

**Online questionnaire report:**  
**Inquiry into the operation of the *Point to Point Transport (Taxis and Hire Vehicles) Act 2016***

As part of its inquiry into the operation of the *Point to Point Transport (Taxis and Hire Vehicles) Act 2016*, Portfolio Committee No. 6 launched an online questionnaire to enable public participation in an efficient and accessible way.

The questionnaire was not intended as a statistically valid, random survey. Like the submission process, respondents self-selected in choosing to participate. This means that respondents were not a representative sample of the New South Wales population, but rather interested members of the public who volunteered their time to have a say. It should be noted that some participants reside outside of New South Wales.

The questionnaire was complementary to and did not replace the usual submission process. The submission portal was also available to individuals and organisations who wished to provide a more detailed response to the inquiry's terms of reference. In this regard, some respondents may have completed the questionnaire and also made a submission.

### **Questions**

The questionnaire comprised 17 questions. This included background information about the respondents including their contact details, and the capacity in which they responded to the questionnaire.

A mix of multiple choice and open-ended questions sought the views of respondents on:

- the regulatory system governing the taxi industry, as well as industry reforms
- the current bailment system
- the NSW Government's industry assistance package
- the Passenger Service Levy
- the value of taxi plates
- the Point to Point Transport Commissioner.

The full list of questions is at Appendix 1.

## Responses to questions

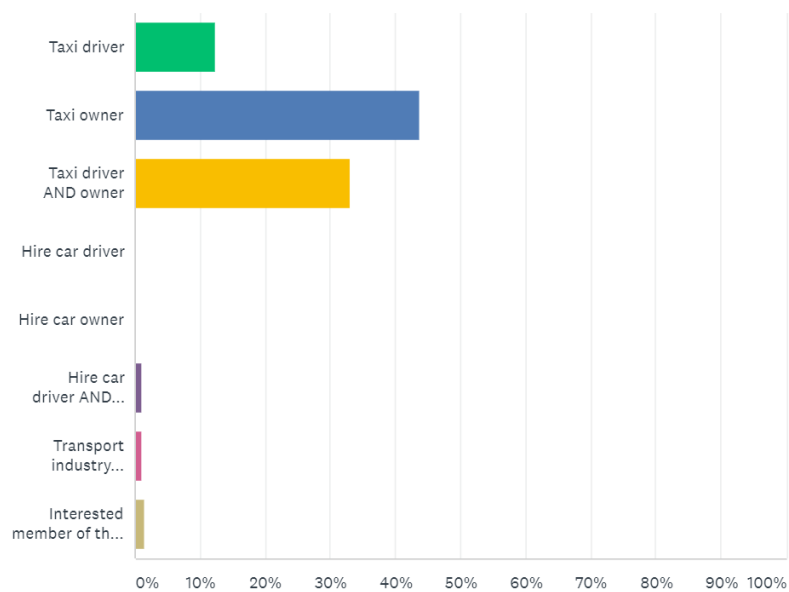
The questionnaire was open from 14 April to 31 May 2020 and received 617 responses. A sample of answers and summaries of responses are provided for each question below. The samples have been selected to represent the various viewpoints expressed in the responses.

### *Background*

The majority of respondents were taxi owners (43.63 per cent), followed by those who were both taxi drivers AND owners (33.01 per cent), and taxi drivers (12.25 per cent).

In what capacity are you responding to this questionnaire?

Answered: 612 Skipped: 5

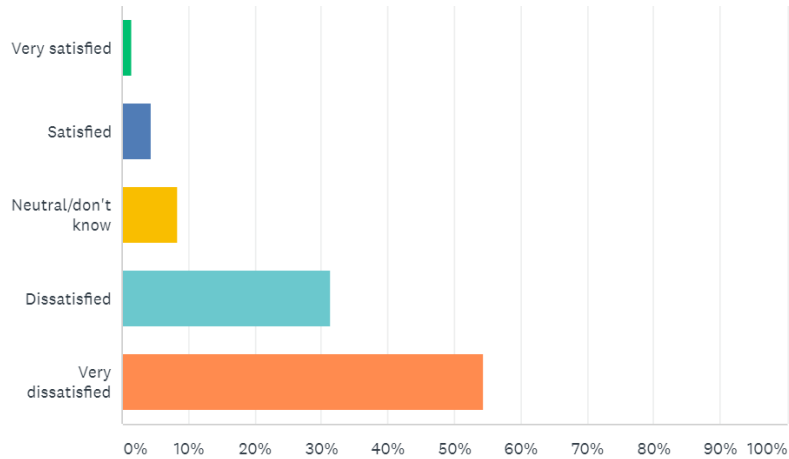


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Taxi driver	12.25% 75
▼ Taxi owner	43.63% 267
▼ Taxi driver AND owner	33.01% 202
▼ Hire car driver	0.00% 0
▼ Hire car owner	0.00% 0
▼ Hire car driver AND owner	1.14% 7
▼ Transport industry professional	1.14% 7
▼ Interested member of the public	1.47% 9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>612</b>

***How satisfied are you with the regulatory system governing the taxi industry?***

Most respondents were very dissatisfied (54.45 per cent) or dissatisfied (31.47 per cent) with the regulatory system governing the taxi industry.

Answered: 483 Skipped: 134



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Very satisfied	1.45% 7
Satisfied	4.35% 21
Neutral/don't know	8.28% 40
Dissatisfied	31.47% 152
Very dissatisfied	54.45% 263
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>483</b>

***Do you have any comments about the operation of the regulatory system governing the taxi industry?***

The overwhelming majority of respondents commented on the impact of competing with the ride-share industry.

- "The regulation of the taxi industry has an impact not only on sole traders like myself who have to pay large sums of money to keep our vehicles on the road annually, but also on the customers who use our services and who bear the ultimate cost of passing on the costs of regulated services. The introduction of rideshare services who are not regulated has had a significant impact in that in view of their unregulated status, they may offer a more affordable pricing model, where as taxis cannot due to their regulations (prices are set by the government - not the taxi industry). I understand the govt intended to make competition to meet the needs of the public, however, if the govt intended there to be fair competition, it cannot have a regulated industry compete with an unregulated competitor who are free to undercut the pricing model and essentially cripple the regulated industry's ability to operate." (Taxi driver AND owner)
- "The regulatory system has created an uneven playing field. While it has allowed taxis to continue to operate it sets up a two-tier system of "regulated" and "non-regulated" vehicles to which different conditions apply with higher costs applying to taxis. As some examples, taxi drivers must wear a uniform; taxi vehicle insurance costs are higher (\$6000

vs \$700); taxis face higher registration fees as business, rather than private vehicles. The application of the customer service levy to taxis only is particularly unfair; it means that the industry most affected by the reforms is paying for any assistance provided by the Government. It creates customer dissatisfaction and inequity and gives the industry disruptors an unfair advantage.' (Taxi driver AND owner)

- 'The rules and regulations that have been applied to taxis are different to the rules and regulations that have been applied to other transport services such as Share Rides ie UBER and OLA. The expectations are high for taxis, yet these rules are not being applied to UBER drivers. Taxi Owners are losing their source of income. This once well respected job is now being eradicated from society. It is not a fair playing field.' (Taxi owner)
- '...We are among the most regulated industries in Australia, as this has played a vital role in the collapse of the Taxi industry, whilst an Uber driver could be signed up and on the road within hours. It hurts knowing that we have all these upfront costs and rules in place whilst our competitor gets away with minimal requirements on a daily basis, which has lead with no choice but to recently shut down our taxi. Due to our competition and all Government regulations we haven't been able to find drivers over the last 2 years. I have had no more than 3 calls over the last 2 years from people wanting to work my taxi. The over regulated taxi industry has caused us grief as we are unable to lease or sell our plates as they are worth nothing. I remember back in the 1990's I was leasing my plates for \$350 per week now in 2020 we are being offered \$40 per week. We have been following the governments requirements and paying our way as the Government has requested for 30 years and now we seek support for our losses: Taxi has no value This was my super, but now I have nothing...' (Taxi owner)
- 'The fact that regulatory system allowed ride share into the system, unregulated and untrained, without the overheads that the taxi industry has had (training, driver monitoring, standards that are upheld, regulations around car age and conditions etc etc) has had major impact on our income, and asset value' (Taxi owner)
- 'Taxis are disadvantaged in the current point to point system as uber and other ride share companies have been allowed to operate without any fees or regulation and have taken all our income. I purchased my taxi licence in 1961 at a time when it cost more than a house. The taxi industry was well organised and fairly regulated until the new point to point law changes. I worked for over 50 years as a driver. I am now retired and was meant to live off the rental of my taxi plate. However recently with the entry of unregulated vehicles into the market, our driver has not been able to make a living for himself and so not able to pay me enough rental for my survival.' (Taxi owner)
- 'Taxi owners and drivers should be treated similar to any point to point the competition is not fair, the competition should be like any other business paying tax, rent, insurance, licence etc. we rather have only taxis to move point to point only and competition should be between taxi companies themselves for what they want to offer better for their customers' (Taxi owner)
- 'The regulations are too harsh on the taxi industry as compared to rideshare as the government has set out guide lines that I am sure are not set the same on rideshare as I have out laid large amounts of money to operate my taxi . Have found the regulatory

frame work applied to my industry as very harsh. When government allowed rideshare to operate it said it was rolling back some regulations on taxis which didn't happen they put it on the taxi network to be responsible. I like to see Uber be responsible for all it's so called driver partners that they keep using to avoid responsibility not like what the networks have endured the last four years.' (Taxi driver AND owner)

- 'P2P [Point to Point] has failed to deliver Level Playing Field between Taxis & Hire Vehicles and Ridesharing. P2P has not decided yet to compensate HC plate before it's retained by 30 June 2020. P2P has not provided any financial assistance per Hire Car plate during COVID-19.' (Hire car driver AND owner)

One respondent highlighted that there is a need for the point to point regulation to include the ride-share industry to ensure consistency across the different industries.

- 'While Point to Point is considered still in its infancy, it is a much needed system that should also include ride-share to ensure the safety of, and costs to, the traveling public is consistent across the passenger transport industry. The Regulator should look at being in a position to assist Regional taxis with compliance by locating offices in strategically placed regional areas (i.e. Newcastle, Dubbo, etc).' (Taxi driver AND owner; Chairman of Board of Directors)

#### ***What are the positive impacts you have seen from the industry reforms?***

Some respondents cited better customer service, improved safety standards, more autonomy for taxi owners, and more choice for the consumer as positive impacts of the reforms.

- 'The public has more choice and cheaper prices and taxis have lifted their standards.' (Spouse of taxi owner)
- 'Competition has led to taxis providing a better service and there is more choice for the consumer.' (Taxi owner)
- 'Some savings on operating cost & safety.' (Taxi plate owner)
- 'Only one positive thing that is plate lease coming down. Every other cost has increased.' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'Improvement in vehicle, driver and passenger safety. The legislative support to enable Networks to ensure owners and drivers are adhering to the compliance. A Regulatory monitoring process - that includes audits - to ensure the networks and owners are focusing on safety and public satisfaction.' (Taxi driver AND owner; Chairman of the Board of Directors)
- 'Making sure all drivers carry an authority card. Not having to pay an accreditation fee each year.' (Taxi driver AND owner)

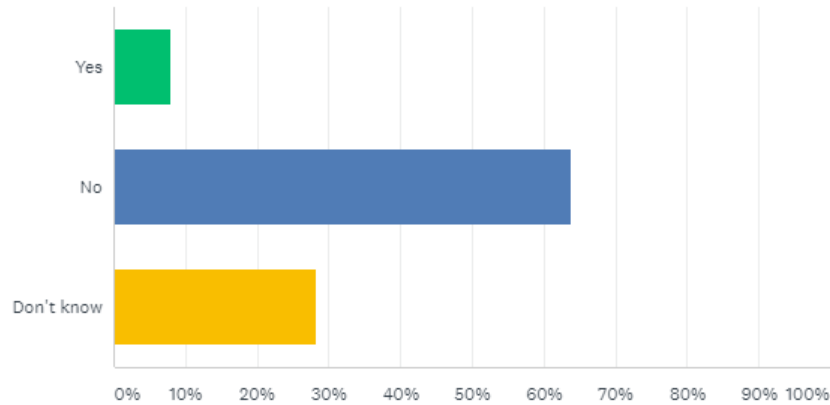
However, most respondents expressed the view that there have been little positive impacts from the industry reforms. Some of these respondents believed that the reforms resulted in positive impacts for the consumer and for the rideshare industry, but not for the taxi industry.

- 'Regrettably after 40 years in the industry - the reforms have essentially decimated the taxi industry - I cannot say it has had any positive impact.' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'The intention of the reforms was good, but the result was an absolute disaster for the taxi business. The reforms do improve customer choice and did give customers a better price. The reforms definitely did not provide a level playing field in the industry as the running costs of taxis are significantly higher than for rideshare. These reforms did not promote industry sustainability for the taxi industry. Rather it negatively impacted this industry significantly and the livelihood of many owners/operators. These reforms resulted in taxi operators looking to sell the taxi plates as it was no longer viable to continue working in the taxi industry due to significant drop in work and the high running costs remaining unchanged. The changes mainly affected taxi owner/operators on the front line on the road. However the reforms did not affect the taxi network. For the Taxi Network it is business as usual, for example we are still be charged the same radio fee of \$705 every four week cycle. If there are any issues, the taxi drivers and operators are always to blame and any issues we raise are ignored. We are left feeling helpless.....' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'Positive impacts only for uber not for taxi industry' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'I have seen zero positive impacts from the legislative point of view. I have seen a number of positive impacts thanks to the taxi company reforms, in my case 13cabs. Unfortunately a company like 13cabs can only act within the frames of legislation.' (Taxi driver)
- 'From the consumer's perspective there is more choice, however from the taxi industry's perspective, and for stakeholders who have invested a significant amount of time and money, the reforms and the introduction of ridesharing companies have been detrimental, and for many has caused devastating consequences.' (Taxi owner)
- 'The reforms and grants that we have seen are a step in the right direction, but in the grander scheme of things they are not enough to protect their drivers as the second grant that supported the networks do not have a flow down effect to their drivers.' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- '[A] very slight decrease to the green slip but not enough to really see an impact.' (Taxi driver AND owner)

### *Have the industry reforms improved customer engagement and satisfaction?*

Most respondents (63.71 per cent) did not believe that the industry reforms have improved customer engagement and satisfaction.

Answered: 463 Skipped: 154



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	7.99% 37
No	63.71% 295
Don't know	28.29% 131
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>463</b>

### *Have the reforms encouraged you to adopt more innovative ways to service the needs of your customers?*

Respondents who answered in the affirmative mostly noted the increase in the use of apps in the taxi industry as an innovative way that industry has sought to meet the needs of their customers.

- 'We've always been keen to adopt more innovative ways to service the needs of our customers. Opposition has forced some areas of our industry to become more professional. Booking apps are the future, and the idea that customers pre-pay for the service provided, which was introduced by Uber, removes the risk of customers doing a runner...!' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'We have had to adapt our business to cater to a more selective and cost conscious traveller including but not limited to expanding our online presence and creating application based booking systems at cost to ourselves.' (Transport industry professional)
- 'Taxi Industry is developing Apps and other Customer aids' (Taxi owner)
- 'There now exists an opportunity to operate somewhat independent from the network if a provider wishes to register as an Authorised Service Provider and engage in a more personalised service provision with regular clientele, whilst this has always been the case it is now more formal with application to, and registration with the Point to Point Commission...!' (Taxi owner)

- 'Yes, the taxi industry has learnt from the example of uber to become more innovative with the use of interactive mobile phone apps to entice customers.' (Taxi owner)

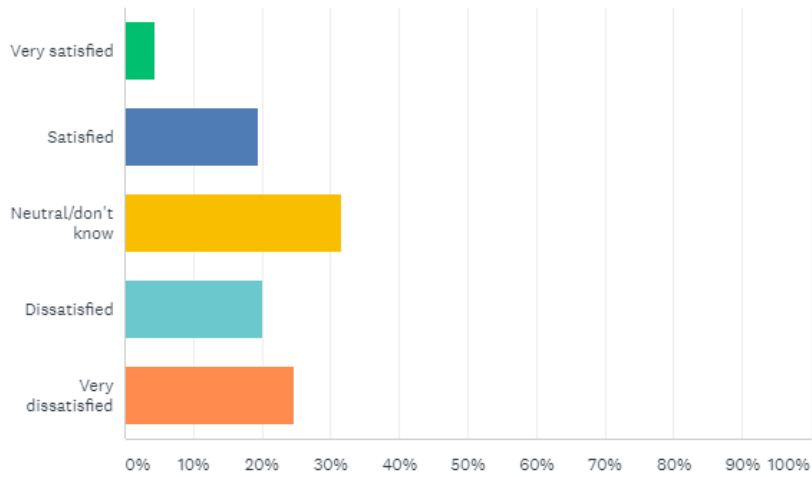
Respondents who answered in the negative cited costs and regulation as inhibitors to innovation in the industry.

- 'The taxi industry has suffered financially so it's hard for the industry to become more innovative when they are losing income. The costs associated with running a taxi are significantly more than other ride share services.' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'Taxi services, their costs and operations are regulated to a greater degree than the industry disruptors are. The regulatory parameters around their operation means that service innovation is limited for taxi owners and operators. The significantly higher costs for Metro cabs, for example, create a regulatory impost that cannot be innovated around. Innovation might be supported across the industry where, for example, the costs of Greenslips between country and metropolitan plates, were the same and all operators were operating on the same level...' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'How can we adopt new ways of servicing customers when the demand for service is the same compared to the number of cars now on the road. Divide the number of jobs by the number of cars then to the number of cars now - Taxi drivers are making far less than what they used to.' (Taxi owner)
- 'We are trying to but there are still restrictions that do not allow for much change' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'I have not been able to adopt more innovative ways because the industry as a whole is not cooperating. What the industry needs is a centralized booking system and an App to compete with ride sharing.' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'The unreasonably high costs of running a taxi preclude slashing fares by up to 50% which is the only effective innovation. Nothing will work until the oversupply of point to point vehicles is addressed.' (Taxi owner)



*How satisfied are you with the current system of bailment in the taxi industry?*

Answered: 435 Skipped: 182

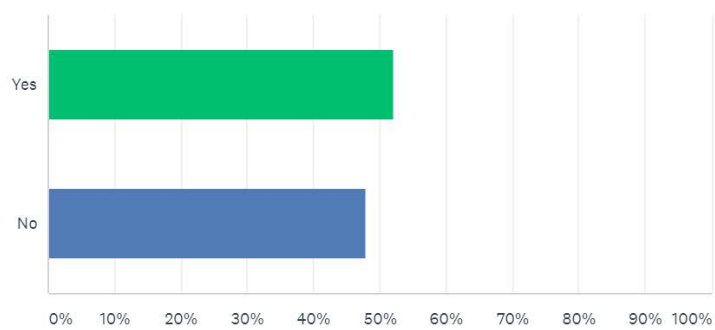


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Very satisfied	4.37%	19
▼ Satisfied	19.54%	85
▼ Neutral/don't know	31.49%	137
▼ Dissatisfied	20.00%	87
▼ Very dissatisfied	24.60%	107
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>435</b>

*Do you think changes should be made to the bailment system?*

The response to this question was split fairly evenly.

Answered: 410 Skipped: 207



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	52.20%	214
▼ No	47.80%	196
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>410</b>

*If you answered yes to the above question, please elaborate.*

One of the main suggestions from respondents included moving to a wage system for taxi drivers. Other respondents questioned whether the current bailment system can be considered a true bailment arrangement when taxi networks are expected to pay employee entitlements.

- 'Taxi Drivers should be on a wage system per hour which would alleviate the stress of chasing fares etc and in some instances result in better driving practices as you wouldn't take risks to secure a fare.' (Taxi driver)
- 'The drivers share should be standardised across the industry and a minimum, per hour, driver earning that does not render the taxi operation unsustainable, should be guaranteed.' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'We should follow the similar business model as AVIS, HERTZ etc and have drivers pay us for the hire of the vehicle and driver must pay MANDATORY at fault driver excess! The bailment is no longer relevant in today's world... The bailment system has been outdated now for too long even before Rideshare came in.' (Taxi owner)
- 'A driver is considered, to a large extent, a sole trader, yet the taxi operator is required to pay him holiday pay and cover him for Workers' Compensation. Even if a driver agrees or states that he wants the pay-in reduced in order to, effectively, take his holiday pay on a shift by shift basis he can then sue the operator for holiday pay at a later date.' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'Taxi driver should be provided entitlement such as sick leave, annual leave, long term service leave by the government body like P2P. The taxi operator should not be responsible for providing the entitlement to the drivers. Workers compensation should be paid by the driver. Taxi driver should pay the access at fault of accident. Taxi owner and driver should be able to claim the entitlement from the network or P2P as well. Hire Car plates should be uncapped.' (Hire car driver AND owner)
- 'After the court ruling in the year 2000 the driver is now considered to be an employee so the owner has to pay employee entitlements such as long service leave, annual leave, super etc. As a result the driver will have to be charged a higher fee to cover these additional costs. It does not work.' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'It should be a true bailment not a quasi employment relationship. The reforms and guides around the taxi drivers/owners and their relationship essentially create obligations of employment in circumstances where it is purely a bailment relationship - in no other industry does this create an employment relationship - this makes no sense.' (Taxi driver AND owner)

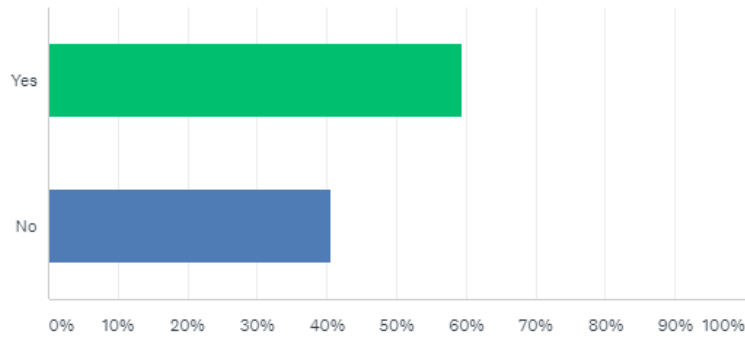
Other respondents indicated that better information should be provided to bailors and bailees.

- 'The terms of bailment need to be made clearer in relation to both bailer's & bailee's legal rights and responsibilities.' (Taxi driver AND owner)

- '... There needs to be a free support agency set up to educate bailees as independent contractors (similar to Fair Work Ombudsman) or could they be treated as employees held on a retainer salary and paid by commission of fares.' (Taxi driver AND owner)

***Have you received any assistance from the NSW Government's industry assistance package?***

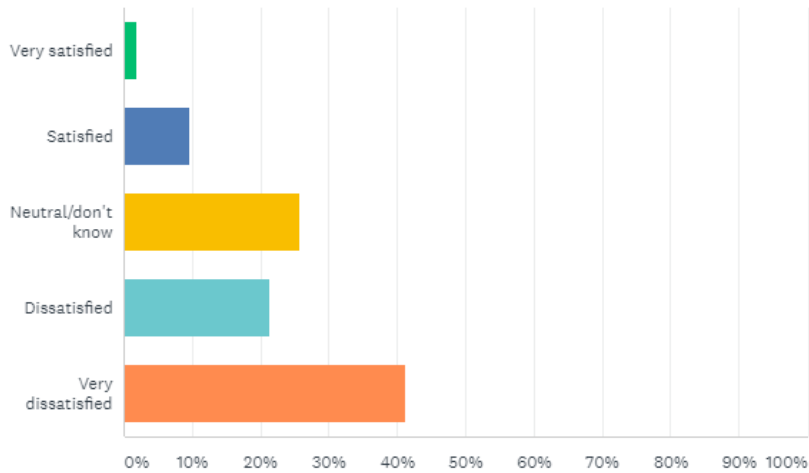
Answered: 427 Skipped: 190



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Yes	59.48%	254
▼ No	40.52%	173
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>427</b>

*If you have applied for industry assistance, how satisfied were you with the process?*

Answered: 412 Skipped: 205



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Very satisfied	1.94% 8
Satisfied	9.71% 40
Neutral/don't know	25.73% 106
Dissatisfied	21.36% 88
Very dissatisfied	41.26% 170
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>412</b>

*Do you have any comments about the industry assistance package for the taxi industry?*

While some respondents indicated that industry assistance has been helpful in some ways, many also suggested that it was not enough. Respondents also expressed concern with the application process itself.

- 'Was inadequate, considering what we really lost in many other ways, especially in the value of our asset, ie value of taxi plate, and also as a consequence, the significant decrease of income from leasing of these plates.' (Taxi owner)
- 'While it was of some assistance, it doesn't come close to compensating the hard working people who have put their life savings and years of work into the industry only to lose almost all of it.' (Taxi owner)
- 'While the process itself was satisfactory the compensation (in my personal case and opinion) was not satisfying as it did not compensate me for the major losses I incurred.' (Taxi Licences Owner)
- 'I thought the offer of \$20,000 per Plate was a very small assistance contribution considering we like many others invested in what was considered a safe "Government Asset" and now have lost over \$200,000. Furthermore, having to declare the Assistance Package as Income on our Tax Returns was another hollow gesture.' (Taxi Plate Owner)

- 'While taxi drivers were granted 20k for their taxi licences, you have to keep in mind that this was a tax deductible lump sum. While it appeared to be generous on paper, in reality it was only 13.5k after tax. Which is not enough to keep a driver with a family afloat. Realistically it was only enough to pay off a year of maintenance and network fees. Real reforms should also combat against unregulated companies so that there is a fair and even operating environment for existing taxi drivers.' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'Initial income assistance was helpful although did not help our drivers and pales in comparison to the level that average income has deteriorated over the last 4 years. For the 2 taxis I am directly involved with there has been a \$100k decrease in income per year and it is still falling. As for the hardship package I was considered to be ineligible as I now have employment outside the taxi industry and have managed to cover my loan repayments because of this.' (Taxi owner)
- 'We appreciate the initial industry assistance of \$20000. It was some help but over time we are still struggling. We then spent hours and hours preparing a second submission as the first Assistance payment was not sufficient and we were rejected. The taxi plate at the moment is worthless...' (Taxi owner)
- 'Yes the initial payment of \$20k for income loss was fair that covered one year of income loss but the second package for hardship was only given to people who were basically on the street, it did not take into consideration that people who invested their hard life earnings into the plates lost everything by doing this...' (Taxi owner)
- 'It seems like Hire Cars got paid out significantly more than Taxi Plates, yet the cost of the plates were the other way around and Taxi Plates have lost significantly more work due to the increased competition for booked work, uber has created an 'e-hail' market which has affected Taxis. The assistance was funded by the PSL [Passenger Service Levy], so essentially customers are paying for it, and most owners in our area are getting close to having repaid their assistance package in term of PSL collected. It seems unjust... and an unequal distribution of assistance.' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'Yes the process is futile. It is very difficult to show the hardship that is required and to get the documents ready for this to get assistance. I have been greatly affected as others have and not been able to get the assistance, this should be broadened and reformed.' (Taxi owner)
- 'There was a lot of paperwork to submit and the assistance was not large considering loss of income and asset value.' (Taxi owner)
- 'System was not managed and processed fairly. Taxi drivers should have been permitted to apply for the package s they were affected as much as the operators.' (Transport industry professional – Network General Manager)

***Do you have any comments about the Passenger Service Levy, and how it has been applied?***

Most respondents who were critical of the Passenger Service Levy argued that the levy should only apply to the ride-share industry and not to the taxi industry.

- 'It is entirely unreasonable that the industry that is most impacted by the reforms, and its customers, are being required to pay for the impact created by others. Passengers are annoyed at having to pay the levy and the five year period of its application is unreasonable, particularly as there is no relationship between any assistance and the investment of taxi owners.' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'To fund the assistance for the taxi industry, the government can consider a material larger annual levy and entrance levies for the ride sharing companies for their access to the original customer base of the taxi industry. Companies like Uber and other new ride sharing companies have gained enormous profit and should be funded from their corporate income. This will speed up the funding and work its way through to level the playing field between ride-sharing and taxi industry.' (Taxi Licence Owner)
- 'The passenger levy should be higher for ride-share products and used to help the government compensate taxi plate owners for our lost in capital value.' (Taxi owner)
- 'Unfair on taxi customers as this was implement[ed] due to ridesharing. Rideshare operators & customers should be solely responsible for levy' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'The levy should have been applied only to ride share customers and not taxi customers since it was ridesharing companies that caused this impact to start with. Also the levy could have been extended for an indefinite period so the assistance packages to the industry could have been a lot larger..' (Taxi owner)
- 'The passenger levy should be higher for ride-share products and used to help the government compensate taxi plate owners for our lost in capital value.' (Taxi driver AND owner)

Other respondents highlighted the additional work involved in collecting the levy.

- 'I am required to collect and pay it but government does not pay me for the work performed to do this... It's time consuming to separate, bank and record and pay the government.' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'The PSL has been successful in that the monies collected should be used to compensate the plate owner fairly- to date this has not been done equitably. Operators/networks need remuneration for the time taken to do the paperwork associated with this task..' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'Our workload has increased ... the onus is on the operator/network to collect PSL without any compensation for the time involved in collecting it. At the time of PSL implementation State Revenue concluded that it would cost approx. 50 cents in the dollar for it to collect PSL but the P2P ignored that advice & imposed the responsibility onto our industry with total disregard of the added workload, we feel that an equitable arrangement needs be negotiated, we're in favour of continuing with PSL because this will fund the buyback.' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'The fares increased in line with the addition to the PSL however there has been no benefit to the drivers who are effectively collecting tax for the government and impacts

our business due to additional administrative requirements to facilitate reporting and delivery of PSL.' (Transport industry professional)

- 'It's unfair for customers to have to pay the Levy. Then the operator has to manage that payment, and the network deal with the paperwork to submit the payments. It's extra work and cost for Networks for minimal return.' (Taxi driver AND owner)

Some respondents reflected positively on the levy with the caveat that the funds be directed to affected taxi and hire care owners/drivers.

- 'Yes it has paid back the assistance package and would be happy to see it continued if used for the buy back scheme' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'The assistance has been appreciated. Any remaining Levy could be used in a Buy Back offer or distributed' (Taxi owner)
- 'Good idea, hope it can continue and provide funds to Owners.' (Taxi owner)
- 'I have no problem with the levy as long as the funds manage to make it to the taxi owners who have been affected by the changes to the industry both by the fall in taxi plate values and the fall in income...' (Taxi owner)
- 'We have had no issues with applying the Passenger service levy as long as it is paid to the taxi plate owners and not go to government revenue.' (Taxi owner)
- 'I think the levy is fair and applied accordingly it is fine as long as it is used for the right reason and that is compensate those who have been affected financially eg Taxis and Hire Car operators and drivers.' (Hire car driver AND owner)

***Do you have any comments on the impact of the Point to Point Transport (Taxis and Hire Vehicles) Act 2016 on the value of taxi plates?***

The majority of respondents commented that the *Point to Point Transport (Taxis and Hire Vehicles) Act 2016* has resulted in a decrease in the value of taxi plates, with many sharing their personal stories.

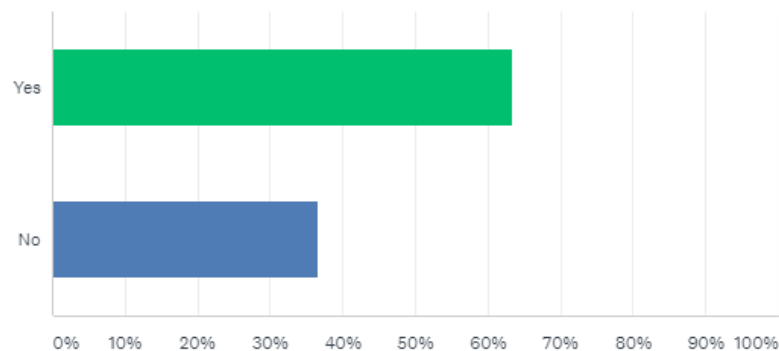
- '...The Point to Point scheme completely decimated the value of taxi plates... [F]or many of us who have been driving taxis for essentially most of our lives, this has left us utterly financially and emotionally devastated, as this has meant that our superannuation and retirement plans have gone up in smoke. I can no longer afford to retire, and will have to continue to work to survive. While we all have different personal circumstances, I was the sole breadwinner for my wife and I. She had no superannuation, and now neither do I. There is no value in the plate, no one wants to buy it - it is not a good investment, and it will bring no return.' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'The value of taxi plates is now worthless. Its unheard of for an asset to lose all its value in the space of a few years. Many owners have debts against their plate which are now worthless and there is no income from the taxi be it through drivers or lease payments to repay the loans. The govt needs to initiate a buy back service.' (Taxi owner)

- 'I have owned my taxi plate for the past nineteen years that was purchase for \$250,000 in 2002. My original plan was to pay my debts on my business initially and purchase my home through the sale of the business. With the implementation of the Point To Point reforms I have had to continue operating the business as the government destabilisation of the taxi industry has made any possibility of selling the business for anything like the capital that was originally invested an impossibility. A plate buy back is the only hope of me recouping this capital outlay and suggestions that I may have recouped this value many times over the years is unrealistic...!' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'When I was a little girl growing up, I remember the value of purchasing taxi plates being on par with purchasing an apartment. I remember how they valued the taxi plates and considered them with great respect and importance. Taxi plates were worth buying as an income and investment. Nowadays their value is low. The market value has drastically decreased on the taxi plates. The income to lease the taxi plates has drastically decreased. The demand to lease or purchase the taxi plates has drastically decreased. Taxi plates are no longer considered a viable source of income or investment. So the impact of the Point to Point Transport Act 2016 on the value of the taxi plates is that taxi plates are drastically losing their value.' (I'm representing my mother who is a Taxi Owner)
- 'Anyone involved in the taxi industry would agree that, because of those changes in the Point to Point Act of 2016, thousands of people have had their world, life and plans for their future destroyed forever. The value of our greatest asset, the taxi plates, has reduced to almost nothing, gone is our superannuation for our old age so we could enjoy our retirement, the leasing fees are not worth much either. The only way that the Government can compensate those who are suffering from those changes would be if they bought back our plates at a fair price.' (Taxi owner)
- 'The impact of the legislation on the value of taxi plates in the mid Blue Mountains has been to reduce their value from approximately \$200,000 in 2012 to between \$50,000 and 70,000 if a buyer could be found. As a consequence of the government's legalisation, my superannuation investment in their controlled taxi industry is such that I can't recover the loss in equity or quit the business and rely solely on my age pension. Like most small taxi owners, I am hoping that the State Government will action the buy back scheme that both sides of the house supported recently.' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'The value of taxi plates dropped from +\$400k to less than \$80k - simply because of this regulation. The impact of this loss cannot be compensated by a \$20k per plate compensation package which was taxed. There has been no real support for plate owners, despite the benefits to government via the various government fees and taxes.' (Taxi owner)



## *Are you aware of the role and function of the Point to Point Transport Commissioner?*

Answered: 399 Skipped: 218



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	63.41% 253
No	36.59% 146
TOTAL	399

## *Do you have any comments about the role and function of the Point to Point Transport Commissioner?*

The common themes emerging from responses in relation to the role and function of the Point to Point Commissioner included the importance of fairness towards the taxi industry, the need for better clarity on the role of the commissioner, and the view that the commissioner has not provided satisfactory responses to stakeholder concerns.

- 'The Point to Point Transport Commissioner role is good however it is important to ensure the Commissioner: is independent; is approachable; and acts fairly and not be heavily influenced by the Taxi Council and the Taxi networks.' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'His role should be to restore the taxi/hire car industry to what it was. Protect an industry which the government generated, regulated and taxed.' (Taxi driver)
- 'It is very vague and we have been unable to speak to the Commissioner and we don't know what information he has available. We have not seen any positive action.' (Taxi driver)
- 'We believe more regulation and scrutiny should be placed on rideshare groups e.g. uber, Ola, Go-buggy etc whom seem to be able to flout the rules in respect of their adherence to the rules in place. We find that we are having to forward our concerns of rideshare not doing the right thing to p2p on a regular basis with little to no result.' (Transport industry professional)
- 'To date, the P2P commission has not satisfactorily responded to the local taxi industry calls for investigation into and enforcement of compliance breaches that have been reported to them. Going forward, the role and function of the Point-to-Point Transport Commissioner should be to deliver the equal playing field that was promised.' (Taxi driver AND owner)

- 'The role of the Commissioner is to oversee the administration and legislation relating to taxis, hire cars and ride share vehicles, to provide safe and reliable point to point services. I believe the Commissioner has failed in his role because of the unfairness which exists between the taxi industry and ride share operators. Taxi owners and drivers are still subject to higher costs to operate their business e.g. Insurance's, registration, pink slips, camera installations etc as opposed to ride share operators. Everyday men and women who apply to use their private vehicles in the point to point system escape these regulations and restrictions. Reliability and safety are in doubt in this mode of transport. The Commissioner has failed to manage such an unfair playing field.' (Taxi owner)
- 'The function and responsibilities of the Point to Point Commissioner are very unclear. At times it seems they have no say in the matter and it is decided above their head, and at other times they have the right to deny and dismiss any questions someone asks about how they have been assessed or why a decision has been made. They seem to not be accountable to anyone and make the final decision. But then at times have no power and sit in the background.' (Taxi driver AND owner)
- 'I believe that the Commissioner of any department should have a better understanding of the industry before they make such devastating changes. There should have been more consultation with members of our industry...' (Taxi owner)
- 'Point to Point Transport Commissioner should be fair and compassionate when dealing with taxi industry in relation to other point to point transport operators likes UBER, OLA, DiDi etc.' (Taxi owner)

### **Conclusion**

The online questionnaire has been a valuable tool to efficiently gather the views of interested stakeholders on the issues raised in the terms of reference. The information gathered through the questionnaire will inform committee members and will be reflected in the inquiry report. The committee may also use the responses to support its findings and conclusions.

## Appendix 1: List of questions

### Questions

#### Page 1

1. Contact details (*free text*)  
Name:  
Email address:  
Postcode:
2. In what capacity are you responding to this questionnaire?
  - a. Taxi driver
  - b. Taxi owner
  - c. Taxi driver AND owner
  - d. Hire car driver
  - e. Hire car owner
  - f. Hire car driver AND OWNER
  - g. Transport industry professional
  - h. Interested member of the public
  - i. Other – *free text*

#### Page 2 – Regulatory system and industry reforms

3. How satisfied are you with the regulatory system governing the taxi industry?
  - a. Very satisfied
  - b. Satisfied
  - c. Neutral/don't know
  - d. Dissatisfied
  - e. Very dissatisfied
4. Do you have any comments about the operation of the regulatory system governing the taxi industry?
5. What are the positive impacts you have seen from the industry reforms?
6. Have the industry reforms improved customer engagement and satisfaction?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Don't know
7. Have the reforms encouraged you to adopt more innovative ways to service the needs of your customers?

#### Page 3 – Bailment

8. How satisfied are you with the current system of bailment in the taxi industry?
  - a. Very satisfied
  - b. Satisfied
  - c. Neutral/don't know
  - d. Dissatisfied
  - e. Very dissatisfied
9. Do you think any changes should be made to the system of bailment?

- a. Yes
- b. No

10. If yes, please elaborate.

*Page 4 – Industry assistance package*

11. Have you received any assistance from the NSW Government's industry assistance package?

- a. Yes
- b. No

12. If you have applied for industry assistance, how satisfied were you with the process?

- a. Very satisfied
- b. Satisfied
- c. Neutral/don't know
- d. Dissatisfied
- e. Very dissatisfied

13. Do you have any comments about the industry assistance package for the taxi industry?

14. Do you have any comments about the Passenger Service Levy, and how it has been applied?

*Page 5 – Taxi plates*

15. Do you have any comments on the impact of the *Point to Point Transport (Taxis and Hire Vehicles) Act 2016* on the value of taxi plates?

*Page 6 – Point to Point Transport Commissioner*

16. Are you aware of the role and function of the Point to Point Transport Commissioner?

- a. Yes
- b. No

17. Do you have any comments about the role and function of the Point to Point Transport Commissioner?