

Submission
No 26

INQUIRY INTO NSW TAXI INDUSTRY

Name: Name Suppressed
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Partially Confidential

**SUBMISSION BY
INDUSTRY**

TO SELECT COMMITTEE ON NSW TAXI

These recommendations relate to the Sydney Taxi District:

Recommendation 1: That the NSW Government require an increase in spending on Taxi Radio Booking Despatch Centres.

The staff levels, staff training, equipment quality and computer program quality of these centres need improving through diverting either more government funds or more of the profits currently made by taxi owners.

Recommendation 2: Increase Passenger Knowledge and Taxi Turnover at Major Ranks.

There should be comprehensive action to encourage more use of taxi ranks including better signage, discouraging passengers from hailing nearby cruising taxis, discouraging drivers from refusing fares, more rostering of uniformed security personnel and addressing severe shortages of taxi queuing spaces (for example Grosvenor Street, Bondi Junction and Belgrave Street, Manly)

Recommendation 3: Phase in Paid In-service Training for Existing Drivers.

Other industries bolster a sense of belonging by giving their workers regular paid in-service training. Driver Security, Etiquette for dealing with passengers and the benefits to the driver of picking up more radio jobs would be desirable targets of paid in-service training.

Recommendation 4: Phase out 'Ring On Approach'

Passengers need to be encouraged to wait in view of their taxi's approach if they make a radio booking. The practice of ringing or texting on approach wastes industry resources, encourages passengers to make bookings when not genuinely ready to travel, blurs the distinction between Taxi and Hire Car charging regimes and seriously reduces productivity.

Recommendation 5: Address localised shortages of transport capacity with integrated traffic management, bus and train and taxi planning.

Taxis cannot substitute for linehaul transport when thousands of people simultaneously desire to leave an area such as Kings Cross or Darling Harbour. Shift attention away from the animosity that escalates between some individual drivers, delayed passengers, enforcement authorities and the media. Focus on resources allocations and the levels of State Government driven planning and funding that might relieve the problems.

Recommendation 6: Discourage Non-cash Payment in Congested Areas

Electronic Fare payment within 15km of the CBD usually takes too long. Loss of taxi productivity, traffic and parking congestion and conflicts with enforcement officers are best addressed by cash fares, even if a manual receipt is also issued.

Recommendation 7: Commission on Collection of Surcharges

End the use of drivers as slave labour to collect the 10% on cabcharges and the Sydney Airport Surcharge, If drivers continue collecting these surcharges, they should keep 50% of whatever they collect.

Recommendation 8: No Increase in Taxi Plate Numbers of Any Kind

The previous 7 recommendations offer many avenues for improving the lot of passengers and drivers. More plates (including those the Govt plans to lease) just means more stressed drivers working longer hours for lower incomes. It attacks the beneficial sharing of

responsibilities between taxi fleet operators and bailee drivers where the fleet operators focus on administration and maintenance and the drivers focus on face-to-face service to the public.