

Upper House Select committee on the Taxi Industry Additional Questions on notice

Question 1.

Could you please provide the Committee with an overview of your organisation membership, and the role that you play in representing the NSW taxi drivers?

ANS: The NSW TDA Inc is an organisation incorporated in 2004 by bailee taxi drivers, operator (bailor) taxi drivers, and plate owner drivers, for the advancement of all those who drive taxis in NSW. Its membership comprises all working taxi drivers who make their living on the road driving taxis. Our members must have a taxi authority to join. We have designated positions on our 12 member management committee for bailees(2), wheel chair accessible taxi drivers (1), lessees (1) and plate owner drivers (1).

We publish a newsletter with a print run of around 4000 copies. Copies are distributed by mail to paid up members and distributed by hand at locations popular with taxi drivers e.g. taxi washes and the airport.

We have been active in negotiations on behalf of taxi drivers:

- A. With successive submissions to IPART (available on IPART's website);
- B. Having had representatives on the Taxi Access Working Party (hosted by RTA, now dissolved);
- C. On the Taxi Advisory Council (currently lapsed, hosted by T & I with a recent commitment from the Director General that meetings will recommence and once again include the NSW TDA);
- D. On the Sydney Airport Ground Transport Management Committee;
- E. With local councils including Sydney city Council and Blacktown;
- F. As well as with Insurance companies, WorkCover and many other organisations relating to the taxi industry.

The NSW TDA currently receives no government funding and we would draw your attention to the commitment by Lyn Kosky, Victoria to support the Victorian Taxi Drivers Association.

Question 2.

Apart from the issues identified in your submission and appearance before the Inquiry, are there any other measures that could be undertaken to improve the working conditions of NSW taxi drivers?

ANS: As you have no doubt already realised these questions crossed with our 21 page submission of 3/3/10 which certainly addresses many salient issues to improve the working conditions of taxi drivers. Certainly the many still unfilled recommendations of the Madden report would be an ideal starting point.

Question 3.

The Victorian Government recently established the Taxi Industry Safety Taskforce to develop initiatives to improve driver safety. Do you think that such a Taskforce be of benefit in NSW?

ANS: Such task forces and enquiries in the past have been held and often gave us hope. It is with some regret that we must acknowledge that many past initiatives did not lead to the action that we had hoped for. However any prospect of joining an ongoing taskforce that has a mandate to implement its recommendations would be most warmly welcomed by the NSW TDAInc and would be of significant benefit in NSW.

Question 4.

One of the main reforms resulting from the Victorian Taxi Industry Safety Taskforce is the introduction of mandatory pre-payment of fares between 10pm and 5am. Would such an initiative be of benefit in NSW? Why?

ANS: Yes. We appeal most emphatically for upfront fare payments to be made legal in NSW. At the driver's discretion (not necessarily madatory), but irrespective of the time of day, a payment in advance would confirm the passengers' ability and willingness to pay and alleviate the end-of-journey disputes which are far more prone to violence and criminality than a request for payment at the commencement of a journey.

Trevor Bradley , Acting Secretary,
Ernie Mollenhauer, Delegate

President Anne Turner
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Per committee and members, NSWTDAlnc.