot be legally called so.

Now, if we overlook the way U drivers ignore the law by picking up and setting down at zebra crossings, traffic lights, wait on zig-zags and double park on main roads, etc, in theory why is it OK for a PHV to increase a customer's fare through not having the TC but not OK for a taxi to do the same?

Now, if we could be like PH and not have to have ZEC vehicles until 2023 and lose the TC before that, we would probably have a range of



out the faults and production errors as we drive it?

For those that worry we will lose our identity – the icon, don't. The WC facility will ensure that all taxis will still be roughly the same shape as Multi people Vehicles (MPVs) would be necessary and all look pretty much the same.

All we would need to add to that is a rule that all first-time plated cabs have to be black in colour, with the additional rule that no first-time plated PHV can be either black in colour or any colour that could be mistaken for black.

This would leave the fleet as instantly recognisable as it is now. After all, the fleet hasn't always looked like it does today. Does the old Growler look like the FX4? Does the old FX3 look like the TX4? Of course not but the TX4 is less recognized than the FX3 as the latter was always literally a "black cab".

TPH that they had to introduce the same for taxis or it would be unfair. What, and forcing us to buy vehicles at three times the cost of a PHV isn't unfair?

This brings me back to the TC. Why do we need it? The last time this was reviewed about 10-15 years ago, we were told that it would be difficult to turn at some ranks and at times a cab may have to take a slightly longer route if unable to turn in the street.

I wouldn't disagree but would make two points. This additional cost to fares is minimal on the scale of the whole trade. However, the cost of the TC on the tariff means that all taxis customers are paying a significant percentage more than they need to on every fare. This makes the TFL argument nonsensical but even if it didn't, what about apped-up PHVs?

Sorry, gotta use the dreaded U

accessible EVs to choose from at considerably less than the price of the TXe, possibly half the price, by 2023.

Nor should we forget that it would be the customer that gains. Our tariff is based on our costs so if our costs go down, our fares go down. If TFL aren't sure about ditching the TC perhaps they should add the question to the consultations that ask if the customer thinks fares are too high.

Seems like a small thing to ditch the TC in order to give taxi drivers more work and cheaper fares for customers without reducing driver profits. Hey, but what do I know as I am just one of the 23,000 mugs that obeys the law rather than one of the 110,000 that disregard the law almost completely.

Ditch the TC, get back to black, reduce fares and compete with PH. What's not to like?

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Uber drivers in UK cities strike over pay and conditions

Uber drivers in the UK are demanding to be recognised as employees and paid the minimum wage.

Hundreds of Uber drivers in Britain are to go on strike as part of an international protest against pay and conditions on the eve of the ride-hailing app's stock market flotation.

Drivers in London, Birmingham, Nottingham and Glasgow plan to withhold their services between 7am and 4pm on Wednesday, with some expected to protest outside Uber's offices.

They are joining action by drivers in US cities including Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, New York and Washington DC, as well as in other countries, including Brazil.

Uber is undergoing a flotation that will raise about \$9bn (£6.9bn) in new funds and hand multi-million-dollar payouts to early investors, including the founder, Travis Kalanick, and the Amazon boss, Jeff Bezos.

Yaseen Aslam, the secretary of the Independent Workers of Great Britain union's private hire drivers' branch, said: "Since Uber arrived to the UK in 2012, it has progressively driven down pay and conditions in the minicab sector to the point where many drivers are now being pushed to work over

60 hours a week just to get by.

"Now, a handful of investors are expected to get filthy rich off the back of the exploitation of these drivers on poverty wages. We are protesting today demanding that the company pay drivers a decent wage and that government authorities tackle Uber's chronic unlawful behaviour."

Analysis by the union suggests Uber drivers in the UK earn an average £5 an hour, well below the legal minimum wage of £8.21 for over 25s. They can work as much as 30 hours a week before breaking even.

The union wants fares to be increased by £2 per mile, the commission paid by drivers to Uber to be cut from 23% to 15%, and recognition of "worker" employment status for drivers so they are guaranteed to be paid the minimum wage and to receive holiday pay and other benefits.

A recent Oxford University study co-authored with Uber staff found drivers earned £11 an hour before costs. In December, judges dismissed Uber's latest appeal against a landmark employment tribunal ruling that its drivers should be classed as workers. The company has said it plans to appeal to the supreme court. The company has made a



number of improvements in benefits, including providing free insurance and telephone support for "qualifying drivers". And more than 1 million drivers are set to share in a \$300m payout relating to the flotation.

An Uber spokeswoman said: "Drivers are at the heart of our service – we can't

succeed without them – and thousands of people come into work at Uber every day focused on how to make their experience better, on and off the road. Whether it's being able to track your earnings or stronger insurance protections, we'll continue working to improve the experience for and with drivers."

However, Uber's own prospectus, recently filed with the US Securities and Exchange Commission, admits that being forced to reclassify drivers as employees or workers would "require us to fundamentally change our business model" and have a big impact on the firm's finances. *Courtesy of The Guardian*

Swiss court declares driver an Uber employee

A Swiss court has ruled that a former Uber driver was an employee of the ride-sharing firm, not an independent contractor, in a potentially landmark decision, the driver's lawyer said Monday.

The ruling by the labour court in Lausanne, which has not been made public, is the first of its kind in Switzerland, labour lawyer Remy Wyler told AFP.

Between April 2015 and December 2016 the driver was logged in to the UberPop app for more than 5,600

hours and completed more than 9,000 trips.

UberPop was a version of the application meant for individuals not categorised as professional drivers. It was operated by Dutch-based Uber subsidiary, Rasier Operations B.V..

UberPop was banned in Switzerland in 2017, but UberX, which only uses professional drivers, remains available in the country.

After reportedly receiving a host of bad reviews, the driver received a text

message in late December 2016 informing him that his log-in had been revoked, Wyler said.

In his complaint to the labour court, the driver argued that he had been wrongfully terminated from an employment contract without proper notice, a violation of Swiss law, and demanded back-pay for holidays among other benefits.

Rasier, the Uber subsidiary, countered that its agreements establish drivers as independent contractors who only have the right to file

grievances with arbitrators in the Netherlands, not labour courts in their home country.

In a ruling delivered to the parties last week, the Lausanne court found that it had the right to hear the case and that the driver, whose identity has not been disclosed, suffered a "termination without just cause," Wyler said. Rasier has 30 days to appeal.

Wyler said the case could have far-reaching consequences across Switzerland, with all Uber

drivers potentially being considered employees entitled to social security protections and proper notice in advance of termination.

Uber has already been hit by a series of scandals over executive misconduct, a toxic work atmosphere and potentially unethical competitive practices.

The company is also poised to go public and preparing to sell 207 million shares, raising up to \$10 billion in a US IPO.

Courtesy of France24



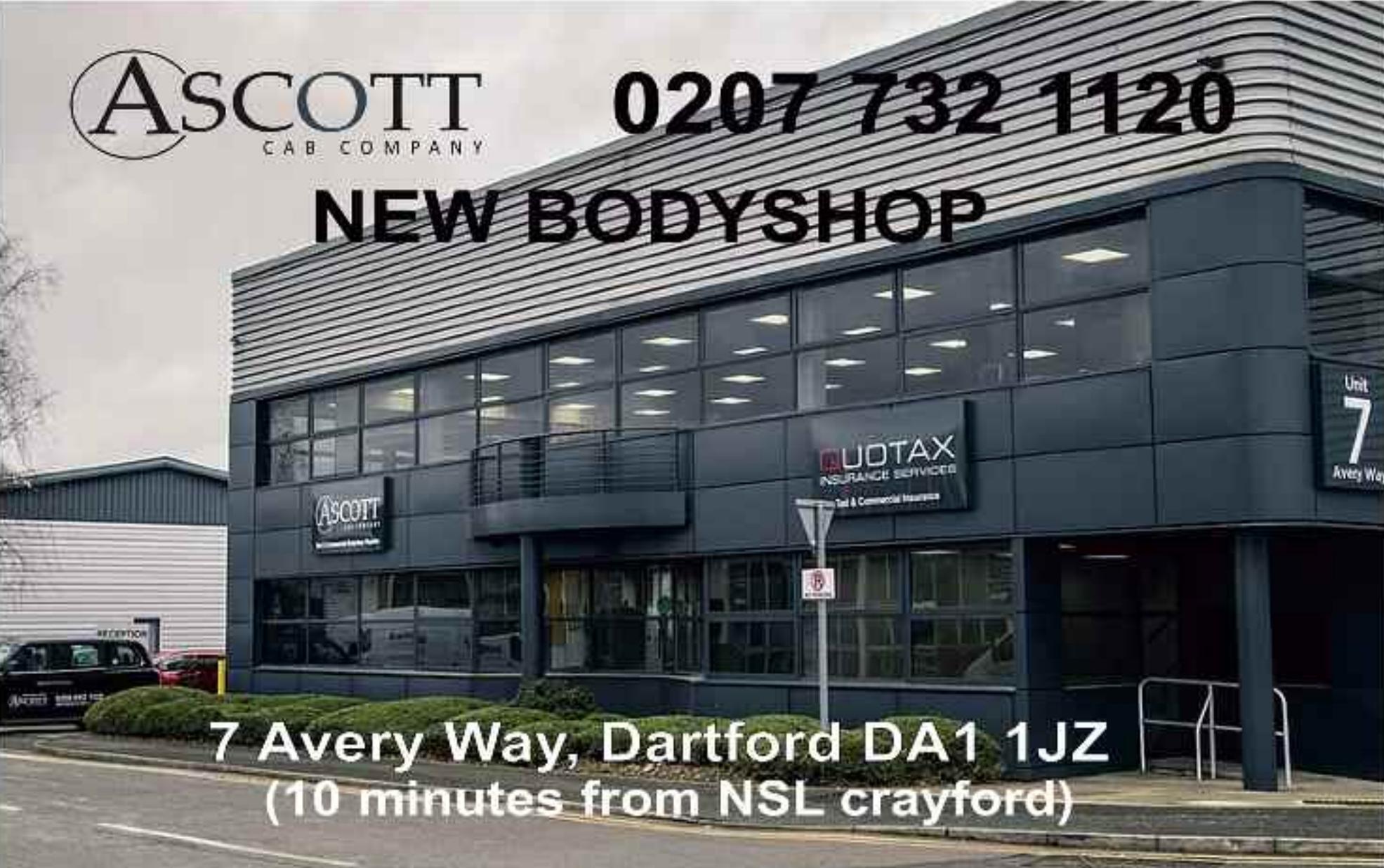
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Dale's Diaries

The voice of a female cabbie

Hi everyone, hope you're all well and had a great month.

I'll start by sharing this fantastic blog which has had 32,000 hits so far, and it's been circulating far and wide around social media. It all started because a friend called Tracey, who is a taxi driver, met up with her old boss and he writes blogs. He said he's fed up with writing about Brexit and so she suggested he write about our black taxi trade and our plight as it stands at the moment.

He said great idea! Then Tracey said "I know just the girl who's good at all that,

Dale" and she passed him on to me! (Thanks Tracey :) I jumped at the opportunity and I love a challenge. So myself and Tracey and my friend Mandy and her husband David who is a cab driver too, compiled a hell of a lot of taxi information to pass onto this blogger called William. He could only use about 250 words but managed to get the main points in it. So here it is, it's quite witty too, so not a boring read.

We're so pleased and I'm particularly happy he added the links to Taxi app, The Badge and Cabchat too. I said he's made a lot of cabbies very happy as this is all free marketing for our

trade and exposure of our plights. So I told him if he needs a free taxi ride give me a call. Here is the link so you also can share it far and wide through social media www.londonmarketcomment.co.uk

So always keep your eyes and ears peeled for opportunities like this as we need to get our issues out into the media domain and not just within our own taxi circles.

So that's enough from me for now, next month I hope to do a great interview with a friend who is a Vegan GP (doctor) as we all need to keep our health in tip top



condition to drive these cabs so it's better to take control of what we do now rather than when it's too late. He'll be sharing some great tips.

So until then, take care out there, be lucky and positive. All the best, Dale <http://londonmarketcomment.co.uk/tag/dale-forwood/>

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the visually impaired. Their tight turning circles (the cabs not the wheelchairs) make them invaluable parts of the London mass-transport system.

Taxis have the advantages of being allowed to use bus-lanes, and having street-wise route calculation! We have a strong community of cabbies who strive to offer a safe, friendly, professional

and clean service. In their spare time, charitable endeavours such as outings for veterans and disadvantaged children are undertaken.

Ha, this sounds like a plug for cabbies, but they really do deserve our support!

And yet they are under threat, not only from Uber, but from London Mayor Sadiq Khan too.



A CAMPAIGNING CABBIE

Uber is a loss-making business, and yet still contrives to ensure that its drivers earn less than the minimum wage.

They were banned in London, and only continue due to legal shenanigans. (Expect a further article on the prospects of Uber as a public company in the very near future).

Yet because it is so easy to become an Uber driver, thousands of unqualified people have done so, clogging up the streets of London. One of the more vocal taxi drivers – yep, that's quite a high level of vocality – Dale Forwood commented "us taxi drivers spend 3 to 4 years doing the 'Knowledge' of London,

which enables us to offer a professional and safe service.

"However, since Uber London were licensed in 2012, the strictly-regulated taxi trade has struggled to compete with this unregulated app. The app allows drivers to virtually ply for hire, taking much of our work."

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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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WELCOME ABOARD!

All roads lead to Uber

A grinning Dara Khosrowshahi posed next to a bus stop in central London last week for a staged Twitter photo shoot. It was much more than a tourist snap for the Uber chief executive.

He was in the capital to court investors in the ballroom of Claridge's hotel. Khosrowshahi's visit also coincided with the ride-hailing app's launch of a new feature — public transport options. Coupled with an advertising campaign plugging its safety credentials, the nod to buses and trains shows that the Silicon Valley giant is on a charm offensive.

Uber needs all the friends it can get as it finalises plans for a blockbuster \$90bn (£68bn) stock market float. London, the city that has caused some of its biggest headaches, seemed a good place to start. Since founders Garrett Camp and Travis Kalanick struggled to hail a cab on a snowy night in Paris 11 years ago and dreamt up the idea of booking a ride on a phone app, Uber has become a digital behemoth.

It has moved into 700 cities and handles 14m trips a day by 91m users. Its listing on the New York Stock Exchange is set to raise \$10bn, the biggest float since Chinese ecommerce giant Alibaba in 2014. Yet in its relentless pursuit of growth, two things have lagged far behind: how it treats rules and regulations, and making a profit. For years its approach to established norms, on everything from passenger safety to workers' benefits, seemed an afterthought — problems for its army of lawyers and public relations advisers to deal with. Profits, meanwhile, are nowhere to be seen. The business lost \$3bn last year and \$4bn in 2017. In the small print of its prospectus, it admitted: "We may not be able to achieve or maintain profitability in the near term, or at all."

Rules and profits are inextricably linked. How Uber handles cities such as London will be key to achieving the holy grail of a healthy bottom line. And these cities have taught the tech giant a painful lesson: it underestimates them at its peril.

In September 2017, Transport for London (TfL), the devolved authority that reports to Labour mayor Sadiq Khan, stunned the company. It revoked Uber's licence, saying the company was not "fit and proper" to run transport in the capital. It was the culmination of a long-simmering dispute over issues around the

reporting of crimes, how criminal checks and health tests are done on drivers, and concerns about software that could prevent regulators checking on the app. "Uber's approach and conduct demonstrate a lack of corporate responsibility in relation to a number of issues," TfL said at the time. Uber won an appeal against the judgment in June last year, apologising for past mistakes and saying it had "made far-reaching changes to address them", but the issues have yet to be settled in full. Its licence has been temporarily extended until September, by which point it will need to convince TfL that it has permanently changed its ways.

Cities around the world have taken up arms against the ride-hailing app and peers such as Lyft. Uber suspended operations in Barcelona in January after a strike by drivers led to strict new conditions being imposed by the Catalan government. In February, New York imposed minimum wages for drivers, and the business has been forced to pull out of German cities including Dusseldorf, Frankfurt and Hamburg. It has faced opposition in countries including Argentina, South Korea, Italy and Japan.

There is little to suggest that cities and local politicians plan to loosen their grip around Uber's neck any time soon. The app is causing problems for which there is no easy answer.

At least Khosrowshahi did not choose the No 48 bus stop for his staged photo. Users of the bus from Walthamstow will be forced to find another route into central London from next month. The route is being axed as part of a string of cuts to services across the capital. Transport chiefs blamed congestion, and said the changes would make the capital's buses more efficient. One of the implied causes, however, was the strain that Uber is piling on to public transport. Years of booming bus passenger numbers have gone into reverse. Journeys peaked in 2014 — two years after Uber launched in London — and have since been sliding, from 2.38bn journeys in 2014-15 to 2.23bn in the year to the end of March 2018. They are expected to fall to 2.03bn by 2024. Also, congestion has slowed buses. By 2024 they are predicted to travel at an average of only 9 mph. All this ramps up pressure on the cash-strapped authority's finances. Buses require huge subsidies, as they generate far less from tickets than they cost to run: they had an



operating deficit of £638m last year — projected to rise to £723m by 2021. It comes at the worst possible time. Delays of up to two years to Crossrail and a near-£3bn increase in the new line's budget will deny the capital about £1bn in fares. Pinning down exactly what is steering passengers away from buses is difficult, but the lure of the Uber app and congestion on the roads caused by its tens of thousands of drivers has undoubtedly contributed. Private hire licences in the capital have almost doubled in a decade, from 59,191 drivers in 2009-10 to 113,645 a year ago. About 45,000 are Uber drivers.

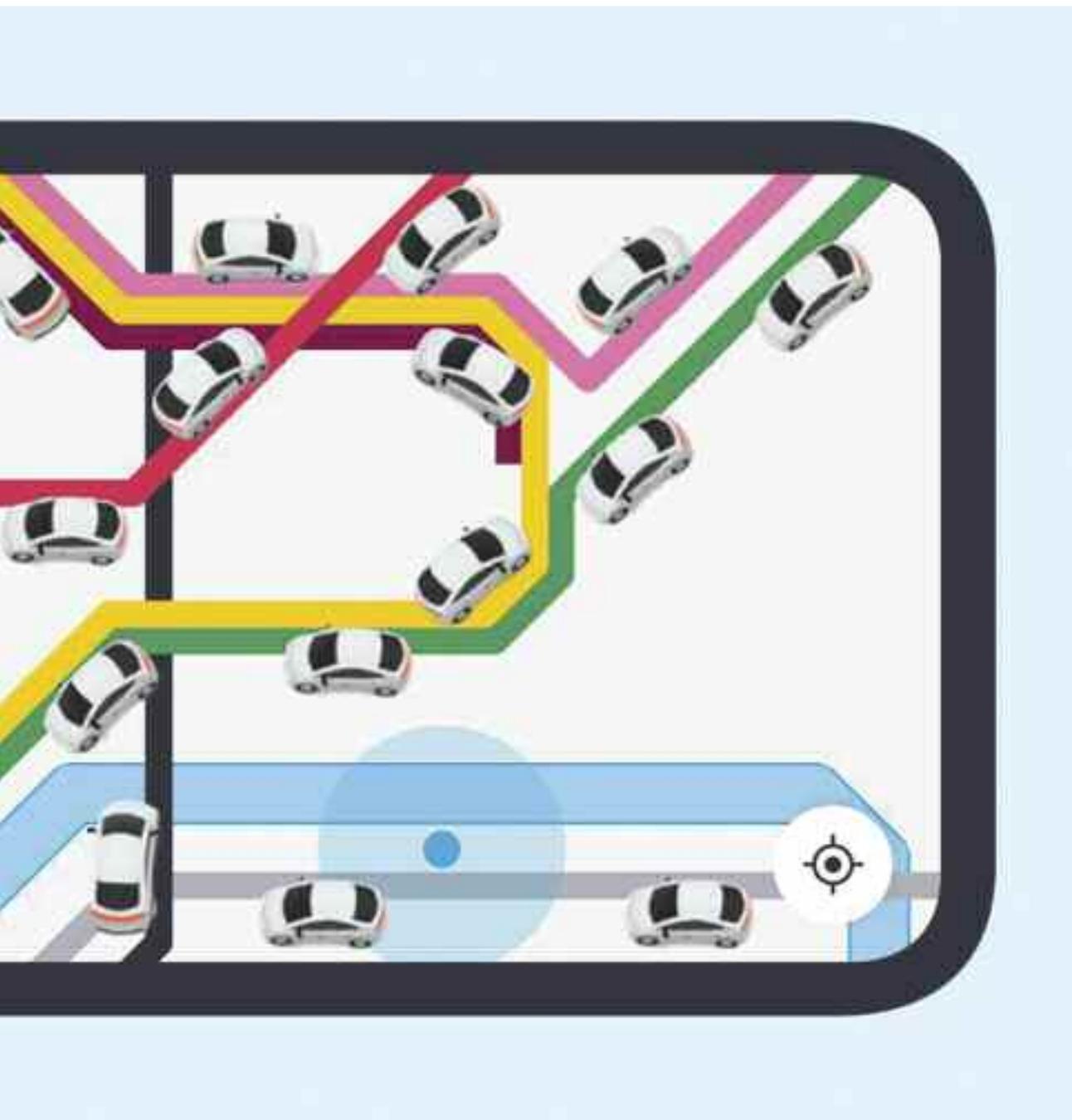
"The more congestion there is, the bus service becomes less reliable, fewer people go on it and TfL has less income," said the boss of a big transport company. "Which way does TfL want to face? Is it a legislator looking after safety and the movement of the city, or someone prepared to embrace new

technology?"

Politics is inescapable. The app's central claim that it is a technology platform, rather than a transport company, has collided with reality. When Uber and its Silicon Valley peers disrupted decades-old industries, they were naive not to expect a backlash from the legislators that rely on these workers' votes and have to pay to keep public services running. Tony Travers, local government expert at the London School of Economics, said: "There is competition for the travel pound between forms of travel such as Uber and Lyft and conventional public transport. There's a complexity in that because TfL is a regulator as well as a transport provider."

Khan has taken a calculated gamble in waging war against Uber. It appeases — albeit partially — the militant black-cab taxi trade, which

The ride-hailing app could yet come a cropper as cities fight back, reports John Collingridge...



has long fought against the ride-hailing app. It puts him on the side of passengers who have concerns over safety. It strikes a chord with Labour-supporting unions, which represent bus drivers, and with bus passengers, who tend to be lower-income Londoners. It helps Khan to claim that he is cleaning up the city's air.

The stance also aligns him with gig economy workers struggling for equal rights. Uber is fighting to keep drivers off its books and ensure they remain self-employed — to avoid costs such as pensions and holidays — but is caught in another long-running legal row after a London tribunal ruled in 2016 they should be classed as workers. The dispute has gone all the way to the Supreme Court. In Khan's mind, all that outweighs the danger of upsetting the 858,000 Londoners who signed a petition to save Uber. As he gears up for re-election next year, it is not an unhelpful fight to pick.

"Uber had this wrong from the beginning," said one source close to City Hall. "What they should have said is, 'How can we make TfL our regulator and capture them like everybody else does? Once we've done that we will write our own regulations and carve up the market.'"

Khan is wary of looking like the enemy of innovation. Hence, TfL is testing its own version of Uber, but for minibuses, soon to hit south London, allowing passengers to hail one on their smartphones. Meanwhile, the mayor continues to put pressure on the app. Khan has said he wants to cap the number of Uber drivers in the capital, and has just snared private hire cars in the congestion zone, charging them up to £11.50 a day.

In the face of this pressure, the company's gung-ho attitude appears, finally, to be changing. The hard-charging Kalanick was ousted in June 2017. Slowly and painfully, Uber has started to realise the power

of city leaders. A letter from a Metropolitan Police inspector in 2017 warned that the app was not reporting serious crimes, and led directly to Khan's revocation of its licence. Khosrowshahi has taken a new tack, meeting Khan and leaders of other cities around the world. Last week's move to include public transport on the app is another big step towards placating the civic authorities. It shows, superficially at least, that Uber cares about reducing congestion — even to its own detriment.

Khosrowshahi has realised that unless Uber gets closer to bodies such as TfL, the pressure will not relent. There is one thing that it will not compromise on, however: the self-employed status of its drivers. Sacrificing this position would either inflate costs to an unsustainable level, putting the goal of profitability out of reach, or force it to put up prices significantly, making it look more like any other taxi company.

Crucially, it would also undermine Uber's tax status. In the UK, the company does not levy the 20% VAT charge on rides, as its rivals have to, because each of its drivers is registered as a self-employed microbusiness.

Uber said: "We recognise the responsibilities that come with being a good partner to this great city. We share many of the same goals as the cities that we serve and are committed to addressing the same challenges: reducing individual car ownership, expanding transportation access and tackling air pollution."

They may indeed share the same goals, but unless Uber can maintain its status as an app, not a giant transport employer, profitability will remain a distant dream. As city leaders from London to Barcelona tighten their grip, that battle has much further to run.

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Cab Chat Corner

Time flies past so quickly these days as it was over 8 weeks ago since we did the 200th Cab Chat Show.

We have recently had a couple of bank holidays which mess up our recording schedule for Cab Chat as we normally record on a Monday, but we are slowly getting back to normal.

Kabbieoke

Kabbieoke is the big thing with the team at Cab Chat at the moment, now what is Kabbieoke you might ask? Well it is where you sing Karaoke in a Taxi and video yourself doing it, now this can be either the driver or the passenger who does the singing.

At the moment we only have a whatsapp group where members are sharing their videos of themselves singing in the Taxi and we have already had some passenger contributions, but we are currently building a website so

that we can launch Kabbieoke onto the World. Once the website is finished, we shall be allowing other drivers to upload their own Kabbieoke videos to the site.

Charity Events

A lot of drivers keep asking about Charity outings that are happening this year and because there is no list kept anywhere of these outings and events we have decided to put together a list of these on the London-Taxi.co.uk website. We have listed all of the events that we have information for, if you know of any event that you think should go on the list then please let us know, you can find the list of events at London-taxi.co.uk/events.

Pie & Mash Club

We are still holding our monthly Pie & Mash Club meets, we visit a different Pie & Mash Shop every month, we will start to put the reviews of these Pie and

Mash shops on the Cab Chat website soon so that you know where the best ones are. It is such a shame that so many of these fine establishments are closing down due to the gentrification of London, it feels



as though London is losing its history and character.

Taxi Delicensing Scheme

I recently delicensed my Taxi under the scheme and have been without a cab to go to work in for the past few weeks whilst I look for a new cab, for me it was a no brainer to delicense my cab

as it only has another year left on the road due to the impending 12 year rule, but I can see that the number of cabs currently being delicensed could lead to a shortage of Taxis, especially in the rental sector where rents are likely to rise due to a fewer number of cabs available.

This is not good for the trade as fewer cabs will increasingly make our trade less viable.

Interviews

The team are continually looking for interesting people to interview for the show, we put many of our interviews out as standalone podcasts which are only available via the Cab Chat feed or website and not on the LTR feed, so if you want to listen to our interviews please subscribe to the Cab Chat feed. If there is anyone that you would like to hear interviewed by one of the team, please let us know and we will try to pin them down and get them in the studio.

Daily Show

Last year we experimented with a daily news show which was received very well, especially by

those of you who only wanted to hear the news, unfortunately putting together a daily show proved to be extremely time intensive and was not really viable.

We are considering putting together a shorter weekly news show which will run along side the normal Cab Chat show which will only bring you the news points each week.

Videos and Youtube

It has been suggested to the team that we should start putting together a few videos, we do currently have a YouTube channel but there is no content on it, we are looking into making a few videos each month and putting them out on our channel, we may also go back to streaming a live video when we record Cab Chat Live.

Get in Touch

At Cab Chat we love your interaction, so if there is anything you would like us to discuss or cover please get in touch, you can find all of the links to our various Social Media accounts on our website at <http://cabchat.london>



Cab Chat Radio Show

The show that takes a light hearted look at London and it's World Famous Cabbies
Hosted by @SuperGabby and the Team

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Compliance meeting 15/04/2019

Recently I wrote an article in 'The Badge', which referred to the last Heathrow Liaison meeting in which I stated that Charanjit Brar Singh had told my LCDC colleague, Mark White, in no uncertain terms, that "We (HAL) ALLOW you to charge your cabs at Heathrow." This statement by Charanjit was heard by all members of the HUTG and Mark, after taking umbrage to what had been stated, actually repeated the words back to Mr Brar during the same meeting.

You can, therefore, imagine my surprise when upon entering this month's Compliance meeting Charanjit (Chinny) zoomed in on me like a guided missile and told me that if I were to print any more untruths about what he had said that I would be barred from all future meetings.

I stated to Chinny that all those present in the room had been present at the previous meeting and had heard him state that "We ALLOW you to charge at Heathrow!" and that if anyone had not heard him say those words then could they please stand up. Nobody stood up.

Mr Brar went on to state that what he actually said was "We allow you to charge your cab at Heathrow while continuing to be part of the queue for a dispatch to the terminal."

This was a very strange thing to say, firstly because Mr Brar's revised statement actually only compounded the arrogance with which it may have been stated and secondly, because licensed taxi drivers have a right to rank at Heathrow that is written into legislation that supercedes any 'allowances' made by Heathrow Airport Ltd. I believe that if someone had been spoken to in the workplace in the terms that I was spoken to, that it may easily be construed as bullying. I told Charanjit Brar in no uncertain terms that I would not be bullied.

Reasonable and polite behaviour should be expected of all those attending meetings and this must extend not just to Taxi Trade Airport Reps, but to everyone invited to meetings, including HAL staff. If the result of this article should lead to my being banned from future meetings, then it is the duty of all members of the HUTG (Heathrow United Taxi Group) to boycott all future meetings and I would fully expect them to do so.

Moving on...an update was requested as to the dangers of drivers wearing lanyards to display their badges. TfL Compliance stated that the wearing of lanyards was under review while investigations were continuing into alleged injuries



Airport matters

by Jamie Hawes



suffered during crashes.

Questions were asked about the level of Compliance Operations on Terminal Forecourts and whether there were enough operations during the evening hours, especially after 21:00pm. Cliff Lewellyn stated that operations are scheduled to take place according to flight scheduling ensuring coverage at the busiest times.

It was put to the Compliance Team that TfL had a duty not to license more P/H drivers than Compliance were able to police but this was met with a muted response. To be fair to those present these decisions are out of their hands but it never hurts to raise these points.

Also raised was the issue that NSL Test Stations seem to have upped the requirements for plating cabs and it was suggested by Compliance that NSL had possibly brought in a new manual regarding the standard of cab licensing and that they had not been informed, but would look into it and also the possibility that

Taxi Garages would be issued with new guidelines for passing vehicles.

The issue of TfL licensed P/h drivers working with their roundels obscured by tinted windows was also brought to the attention of the Compliance Team who informed us that if the tinted glass was fitted by the manufacturer of the vehicle then it was within legislation. Nowhere in this statement by Compliance was any regard given to the safety of the travelling public. Ask yourself this: would TfL allow a black cab to ply for hire with its identifiers obscured? Of course they wouldn't, so this is incredible double standards. This stinks of curtailing to the large corporations. Never mind their factory fitted tint, the safety of the public must always come first and bearing in mind the extremely high level of sexual assaults in TfL licensed PHV's this needs to be addressed as a matter of great urgency.

As far as I'm aware Car manufacturers are not responsible for the safety of the travelling

public in TfL licensed PHV's but TfL are.

One question that comes up, in meeting after meeting, is what drivers should do when a fare that they have taken from an Heathrow Rank to London, who then decides to change destination to what would be a local destination, such as Hatton Cross etc.

Sean Taylor of APCOA suggested that drivers should draw up some sort of statement pertaining to where the driver drops the passenger and to ask the passenger to sign it as proof of the destination.

This doesn't really stand up to scrutiny as more often than not, passengers have changed the destination because they have realised the fare is higher than they anticipated and may already be angry/irate and won't be keen on signing.

Sean Taylor also suggested that certain credit card devices may keep a record of the location in which the passenger has been set down. All a bit hit and miss and not much help to drivers who may have waited five hours in the Feeder Park, only to find themselves on the wrong end of a £10 job to Hatton Cross without a local journey ticket. A solution must be found quickly.

Ben Ellis, the spokesperson for the Taxi Marshalls at Heathrow, asked the Compliance Team what they did with intelligence regarding touts, videos, times, dates, registration numbers etc that had been passed onto them by Heathrow Police and was surprised to learn that Compliance do not receive any information from Heathrow Police regarding TfL licensed vehicles

and would only be informed when a driver was convicted of an offence. In other words, TfL have no interests in the touts that are observed and documented by Taxi Marshalls at Heathrow unless they are convicted first. Maybe Taxi Marshalls should now pass their info straight to TfL complaints department as if they were ordinary members of the public as it seems that much more may be done by TfL in regards to touting at the Airport should that be the case.

Recently there have been cases of Taxi Drivers being given bans of up to a week for picking up on Terminal Forecourts and the question was raised as to whether Private Hire Drivers were being punished for the same offence. Charanjit Brar stated that HAL would pass details of any PH Driver found illegally picking up on forecourts to TfL. TfL were then asked what they do with that information to which the reply was that it was filed. In other words no action.

So, here we have incredible double standards, whereby the driver of a London Taxi is much more heavily punished than a PH Driver for the same offence. It was stated by Sean Taylor, that HAL and APCOA had the power to ban a PH Driver from accessing the AVA and also from Terminal Car Parks but no evidence was given as to how many times this had occurred. We look forward to an update on this in the near future. A curious aside transpired during this question when HAL's Charanjit Brar admitted that "we talk to Uber". Quite what those discussions amount to who knows?

NOTES AND ACTIONS From the HEATHROW COMPLIANCE MEETING

Monday 15th April 2019, UNITE HOUSE, HEATHROW

Attendees

Stuart Hope (Chair) Unite, Daren Lewis, Unite, Jamie Hawes, LCDC, Sam Houston, LTDA, Paul Walsh, RMT, Stephen Jones, UCG Charanjit Brar, HAL
TfL Compliance Anand Nandha (Action Taker), Edgerton Rodgers, Cliff Llewellyn
Sean Taylor, APCOA

- 1) Reminders for remaining Heathrow Compliance Meetings this year
22/07/2019 & 28/10/2019
- 2) A request was made for Representatives from TfL Policy and Licensing to attend further meetings.
- 3) Police and/or other security bodies to attend further meetings with reference to that Richard James (MPS) would be leaving.

Notes

TfL opened the meeting stating that the meetings should centre around "Heathrow Compliance specifics" only.

The HUTG were unanimous in stating that a fully integrated meeting encompassing all and any items, are there to be discussed. HUTG state that matters across all areas and boundaries will affect Heathrow drivers at some point.

HUTG - Are NSL carrying out more rigorous testing at stations? **TfL are not aware of such, but said it is possible that staff may be better trained from last year. The stations are provided with "booklets". Graham Robinson is TfL lead for contracts to centres.**

HUTG - Are they the same "booklets" as last year? **TfL to find out.**

HUTG - Why are taxis put on ramps not mini-cabs? **TfL - As far as they are aware this is not the case.**

HUTG - What is the purpose of an Identifier in a PHV if it cannot be seen through tinted glass. **TfL - If the vehicle is manufactured with tinted glass it is allowed. If it is an add-on then a hole has to be drilled to allow it to be visible.**

HUTG - If it is already manufactured then the vehicle cannot be fit for purpose from the regulator. **TfL - Put this into the consultation to run until 26-4-2019.**

HUTG - What is TfL doing with intel passed to them regarding touting?

TfL - Nothing can be done without a successful; police prosecution first.

HUTG - Touting is a criminal offence and should be investigated by TfL as fitness of



character. Several meetings are now being put into place now with relevant bodies to investigate this and get a procedure in place. **TfL asked to attend meetings.**

HAL - This may be done at a later stage.

HUTG - What is the official position on returning passengers to ranks at Heathrow. Mindful of the allegation of "kidnapping". TfL could not comment. Advising HUTG to get organisation's legal advice.

HAL to further discuss with HUTG.

HUTG - Are taxi drivers and PH getting same punishment regarding pick-ups outside car parks? **HAL: No but discussion is needed.**

HUTG - What is the procedure for regaining a police presence on terminals regarding touts. Can Heathrow be protected from touts via a returning tout squad. **HAL to further discuss with HUTG.**

HUTG - Some vehicles in the PH Sector are seen as unfit, what is TfL stance via a recall?

TfL - A recall can only be done through the manufacturer and then TfL can take any necessary action.

HUTG - Are insurance companies given TfL breakdown of taxi and PH accidents in relation to last TOPS meeting?

To be updated.

HUTG - Are TfL aware of police statement regarding accidents involving lanyards?

TfL - Yes and are carrying out investigation themselves.

HUTG - Regarding TfL investment in subsidising or money involvement in chargers, do they monitor usage or success?

TfL - No. TfL to take this back to relevant department.

HUTG - Can a Euro 6 engine be put into an older model to have full

HUTG in order to get its ducks in line and so as not to have any fall outs during the actual liaison meeting. We don't want handbags at dawn in compass house after all.

I and my colleagues at the LCDC have thus far swerved the pre meetings and the reasons are as follows: There is no trade Unity at Heathrow.

I say this on the grounds that only Unite and The LTDA are afforded office space at the Airport. As far as the LCDC is aware there are currently no contracts that exist that allow either Unite or the LTDA

accepted to be a necessity.

I suggested that drivers receiving warning tickets in the TFP should have the right to respond if they feel they have been unfairly ticketed and it was agreed that more information should be placed on the tickets themselves to inform drivers of this process.

This was met with some resistance from APCOA/HAL and, I'm pleased to say, that on this occasion Stuart Hope of Unite did helpfully provide his backing in the ensuing debate, only highlighting the fact that showing a united front does actually make a difference. However, it was the same HUTG Reps who got us into a situation where Drivers have no right to reply.

Should the office issue be resolved I look forward to a lot more of these unified responses (one can only live in hope).

The LCDC believes it's time that the price of a fares fair journey should go up, or at least be metered so that Drivers receive a Fair Fare. The present Fair Fares have been set at the current rate far too long and are becoming unviable.

The LCDC suggested an increase from £35 to £40 on the closer fares and from £40 to £45 on the longer distance fares and this was met with general approval and should fall into place shortly subject to the usual checks and balances.

For those who use the showers at Heathrow there is good news as the one in the canteen is now finished and awaiting results from final testing for bugs etc that may still be lurking in the darkest recesses of the Ubend.

The taxi journeys statistics were not so encouraging with journeys down 2000 on the previous April 2018 and we can only hope that it isn't the start of a longer downward trend. So much for things looking up, Sam!

During AOB (Any Other Business) the question was raised as to the promise made to the trade some time ago that the AVA (Authorised Vehicle Area) be geofenced so that Uber drivers could only receive a ping(job) whilst located in the AVA. Sean Taylor of APCOA assured us that this geofence was still in place. I'm sure the residents of Harlington, Colnbrook and Cranford are still largely unaware of this as they find PH drivers still sleeping on their drives and using their streets as a latrine.

We were also informed that all the new camera on the perimeter road were now in force and that operation of them had been handed over to the police.

Beware; the only way to negate the revenue they expect to raise via these cameras is to keep your speed down, so please get your foot off the gas or I cccy and don't give them the opportunity to grab any more of your hard earned money than they already do.

15 years.

TfL - This is a question to be put into taxi age limit consultation.

HUTG - Are drivers (particularly Reps) being blacklisted or highlighted on any TfL **TfL - No.**

TfL Day of Action
TfL held a Compliance day in the Heathrow Village Area. This was taken in conjunction with various other Agencies.

TfL shared photos of several vehicles from both the Taxi and PH Trades. These highlighted faults including cracked bumpers, lights and old fare charts. Nearly six hundred (600) vehicles were inspected; in total 16% were non-compliant. PH and Taxi Trade statistics were not separated

Heathrow Liaison Meeting: 2nd May 2019

The bi-monthly meeting between the HUTG and Hal/Apcoa felt like a very odd affair. The trade organisations that purport to form the HUTG (Heathrow United Taxi Group) consist of the LTDA, UNITE, RMT and UCG. The LCDC are supposed to be part of this group.

Prior to the liaison meeting a pre-meeting is usually held by the

'gratis' office space at Heathrow. However, Heathrow Airport (HAL) is at this very moment drawing up fresh contracts to allow this unfairness to continue.

The strange thing is, that when Charanjit 'Chinny' Brar Singh was challenged by as to the current discriminatory setup regarding office space, I was fully expecting both the UCG and RMT reps to actually get behind me as both these groups are also in the same boat of having no office space at Heathrow.

It's odd that representatives of these Trade Orgs stayed silent when I was clearly trying to fight for a solution that would be beneficial to ALL orgs and if I was a member of the RMT or the UCG I would be asking my organisation why my representatives aren't trying to give me the best possible representation at the Airport.

It's a shame for the trade at Heathrow that these jealously guarded offices have become such a bone of contention baring in mind they are used sparingly and sharing or making room for other Trade Orgs to utilise this space can only be beneficial to the trade and the unity of the Taxi Trade at Heathrow.

Other issues brought up at the meeting were as follows:

The Taxi Feeder Park Wardens Representative, Susan Sullivan, requested that Wardens entering the TFP to start a shift should be able to bypass any police blockade due to queuing in Newall Rd and this was generally

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UBER'S LONDON TAXI RIVAL WILL COST YOU PEANUTS

Uber Technologies Inc.'s initial public offering next week will be a bittersweet moment for private equity giant Carlyle Group and its London minicab firm Addison Lee Holdings Ltd.

Uber will almost certainly join its fellow ride-hailing company Lyft Inc. in securing a nosebleed market value, despite making heavy losses. The investor buzz could benefit Carlyle as it looks to exit from its own unprofitable taxi operator. Unfortunately, fierce competition from Uber is also a big reason why Addison Lee has been such a difficult investment for Carlyle's 5.4 billion euro (\$6 billion) European buyout fund.

Media reports suggest that the U.S. private equity firm hopes to sell Addison Lee for between 300 million pounds and 500 million pounds (\$390 million to \$650 million, though estimates vary widely) and that Jaguar Land Rover Automotive Plc, the luxury British carmaker, might be among the interested parties.

However, Carlyle's previous attempts to sell Addison Lee came to naught, and it's not certain whether recent efforts to strengthen the business by expanding internationally will deliver sustainable profit growth. Legal questions about Addison Lee's employment of casual drivers are unresolved. When potential bidders look under the hood, they may not like what they find. Addison Lee's revenues have grown, but so have its losses.

Carlyle bought Addison Lee in 2013 for about 300 million pounds, including debt, but it was a poor moment to acquire a fleet of more than 4,500 London minicabs just as Uber had launched in the city.

Addison Lee's latest accounts show the scars from Uber's arrival remain unhealed. Net losses almost doubled to 37 million pounds in the 12 months to August 2018. While that was due partly to one-off restructuring costs, this was hardly the first time the company has lost money under Carlyle's ownership.



Wisely, Addison Lee responded to Uber by investing heavily in technology and a premium car service (unlike Uber, it rents many of its cars to drivers), but that has taken its toll on the balance sheet. Liabilities due in the next 12 months far exceed current assets and shareholder funds are negative, usually not a good sign. Net borrowings, excluding preference shares and finance leases, are about five times adjusted earnings by my calculation.

In fairness, Addison Lee does at least have positive Ebitda, unlike Uber. But thanks in part to those hefty investments and rising overhead costs, its cash had dwindled to just 8 million pounds at the end of August. The company initially pursued a comprehensive refinancing of its debts, but opted eventually to extend repayment terms on some of them. It also received additional loans of 30.5 million pounds from related parties,

presumably Carlyle, to fund its working capital requirements.

Of course, losses have been no barrier to Uber amassing billions of dollars of venture capital, nor to the company seeking a stock market value that's an eye-watering seven times its yearly revenue.

Addison Lee's nascent driverless car project and various U.S. acquisitions seem designed to help it benefit from the Uber halo effect and to reposition a plain-vanilla taxi fleet operator as a growth company. Revenue has jumped by almost half since 2016 to near 400 million pounds and the U.S. now accounts for about one-quarter of those sales.

Corporate clients provide about three-quarters of the car service's revenue, offering some protection from Uber's price war in consumer ride-hailing. Potential buyers may worry, though, about Addison Lee's still predominantly British business, especially given the recent

pushback against gig economy employment practices by the country's judges.

Along with Uber, Addison Lee has faced legal challenges over its classification of drivers and couriers as self-employed contractors. If its appeals are unsuccessful, the company might have to offer worker benefits such as holiday pay, inflating its operating costs.

Addison Lee was a relatively small investment for Carlyle, which has put about 125 million pounds of equity and debt into the company and shouldn't have trouble recouping at least some of that. Yet one wonders why a loss-making carmaker like Jaguar Land Rover would want to add a minicab firm's challenges to its own.

The risk section of Uber's IPO prospectus says plenty about the difficulties of making money from selling car rides. Addison Lee could no doubt tell you the same.



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Veterans commemorate Dutch liberation

The Taxi Charity for Military Veterans' first trip to Holland this year to take part in the Dutch Liberation commemorations was a great success, despite the rather inclement weather.

Ian Parsons and Dick Goodwin put so much work into the organisation and the veterans' faces are the clearest indication that their work paid off with interest.

As ever a huge vote of thanks must go to the cab drivers without whom none of this would be possible.

Frances Luczyc Wyhowska

To find out more about the charity or to donate visit the website <http://www.taxicharity.org>



A group of 7 nonagenarian RAF veterans will visit Berlin, Germany in May, with The Taxi Charity for Military Veterans, for the 70th Anniversary Celebrations of the Berlin Airlift.

The veterans arrive in Berlin on 10 May and will be met at the airport by four London taxis, to take them to a reception at the British Embassy, hosted by UK Air Attaché, Group Captain Mark Heffron. The following day the taxis are scheduled to take the veterans to visit the Brandenburg Gate and Checkpoint Charlie, landmarks synonymous with WW2, followed by a reception at the Allied

Museum hosted by the German Defence Minister, Dr Ursula von der Leyen. On the final day of their trip, the veterans will attend a commemoration service at the Air Lift Memorial at Tempelhof, followed by a reception with the Mayor of Berlin and other VIP guests from the 6 nations who supported the Berlin airlift. The veterans will finally take part in an 'open day' at the former Tempelhof airport, now a memorial park, at which 50,000 people are expected.

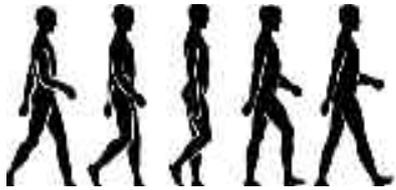
About the Berlin Airlift
In 1948, Stalin ordered highways,

railroads, and canals with access to Berlin from the west to be closed. He believed the Western powers would give up and abandon Berlin to Soviet control. Instead, Britain, the United States and France, supported by other nations began airlifting supplies into the beleaguered section of Berlin. Known as the "Berlin Airlift" more than 2.3 million tons of goods were dropped to supply West Berlin.

About the Taxi Charity
The Taxi Charity for Military Veterans was formed in Fulham in 1948, to work for the benefit, comfort and enjoyment of military veterans and

arranges many trips every year for veterans from all conflicts. The charity offers international trips to Holland, Belgium and France, UK day trips to concerts or museums, transport to attend fundraising events, as well as special days out to catch up with friends and comrades. To fund and facilitate these outings, the charity is wholly reliant on generous donations from members of the public, businesses and trusts and the amazing group of London licensed taxi drivers who offer their time and vehicles free.

To donate visit the website <http://www.taxicharity.org>



Walker on the March...

THE UBER MONEY PIT

In its blurb with regard to making a public offering, Uber admit to losing \$7.9 billion since 2009.

They are doing this to try and create a taxi /ride-hailing monopoly. They also claim to already have 65% of the combined ride-hailing business of the US, Canada, Europe and Australasia.

The regulators never seem to learn. Every time an unregulated taxi market is allowed to develop, as London is currently on the way to doing, it seems like a good idea as customers get cheaper fares. However, the cut-throat nature of an unregulated taxi market always ends in a race to the bottom and a poor



quality service that has to be resolved by introducing or stiffening regulation.

It would seem that TFL have learned nothing from history. They are allowing big business to disrupt what could have been a good and complementary taxi/PH service into a race to the bottom, destroying small businesses and livelihoods in order to increase supply and reduce fares. However, such fares are unsustainable, as Uber are currently proving, and short-term, while the damage is long – term.

When this unofficial deregulation runs its course and London is left with a Mickey Mouse taxi/PH service, some bright spark will see the answer as more regulation and history will repeat itself once again.

Electric vehicles emit more CO2 than diesel ones, German study shows

Electric vehicles in Germany account for more CO2 emissions than diesel ones, according to a study by German scientists.

When CO2 emissions linked to the production of batteries and the German energy mix - in which coal still plays an important role - are taken into consideration, electric vehicles emit 11% to 28% more than their diesel counterparts, according to the study, presented on Wednesday at the Ifo Institute in Munich.

Mining and processing the lithium, cobalt and manganese used for batteries consume a great deal of energy. A Tesla Model 3 battery, for example, represents between 11 and 15 tonnes of CO2. Given a lifetime of 10 years and an annual travel distance of 15,000 kilometres, this translates into 73 to 98 grams of CO2 per kilometre, scientists Christoph Buchal, Hans-Dieter Karl and Hans-Werner Sinn noted in their study.

The CO2 given off to produce the electricity that powers such vehicles also needs to be factored in, they say.

When all these factors are considered, each Tesla emits 156 to



180 grams of CO2 per kilometre, which is more than a comparable diesel vehicle produced by the German company Mercedes, for example.

The German researchers, therefore, take issue with the fact that European officials view electric

vehicles as zero-emission ones. They note further that the EU target of 59 grams of CO2 per km by 2030 corresponds to a “technically unrealistic” consumption of 2.2 litres of diesel or 2.6 litres of gas per 100 kms.

These new limits pressure German

and other European car manufacturers into switching massively to electric vehicles whereas, the researchers feel, it would have been preferable to opt for methane engines, “whose emissions are one-third less than those of diesel motors.”

**courtesy of brusselstimes.com*

The Anderson Shelter's TAXI LEAKS

THE CONSEQUENCES OF TRANSPORT FOR LONDON'S FAILURE TO REGULATE THE STATUTORY REGIME

Transport for London (TfL) is in danger of breaching a wide array of discrimination orders. Not least the latest policy that directly prejudices those needing a door-to-door service, forcing drivers to use costly, time-inefficient routes.

Likewise, TfL's collaboration with the local authorities through their local implementation plans negates the rule of compellability and offers no advice to drivers on how to inform their passengers that they can no longer drop them at their desired destination. Even if there are eventual concessions granted to those with mobility issues, it should not be down to the driver, the local authorities, or TfL to determine if someone has a disability or not.

As far as the impact on the driver is concerned, it's another policy to further destabilise the industry, whilst all the time the 20,000 strong workforce is kept in this dire place of incertitude.

As sole traders we should all be tolerant of a degree of uncertainty but when policies are being stripped away on a regular basis, or not enforced, then it's difficult to remain optimistic about the future. Even if you are unaffected by this, it's easy to see how a lack of confidence in TfL's ability to strengthen -or even regulate - the statutory regime can induce anxiety.

Not knowing what to do, not knowing what's going to happen, not knowing what TfL's end game is - these situations are ripe to breed anxiety in anyone, even those who are in a position to not immediately be impacted by the situation.

I don't feel there are arbitrary clear-cut points between subclinical and diagnosed anxiety. It's a continuous spectrum where uncertainty plays an increasing role. However, the situation is easily exacerbated by TfL's neglect at getting a handle on the situation and none of us can claim immunity from the effect of uncertainty about the future.

Long term anxiety can exhaust one's natural resourcefulness to cope, which in turn can lead to depression. In an ambiguous situation, we seek out patterns within our environment, emanating from our past experiences that are associated with threat or assurances. If this is unsuccessful then we struggle to console ourselves with



how to respond and everything is experienced as incredibly worrisome.

There can be lots of triggers for anxiety, and within a short space of time the underlying issue instils replicable response patterns (both emotional and behavioural) and our ability to manage every day tasks is weakened. And this, as some of you will attest, can encroach on our lives outside of work. Secondary complications are an inevitable consequence of anxiety and/or depression.

If you're able to relate to any of this, then it's important for you talk to someone about how you're feeling. It doesn't have to be a medical practitioner, it can be a friend, colleague, sibling or an uninvolved third party. If it's a professional that you seek, there are various charities that you can access where the cost is based on your ability to pay, so you don't need to be referred by your GP, nor should it cost you an arm and a leg.

As far as the trade goes, we desperately need to find a better system for governance. Many of the irreversible risks that now threaten our trade originate from a rapid pace of industrial development coupled with the monopolisation of emerging technology and an unwillingness by TfL to strengthen-or even regulate- the statutory regime.

Conveniently for TfL, the system currently in place to represent the trade

- and effectively manage many of issues we are facing is done by using yesterday's tools and by the same people. As a consequence, the necessary action is either not taken or is taken too late, while the problems and risks the industry faces continue to grow and mutate.

In closing, it has to be considered a dereliction of care that TfL have collated no impact data (or any that we know of) on policy implementation, and made no attempt to address what is inarguably a very serious issue.

TfL need to act appropriately and urgently if we are to avert a sense of herd- contagion within the industry and to channel, manage and minimise the consequences of what should be considered a ticking time-bomb.

To coincide with Mental Health Week, LTR is asking for your support to raise £4,000 to produce a short film that will be directed by Hello Deer Productions and supported by the Mental Health Charity Silence of Suicide.

Should we fail to raise all of £4,000 needed to produce this film, then all the proceeds will be donated to London Taxi PR and UTAG.

*At the time of going to press, the £4000 needed for the professional film on mental health problems had been raised. Thank you to all those who donated.

Sean Paul Day
London Taxi Radio

Taxi Trade Shape Of Things To Come...

by Jim Thomas

In all the years I've been driving a Taxi in London, I've personally never known anything like this.

But don't think for one moment that because you have a brand new taxi, or you only rent, this crisis won't affect you. Every licensing booking has to be made by this booking line, new cabs don't have a different phone number either.

Decommissioning will mean all garages will have less spare taxis sitting about. At the rate this is presently happening it's going to get extremely hard to find a Taxi to rent on a permanent bases.

And as a result, we could actually find ourselves unable to service ranks at stations and airports. Although there are those who believe that this will be a good thing, heralding an abundance of work...within a very short time, -because of their abundance currently our numbering us 6 to 1- Private Hire will be allowed to work stations and Airports ranks....this is something TfLTPH have been planning since 2010... they've already turned a blind eye to virtual street hails.

The empty ranks will be handed over wholesale to PH because of insufficient taxis available, something I spoke about at RMT branch meetings back when I first uncovered Project Horizon in 2010. But no one would listen...

Plus there will be no rush for PH to go 100% electric because at present, TfL's cash cow will be earning £24 a day from most of the 110,000 PH fleet.

Think about it, with an ever decreasing fleet of vehicles and drivers, it has over the last few years become increasingly harder to renew Bills, book inspections, when in fact, it should have become easier.

TfL Licensing has actually made it more complicated and difficult to renew and the orgs are not asking why!!!

The only reason I can see is that it keeps members paying subs as you can get help from your org to file your application. But is this right.... shouldn't it be easy for every driver to apply for a renewal?

It's no longer a secret that TfLs Project Horizon's aim is to embed the Taxi trade into a one-tier service with Private Hire.

With both services doing the same job, working the same way, there will be no requirement to do the knowledge and the knowledge of London will die and become no more than a memory.

Is it not time to beak away from TfL Taxis "and" Private Hire?

Given the reason that our regulator is no longer regulating!!!

We need our own department set up, before it's too late?

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London Taxi PR donates Pops the Magic Taxi books to Brompton Fountain

London Taxi PR (LTPR), an organisation which represents the interests of the Licensed London Taxi profession, has paid a visit to children's charity, Brompton Fountain, to present and donate a number of books about Pops the Magic Taxi, accompanied by the books author and Taxi driver, Fiona Kennedy.

The donation of books, which were presented in person to several patients on the children's wards at Royal Brompton Hospital, was made by LTPR founder and Director, Lee Sheppard, PR and Communications head, Andy Scott, and Pops the Magic Taxi author, Fiona Kennedy. A further number of books for the charity were also presented to Brompton Fountain Director, Trudy Nickels.

Pops the Magic Taxi is a children's book about Pops, a magical Taxi that can not only talk, but also has the ability to travel back through time. The book involves Pops visiting Battersea Power Station, to help rescue a runaway dog.

London Taxi PR decided to make the donation of the books to Brompton Fountain as Andy from LTPR has known about the charity for a number of years due to a family member suffering from Cystic Fibrosis and seen at first hand the work they do for children and their families.

The Brompton Fountain



charity supports the paediatric intensive care unit and children's ward, the young patients and their families at Royal Brompton Hospital. It relies on the kindness and generosity of its supporters for its funding and donations. www.thebromptonfountain.org.uk

Since their formation, London Taxi PR has undertaken a series of targeted media campaigns, which are being used by London Taxi PR to promote the benefits, advantages and safety of using the iconic London Taxi to a wide audience.

All the campaigns and publicity that has so far been generated by the company has been funded by fellow London Taxi drivers as well as supportive companies and organisations, many of whom have signed up to donate to the cause on a monthly basis, indicating how passionate they all are about their industry and the cause. London Taxi PR. Passionate about promoting and preserving the iconic London Taxi trade and funded by London Taxi drivers who care about their industry.

For more information on London Taxi PR and their campaigns, please visit their website <http://londontaxipr.com>

For information about Pops the Magic Taxi and how to obtain copies, visit: www.popsthemagictaxi.com

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Ruiz to take on Joshua at Madison Square Gardens

The long, drawn-out list for a heavyweight to challenge world champion Anthony Joshua on his US debut has been whittled down to one short, squat Mexican.

Finally, it's official.

Andy Ruiz Jr will be in the opposite corner in New York's Madison Square Garden when Joshua defends his WBA, IBF, WBO and IBO titles on June 1. Ruiz, having won the multi-million dollar lottery to replace that Big Baby drugs cheat Jarrell Miller, now dreams of becoming the first fighter from his country to become world heavyweight champion.

Few in Britain will have heard of Ruiz until now and even Joshua's promoter Eddie Hearn had to admit the California-based boxer has a rotund image problem: 'He's a credible contender with a good record but my one concern is that his appearance makes him a hard sell.' Ruiz is three inches shorter than Joshua and will be out-reached by a massive eight inches but he has fast hands and his record offers better statistics.

The 29-year-old boasts 21 KOs in his 32 victories and his only defeat was a close and questionable one in his only previous world title bid. He lost a majority, home-town decision in New Zealand to Joseph Parker, the only man to take Joshua the full 12-round distance.

While Ruiz may not look in athletic shape he is in fight condition already, having forced Alexander Dimitrenko to retire after five rounds in Carson City less than two weeks ago. He genuinely believes he is about to fulfil his Mexican destiny. He says: 'I'm really excited for this fight. There's nervousness in me, but they're happy nerves. The chills. This is my chance to make history, I want to be one of those greats like Chavez, Tyson, Holyfield, Lennox Lewis. I want to be in that category. Thanks to God for everything that he put in me, I just can't wait.'

'I think the fight is going to be toe-to-toe, two guys smashing each other's faces. I'm going in there to throw combinations like I've never done before and with more speed than ever. A lot of people underestimated me. I'm used to that. My whole life people underrated me so I'm just going in there to take it all. I'm not going in there scared and I'm not going in there nervous, I'm going to go in there mad to take what I believe is mine.'

This is his withering assessment of Joshua: 'I think being so tall he fights like a big robot. He hasn't fought anyone with my style, my speed, my movement. It's going to be a whole different ball game. All the guys he's fought, they usually run from him. I don't think he's good going back. I'm going to bring the pressure, the speed, and the combinations to him. 'When I do pull out this win, everything is going to change. I'm going to bring the



titles back to Mexico, it's going to mean everything. I'm going to be able to change my whole family's lives; my life and all my kids. It's a win-win situation right now but the main thing is to win the fight and make history.'

Joshua says: 'Yes, Ruiz is a different kind of challenge but one I embrace. We have worked in the boxing gym week on week and whoever was going to be put in front of me at Madison Square Garden was going to be dispatched in style. The rent will be collected.'

Hearn admits it has been 'tricky' finding a replacement for the three-times disgraced Miller, whose mere six-month suspension for those multiple positive tests is almost as disgraceful as the offences themselves, but he believes he has come up with the most credible alternative available. He says: 'People talk about fighting AJ. Some fill their bodies with PEDs to try and beat him up. But very few genuine fighters step up and take the challenge.'

'When we selected this opponent I wanted someone with fire in his heart, someone who genuinely believes he can win and become world champion. Andy showed me that desire. Give him credit for taking this challenge.'

'In my opinion, this is a tougher test than Jarrell Miller. Andy punches harder and is much faster. This is going to be a war. Andy brings Mexican heart against the best heavyweight in the world. Don't blink!'

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