

# THE MAYOR'S AIR QUALITY PROPOSALS A UNITED RESPONSE!

**F**or the first time ever the London Taxi Trade has responded to a public consultation from Transport for London with one voice, with every recognised group signing the same document.

The Mayor's Air Quality Strategy proposes the introduction of a ten year age limit on taxis from 2015 along with compulsory 'smarter driving' courses for ALL taxi drivers and the introduction of non idling taxi ranks and zones across the central area.

After a series of meetings between all groups representing the London Taxi Trade and senior managers from Transport for London and the Public Carriage Office we quickly realised that the threat to the trade from these proposals was very real and that in

order to avoid any doubt or confusion on the trades objection to a ten year age limit and many of the other proposals 'The Trade' would make a joint single submission. The document, as well as setting out 'The Trades' proposals for helping to clean up the air in our City also questions the commitment of the Private Hire industry in assisting the Mayor in his objectives.

The Trades Response to the Mayors Air Quality Strategy was signed by LTDA, LCDC, UNITE the UNION, LMCPA, Dial a Cab, Computer Cab, Radio Taxis London, London Taxis International and KPM-UK Taxis PLC.

The Mayor will publish his completed Air Quality Strategy in September and we are hopeful that he and his advisors will recognise the Trades desire to do all it can to improve the air that we all breathe but that a ten year age limit would decimate our industry.

*Left to Right Steve Mcnamara LTDA, Ivan Kovler LMCPA, Rob Laidler LTI, Geoffrey Riesel RTL, Malcolm Paice Com Cab, Mike Hedges UNITE, Brian Rice DaC, Eddie Crossley LMCPA, Peter Da Costa KPM.*



**YOU CAN READ THE TAXI TRADES OFFICIAL RESPONSE ON PAGE 2**

# MAYOR'S AIR QUALITY STRATEGY CONSULTATION A RESPONSE FROM THE LONDON TAXI TRADE

The London Taxi Trade welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Mayor's Air Quality Strategy Consultation. Trade representatives have engaged with Transport for London (TfL) in an effort to find acceptable solutions which will enable taxis to fully contribute towards the Mayor's objective of improving air quality in our Capital City and this document has been based and produced on background information and data provided by TfL.

London's 25,000 Taxi drivers spend their working lives in close proximity to some of the most polluted air in the Capital; for this, and many other reasons, the Trade is keen to develop and support any reasonable and realistic proposals which improve their working environment and that of everyone who visits, lives or works in our City.

The London Taxi Trade proposes that:-

1. All taxis licensed for the first time in London to be Euro V compliant from 1st January 2012.
2. All newly licensed taxi drivers to undertake an eco driving course as a prerequisite of licensing from 1st January 2011. The Taxi Trade Representative Organisations and Radio Circuits are especially keen to encourage existing drivers to undergo an Eco driving course. To this end the LTDA, LCDC and UNITE are currently considering the option of offering courses, on a voluntary no-cost basis, to their existing members in the expectation that there would be a considerable take up. It is anticipated that this pro-active approach would negate any resistance that the introduction of a compulsory requirement for existing licence holders to attend such courses might create.
3. The Trade is keen to embrace the concept of a non-idling policy and welcomes the introduction of a non-idling zone in conjunction with an increase in taxi ranks as a dual policy mandate. This would significantly reduce the amount of empty running by taxis especially in the central area and relevant key 'hot spots' which are at risk of not meeting the EU limit value for daily PM10 emissions by the extended 2011 deadline. These are Marylebone Road and Euston Road, Marble Arch and Hyde Park Corner and Victoria Embankment to Tower Gateway.
4. Taxi drivers already operate taxi sharing schemes at several central London locations enabling up to 6 passengers to share a cab, thereby reducing the duplication of journeys at peak times. This practice provides a significant beneficial environmental impact and the Trade is actively seeking to work in cooperation with TfL to extend these schemes across the Capital.
5. The two existing manufacturers of taxicabs for London: London Taxis International and Mercedes Benz are

both developing alternative fuel vehicles and are currently trialling electric, hydrogen fuel cell and hybrid taxis. These companies have an in-depth specialist knowledge of taxicab operations in the Capital and this coupled with an expertise in low volume specialised vehicle production will ensure that cleaner less polluting vehicles will be available to the trade at the earliest opportunity.

Recent technological innovations which reduce the empty running time of taxis, including electronic hailing devices, twitter and internet booking services are also currently being introduced into London and the Industry is very supportive of any future advances of this type.

The Trade is particularly aware that 22% of taxi related emissions are caused by PM10's resulting from tyre and brake wear. In an effort to significantly reduce this figure the Trade is in discussions with tyre and brake component manufacturers to facilitate the soonest possible introduction of cleaner alternatives into London. It is important to note that as soon as this technology is developed we anticipate a rapid and substantial reduction in related PM10's due to the Trade's high volume replacement cycle of tyre and brake parts.

5. The Trade broadly supports the proposal to enable drivers and owners to have their vehicle licensing inspections undertaken at MOT centres.
6. The Trade, having carefully considered the impact of various vehicle age related options, contends that, without the assistance of extensive funding, the only sustainable age limitation policy for taxis would be 15 years from 2012, with no possibility of further tightening of this criteria. Any additional restrictions on the fleet would make it impossible to mitigate the serious negative economic impact which our industry is experiencing during one of the worst recessions in recent history.

The Trade has also reviewed the proposals for the Private Hire Industry and offers the following comments:

- Restrictions on new vehicles:- If the Taxi Trade with a restricted choice of just two approved vehicles, can agree to all newly licensed taxis meeting Euro V from January 2012 we find it surprising that the PH industry, with its unlimited choice of vehicles, can only agree to newly licensed PHV's meeting Euro IV from April 2012.
- Restrictions on idling and improvements in waiting facilities:- The trade is seriously concerned about the proposals for Private Hire stands. Private Hire vehicles are exclusively pre-booked and therefore have no need to 'rank up' whilst waiting to be hired, and the introduction of any PHV stands/ranks would encourage and appear to endorse illegal plying for hire.

# HEATHROW UPDATE

By **DANNY FREEMAN**  
Secretary UNITE Cab Section, Heathrow Branch

## OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF stopforabite.com

Friday 2nd July saw the official launch of **Stopforabite.com**. A coach kitted out with computers arrived at the Taxi Feeder Park and during the course of the day over a hundred drivers had stopped for a bite... of knowledge!

You have probably already read in last month's Cab Trade News about the innovative e-learning site for taxi drivers and their families called 'Stop for a bite' ([www.stopforabite.com](http://www.stopforabite.com)). This was developed by Micky and me in partnership with TNG, a learning provider to give top quality education to taxi drivers. This resource is only accessible to UNITE Cab Section members.

The idea behind it was a very simple one; most of us enjoy learning but find it difficult to find time to study in our busy lives. We thought it would be great if drivers could have the chance to learn with bite size 15 minute chunks of knowledge building up to a full module over a period of time. We are also planning in the future to have access to a library of knowledge for your children. You will be able to simply type in a subject they may be studying, for example, a history project on Henry VIII and knowledge on that subject will be downloaded to your learning account.

Some of the knowledge available on the site for Unite Cab Section members:

**Language courses** - French, Spanish, Italian and German.

**IT Skills** - courses both starter courses and more advanced.

**Hobbies** - from flower arranging to Origami!

**Leisure** - Sudoku, on-line games, snakes and ladders with a Unite twist!

**Toolkit** - Currency converters, calculators, world time zones.

And lots, lots more UNITE benefits; UNITE education courses, Unite Hotel (Eastbourne Centre).

If you do not have access to your own computer you are most welcome to come into the UNITE Office at the Taxi Feeder Park and use one of the half a dozen computers we have for UNITE members to use.

For those members who receive a copy of Cab Trade News in the post we have pleasure in enclosing your 'Stop for a bite' card and your unique redemption code.

If you are a member who has not yet received a card or if you wish to know more then please don't hesitate to get in touch via my email [Danny.Freeman@uniteunion.org](mailto:Danny.Freeman@uniteunion.org) or pop into the office. We would love to hear your feedback and any ideas that you may have to improve the site.

*Good Luck and happy studying!!  
Danny and Micky*

**Become part of the 44,000 Unite Heathrow family. Pop into the Unite office and join today!**



Dan Freeman  
(Branch Secretary)  
Micky Samroo (Chair)  
Heathrow Cab Section

# LONDON DRIVERS TO HAVE THEIR SAY ON PARKING PENALTIES

## LONDON COUNCILS PRESS RELEASE

Drivers in the Capital are being invited to have their say on how much motorists should be charged in parking and other traffic penalties and charges. London Councils and Transport for London (TfL) have launched a three month consultation on levels of penalties for motorists who commit parking and traffic contraventions.

The amount of penalties charged is reviewed every four years. The last consultation, carried out in 2006, resulted in the introduction of the two tier parking system in July 2007. This means all contraventions on TfL roads and the more serious contraventions on London borough roads incur a higher penalty than other contraventions.

Londoners and other interested parties will be asked whether they think the two tier system works or whether there should be a single level of penalty charge.

They will also be asked for their views on how much penalties should be for:

- Contraventions of parking regulations
- Moving traffic contraventions including in bus lanes and yellow box junctions
- Release from wheel clamps
- Contravening the London Lorry Control Scheme
- Bonds paid by persistent evaders

appealing against one or more of their penalty charge notices

- Storage and disposal charges
- Following the consultation, a final decision will be made by Transport for London and London Councils' Transport and Environment Committee on 9 December 2010. This will be approved by the Mayor of London and the Secretary of State for Transport. It is intended the new penalties will come into effect from 1 April 2011.

Chair of London Councils Transport and Environment Committee, Councillor Catherine West said: "We know that parking penalties are a contentious issue and we are encouraging everyone to have their say in this consultation.

"We must ensure penalties are at the right level to deter motorists from stopping the flow of traffic by parking illegally or carrying out dangerous manoeuvres which put other road users at risk. "We also recognise motorists like everyone else are facing tough times and we want to be as fair as possible in parking enforcement."

The consultation runs until 30th September 2010.

To have your say, visit: [www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/landtflconsultation](http://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/landtflconsultation) or call 020 7934 9907.



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# CTN

Comment

## UNITE IN READINESS

By FRANK HULL

You don't need us to tell any of you what is likely to happen to this trade over the next few years. With the prospect of unemployment figures rising we have no doubt that quite a few of those who become jobless will look to the taxi and private-hire trades as a way out of a difficult situation. There can also be no doubt that those in power will give some encouragement to this idea. Then with the increase in the numbers of mini cabs that will result from this, we will get the inevitable encroachment into the licensed taxi patch and 'voila' we have returned to the eighties.

However, things are different these days. Now there is a powerful nationally licensed private hire trade. Therefore we must be prepared and if possible united in readiness for the inevitable attack on this trade from licensed and unlicensed mini-cabs that, of course, will have the assistance of bad taxi legislation. In a way this attack has already started with mini-cabs hanging around profitable corners in the provinces. It is not just the provincial taxi trade that will feel the effect this time. It has also already started in London, where the trade is finding it difficult to deal with unlicensed taxis on unofficial ranks and we must not forget the illegal taxi tout, who because of blind-eye legality is now part of a thriving industry.

Another nightmare heading our way is the equalities bill and the ratio of wheelchair accessible taxis to non-accessible taxis in many licensing areas. Just how this ratio will or can be determined fairly is anybody's guess. However, for sure it is going to cause a lot of arguments and difficulties within these local taxi trades.

What those who have been responsible for this part of the Act probably don't know is that many taxi drivers and authorities throughout the country are not one hundred per cent clear of the legal position of taxi insurance and wheelchair occupied fares. For instance if some mishap was to occur whilst a driver was manoeuvring an occupied wheelchair to or away from the taxi, would taxi insurance cover such an incident? Would drivers themselves be financially responsible for the result of any such incident? No doubt it will be down to the courts to determine.

All taxi drivers are conditioned to give reasonable assistance to their fares. Sometimes taxi drivers do go over that reasonable assistance clause. For instance it would be a hard heart that would unload someone and leave them sitting there in the rain. Many, we are sure, would assist that fare to their front door.












Whilst the idea of taxi accessibility for all was a fine and noble idea unfortunately from the start all of the finer points were not worked out and have still as yet not been resolved. There are too many for us to list here but there are many and it will probably be only legal actions that will sort some of them out.

We have highlighted here just a couple of the problems that are heading our way but there are others too still lurking. As we have already stated we should be prepared and if possible united for all contingencies. Why not Unite with us by filling in the application form on Page 15

Frank Hull is a UNITE Cab Trade Committee Member.

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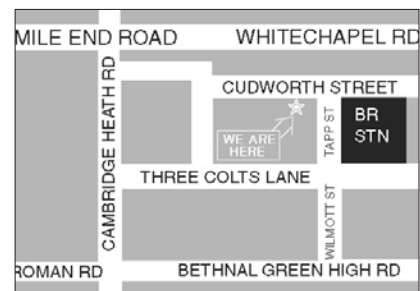
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# AROUND & ATOUT

By **PETER J ROSE** – Secretary **UNITE** Cab Section, London Branch

## RICHMOND

Readers of Cab Trade News will know that we have been casting a wide net when it comes to Satellite Offices and Clipboard Johnnies, recognising that the issue is not just one concerning the Central London area; but rather a London-wide problem.

This month as well as keeping an eye on the all the regulars, Tiger Tiger, Abacus, Pep-C etc etc etc, we've been to Richmond upon Thames to look at the situation there. To be honest what we found there was no different to anywhere else in the Greater London area. Minicabs parked outside the venue with the requisite Clipboard Johnnie in attendance waiting for the next job to come their way.

To say we are at the point of saturation would at best be an understatement. We all know that TfL have little chance of controlling these offices (they do too but won't admit it), read Peter Bond's Compliance report on page 6, but until very recently they kept issuing licenses to them anyway. What is worse is the fact that TfL will issue a licence to a Club, Bar etc even though it may be in a completely inappropriate place, as with Be At One at the bottom of Petersham Road. TfL know that minicab drivers will congregate at a venue that has an office (because the private hire associations have told them) often causing havoc with local traffic; in the case of Be At One – I witnessed mayhem as local busses got stuck, unable to get around the parked minicabs, but still the practice goes on. But just try and get a taxi rank outside this or a similar venue and the request would undoubtedly be denied because of the traffic situation, Funky Mojoes in Woodford being the perfect example. Even when we do get the go-ahead for a rank it can take months to get it physically appointed, remember Nobu? Not so it seems with a Satellite Office. They appear to pop up like Spring Daffodils at the roadside; all of a sudden they are just there ready for business. Are there no rules at all for these things?

Since my visit to Richmond I've been informed that that the authorities have indeed paid a visit to the area which we understand resulted in three cautions and one arrest. Although we welcome the effort we all know that once again, it's all too little.



## PASTANA HOTEL

I recently put on at the Pastana Hotel, near Chelsea Bridge – south side. The first thing to note was the minicab occupying the front space of the two cab rank outside, but no driver. I assumed that he had gone in to make contact with his passenger. But no, he came out and went over to another minicab that had pulled in after me. As I sat there it was apparent that neither driver had indeed a job. After a further while I watched as the driver of the first minicab went and stood inside the doorway of the hotel, don't you just know when something isn't right? Looking inside I could see him looking expectantly at people as they left the hotel, as if waiting to be asked if he was a cab. Eventually a customer did come out and into my taxi, as I looked back I could almost see the disappointment on his face. One to watch I think.



## ANTHROPOLOGIST

It didn't take long for this new venue in Gresham Street, EC2 to gain a few expectant minicabs outside, especially since the removal of the taxi rank. Good old City of London I'm sure that they will keep a close eye on the touting situation outside this bar. Just as they do with the rest of the Square mile – NOT! Although it has to be said, what a great job they are doing moving taxi drivers from Warwick Lane while they wait for meagre pickings from their radio circuits.



## WESTMINSTER

How long have you got? We could cut down the Amazon rain forest and still run out of paper for this borough. Although Westminster Council has been very constructive in the appointment of some new night-time taxi ranks, the enforcement of them is far less than satisfactory. Minicabs can still be found on the taxi ranks Tiger Tiger, Charing Cross Road, etc. The much vaunted camera enforcement is proving to be non-existent. Unless of course you are a taxi waiting for a passenger in broad daylight. The taxi in the picture below received a parking ticket for waiting three minutes and thirty-six seconds while his passengers got out to take a picture of the square. Another driver got a ticket while waiting when he had to return to the Cumberland Hotel because his passenger forgot his passport. Welcome to London!



**UNITE the UNION** believes that unless proper resources are made available, the only way the problem of the Clipboard Johnny will ever be sorted is to end the concept the satellite office. **UNITE** will continue to press for the Abolition of Satellite offices and an end to the Clipboard Johnny.

**TfL – Press Release**

**14 ILLEGAL CAB DRIVERS  
ARRESTED IN WEEKEND OPERATION**

The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) Cab Enforcement Unit, part of the Transport for London (TfL) funded Safer Transport Command (STC), made 14 arrests during a covert operation overnight on Thursday 15 July and Saturday 17 July 2010.

The Cab Enforcement Unit officers patrolled touting hotspots in central London locations such as the Haymarket and in Camden.

They dealt with illegal cab activity including touting involving both licensed and unlicensed drivers, illegal plying for hire, and illegal operators/clipboard operators. This is not only to ensure compliance with regulations but most importantly to enhance the safety of the travelling public. Officers used specialist undercover tactics to catch touts red handed. The operation was not only successful in arresting illegal touts, but also acquired valuable intelligence.

Cab Enforcement operations are carried out on a regular basis in line with current intelligence on touting behaviour. More than a dozen operations have taken place in the last two months to tackle illegal cabs and touting across London. This is in addition to the undercover patrols that take place every virtually every night of the week.

They also cooperate with clubs and late night venues to crack down on the touts who operate in these areas, ensure licensed operators operating from venues are complying with regulations.

Since 2003 the Cab Enforcement Unit has made more than 6,000 arrests for touting and cab-related offences.

Chief Superintendent Royle, Safer Transport Command said:

“We are working together with our policing partners to keep London moving safely by driving down crime and the fear of crime even further.

“Illegal cabs and touting undermines the legitimate cab trade and puts the travelling public

at risk.

“The Safer Transport Command is committed to tackling illegal cab activity and will continue to target offenders through our regular cab enforcement activities.

“The safety of the public is paramount and I would advise everyone not to get into any vehicle that they have not booked through a licensed operator.”

Steve Burton, Director of Community Safety Enforcement and Policing, said: “Touts pose a serious threat to those who use them and Londoners should remember that only black cabs can be stopped and picked up off the street without being booked. By booking your minicab you’ll ensure a record of your trip is kept and in the event of any problems the driver will be traced.

“These positive results show that we continue to clamp down on illegal cab drivers and touts should be reminded that the Safer Transport Command is out there and will use all the necessary tactics to catch them.”

- Cab Enforcement operations are carried out on a regular basis in line with current intelligence on touting behaviour. They also cooperate with clubs to crack down on the touts who operate in the area and ensure compliance with regulations and importantly enhance the safety of the travelling public.
- During the operations roadside and compliance checks are made and in addition, officers carry out operations and conduct checks on all minicabs within the confines of the operation area.
- The MPS Safer Transport Command (formerly Transport Operational Command Unit, set up in 2002) fights crime on buses, tackles illegal taxi touts; and assists with the control of traffic congestion. There are now around 2,000 uniformed officers in the unit, which are part funded by Transport for London (TfL).

**SGS & COMPLIANCE  
REPORT**

**By PETER BOND**

**SGS**

**The much-loved ‘First-Time Pass Rate’ has increased for the latest inspecting period from 39% to 44%.**

The top five Headline Inspection Failure Rates remain as follows, (1) Brakes (pipes, callipers, cylinders, leaks- not the rolling road), (2) Chassis Under body (rust, cracks etc.), (3) Lamps/Reflectors, (4) Lights and (5) Topside Body.

The principle of extending the list of ‘Advisory Letters’ to be used by the On-Street Compliance team to the Annual test at SGS has at last been accepted and although there is some confusion as to whether the 2 lists will be the same, which is just obvious common sense as Taxis are either ‘fit’ or ‘unfit’ whether tested at SGS or ‘On-Street’, is another welcome move in the right direction.

There are now 647 Mercedes Vito taxis Licensed in London.

Our request for a detailed and itemised comparison between the TX4 and Vito failures at the annual test, a perfectly reasonable request when Drivers are deciding on which vehicle to spend £30,000-£40,000 on, has been refused on legal grounds - a Freedom Of Information request is on its way and we look forward to the response from LTPH (formerly PCO).

The move to On-Line bookings for the annual test is still in the pipeline but has been delayed due to all the changes, £50 Re-test fee/Advisories etc.

You will soon be receiving confirmation of your booking by text as LTPH/TfL are moving away from information by post and leaflets and, as with PCO Notices, you will have to access more and more On-Line, even the helpful leaflet from SGS with a reminder of the correct documentation to accompany your Taxi at the test will soon only be available by this route!

Remember to always ask your garage for the VIR (Vehicle Inspection Report) as this may answer some of the confusion over the reasons for failure- some garages may not want you to know the full list for obvious reasons!!

**ON-STREET COMPLIANCE**

Save repeating the same statistics as before, the period reported on at the latest meeting with the On-Street Compliance team show once again that the number of Taxis and PHV’s examined on the road prove there is still an unacceptable disparity against Taxis. The trend is towards parity but far too slow and unfair for our liking.

One positive note to these figures is that many checks on Taxis are now Badge/Bill/Tax/Insurance and only lead to a full check if one of these is not in order- including if your new Licence isn’t signed, which is technically a breach leading to

possible suspension!! So sign it NOW!!

These meetings are now attended by representatives of STC (formerly TOCU) and from next month by the LTPH ‘Licensing’ team, both are welcome additions.

Only 2 Yellow badge drivers were warned in the last month for working out of their area, surely not enough to justify ‘Identifiers’ for Yellow/Green Badges with the emphasis on drivers reporting each other, only causing animosity, when at this time of problems affecting us all, particularly Clipboard Johnnies and Satellite Offices, surely UNITY is the order of the day! Join us at UnithetUnion, come to our regular meetings and have your say.

Figures for much activity by LTPH Compliance and Licensing teams as well as STC, Local Councils, VOSA, DSS etc were given for Taxis and PHV’s with lots of good work being done- STC cautioned or charged over 80 touts/Clipboard Johnnies in one Month, PHV drivers cautioned for parking on Taxi Ranks, Taxi Drivers sent warning letters for the same on ‘working’ Ranks, operations in Dagenham, Epsom, Tooting, City, Gatwick, Kingston and Wandsworth led to many PHV’s given unfit notices...but, once again, we made the point that even if the staff of these agencies were quadrupled all these good practices make little difference to our biggest problem...the illegal operation of virtually all Satellite Offices is UNENFORCABLE, to which there was no disagreement from the other side of the table.

Problems were highlighted at Wimbledon Dogs, Tiger Tiger, Abacus, Richmond and in the East - Funky Mojo’s, Faces, Lizard Lounge amongst others with the, genuine, promise of a visit at least, to them all.

Be sure to apply for your Licence renewal in good time, as now we have nowhere to go other than the Post Office if anything goes wrong- if you have no current Licence in your hand- NO WORK!! You should receive your renewal form 8-10 weeks before expiry and your new Licence 2 weeks before that date.

To report any misdemeanour there is a dedicated email address at LTPH who will direct your complaint to the relevant agency- ltpH.enforcement@tfl.gov.uk. STC advise if taking photos, of PHV’s in particular, be subtle and discreet as if a problem arises and the Police are called to an incident they, the Police, will only be interested in the incident and not in why you were taking the photo in the first place.

Although this seems, on the face of it, a good idea to help stop PHV’s encroaching on our work and Ranks, if it is used widely by Cab Drivers reporting each to enforce the possible introduction of ‘Identifiers’ this Union can only foresee problems.

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## Street Legal

By ELLIE REEVES

# TORIES SCRAPPING SAFETY MEASURES

Lord Young of Graffhan, Margaret Thatcher's former trusted adviser, has been entrusted by David Cameron to review health and safety laws. Now deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg has launched a website for the public to suggest laws to scrap and the people who have popped up with suggestions so far want to amend trade union laws to curb their ability to go on strike and scrap laws that protect workers.

Meanwhile Lord Young has suggested that emergency workers should be excluded from health and safety laws because they are "paid for doing a job that involves risk".

His Lordship's official brief is to "investigate and report back to the Prime Minister on the rise of the compensation culture over the last decade coupled with the current low standing that health and safety legislation now enjoys and to suggest solutions."

Thompsons has sent Lord Young evidence showing that all the reports and all the statistics prove there is no compensation culture. There may be a tabloid driven perception of compensation culture but removing protection for firefighters, paramedics and other emergency service workers is a dangerous sledgehammer to crack tabloid myths however persistent they are.

Lord Young has been widely quoted pointing out the absurdity of the many stories that abound – from toothpicks being unavailable in restaurants to pancake racers having to walk in wet weather. We have taken Lord Young at face value and assume that rather than seeking to perpetuate the myths he is highlighting what are, in anyone's eyes, clearly misinterpretations of the law.

'Elf and safety' hasn't 'gone mad'. Myths are being exploited or indeed, on occasions, made up by the media to maintain a favourite theme. In the process they attribute to health and safety rules and powers that are completely false. It is a monster of their own making.

The Your Freedom website which invites the public to nominate laws to be repealed further encourages the hysteria about health and safety. People are hijacking it to nominate laws for repeal that simply don't exist.

In 2008 the Conservative shadow work and pensions minister Andrew Selous said that health and safety was 'the bottom line' and 'traditionally had cross party support' and The Health and Safety (Offences) Bill 2007 did indeed get all party support in order to become law.

So we have asked Lord Young what has changed. Why does the coalition think that health and safety laws are in "low standing" when they weren't in 2007 and weren't in 2008?

Between April 2009 and March 2010, 151 workers were killed. Thousands were injured in work-related accidents. That is the reality for working people and statistics show that most then don't make a claim.

The key is adequate enforcement of health and safety legislation. We have too few inspectors and too few prosecutions of employers and that leads to thousands of people continuing to be injured and killed at work.

We have told Lord Young that if his review intends to look at real personal injury claims – ones that result in formal claims for compensation recorded by the Government's Compensation Recovery Unit (as all claims must be) rather than the tabloid myths – then he will see that compensation claims for people injured at work and out of work are falling consistently.

We suggest it isn't acceptable to put emergency and other workers' lives at risk through the watering down of health and safety legislation simply to deal with a false perception about the law.

## CAB TRADE NEWS NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE!

**Cab Trade News** the national taxi paper produced by drivers belonging to the Cab Section of UNITE the Union is now available to read online at the UNITE the Union Website.



Please Visit: [www.unitetheunion.org/cabsection](http://www.unitetheunion.org/cabsection)

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\*Savings are in comparison to Martin Cordell & Co's normal full service accounts charge for taxi drivers of £410.00 including VAT. Actual saving made is: £77.87 including VAT. Figures correct at time of going to press. More benefits for members can be found on the UNITE the UNION website [unitetheunion.com](http://unitetheunion.com)

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MARK EDWARD TAYLOR

# NOT SO GREAT BRITAIN?

The great summer of sport has not been so thrilling for Great Britain. The English football team fell well short at the South African World Cup finals and Scotsman Andy Murray's shot at Wimbledon tennis glory was not quite good enough. The media hyped up both events on a tide of patriotism and bluster. An innocent bystander may have had the belief anything British would conquer the world.

The truth was a wonderful reality check. Great Britain is certainly not great at football or tennis. Listen to the media and they come up with a whole load of other clichés about how great Britain is; best armed forces in the world, mother of all parliaments, best health service, finest police force, The World's favourite airline (some UNITE members may well disagree with this claim), most respected monarchy in the world, the greatest Rock'n'roll band in the world, the world's greatest tennis tournament (which is never won by a Briton), the world's most magnificent cup competition, meaning the FA Cup, that is often shown a lack of respect by the entrants, and even boasting London has the world's best taxi drivers. Well, we must have one thing where the claim could be correct!

Great Britain is certainly a very good place to live. Great Britain is certainly not, broken, as claimed by the right of the Tory party at the recent 2010 general election. There is very much to be proud of about life in the UK. Life expectancy is amongst the highest in the world at 77 for a male and 81 for a female and rising.....The UK has a free media, rated 23 out of 173 according to the Guardian newspaper. London is probably the most cosmopolitan city in the world, people in the UK are free to believe and practise any religion they wish or choose to ignore medieval doctrinal mumbo jumbo. Adult literacy is 99% of the population and we have 2.3 doctors per 1,000 head of population. But, to put some perspective on this, Greece has 5 Doctors for each 1,000 people and Cuba pushes the stats further to 5.9 per 1,000 head of population

A little humility in Great Britain would be no bad thing. Possibly dropping the, GREAT, and being plain BRITAIN. [The Melange Column is aware that the Great may refer to composite collection of islands forming a greater collective archipelago] Britain may be able to

cope with the disappointment of having a football team rated 16th in the world, a tennis player rated 4th in the world and a government that could allow its media the freedom to be ranked number 1, rather than 23, by showing a little less arrogance, Britain could sit more comfortably with mere partaking rather than expecting to win.



Denmark probably has the best lager in the world, Israel the skies safest airline, India the biggest democracy and the United States the largest prison population. The UK could learn a few things by shaking off the superiority complex of a class riddled society, embracing the human rights act and consider trying to speak a foreign language or two.

The Swiss had a good time recently with Roger Federer winning everything there is to win in the tennis world. Their football team beat Spain in their opening match of the World Cup. Joy yodelled out across the Alps with the fustball victory. However, there was enough savvy about the Swiss to enjoy the moment and not expect too much more joy from the tournament. Match this national expectation to the Spanish, who, like the English, could go far in the tournament. Spain lost their opening fixture then advanced through the competition to sportingly outplay Holland in the final. Plus, their hombre, Nadal, won Wimbledon to boot!

Still, nonetheless, we do quite well at cricket. A game played by former colonies of the Great British Empire. A game devised to spend almost half the time sitting around doing nothing while the locals were exploited working the local plantations making the British Empire hugely rich.....Com'n Tim... ..and the 2012 Olympics will see GB win medals in the elite sports of sailing, rowing and cycling

Could the plight of not so Great Britain have anything to do with the most unequal society in Europe? Could the disappointment of Murray have anything to do with the class based society of UK? Could the terrible failure of highly paid England soccer stars reflect the massive gulf in Great, and not so great, Britain?

# THE FIGHT BACK CONTINUES

By MARK SHULTON

Following on from a piece I wrote back in April regarding our WAR ON TOUTS at Heathrow which has been on-going for the last six years, the positive response we have had from the majority of the drivers at "the flyers" and in town has been very much appreciated.

Without wishing to repeat myself the only people that are going to fight for our livelihoods are licensed London taxi drivers. Not the boys in blue who are stretched to the limit so it seems, or any paid mercenaries. We have enough parasites living off our hard work already. Heathrow Taxi Marshals earn their money working the cab same as all taxi drivers do.

It has been rumoured, although totally untrue, that there are no rules or regulations for the Heathrow Taxi Marshals to work by. There has been a service level agreement in place since the beginning of Marshalling at Heathrow to protect the Marshals and protect the trade and BAA.

It gives everybody clear guidelines and boundaries as to what is expected from our Taxi Marshals. Like all good ideas the Marshalling has evolved into a highly motivated and well organised machine. We have the touts on the back foot disappearing the minute Taxi Marshals enter the Terminals. Go back six years and there were dozens of touts operating continuously in all terminals.

With evolution so must come change and with this in mind a new Service Level Agreement needed to be written and implemented. This was organised and signed off by all interested parties on the morning of 17 June 2010. A copy of the new SLA will be available for all to see at the feeder park.

A lot of hard work was put into drafting and agreeing each point of the new SLA. A big thank you must go to all parties involved in this process. We would like to thank the main players, BAA, Heathrow Police, LTDA, HATDU, UNITE, NSL, HALT and The Marshal COM for their endeavour in getting this new and updated SLA up and running.

It's nice to see the trade united in their fight against the scum touts trying to steal from our pockets. And personally I hope we can ALL unite to fight in town and out West the parasitical blood sucking touts that prey on the unsuspecting public.

While I've got the time to sit in front of my PC I do feel the need to relay the story to you of a Heathrow Taxi Marshal. He was patrolling Term 5 a couple of weeks back. The Marshal concerned being the modest chap he is preferred his name not to be mentioned.

There he was walking up and down Terminal 5 looking for anybody that might look suspicious or any regular touts. Walking past a group of people that were travelling together the Marshal noticed an older man struggling to breathe; he stopped to watch wondering if it was an asthma attack or something worse.

The Marshal approached the family and asked if the gentleman needed medical attention to which they replied yes. He was then put in a seat by the Marshal.

The Marshal sprinted up to Information and requested an ambulance and ran back to the unwell man with his family. Only seconds had passed and in this short time the man had passed out and his lips were turning blue.

Unfortunately the Marshal's thoughts had been confirmed, the man was having a heart attack. The Marshal then went into autopilot and put into practice his first aid training for the first time. He lowered the man to the floor with the aid of an airport member of staff and they then administered Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

This continued till the Paramedics arrived. Our hero said it seemed like hours although was probably only minutes. The man was put into the ambulance while having the treatment continued. In these situations the first minutes are the most vital, so I am told.

The "on the ball" Marshal gave this man a fighting chance of survival, without him being there the heart attack victim would not have made it to the ambulance...!. What deed can be higher than the helping of, or trying to help the saving of a life? WELL DONE FELLA! You did the trade proud.

It certainly got me thinking about taking a First Aid course. I would urge all drivers to join a recognised trade body, your support is needed more now than ever in the fight of our lives against PHV and people wishing to destroy us. Join us in the fight back!

## PCO Notice 20/10

Transport for London  
Taxi and Private Hire



## New Style CRB Disclosure Application Form

New Style CRB Disclosure Application Form As of 20 July 2010 the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) will no longer be able to process the old style (white) CRB application form. From that date all applications will need to be made on the new (purple) form.

All application packs for taxi or private hire driver licences now contain the new CRB form. No further applications should be submitted using the old CRB form. If you have recently submitted an application using the old form, TfL will countersign it and despatch it as usual. Should any individual problems arise with these

forms TfL will write to the applicants concerned individually.

Any driver intent on submitting an application who is in possession of an old application pack (containing the old CRB form) can email us on [TPH.Enquiries@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:TPH.Enquiries@tfl.gov.uk) to request a new CRB form providing us with a full postal address. Drivers who have recently submitted an application on the old form need take no action unless specifically contacted by TfL.

John Mason, Director Taxi and Private Hire, 13 July 2010. For previous notices visit [tfl.gov.uk/tpH](http://tfl.gov.uk/tpH)

[marktaylor842@btinternet.com](mailto:marktaylor842@btinternet.com)

## TfL – Press Release

# LONDONERS' TO FACE FEWER DELAYS AT TRAFFIC SIGNALS

Almost six per cent reduction in traffic delays for drivers without holding up pedestrians – Drivers now spend less time at red lights following more than 1,000 traffic signal reviews in 2009/10.

"We've now identified 145 sites where we think the signals may no longer be doing a useful job" Kulveer Ranger, the Mayor's Transport Advisor, 145 traffic signal sites across London considered for removal to help smooth traffic flow.

Drivers are spending less time sitting at traffic lights, after Transport for London (TfL) reviewed the timings of more than 1,000 sets of lights in the Capital last year.

As part of the Mayor's pledge to smooth traffic flow, TfL reviewed timings at 1,003 signals last year to ensure they were operating as efficiently as possible.

Changes made to the signals as a result of the reviews have delivered a six per cent reduction in unnecessary delays at traffic signals, without negatively impacting on pedestrians.

TfL will review timings of a further 1,000 traffic signals this year and for the next four years to ensure that the Capital's signals are operating in the best possible way for both drivers and pedestrians.

## SMOOTH TRAFFIC FLOW

TfL has also identified 145 sites where traffic signals could be causing unnecessary delays. They will be holding discussions with local boroughs and stakeholders about whether these traffic signals could be removed or replaced with alternative measures, to further smooth traffic flow in the Capital.

Kulveer Ranger, the Mayor's Transport Advisor, said: "There are few things more annoying than sitting at a traffic light on red for no apparent reason and we've now identified 145 sites where we think the signals may no longer be doing a useful job."

"By getting rid of them, we hope we can smooth traffic flow across London and deliver real improvements for all road users."

## Key commitments:

Garrett Emmerson, Chief Operating Officer for London Streets, TfL, said: "Re-timing traffic signals to get London moving is one of the Mayor and TfL's key commitments."

"I am delighted that we have been able to significantly cut down on delays at traffic

signals, without impacting negatively on pedestrians."

TfL is working hard to deliver the Mayor's Smoothing Traffic Flow agenda, which aims to improve the reliability and predictability of journeys on London's roads, tackle stop-start traffic conditions and ensure there is space and improved safety for both cyclists and pedestrians.

TfL is seeking to deliver the Smoothing Traffic Flow agenda through a number of initiatives:

- Minimising the impact of planned interventions
- Minimising disruption from unplanned events
- Achieving modal shift
- Developing the road network
- Maintaining road network assets in a good state of repair

During 2009/10, TfL reviewed 1,003 traffic signal sites, which resulted in the following changes to traffic and pedestrian flow:

*Number of occasions when queued traffic will have cleared through the first green phase (2009/10):*

	Before %	After %	Change %
Overall	71.70	77.60	5.90
AM period	53.56	61.62	8.06
Off-peak	66.88	75.40	8.52
PM peak	51.10	59.64	8.54
Late evening	85.75	90.78	5.03
W/end period	69.45	74.86	5.41
Overnight	97.60	98.28	0.68

*Number of occasions when pedestrians waiting to cross the road, easily clear the kerb during the first green man/blackout period (2009/10):*

	Before %	After %	Change %
Overall	94.30	94.60	0.30
AM period	91.64	92.30	0.66
Off-peak	92.63	93.15	0.51
PM peak	90.19	90.59	0.40
Late evening	98.10	97.94	0.16

TfL will carry out reviews at a further 1,000 traffic signal locations across London during 2010/11, including traffic signals along Tottenham Court Road, Parliament Square, A40 Western Avenue, and around the Hanger Lane Gyratory, and will continue to do so until 2015/16.

**Although TfL controls only five per cent of the road network (the 580km of Red Routes in London), this carries over 30 per cent of London's traffic.**

# T H E A T R E

By Tony Benson

## AFTER THE DANCE at the Lyttelton Theatre



*Benedict Cumberbatch as David Scott-Fowler and Faye Castelow as Helen Banner.*

Before the last war, late-night dance music was broadcast by the BBC from hotels in the West End of London: Ambrose at the Mayfair, Jack Jackson at the Dorchester, Sidney Lipton at Grosvenor House. Always in the background to the music was the distracting sound of loud talking and boozy laughter. As a child I used to listen and wonder who these people were. How could they party into the early hours in the middle of the week? Where I lived in the East End, people had to get up for work in the morning, assuming they had work to get up for.

But writer Terence Rattigan knew them well. He became one himself and accurately observed them in "After the Dance". Rattigan began writing plays in his twenties, only to be deluged by a succession of rejection slips. In 1936 a West End theatre unexpectedly fell vacant and impresario Bronson Albery, in need of a cheap stopgap to occupy the theatre, turned to one of those manuscripts submitted by Rattigan; it was a very light comedy called "French Without Tears". Surprisingly this became a smash hit. Suddenly Rattigan had fame and money which he managed to spend faster than it came in: Saville Row suits, expensive cars, gambling and a succession of male lovers. It was a year before he began work on his next play, which was "After the Dance", about a hedonistic world with which he was now fully acquainted.



*Juliet Howland as Moya Lexington and Benedict Cumberbatch as David Scott-Fowler, with members of the company*

The play was an enormous success. However, the year was now 1939 and the general public had more important things to occupy them and it closed after three months.

The current production is the play's first major revival for seventy years and – you know what? – it's worth the wait. The story concerns a wealthy alcoholic writer, David (Benedict Cumberbatch) and his wife Joan (Nancy Carroll) who exist in a continuous round of parties surrounded by parasitic hangers-on. The most extreme of these is an old friend, John (Adrian Scarborough), who has actually taken up residence in their luxury flat and has harboured a crush on Joan for decades. He is bright and astute enough to see through

the motives of the other characters and thus wins our sympathy. David and Joan love each other but cannot bring themselves to express their love... it would be "boring" to do so. This leaves the door open for one of the pretty young things on the make, Helen (Faye Camelow) to destroy their marriage – with tragic results. Thea Sharrock's sumptuous production is well worth seeing.

## THE PRISONER OF SECOND AVENUE

at the Vaudeville Theatre

Playwright Neil Simon's wife, Joan, had an uncle who was making a very good living with his printing business; he had a lovely home on Long Island Sound but longed to own a small-town newspaper and write his own daily editorials giving his opinions on the state of the world. (Maybe he'd seen too many Westerns and wanted to be the owner of that little hand-run press machine in Tombstone campaigning for law and order.) So, at the age of 50, the uncle gave up his business and bought a small newspaper in New Jersey.

Knowing nothing about the business side of running a paper, his bank account moved rapidly into the red. He finally went broke, losing every cent he had. He sold his house, moving into a small apartment in New York while his wife became the breadwinner and he searched for a job. Fifty is a bad age to start a new career and eventually he had a nervous breakdown.

Simon decided the uncle's misfortune was a good idea for his next play: a wonderfully interesting man who had let his dreams take him away from reality. "The Prisoner of Second Avenue" began to gestate. In 1971, America was going through a financial crisis so it wasn't a bad time for a play about a guy down on his luck – and 2010 isn't a bad time to revive it.

We are introduced to Mel Edison, a 47 year-old Manhattan advertising executive, at the start of his nervous breakdown, pacing around his 14th floor apartment at 2 am. He had lost his job four days earlier and hadn't yet told his wife. (He's been going for interviews in the mornings and sitting in the park in the afternoons.) He rails against the apartment's air-conditioning – it's either freezing cold or baking hot – no in-between. If he opens the balcony door the smell of garbage wafts up which, along with the traffic noise, is overpowering. The toilet will only stop flushing if the handle is jiggled. The air hostesses next door seem to entertain all through the night. Worst of all, Mel doesn't know what direction his life is taking.

As the weeks go by his wife, Edna, with the patience of Job, tries to quieten him down, eventually persuading him to see a psychotherapist, which they can now barely afford. Edna gets a job but comes rushing home every lunchtime to see if Mel's okay and give him his lunch.

Neil Simon's one-liners are cleverly delivered deadpan. With Mel in the depths of despair, Edna asks how his day has been. "Your mother called. We exchanged recipes." Surprisingly Simon instils much humour in Mel and Edna's misfortunes. Trouble is one can't help feeling Mel's recovery is a third act cop-out.

Jeff Goldblum and Mercedes Ruelh are brilliant as the hapless couple, and Terry Johnson's direction doesn't miss a trick.

## PCO Notice 19/10

Transport for London  
Taxi and Private Hire



## Revised Guidance for Taxi Advertising and Private Hire Signage

Transport for London has issued revised guidelines for advertising on licensed London Taxis and signage on licensed London Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs). The TfL/Taxi and Private Hire website will be updated in due course but should you require a copy of the guidelines please send your request to [tp.enquiries@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:tp enquiries@tfl.gov.uk).

The key changes outlined in the guidelines are the removal of the existing advertising approval process and the approval of full rear window advertising for taxis.

The new guidelines seek to help taxi drivers and advertising agencies to clearly understand what they are allowed to advertise on their vehicles without the unnecessary administrative burden of a formal approval process. The guidelines also clarify what signage PH drivers are allowed to display. They include detailed diagrams to illustrate on which parts of the vehicle advertising/signage is permitted.

The revised guidelines seek to implement a common sense, less onerous process when it comes to installing and maintaining advertising on taxis, whilst providing an opportunity for taxi drivers to earn more money from full rear window advertising.

The guidelines clearly state what owners and operators can and can't do and, in particular, the taxi trade are no longer required to seek our approval for every advert. However, we are on hand to provide additional guidance and assistance should drivers or advertising agencies require it.

If advertising or signage fails to comply with the guidelines TfL may request a copy of the advertisement or sign and if it is considered appropriate TfL will request that the advertisement/sign is removed.

John Mason, Director Taxi and Private Hire, 7 July 2010. For previous notices visit [tfl.gov.uk/tp](http://tfl.gov.uk/tp)

# IDENTIFIERS – DIVIDE AND RULE?

By **JIM KELLY**  
Chair of UNITE Cab Trade Committee

At a time when we are faced with touting by PCO licensed drivers, on an unprecedented scale. When satellite office legislation has proved to be a licence to tout. When the PCO has been effectively outsourced and privatised, we are now being offered the opportunity to turn our anger on suburban licensed taxi drivers, to divide our trade, at precisely the time when we need unity.

In the same way that 18 months ago the banking fat cats who wrecked ours and the worlds economies with their greed were being portrayed, quite rightly, as nothing short of criminals, now they are again paying themselves huge bonuses, while we support cut backs of 40% on the NHS, schools, council services and most other sectors of our welfare state. Misdirection-divide and rule at its simplest.

So now within our trade, the mandatory identifier in cabs will turn us in on ourselves. UNITE Cab Section has asked for the statistics showing the size of the problem, the PCO has no figures to show that suburban drivers are illegally plying for hire outside their areas on a large scale. The latest figures produced by the PCO On-Street Compliance Unit show 2 suburban drivers caught in a 5 week period. Yes its an issue, but is it a big enough problem to warrant the identifiers, a "Grass your colleague" phone line and inevitably, conflict, with drivers worrying more about other licensed drivers than they do about the ranks of touts operating across both green and yellow badge sectors?

Will the identifiers make it easier or safer for the travelling public? How many members of the travelling public will be aware of the proposed colour scheme? Will blue be for the North-East? A nice shade of magnolia for Bromley? Pink with yellow dots for the Eastern sector? Unite remains to be convinced.

UNITE does not feel that the identifiers are necessary, nor practical. It will be another cost on our licence, another unnecessary 18 month project for any remaining staff at PCO, who would be better employed stopping licensed PHV touts. There are procedures in place at the moment to deal with persistent flouting of the rules by individual suburban drivers

Surely the solution to the problems of taxi work being lost is for proper levels of enforcement, tougher penalties for both PH drivers and operators, rigorous and regular checkups, at both operating centres and satellite offices.

UNITE warned at the very start of mini cab licensing that the Operators fee level was far too low, especially for PH operators with large fleets. The PCO strategy was to apply a "light touch" to regulation and enforcement. This has now backfired spectacularly.

The only way to fight for our traditional work is for a united taxi trade to fight back against the real enemy at the gates – illegal touts operating the length and breadth of the Metropolitan area with little heed to the PCO or other enforcement agencies.



# RANKS REPORT REST RANKS

After waiting for what seems like an eternity a number of taxi rest ranks have finally been appointed. The idea behind the scheme was to make better use of little used ranks and to provide taxi drivers a safe place to park and use toilet facilities, cafes etc. without the fear of receiving a parking ticket for parking on a yellow line or worse a criminal record the leaving their cab unattended on a taxi rank which would be the case under the London Hackney Carriage Act of 1850.

Before the ranks could get the go-ahead a change of law was required. This was eventually achieved within the Transport for London Act 2008. The first batch to go live are in Westminster and have been facilitated with the cooperation of Martin Low of Westminster Council and John Mason – head of London Taxis and Private Hire.

Location and number of spaces are listed below. Drivers using the ranks should note that usage is free but the maximum parking time aloud on any of the rest ranks is one hour.

Rank /Number of spaces:		
Aldwych	5	Law Courts (Part of)
Arundel Street	2	Marylebone Road (Baker Street Station)
Great Portland Street	1	Matthew Parker Street
Grosvenor Street	3	New Bond Street
Hyde Park Street	6	Praed Street
Lancaster Gate	4	Russell Street (Part of)
		8
		12
		8
		4
		3
		3

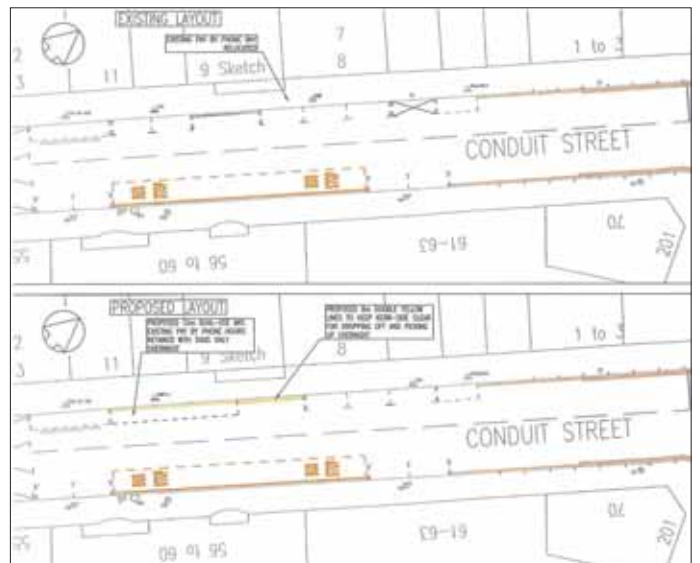


The London Cab Ranks Committee with John Mason and Martin Low.

## SKETCH

Regular readers will know that Sketch in Conduit Street, London, W1 have made an application for a rank outside their building to Westminster Council. As you can hopefully see from the plan below, the current proposal is for a little rearranging of the existing parking bays to create a three space duel use cab rank. That is car parking during the day and a taxi rank operational overnight from 6:30pm to 8:30am. This would be an unmarked rank save for a signage.

Although UNITE are not in the habit of refusing any taxi rank offered to the trade, we do foresee problems with enforcement of the night only/unmarked proposal. As the trade has seen with Westminster's other part-time rank located outside Tiger Tiger in the Haymarket, keeping cars and minicabs from parking on the rank when in operation would seem more than difficult. UNITE Cab Section will continue to push for the better option of a twenty four hour rank with full signage and road markings outside Sketch.






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# ENGLISH FOOTBALL SUCCESS IN SOUTH AFRICA!!

By **PETER BOND**



Below is an account of part of a fantastic trip a group of friends and I took to South Africa during the World Cup.

On our third day we played a pre-arranged 11-a-side game at Camps Bay Football Club in Cape Town, a surreal setting to play football with Table Mountain on view one side and Palm trees and the beach on the other! We beat a South African Eleven 4-1 – surely England's best performance of the World Cup!

Taking in a trip to Robben Island – a must for all visitors, a club night with Fatboy Slim as DJ – a very strange affair, the painful matches against Algeria, Slovenia and Germany as well as Portugal 7 North Korea 0, plus many more highlights, not least the wonderful hospitality of every South African we met, exploding the myth that we would be mugged, stabbed, burgled etc by every poor black local encountered – the media have a lot to answer for on that score, not to mention one of our group who emigrated there a couple of years ago putting 13 of us up in his house for 4 nights – he has a very understanding wife and 2 gorgeous children.

The best and most humbling part of the trip is described below courtesy of 'Jono' who organises all our football trips including World Cups and Euros to Italy, France, Portugal, Germany, Holland etc. A special mention goes to Martin, Dave (both Carlisle) and Rich (Barrow) for raising money, see below, Jimmy (QPR) for supplying one school with a full Rangers kit, plus Nick (Chelsea... shame), Martin (Liverpool), Greg (West Ham), Ed who lives in Cape Town (QPR), Moose, myself (both Arsenal) and Jono (Everton).

If you get the chance you must visit South Africa – you won't regret it!

**ENGLAND FANS GIVING TO THE LOCAL SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNITY**  
In line with FIFA's Mission Statement



to 'Develop the game, touch the world and build a better future' nine independent England fans (all supporting different teams in England) organised a 'Football Coaching Session & World Cup Tournament Day' for local South African children at Samara Game Reserve in the heart of the Great Karoo desert.

- England supporter and FA Registered Coach Jono Vernon-Powell (visiting South Africa over the World Cup) arranged through his travel company's contacts to run the 'Fans Friendship Day' at Samara Game Reserve [www.samara.co.za](http://www.samara.co.za)
- The England fans ran a full day's football coaching course and World Cup Tournament for local Graa-Reinet children on 24th June (between the Slovenia and Germany games).
- Homeless children from the Vuyani Safe Haven ([www.vuyanisafehaven.co.za](http://www.vuyanisafehaven.co.za)) and ten local schools (accompanied by Mayor Jafta) enjoyed one of the World Cup's more remarkable events.
- The travelling England fans set up the event before departing the UK with a charity fund raising football match at Brunton Park, England. They raised enough money to purchase footballs, bibs, cones, prizes, medals, football shirts, T-shirts and other football memorabilia – which were all donated to the Children after the Coaching Day in South Africa.
- With Graa-Reinet ([www.graafreinet-tourism.co.za](http://www.graafreinet-tourism.co.za)) remotely located in the heart of the Great Karoo desert over 60 children had an opportunity to experience the World Cup first hand in their own back yard.
- If the England team failed to raise the average fan's heartbeat – certainly their fans have.

If you would like further information please contact – Jono Vernon-Powell @ Nomadic Thoughts (World Wide Travel) – +44 (0)20 7604 4408.

# NO CHANGE SHALL CONTINUE?

By **MICK GROOM**

The great Peter Tosh once sang "400 years and it's the same philosophy, 400 years and still the people can't see". Wise words I'm sure you'll agree and so relevant here, now in 2010, as the same failed system chugs along the road to ruin. In the late seventies, at the tender age of 13, my older brother took me to an event that changed my whole perception of life completely.

The Rock Against Racism Carnival Staged at Brockwell Park in Brixton, in September 1978, literally changed my life. For a young naive bumpkin growing up in rural Rutland, the images of that day are still clear, the messages even clearer. Yet how far have we actually moved on? Sadly this is the question I still ask myself on a daily basis and the answer is always – not that far really.

Next year 2011, marks the centenary of the Liverpool Transport Strike. A dispute which was the culmination of many actions, not only in Liverpool but also across the whole Kingdom. The impact of mass solidarity led to better pay and conditions for many working class men and women. Trade Unionism was strengthened by the unity of workers from different trades, amalgamations swelled numbers from thousands to tens of thousands, forcing employers to sit up and take notice.

I find it disappointing although not surprising, that nearly a century on, the kind of unity, courage and determination seen back then is clearly lacking in a general sense now, especially as pay and conditions are not much better in a relative sense. Does anyone seriously believe that working people are actually better off these days?

- Are we working less? No
- Do we have more prospects? No
- Are we any less expendable? No

If you believe the propaganda, we are having the time of our lives! A slab of lager, 20 ciggies, being sold to-on the plasma HD 3D telly, on the DAB Digital radio, on the iPhone and online; a bit of the liquid cosh and a dose of brainwashing – life of riley! The comparison to one hundred years ago lies beyond the illusion that the system updates as time passes, and is evident in the policies that are now heading our way. Same shit – different decade.

Of course there have been many advances in working practices, conditions and pay, so it's not all doom and gloom, but as the double dip approaches the resolve of many working people will be tested to the full.

Many believe, myself being one, that working people can and will stand united once again, however, with the amount of debt imposed on us nowadays our numbers may be too few.

I'd like to use the taxi trade as an example here, as that is my profession. During a recent campaign by the Liverpool Cab Section of UNITE, various major towns and cities were visited by our team of activists. We targeted ranks and spoke to many cabbies, the vast majority of whom had issues and grievances similar to our own.

However, we found the difference was that, because they were represented by local

associations, run by those with vested interests, and not a nationally recognised trade union, very little was being achieved.

You see, when local authorities are approached by a trade union they are more likely to sit up and take notice and work with you, rather than just palm you off with a large pile of bullshit.

Here's an example for you; when a customer undertakes the hiring of a black cab, he or she will have certain expectations of service, including knowledge, trust and professionalism, just because of what it is – a black cab. The same example can also be levelled at trade unions.

When unions approach an organisation, such as a local authority, there is an immediate understanding of what to expect. They understand the knowledge and influence that trade unions possess. It is this that gives trade unions the edge over smaller, less familiar trade associations. The proof is in the pudding of course and we discovered that during our campaign. Many of the problems that drivers related to us from around the country, our branch in Liverpool had already addressed in one way or another. All this to the astonishment of those we talked to. This only goes to show that organised trade unionism works.

Maybe it is now time to amalgamate the Licensed Taxi Trade, all representative bodies joined into one strong trade voice, with a national identity and cross trade support numbering hundreds of thousands of workers. This not only adds weight to national issues but gives an opportunity for local differences to be addressed with the same support. It's about empowering the worker, giving him or her confidence, reassurance and knowledge that their rights are not being compromised.

The benefit to the service that cabbies provide would improve if this were to happen, thus earnings and customer satisfaction would increase. Unfortunately the "can't be arsed" attitude that exists today makes our task even harder, apathy rules the ranks and the mistrust that people vent towards MPs and Local Councillors is sometimes aimed towards union officials as well.

I believe that a nationally united trade would and could force through the changes urgently required to lighten the heavy load being carried by the poor cabbie in 2010. Back in 1910 the unions and the workers understood that lots of small associations and representative groups had no real future, but united together they had power in numbers.

That is how change happens, and change needs to happen. Of course the powers that be are always trying to break things up into smaller, more easily managed portions, that works fine for them, a little bit of divide and rule goes a long way.

To conclude, I would like to put the above to the test and challenge drivers, owners and hackney associations to put their own self interests aside for a minute and think about what I have said here.

What have you got to lose?  
©Mick Groom 2010



Dear CTN

Have just returned from the world cup and picked up my copy of CTN & Branch Newsletter.

I just want to confirm my support for the union over the different markings for sector drivers; it would be ridiculous to start turning driver against driver over such a trivial matter when we face so much over biased regulation or

lack thereof by the so called authorities that are meant to represent to us. I really don't care if the public use a yellow or green badge driven cab, at least they have been able to get into a licensed vehicle without the aggravation and harassment of a chaotic free for all system that for far too long the PCO, Police etc. seem to think doesn't exist.

Michael Beckingham, UNITE London Cab Section member. (All London Badge) Via email

## BLACK CAB COLLECTION - NEW WEBSITE, NEW PRICES & NEW PRODUCTS



LTI Vehicles Black Cab Collection of special London Taxi themed gifts has been improved and is available again with better than ever service and prices.

Drivers have always expressed an interest in being able to buy not only nice taxi gifts but some useful items such as multi tools and flasks as well. The range also appeals to tourists and overseas customers, all wanting to buy a little memento of the best taxi in the world.

Now LTI have relaunched the range with new low prices an easier to use website and new products in the near future. The improved service is thanks to LTI's new partner, Arcadia.

To visit the new website click



[www.blackcabgifts.co.uk](http://www.blackcabgifts.co.uk) and check out the lower prices. Online ordering couldn't be simpler and your gifts will be with you in 2-3 days.

LTI will be introducing new items and special offers to the range as the old ones sell out so save the website to your favourites and visit regularly to see what else is new.

For more information please visit [www.lti.co.uk](http://www.lti.co.uk) or send an enquiry to [enquiries@londontaxis.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@londontaxis.co.uk)



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Colin Williams



# Join the campaigning Union for taxi drivers!

**As a member of the UNITE Cab Section you will:**

- **Make the policies on all taxi issues, including**
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  - **You are represented**
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- For membership enquiries only telephone: 020 8800 0151 whose members produce this paper.**
- ## Isn't it time YOU joined?

All you have to do is fill in the form below and send it to:  
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**Please send me an application form to join the Unite The Union**

PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS




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UNITED TRADE STATEMENT

**The Licensed Taxi Drivers Association (LTDA), the UNITE Cab Section and The London Cab Drivers Club (LCDC) are united in their condemnation of the RMT's (Rail, Maritime and Transport Union) support for a restriction on taxi driver's working hours and the compulsory fitting of tachographs in London taxi cabs.**

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