

A SAFER LONDON

UNITE RESPONSE TO TFL PRIVATE HIRE CONSULTATION

Comment by **PETER J ROSE**

In this issue of Cab Trade News we publish in full the Cab Sections response to the recent TfL private hire consultation.

Regular readers and those drivers that work nights will be well aware of the problems that private hire causes the London taxi trade, with Satellite Offices and their Clipboard Johnnies, widely considered as being out of control. Yes there are victories here and there, fruitful operations that can yield multiple arrests of touts, but will this ever really be enough?

Outside venues, unlicensed touts can easily mix with licensed ones, nicking a fare here and there, with the passenger unaware that anything is amiss. Record keeping requirements are at best forgotten and at worst totally disregarded. At some locations you can and I (on behalf of UNITE) have witnessed private hire literally acting like taxis, moving up the imaginary rank as the minicab in front takes a job. No record of the journey taken, no guarantee that the driver is who they say they are, no reasonable guarantee for the passenger that is entering the vehicle, probably with heavily tinted windows, that the service being offered is legal and safe.

UNITE's response to TfL's consultation, takes these and many other issues head-on. If all of its proposals are adopted, we will see a much more regulated and



controllable private hire service for the capital. Something that most taxi drivers' I'm sure would agree is needed.

Having spent many hours watching the activities of the Clipboard Johnnie and their minicab drivers committing many misdemeanours over the last few years, together with the latest published figures showing a 54%

increase in cab related sexual assaults. I invite the taxi trade to support and Transport for London to implement UNITE's proposals without delay. Doing this will result in a safer travelling experience for the public and a more level playing field for our trade and an end to the Satellite Office.

You can read UNITE's full response on page 11 of this paper

and a link to the TfL consultation document can be found at www.cabtradenews.co.uk Also see London-wide on page 5.



LONDON GETS 2.7% TARIFF INCREASE

By MIKE HEDGES



On 2nd February 2011 the Transport for London Board approved an increase of 2.7 per cent in taxi fares from Saturday 2nd April 2011. This followed the long established cost index which is used to calculate the increase in taxi fares for London's taxis.

The cost index takes into account the increase in the cost of running and maintaining a taxi in London and the average national earnings increase. There is no doubt that the London cost index has delivered a steady increase that has meant London drivers have kept pace with earnings in similar industries and that the cost index has served everybody well.

For drivers it gives an annual increase, unlike many areas which have had no increase for a number of years followed by a big increase to make up for the lack of steady increments. This approach of occasional large increases has the effect of alienating the public and leading to discontent and a decrease in the number of passengers using taxis.

The London cost index approach leads to transparency and takes the politics out of the tariff negotiations. In so many areas the tariff increase is seen as a political decision with taxi drivers stuck in the middle. The cost index takes the politics out of it. All sides have always agreed to abide by the percentage increase.

The cost index has been tweaked and reviewed a number of times to take into account the way that costs have changed and the way that national average earnings are calculated. We have looked at using a London earnings index but surprisingly there seems to be a distinct lack of such an index.

Over the years of the cost index there have been a number of changes to the way that the cost of fuel is calculated. Also insurance has become increasingly difficult to calculate as the market is quite dynamic and rapidly changing.

Also with the different models of taxi

(TX4, TXII, TXI and Mercedes) it can be difficult to calculate a realistic model for the cost of buying a vehicle (not every driver buys a new cab).

This year the consultation included the three drivers' organisations, UNITE Cab Section, LTDA and LCDC as in previous years. It also included the radio circuits, who we feel should not have any say in the way we calculate fares.

They can charge their own rate of fare if they desire. Also Travelwatch and the London Chamber of Commerce get consulted although why the Chamber of Commerce gets consulted is beyond me. This leads to the radio circuits and the Chamber of Commerce having a say on the threshold that we are allowed to recover the increase in the cost of fuel.

What has it got to do with them, radio circuits can just not charge the fuel threshold increase if they want to.

Calculating the cost of the vehicle sometimes leads to difficulties as there are a number of different models and buying strategies to take into account.

This tends to happen on an occasional basis, particularly around the time when taxi models reach four or eight years old. So this year the TX4 is 4 years old and the TXII is 8 years old.

This leads to a number of anomalies with last year's cost index as the taxi models at 4 and 8 years old have changed. We objected to the way that the vehicle cost was being calculated and after a lot of discussion some changes were made. I think that in the end we had a good resolution.

LTPH certainly played their part in explaining to the TfL board the reasoning behind the proposed changes so that the time could be used to find a solution.

Overall I think that this once again shows the benefit of being in UNITE as our members are represented in the taxi tariff negotiations and have a say in the process.

Full details of the new tariff can be found on the TfL website.

LTPH Notice 03/11

Transport for London
London Taxi and Private Hire



Important information regarding the introduction of the Quality Act 2010 and its impact on taxi and PHV drivers

The Equality Act 2010 includes some provisions relating specifically to taxis and private hire vehicles (PHVs) and disability.

Based on guidance issued by the Department for Transport (DfT) in September 2010, this Notice provides further information for London's taxi and PHV drivers. More detailed information about the Equality Act and its impact on the taxi and private hire trades can be found on the DfT website: www.dft.gov.uk.

Duties on drivers to assist passengers in wheelchairs

The new Act will place duties on the drivers of designated wheelchair accessible taxis and PHVs to provide physical assistance to passengers in wheelchairs.

The duties will apply to the driver of any wheelchair accessible taxi or PHV which is on TfL's list of 'designated vehicles'. TfL will provide further details in the coming weeks about which vehicles are designated as wheelchair accessible but it will certainly include all taxis.

These requirements will not come into force before April 2011 and the Government will make a further announcement in due course. However, before then any drivers who suffer from a disability or a condition which would make it difficult for them to provide physical assistance can apply for an exemption from the duties to offer assistance.

What are the duties?

The duties being placed on the drivers of designated wheelchair accessible taxis and PHVs are:

- to carry the passenger while in a wheelchair;
- not to make any additional charge for doing so;
- if the passenger chooses to sit in a passenger seat, to carry the wheelchair;
- to take such steps as are necessary to ensure that the passenger is carried in safety and reasonable comfort; and
- to give the passenger such mobility assistance as is reasonably required.

What does mobility assistance mean?

Mobility assistance essentially means helping passengers who use wheelchairs by providing physical assistance.

If the passenger wishes to remain in the wheelchair, the driver must help the passenger to get into and out of the vehicle.

If the passenger wants to transfer to a seat, the driver must help him or her to get out of the wheelchair and into a seat and back into the wheelchair; the driver must also load the wheelchair into the vehicle.

The driver must also offer to load the passenger's luggage into and out of the vehicle.

What if I have a back or other medical condition which makes it impossible for me to help a passenger in a wheelchair get into a cab?

The Act allows for exemptions from the duties on medical grounds or if the driver's physical condition makes it impossible or unreasonably difficult for him or her to comply with the duties outlined above.

If you drive a wheelchair accessible taxi or PHV and you want to apply for an exemption you will need to complete form TPH/209 and provide supporting medical evidence. The form can be obtained on request from London Taxi and Private Hire.

Most drivers with a medical condition severe enough to warrant an exemption are likely to be under a specialist (consultant) medical practitioner. It is therefore expected that evidence from a specialist will be provided with an exemption application.

Your application will be considered by TfL and you will be advised in writing of our decision. The legislation allows you to appeal to the magistrates' court within 28 days if TfL decides not to issue an exemption certificate.

How will passengers know that I am exempt from the duties to assist passengers?

The DfT will be issuing to licensing authorities special Exemption Notices which exempted drivers must display on their vehicles in order that passengers will know that the driver is exempt from the duties. London Taxi and Private Hire will issue the Notices to exempted drivers in advance of the duties coming into force.

Guide Dogs

On 1st October 2010 the duties placed on taxi and PHV drivers and on PHV operators to carry guide dogs and other assistance dogs transferred from the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 to the Equality Act 2010.

In practice, the duties will remain exactly the same as they are now.

Any driver who is currently exempt from the duty to carry an assistance dog on medical grounds will continue to be exempt. All existing Exemption Notices and Certificates issued under the Disability Discrimination Act will remain in force as though they had been made under the Equality Act 2010.

Disability Discrimination

Notwithstanding the new duties that the Equality Act will introduce, it remains the law that drivers cannot discriminate against disabled people. Discrimination includes:

- refusing or deliberately not providing a service to a disabled person because they are disabled;
- offering a service at a lower standard or on different terms to a disabled person because they are disabled;
- failing to make reasonable adjustments for a disabled person.

To many disabled people taxis and PHVs are a vital link in the transport chain and expect taxis to stop for them when hailed; not to be charged for the time it takes to deploy wheelchair ramps; PHV operators to accept their booking; and drivers to offer assistance where it is required.

In maintaining the reputation of London's taxi and private hire trades, all drivers and operators are expected to provide the best possible customer service at all times.

John Mason, Director Taxi and Private Hire, 8 February 2011. For previous TPH Notices visit tfl.gov.uk/tph

LONDON COMPLIANCE REPORT TYRES!! TYRES!! TYRES!! TYRES!! TYRES!!

By **PETER BOND**

Once again the top five reasons for Taxis (and, indeed, PHV's) failing on-street inspections in the capital is headed by – **TYRES!! Followed by, lights – steering – suspension and documentation.**

The LTPH Compliance Team, STC Officers, City of London Police and the Met (all of whom now attend these regular meetings) have once again requested that we highlight all of the above but particularly – **TYRES!!**

Drivers are still claiming 'its not my cab, I only rent it' – doesn't matter, its always the driver who pays the fine, **per tyre**, and gets the points, **per tyre**. Potentially you could pay out far more in fines than your takings for the shift you've just put and be out of a job if you lose your licence – 3 points **per tyre!!** So beware and remember it's down to you – the driver – and not the owner.

As usual we're still not happy with the relative high percentage of Taxis being inspected compared to PHV's but some good news from City Police being their figures have been transformed – for every Taxi being stopped and checked in the City 4 PHV's are now being inspected, with 25% being registered with at least one fault – vehicle or driver.

Drivers are being warned, some verbally some in writing, for either not wearing their badge or failing to sign their licence.

Although in London you don't, technically, have to wear your badge or carry your licence whilst not working, the Police have, quite sensibly, recommended we do to save hassle and confusion, particularly as this is not the case outside London and some drivers have been

charged. Although they get off this charge the Police then charge them for not wearing their seat belt instead, which is illegal whilst not working, or when doing a delivery for that matter – so, up to you, but may be worth at least leaving your licence in the cab just in case.

Some over zealous members of the public have taken to reporting cabbies for what they deem misdemeanours – one a defective window and rattle from the body (cab not driver I presume!) and one for smoking in the cab – both of which are being investigated.

Four Suburban drivers received warning letters for working outside their area during this reporting period, all first time offenders.

Identifiers

LTPH' own statistics, above, continue to prove the case for identifiers is still far from proven and our view remains the same - it's a heavy handed way to solve a relatively small problem; it could cause problems between green and yellow badge drivers, even between yellow badge drivers working in another Suburban area. Divide and rule is an old weapon used by governments and authorities going back hundreds, even thousands, of years and, in this case, is only going to deflect from more important issues affecting our trade. The obvious one being Satellite Offices & Clipboard Johnnies continuing to take a huge chunk of our work – the work lost to drivers working out of their area pales into insignificance compared to this problem.

Unfortunately it seems LTPH are determined to introduce them soon, hopefully our fears on this issue prove unfounded.



News Release

Wednesday 9 February 2011



LONDON TAXIS NOW LISTED ON AUTOTRADER!

Drivers and owners looking for their next used taxi now have another option with The London Taxi Company now listing up to 100 vehicles on the UK's leading car trading website, www.autotrader.co.uk

The Coventry-based manufacturer and retailer made the move, following the changes made to its former independent network in 2010.

The London Taxi Company's UK Sales Director, Rob Laidler, said: "Since we've removed our independent dealers, we've made

moves to ensure that we still provide excellent nationwide access to our vehicles.

"This has included the opening of new dealerships in Edinburgh, Glasgow and here adjacent to the factory, in Coventry. We already had statistics on the high level of enquiries made on Autotrader and felt that the time was right to have additional presence online."

The London Taxi Company currently listed up to 100 vehicles online at autotrader.co.uk, with the full used stock available at the company's new UK website, london-taxis.co.uk

DON'T BREAK BRITAIN CUTS KILL COMMUNITIES



A highly successful meeting was held by London & Eastern Unite at Conway Hall on 5th February to organise for the "March for the Alternative" demonstration, called for by the TUC in London on Saturday 26th March. The meeting attracted over 400 Unite activists covering all parts of both public and private sectors. There were 6 representatives present from the London cab trade, including the Chair of the meeting, Jim Kelly.

A lively morning session included a keynote speech from Len McCluskey, General Secretary of Unite. Len highlighted the devastating impact of the "ideologically" driven Con-Dem cuts on working class communities the length and breathe of the UK. He also spoke of Unite's support for the student demonstrators fighting the attacks on education provision. He clearly set out the alternative economic strategy developed by Unite. An end to tax fiddles a "Robin Hood" tax on speculative bank dealings, and a halt to attacks on our welfare state, especially the NHS.

The next speakers were Mary Robinson, a representative of the student movement and Joe Beardmore from the new protest group UK-UNCUT. Both gave examples of how young people in Britain are starting to organise and are going back to forms of direct action to protest peacefully. This section of the meeting was especially

interesting and was received enthusiastically by all present.

The meeting then broke up into workshops to discuss an alternative economic strategy and how best to organise in workplaces and communities, with the main focus being the 26th March.

The Unite Cab Section is a component of the much larger Unite organisation with 1.4 million members nationally and 260,000 in the London & Eastern region. Unite has put all its weight behind the 26th March demonstration, as the start of the process of mobilising millions against a government which has no mandate from the British people to lead us into a double dip recession.

Cab drivers will suffer as much as other workers if this government is allowed to destroy jobs and the welfare state. The recession of the early 1990's had a devastating impact on the taxi trade nationally. In the London trade at least 2 taxi drivers committed suicide because they could not pay their bills. Taxi drivers lost their homes and families broke up. Cab possessions rocketed, while daily cash takings collapsed by 30% or more.

Cab drivers need to join the demonstration on the 26th and join with millions of other working men and women and young people in demanding that this government is not allowed to break Britain.

CTN

Comment

OUTLOOK GRIM!

By **FRANK HULL**

At this moment in time we are just two weeks into February and already this trade is feeling the effects of the rise in VAT and the inevitable impact it has had on the price of fuel and oil at petrol stations.

The trade all round is experiencing a fall in passenger numbers. All that we can foresee for the immediate future is a further drop in trade.

Already we seem to be experiencing an echo of the 1980's with reports from many areas around the country of unlicensed vehicles encroaching local areas and working illegally as taxis.

The taxi-marshalling scheme that has been adopted successfully across the country is under threat because of the financial cuts many local councils face.

In Norwich one idea that is being considered is to charge late-night taxi users a fee for using a taxi rank. The idea is for those waiting for a taxi to pay a set fee for a ticket from a machine. This they must produce before being allowed to enter a taxi. It might seem like a good idea to those who have little or no knowledge of the taxi trade. However, late working taxi drivers will be able to tell of the problems that will certainly arise from the use of such a system.

We feel that the cost of marshalling should be financed through the licensing fees of those licensed premises that contribute to the alcoholic state of their customers that are passed on to us for transport home. No doubt the question will be raised of cheap alcohol sold at supermarkets. Ok let the supermarkets also contribute to the scheme.

The whole of this trade will be waiting the outcome of the Select Committee hearing into cross border hiring. The phrase cross border hiring refers to those out of area taxis that drop off in another licensing area then hang about in that area waiting to be hired. We don't know what conclusion will be reached on this particular problem.

However we are sure they will not reach a solvable conclusion on another problem that is being exploited across the country. That is the fact that a licensed taxi from one licensing area can work as a mini-cab in another area. This problem is on the increase and in this financial climate will definitely worsen.

As the future looks grim perhaps the only protection we can rely on will be trade unity. In the national press this month we saw unity in action in Southend-on-Sea where the taxi trade there united to help one of their own. This to us is proof that a spirit of unity does exist within this trade.

Why not for the future protection of this trade Unite with us by filling in the application form on page 11.

Frank Hull is a UNITE Cab Trade Committee Member.

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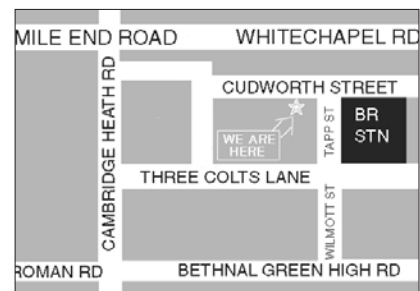
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London-WIDE

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



Minicabs ranking up at Funkymojoe's in South Woodford.

Last spring I wrote an article about the plight of London's suburban taxi drivers and the activities of one suburban late night venue in particular. Funkymojoe's in South Woodford. At the time a taxi rank application had just been refused, the reason given was lack of appropriate space.

Since then it has been a constant source of annoyance, particularly as I pass this venue on my way home in Woodford Green every Friday and Saturday night. Again at the time I pointed out that although a taxi rank had been refused there seemed to be no objection to local minicabs, Redbridge Cars in this case using the same road space, often two deep for what any reasonably minded person would describe as a minicab rank. Just as we have seen time and again in central London.

At the back end of last year the Deputy Director of London Taxi and Private Hire (LTPH) formally the Public Carriage Office agreed to a site visit with me to the area. We started in George Lane South Woodford, just around the corner from Funkymojoe. George Lane plays host to a couple of other bars, the main one being the Lizard Lounge.

There, minicabs park undisturbed on the zigzags of the adjacent pedestrian crossing. As we passed the Lizard Lounge we were both touted by private hire drivers standing by their vehicles. We had been out of our own vehicles for only a couple minutes.

We then made our way to Funkymojoe, as we approached the club the Clipboard Johnnie (in this case Jane), asked if we needed a cab even though it would have been obvious to her that we were not customers of Funkymojoe's.

We then observed her moving the minicabs up the line exactly as a taxi marshal would do, no clipboard, no evidence that a booking had been made, no name board in the minicabs window to indicate that they had a booked passenger. This was without doubt one of the most flagrant abuses of the Satellite Office system that I had seen.

But more than that, the road space outside and beyond Funkymojoe's is regularly coned off, preventing anyone else from getting anywhere near the venue and this is a double yellow lined stretch of road, at a junction, an urban clearway, adjacent to two pedestrian crossings, the

reasons given for a taxi rank being refused in the first place.

Having watched this for a while, we our way back to our vehicles, we were again touted, this time by an illegal minicab. No private hire licence visible on the drivers Y registered silver BMW.

Now I know what you are asking yourselves, "why were there no arrests made on the night"? To be fair to the Deputy Director, it wasn't a Safer Transport Command (STC) operation but rather, a short notice, small scale, fact finding one and at this point, I would like to thank the Deputy Director for agreeing to it.

As a result the area was put on STC's high priority list and UNITE is currently awaiting figures relating to operations carried out as a result of our intelligence.

That being said, I can't help taking my mind back to when the now defunct 'directional rank' first started in the West End. Soon after it started it was paid a visit by an STC or TOCU as it was then, officer who told the marshals that the rank had to operate on a first cab, first job basis. The result of this was that the directional rank had to be suspended for the night.

In the week that followed the misunderstanding was cleared up and the rank went on to be quite successful, until funding was eventually cut and the rank ceased operation, much to the disappointment of the drivers that regularly used it.

So my point is this. If the authorities can close a taxi operation, they think is breaking the rules. Why given such clear evidence, given by myself and the Deputy Director of LTPH, that a Satellite Office is breaking most if not all the rules currently governing them, it is still allowed to operate with such impunity, why wasn't the minicab rank at Funkymojoe's been closed down at the first opportunity? Why are local taxi drivers waiting for something to be done? They are understandably frustrated that this source of work is being deigned them.

On a more positive note, I have been asked to say thank you to local Kingston Police from our drivers in southwest London. They tell me that they have been doing a great job in keeping the local minicab tout problems down to a minimum.

Be seeing you.



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GLASGOW UPDATE

By **KENNY GILLESPIE**
Chair Glasgow Cab Section

The Glasgow Cab Section attained full branch status over 18 months ago. Since this time our membership has continued to grow on a monthly basis, contained within our membership list are both owners and drivers who along with the union have worked hard to improve the taxi trade in Glasgow.

We hold our branch meeting's the second Monday of every month at John Smith House in Glasgow. We are also holding an open day on 22nd March at John Smith House.

In line with other Cab Section's throughout the country, the issue of illegal touting is very alive and operating on the streets of Glasgow. The Cab Section have raised this issue on numerous occasions with Glasgow City Council, unlike other parts of the country the enforcement team in Glasgow is civilian and run by the council, they have very limited powers and over the past few years statistics have shown that they have caught a very, very small amount of people "pirating".

At our behest we have been involved joint exercises with Strathclyde Police, carrying officers in the in the back of taxis showing them were the "hotspots", as a result of this a few serial offenders have had their collars felt.

Glasgow has a massive problem with out of town cars that come from the various satellite areas and "tout" for business on a

nightly basis; it is our intention to put a stop to this. We are governed by the Civic Government Act, were it clearly states the "cars not licensed in that area must return to their area of licence", again, we have highlighted this to the relevant authorities, we want to promote a zero tolerance to "illegal touting". We fully understand that this will a long process, however rest assured we will continue the fight for as long as it takes.

Throughout Scotland, the Cab Section is now growing stronger and more influential in "Taxi Issues" in their respective areas. Dundee Cab Section is currently in the process of going to the Traffic Commissioner as a result of refusing an unacceptable proposal from Dundee City Council in relation to their tariff.

There is the new Cab Section branch in Aberdeen who literally have hit the ground running and are asking for a cap on the private hire in that region. We also have Cab Section's in both Edinburgh and Renfrewshire who have long established relationships with their local authorities and have helped make the trade a whole lot better in their areas.

I look forward to updating the Cab Trade News about the "Taxi Trade" in Glasgow on a regular basis, if you have any questions about the Glasgow Cab Section you could e-mail me at kenny.gillespie@unitetheunion.org or branch secretary paul.todd@unitetheunion.org

Cambridge taxi drivers urge police crackdown on 'runners'



Source: cambridge-news.co.uk
Passengers doing 'runners' after taking a taxi ride have fuelled a fightback by Cambridge's licensed drivers.

Hundreds of people have hired a taxi and then made off without paying after being driven to their destination, say taxi union leaders. They are calling for a police crackdown on the problem after a News investigation uncovered a general increase in such offences.

In 2008, 41 'ride and run' incidents were recorded by Cambridgeshire police, rising to 70 the following year and 60 last year, a Freedom of Information request by the News has revealed. But taxi drivers say the true figure will be much higher, as many incidents are not reported.

Glenn Hall, chairman of Cambridge City Licensed Taxis, said: "We've always reckoned that about 40 per cent of these incidents are not reported to the police but they can make a big dent in our livelihoods."

"Until recently the police were saying it was a civil matter but it is in fact theft. It would be the same if you had a meal at a restaurant

and didn't have the means to pay. We would like the police to take this theft issue more seriously."

He added: "It was this that stopped me from doing nights. I got tired of losing money from runners, as we call them in the trade. Often these things can lead to a driver being attacked."

A police spokeswoman said: "We take all reports of ride-and-run seriously and will always attend incidents."

"Last month two people were charged in connection with ride-and-run incidents in the city and officers attended another incident where two women were made to pay for their fare after hiding from their driver."

"We actively encourage drivers to report these incidents and ensure they get as much information as possible from the customers to ensure we can trace suspects."

She added: "To reduce the risk of such incidents we would advise taxi drivers to ensure the address they are being asked to drive to is genuine, ask to see money up front and get a phone number from the person using the taxi."

DISQUALIFIED DRIVER SENTENCED TO FOUR MONTHS FOR TAXI TOUTING

A taxi tout has been jailed for four months and disqualified from driving for 12 months thanks to the Metropolitan Police Service Cab Enforcement Unit, part of the Transport for London (TfL) funded Safer Transport Command Unit (STC).

Abdul Hassan, of Heather Dale, Birmingham, was charged with touting for hire, driving with no insurance and driving whilst disqualified. He was sentenced to a total of 18 weeks imprisonment on Monday 17 January at Ealing Magistrates Court after pleading guilty.

Hassan, 30, was arrested in the early hours on Sunday 16th January after he approached a plain clothed police officer, who was carrying out a tout operation and asked if they wanted a cab, which is illegal.

Hasan was arrested on suspicion of touting for hire and taken into custody, where further checks revealed he was not licensed by TfL, which regulates London's black cabs and licensed private hire vehicles, and he didn't hold a driving licence, valid insurance and had already been disqualified from driving until September 2012. He was further arrested

and charged on Sunday 16th January and appeared at Ealing Magistrates Court the following morning.

Chief Superintendent Joe Royle Safer Transport Command said: "Hassan not only undermined the legitimate cab trade, but put Londoners in danger by not having insurance and driving whilst disqualified. The joint STC/TfL Cab Enforcement Unit is a dedicated unit that carries out anti-tout initiatives to tackle touts and improve the safety of passengers who use taxis and private hire vehicles."

Steve Burton, Director of Community Enforcement, Safety and Policing at TfL, said: "We are very happy with Mr. Hassan's sentence and this case demonstrates the good work done by the Cab Enforcement Unit and TfL Enforcement Officers, who work together to reduce illegal touting in the capital."

"We urge anyone who thinks about picking up a minicab off street not to take the risk. Only black cabs can be stopped and picked up off the street and minicabs, even those licensed by TfL, must always be booked through a licensed minicab operator."

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Mark's Mélange 84

MARK EDWARD TAYLOR

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Call me Ishmael. So begins the classic American novel, *Moby Dick*, by Herman Melville. Melville resided briefly in London. There's a blue plaque in Craven Street, WC2, just behind The Playhouse Theatre. The first sentence of *Moby Dick* opens with one of the stories central characters making a statement of his name.



The rest of the novel looms ahead with those for the staying power. ... Some years ago – never mind how long precisely – every person, street and thing gets a name. When it comes to street names, which is what should be of interest to London Taxi Drivers and how are they arrived at? There is an element of history, local councils naming new roads, property developers and street names that have just stuck through the years.

Kay Way, Greenwich and **Keep Lane**, Southgate are a good south/north pairing. **Luke Street**, EC2 going south to **Love Lane** in the same post code. This is where you went to get a prostitute in Shakespeare's day. **Martin Lane**, where one went to get a Martin, no doubt. Now a defunct thoroughfare by London Bridge and onto the wonderfully camp, **Mincing Lane**. ... what went on there? **Nelson Street** and one of the many **Nags Head's**. Nag is a verb, meaning to find fault or scold persistently. This being the dictionary definition. It would also appear to be a small riding horse. **Olaf Street** in Notting Dale named after the Aston Villa defender, Olaf Mellberg, who is a Viking and Vikings use oars that could have been made in **Orsman Road** N1, adjacent to the canal.

SYDNEY GREENSTREET... COLINDALE

Just over halfway through the street names and verbs of the melange A to Z. Remember many streets are named after geographical locations. ... Please refer back to Melange 66, Cosmo City when we journeyed from America Square to Zealand Road. ... Back to the metropolitan madness or creative prose. ...

Philip Street as this article may **Peter** out. **Quilp Street** in Dickens Southwark, and there maybe a verb, to **Queen**, after all, is that not what Her Majesty does? **Rufus Street** leading into bohemian Hoxton Square and the verb, to **Roger**. ... ah! Umh! **Stephen Street** W1, which can leave drivers **Seething** when blocked. **Trevor Square**. There can never be enough Trevors in the world. Although there are plenty of **Taylors**, but that could be stretching things verbally.

Usher Road in Bow gives two for the price of one. And, it is also a famous American Rapper. **Victoria Street** and Vere off to **William Street** and **Wades Place** named after the great Blues/Soul classic, Wade in the Water. Forget X, too difficult. There's probably no need for the letter X in the English alphabet. It can always be replaced by OCHS or EKS. **Yunus Khan Close** E17, no doubt a relative of Spurs Frenchman Younes Kaboul, and finally the one to **Yield** to all; **Zoffany Street** N19 as this column **Zoar Streets** into oblivion. ... @#=-G,<£\$%...! Addled?

ALBERT HALL ... ARNOLD CIRCUS

Now we all have a name. Some of us have streets that share our names. It must be easy to give a name to a street after one of your friends or family. Some streets are named after geographical locations, others after characteristics of the domain. In true London A-Z tradition, the Melange Column will run through an alphabet of street names that are names. This should be a pretty easy thing to do, but to make the task somewhat more difficult ... lets see if it is possible to find an A-Z of streets named after verbs. I.E. doing words.

ALBERT HALL ... ARNOLD CIRCUS

Ada Street E8, adjacent to fashionable Broadway Market. Everyone must know an old girl called Ada. Let's **Addle** along to **Beryl Road** W8 which is confusing as **Bow Road** does not help us get to **Charlotte Street**. There's no need to Change neighbourhood as we direct to **Dean Street Droop Street** W10 is one of London's great street names. Was there a Councillor Droop in Kensal Green?

Eric Street, Mile End, **Exchange Square**, Bishopsgate, **Francis Street** SW1, **Foster Lane** in The City. **Grace's Alley** by Wilton's Music Hall and on **Gander Green Lane**. Gisa gander, gisa look, quite where that comes from only the good folk of Sutton will know. ...

Harriet Street. Knightsbridge... a female relation of brothers, Harold Hill & Harold Wood which is a fairly **Hollow** connection. **Ivor Place**, NW1... poor old Ivor. Lots of silly jokes and the men with names like Ivor Biggun and Ivor Broomhead. Forget them and advance to **Ironmonger Lane** or **Row** (to monger about with iron)... and **Jockey's Fields** forth to **James Street**, St James's. James is a good name. There are many variants. It is similar to Timothy ... Jim ... Tim ... Jimmy... Timmy, then it goes wonky... James/Tames or Timothy/Jimothy ...@#=-G,<£\$%...! Addled?

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Street Legal

By VICTORIA PHILLIPS

PAY BARGAINING UNDER THREAT!

The Institute of Directors, the union for bosses, is calling on the government to end collective pay bargaining for public sector workers. This will enable the private sector to get its claws further into the public sector, as cheaply as possible.

Bosses unions don't need to negotiate pay rises for their members. What grotesquely large rise or bonus a company director gets is stitched up in the boardroom. But collective bargaining between trade unions and managers on behalf of NHS, education and other public sector employees is vital to protecting the pay and conditions of low paid workers.

The IoD's proposals would embed inequality into public sector pay. Which would suit private sector firms very well as they put their cheap and not cheerful tenders together to run the key NHS and education services being dismantled by the government.

It's the latest attack on trade union and employment rights to come from the government and its business lobby friends in recent weeks. The proposals in a consultation launched by Vince Cable on reforming employment tribunal processes will penalise the most vulnerable workers and deny them access to justice.

The government wants claimants to an employment tribunal (ET) to have to pay a fee before they can proceed. The IoD suggests it should be £500. These recommendations are based on the largely anecdotal claims that a high proportion of tribunal claims are unmeritorious and should not have been brought in the first place.

I speak to Employment Judges all the time and they say that a lot of their time is spent dealing with claims for things like holiday pay and unpaid wages where the employer has no realistic defence. There are a lot of employers however, particularly in the construction industry, who simply won't pay up until they've received a claim form. A fee may well stop workers bringing claims, because they don't have the money or cannot risk losing it, but it doesn't mean they have not been badly treated.

The government and business organisations are obsessed with the legal costs of defending claims by employees. They claim that small businesses in particular are fearful of hiring people in case they take them to an ET. There is no need for employers to run up thousands of pounds in costs in ET cases. If they are so convinced that a claim is without merit then they can seek to have it struck out before costs start to mount.

And if employers really want to be able to control costs then they should deal with trade unions in order to try to sort out employment disputes before they are ever lodged with a tribunal. But by proposing an end to collective bargaining, the IoD is suggesting the opposite. The government should stop listening to anecdotal scaremongering from employers and see employment tribunals not as a "business burden" but as a reasonably informal mechanism for workers to have their claims determined.

People don't rush to bring claims against employers. It's a stressful process. If they are treated with respect and dignity most people will not bring claims.

Ellie Reeves

The CTN Editorial Board is sorry that Ellie Reeves will no longer be able to write Street Legal. We take this opportunity to thank her for her splendid copy and send her our best wishes. We welcome Vicky Phillips – it is good to have an old friend back.



THEATRE

By TRUDI-JOY LEVY

GREENLAND at the Lyttelton Theatre

In 2010 Sir Nicholas Hytner commissioned four writers, Moira Buffini, Matt Charman, Ben Power and Jack Thorne, to collaborate on a play about the topical, but complex, subject of global warming, finding different ways into the subject through research. No doubt any one of them would have been capable of producing a coherent play, but this collaboration has instead produced an episodic mishmash. Granted, it is a highly scientific subject to dramatise, even under the direction of talented Bijan Sheibani and employing the multi-media facilities of the National Theatre. However well-intentioned, I'm not sure that bombarding the audience with facts and statistics and lecturing them for two hours without a break will do anything to raise their global consciousness, or change their behaviour. And when will writers learn that the constant repetition of the same four-letter profanity robs it of any shock value?

CLYBOURNE PARK at the Wyndham's Theatre

Loosely based on Lorraine Hansberry's controversial play "A Raisin in the Sun" produced in New York in 1959, Bruce Norris's play also opens in 1959. Bev and Russ are planning to sell their home in the white middle-class Chicago neighbourhood of Clybourne Park. The price has been lowered as their son committed suicide upstairs, on his return from the Korean War. It transpires that the prospective purchasers are black and the

neighbours are concerned that their own property values will fall.

The sale goes ahead and the second act finds us in the same house, but 50 years later. In the intervening years Clybourne Park has become a newly gentrified all-black neighbourhood. Now a white couple are planning to buy and demolish the house in order to build a new one on the plot. They meet with a black couple representing the community in order to overcome planning obstacles. The local black community are concerned that the area will lose its character and the discussion soon degenerates into racial issues and prejudices every bit as shocking as 50 years earlier.

The same cast, including Lorna Brown, Stephen Campbell Moore, Sophie Thompson and Stuart McQuarrie, double up as different characters in both acts, with role reversal and, without exception, give superb performances. This is one of the best plays, albeit uncomfortable, that I've seen in a long while.

SHOES at the Peacock Theatre

This is a delightful musical celebration of our obsession with footwear throughout history. Composed by Richard Thomas (co-creator of Jerry Springer – The Opera), with equally witty tongue-in-cheek lyrics from Alethea Wiles such as "Time wounds all heels", and exuberant choreography from Stephen Mear. Executed by 12 extremely talented dancers and 4 singers, I recommend you hot-foot it to the Peacock Theatre for the perfect Girls' Night Out.

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PRIVATE HIRE CONSULTATION

Unite welcome the opportunity to engage in the London Private Hire consultation. Since Private Hire in London have been licensed many changes have taken place in relation to drivers, vehicles and operators.

For Unite the major problems that need to be addressed are primarily those which have been created by 'satellite offices'. The long lines of private hire vehicles, often illegally parked, outside of clubs, pubs and bars together with the illegal touting by 'clipboard Johnnies' outside of these premises and the lack of record keeping has contributed to a system which has become impossible to enforce.

This is despite the best endeavours of a very dedicated enforcement team. The situation has clearly been allowed to get out of control. Unite hopes that this consultation will be able to rectify the problems of enforcement that have been produced by the current system. We welcome the suspension of the issuing of private hire operator licenses in 3rd party venues. Below we set out our response to the proposals listed in the consultation.

4.3 Driver Proposals Driver Proposal 1

We support the proposal to introduce a minimum three year UK residency in addition to the requirement to a Certificate of Good Conduct.

Driver Proposal 2

We support the introduction of a DSA enhanced taxi and private hire driving assessment for all new private hire drivers.

All new drivers should undertake the DSA taxi and private hire driving assessment (as outlined in appendix 1) before their private hire drivers' license is issued.

Driver Proposal 3

We believe that the Vocationally Related Qualification (VRQ) should be introduced before licensing for private hire drivers. This would ensure a consistent standard for new entrants of drivers into the private hire trade. The VRQ course is relatively short and would professionalise private hire drivers and may diminish the high turnover in the private hire trade and enhance the passenger experience.

NVQ's should be encouraged to the private hire trade but should be done on a voluntary basis. Education is always better delivered when the recipient is learning willingly. We believe that the introduction of the VRQ is more important than the NVQ. The VRQ requirement for licensing along the introduction of the DSA driving assessment will ensure that every passenger that travels in a private hire vehicle can expect the same standard of driver.

Driver Proposal 4

A second badge should be issued to the driver showing a photograph of the licensed driver with the licence number of the driver and the licence expiry date. This is the only information that should be displayed on the badge.

The additional badge should be displayed on the dashboard in addition to the badge worn by the driver. This should be on display at all times whilst the driver is working in the vehicle.

We are opposed to the introduction of redesign of the paper licence as we feel that this would be cumbersome and unnecessary compared with just having a second identifying badge.

Driver Proposal 5

Whilst we support the intention of this proposal we have a number of concerns regarding the actual interpretation and use of this proposal. One of our concerns is the unintended consequence of this proposal. TfL

rightly campaign to encourage taxi drivers to safely get vulnerable passengers home, especially late at night from social venues. We believe this will be undermined as drivers will be reluctant to put themselves in such compromising positions and will choose to avoid taking these fares.

We have a number of questions that we would like reassurances on before we can fully engage in this proposal. It is important that this is something that should be properly assessed before rushing into its implication.

1. What is the test for "balance of probabilities"? Is it a decision to be made based on a genuine belief following reasonable investigation? If so, who carries out the investigation and who makes the ultimate decision to revoke?
2. How is this intended to be enforced and by whom?
3. How long will the license be revoked for? Can TfL define "precautionary basis"?
4. Will there be a right of appeal and if so, how will this operate and will the licensee be able to operate during the appeal period?
5. Could the licensee be offered the opportunity to have a license with conditions - say only working within certain hours of the day or only taking fares where there are more than one passenger, or account work/delivery of parcels, couriering type services.
6. What happens if the allegation is not pursued by the police or CPS, where the criminal burden of proof is "beyond reasonable doubt"? Will the license be reinstated?

We would like answers to these questions before we can fully respond to this proposal.

5.3 Vehicle Proposals Vehicle Proposal 1

We feel that the original system of having a single yellow licence disc on the front and rear windscreen worked well when first introduced. The proliferation of dark tinted windows in private hire vehicles obscures the licence discs from the public. This then leads to confusion between whether a vehicle is a licensed or unlicensed vehicle as the disc is obscured. The added benefit of the yellow disc is that it is clearly visible at night and it is very easy to fit to the front and rear of any vehicle. The introduction of the additional red route sticker was needed to compensate the problem of the yellow licence disc being obscured by the tinted window. If tinted windows were removed then the licence discs would be clearly visible to any red route operator or enforcement teams making the red route stickers redundant.

We believe that private hire vehicle should be restricted to the same window tint as exists for taxis in London. This would allow the yellow licence discs to be clearly seen at all times. Private Hire vehicles should have the same restriction on tinted windows as exists for Taxis in London, i.e. all windows must allow a least 75% of light to be transmitted (70% on the rear window if an advert is fitted).

We believe that tinted windows in private hire vehicles should be as described above at all times as this makes it safer for vulnerable and female passengers, particularly late at night. Not having tinted windows allows any misdemeanours taking place inside the vehicle to be clearly seen. We intend to provide supportive evidence of this view from women's groups at a later date.

We think that the current work being done by TfL to highlight the differences between taxis, licensed private hire and unlicensed vehicles is currently very effective. Continuing education of the public is the best way to overcome this confusion rather than the introduction of further signage which we believe will confuse the public even further.

We believe that the regulations on tinted windows as described above should be extended to Limousines. At the moment there are Limousines driving about that are hired as strip clubs and brothels. Much of the activity that takes place is illegal. We believe that an organisation like TfL which has very progressive policies towards women should not condone these activities as the women involved are put in a very vulnerable position. The only way that these activities can take place is by the vehicle having tinted windows.

We are also opposed to any form of roof signage on private hire vehicles as this leads to confusion for the public.

We also feel that the use of fully partitioned vehicles that resemble the inside of a taxi are confusing to the public and should be excluded from use as a private hire vehicle.

Given that there are only two types of taxis currently produced for the London market we think it is easier to educate the public into the differences between taxis and private hire and unlicensed vehicles in London compared to towns and cities where any type of vehicle is licensed as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle. In these places all types of signage are used, which we don't believe is necessary in London.

Vehicle Proposal 2

Private hire vehicles should not be colour coded with a single colour such as silver, as this will add even more to the confusion by the public. It would allow unlicensed vehicles to adopt the licensing colour and the colour would become the distinguishing feature of the vehicle rather than the vehicle licence.

It is already a concern expressed in the consultation document that PHV's waiting for booked journeys may be regarded as a rank (we do think it is a rank) by customers and that this an opportunity for unlicensed drivers to tout and may expose passengers to the risk of assault. Having a standard colour for PHV's is likely to increase this risk as a passenger will instinctively use a vehicle of the correct colour rather than checking the licence of the vehicle. Colour coding is another form of signage which is likely to distract the public from correctly identifying the licence status of the vehicle.

We do not believe that any colour coding should be used for taxis or private hire vehicles as there is a clear distinction between taxis and private hire with the 'for hire light' and taximeter on display in hackney carriages.

Where the same or similar vehicle is currently licensed, taxis should have compulsory clear taxi signage as is currently used by some licensed hackney carriage Mercedes Vito vehicles.

We are opposed to private hire vehicles being left-hand drive.

6.3 Operator Proposals

Regarding licensed operators there has clearly become a problem late at night and regarding providing private hire to corporate events. We welcome the suspension of the issuing of licenses in 3rd party venues but the number that has currently been issued has made it impossible to enforce.

The long line of vehicles outside many of these premises means that along with the private hire marshals that are often employed in tandem passengers get into these private hire vehicles without having been pre-booked and the correct records being taken. This is clearly touting by the driver with clear safety implications for the passenger.

We believe that the removal of some of the record keeping requirements at these operating centres is also responsible for the proliferation of illegal activity. We think addressing the late night situation of illegal touting should be the main aim of this consultation.

Operator Proposal 1

We do not believe that Operating Centres, commonly known as Satellite offices, should be licensed in shared premises. The problems this causes for enforcement agencies is beyond the control of current resources.

Operator Proposal 2

We support the proposal that planning consent should be checked before granting a licence for an operating centre.

Operator Proposal 2

We support this proposal that it is made a condition of the operators licence that operators make a commitment to comply with local parking regulations.

Operator Proposal 4

We support this proposal that all bookings should be taken inside the premises in a secure identified booking area and all details of bookings should be recorded immediately. Bookings should include the time of the booking, the name of the passenger, the licensed driver and vehicle details and the destination. The identity of the member of the operating staff taking the booking should also be recorded.

Operator Proposal 5

We agree that all private hire operators should have arrangements in place to transport disabled passengers. The only exemptions should be those allowed under the Equality Act.

Operator Proposal 6

We support this proposal of only allowing Small Operators being allowed to licence residential premises as an operating centre.

The only exemption to this which we would support would be to the Association of Professional Tourist Guides (APTG) and the Drivers Guides Association (DGA). These are a specialist niche group of individuals who have trained over a number of years to become Blue Badge Tourist Guides in the UK. We believe that the current arrangements were they can have one operators licence in the name of the APTG for 50 Blue Badge guides licensed as operators at their place of residence, or a Small Operators licence for 2 individuals both having an operating centre works well now at the moment. We can see no benefit in changing this system as it works well and we can see no safety implications for the travelling public.

Operator Proposal 7

We agree with this proposal. All operators should include the operating address on all literature that they produce and in all advertisements that they use.

Operator Proposal 8

We agree that CRB checks should be introduced for all named applicants on an Operators licence.

We also feel that all operating staff in the Operating centre who come into contact with the public should have a standard CRB disclosure.

We also feel that all operating staff in the Operating centre that come into contact with the public should have an enhanced CRB disclosure, particularly 'Clipboard Johnnies', due to their pivotal and influential position in allocating which passenger goes into which vehicle. 'Clipboard Johnnies' are low paid employees and are often open to corruption from unscrupulous drivers and sexual predators.

Operator Proposal 9

TfL should not licence any operating centres in 3rd party venues as the problems that this causes for enforcement is beyond the control of the resources available.

TfL assumes responsibility from Olympic Delivery Authority for delivery of key 2012 Games transport programmes

Travel Demand Management, Olympic and Paralympic Route Networks and Road Freight programmes in London transferred, as preparations for 2012 Games move from planning to operational delivery phase.

All partners continue to work together to deliver spectator and Games Family transport, and to keep London moving during 2012.

The Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) and Transport for London (TfL) confirmed that responsibility for the 2012 Games Travel Demand Management (TDM), Olympic and Paralympic Route networks and Road Freight Management (RFM) programmes in London have now transferred to TfL.

With less than 18 months to go until the 2012 Games Olympic Opening Ceremony, the focus of all 2012 Games partners is now moving from the planning phase to one of implementation and operational delivery.

As the authority leading on transport operations in the Capital during the Games, TfL is already responsible for the delivery and management of a number of key programmes, including the Transport Co-ordination Centre, which will ensure co-ordination and communication between all transport operators, authorities and 2012 Games partners during Games-time.

The transfer of these programmes to TfL will further enhance the integration and operational management of all Games transport, ensuring all athletes, officials and spectators can get to their events on time, and we can keep London and the UK moving.

Boris Johnson, the Mayor of London, said: "The London 2012 Games are a unique opportunity for Londoners and as Mayor I am determined to ensure the Capital reaps the utmost possible benefits from them.

"I am conscious that not only is this an unparalleled opportunity, but also that we have a responsibility to ensure London functions as smoothly and efficiently as possible during the Games for the great people who live, work and play here."

London's Transport Commissioner, Peter Hendy said: "All London 2012 transport improvements are on track and Londoners are already benefiting from this early Games legacy.

"While it will be business as usual during the Games, we're confident we'll get all athletes, officials and spectators to their events on time and we'll keep London moving as well.

"Hugh Sumner and his transport team at the Olympic Delivery Authority have done an excellent job in the planning and design of these programmes.

"Now, as we turn our focus to operational delivery, it makes sense for TfL to take on responsibility for the Olympic and Paralympic Route Networks, Travel Demand Management and London Road Freight programmes and ensure there's an integrated approach to the planning and management of all London 2012 transport."

ODA Chief Executive, Dennis Hone, said: "Staging the Olympic and

Paralympic Games is a huge logistical challenge and transport is vital to making it work.

"London 2012 has helped drive billions of pounds of investment into upgrading public transport, benefiting the Capital for generations to come.

"It will be business as unusual during the summer of 2012 and we have spent the last five years delivering the upgrades and planning the programmes needed to keep London moving.

"As we progress to the operational stage, we are on track and it is the right time to hand over the baton to TfL who will be responsible for the co-ordination and delivery of transport during the Games."

TfL will continue to build on the work undertaken by the ODA, who have led the planning, design and designation of these programmes to date.

TfL has extensive experience in managing London's road and transport network during large events, and has a successful track record in the delivery of mode shift through behaviour change programmes and freight management.

TfL will also continue to work with all partners to ensure all 2012 Games transport programmes are integrated and provide consistent messages to businesses, residents and freight operators, so they can plan now to get the most out of the Games.

Olympic & Paralympic Routes Networks:

The Olympic Route Network (ORN) and Paralympic Route Network (PRN) will comprise of a number of roads linking all competition and key non-competition venues.

The networks were designated by the Secretary of State for Transport in 2009 and work on the detailed design and local engagement has progressively transferred to TfL since late last year.

TfL has now taken full responsibility for the ORN and PRN inside London, beginning discussions with Boroughs and local businesses on the detailed Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) that are required to support the traffic measures along the routes.

TfL will continue to work closely with the ODA and Highways Agency, who will deliver and operate the ORN and PRN outside of London.

Travel Demand Management:

The 2012 Games TDM programme will ensure that the London and UK transport network can operate effectively at Games-time by influencing people's travel behaviour.

The programme was launched last year with a conference to businesses and TfL will continue to work with all partners in London and nationally, including Network Rail, the Highways Agency and local authorities, to deliver this programme.

London Road Freight Management:

The 2012 Games RFM programme will influence the necessary behaviour change for the efficient and safe movement of freight in London.

"We have a responsibility to ensure London functions as smoothly and efficiently as possible during the Games"

Mayor of London, Boris Johnson



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