

Australian Taxi Drivers Association

120 Evans St , Rozelle 2039

mail@tda.net.au

www.tda.net.au

Inc 9886630

... a fair share of a fair fare ...

Parliamentary Committee No. 6

Response to Supplementary Questions by Michael Jools

1. TAXIS.PLUS as my Booking Service and Taxi Network has just commenced commercial activities and recruitment of Drivers and Taxis. As such we do not own or manage any Taxis, but have expressions of interest from 530 Drivers and from 23 Operators / Taxi Service Providers. It is not our plan to own Taxi Plates, rather to encourage the Operator / Driver Model. Full Booking Services will commence in November with the launch of our Passenger and Driver Apps.
2. Prior to the Pandemic, the more recent Cost of Tendered Taxi Plates (average \$19500 pa) equated to \$350 a week. Earlier costs of Tendered Plates varied from \$25,000 to as much as \$32,000 a year, equating to the \$500 to \$600 a week as I stated. Privately leased Plates tended to follow the Government rates.

Initially the major Networks did reduce Plate Lease Fees on what was first described as a deferment of charges, and only afterwards as an actual reduction. This generosity was effected by dropping their payments for the Plates managed for the Plate Owners immediately to as little as a nominal \$1.00 a month (plus GST).

By end September almost all tendered Plates have been returned to Transport for NSW.

The point being made was that the cost to Drivers of their Bailment Pay-In has largely not been affected to the extent of operating cost reductions flowing to Operators during the Pandemic, and now, at end October, beginning to creep up again with about half the Taxis still de-registered. If the Standards of Proof of loss of Earnings were applied to Drivers similar to that applied to Plate Owners there would be even less Drivers able to receive any assistance at all.

Assistance to Drivers must be in the 'here and now' with measures from the Industry to reduce excessive costs, to maintain minimal Plate Lease Fees, and to ensure that Drivers earn at least the National Hourly Minimum Wage.

No, we do not seek compensation for past losses !

We do point out that the Act was passed unamended, and despite Mr Mookhey's comment (transcript P 14) it did and does provide in Section 3 Adjustment Assistance, the eligibility of more than just Plate Licensees.

CORRECTION : My Response to Mr Mookhey was "Not Correct"

Schedule 3.1.b and 3.4.(1) "persons who are or were involved in or connected with the taxi or hire car industry and who are detrimentally affected by changes made to the regulation of the industries under this Act"

The Minister's Second Reading Speech specifically mentioned Taxi Drivers as such persons.

Additional Information / Comment

Since it now has been confirmed by the final Witness (Mr A Wing from Point to Point) that there will be in the order of \$100,000,000 yet to be raised by the Passenger Services Levy and that all Assistance Programmes have been concluded, that those funds be distributed to those other persons, Operators and Drivers, who have not received any Compensation.

Michael Jools President ATDA November 2020