

## INQUIRY INTO NSW TAXI INDUSTRY

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Partially Confidential

## **Submission to the NSW Parliament Select Committee inquiry into NSW Taxi industry**

I welcome this opportunity to make this comment on the taxi industry in an effort to broaden your understanding of the specifics, details and dynamics of this particular section of the transport industry.

My name is \_\_\_\_\_, I am an accredited taxi operator and full time taxi driver. I migrated to Australia with my wife and two children from United States of America as most of my family lived here. I come from a farming and trucking family background and hold certificate in Automobile mechanics and have worked in different other jobs as well. I am very grateful and thankful that I got the opportunity to come and settle in Australia. On my arrival in Australia, I had difficulty in finding a job due to my age factor, so I decided the idea of driving a taxi cab. Since year 2000 I became a multi cab operator and operate four taxis at the moment. I have a total of 15 drivers.

I am very content with whatever I earn being a taxi driver as I try to use my hard earned money wisely. They say that this is a country of "fair go" which means we cannot snatch other peoples' property (taxi Plate) by force or deceitful pretext or influence and send them to financial disaster and misery as they did in Uganda and Zimbabwe.

I believe there has been a lot of criticism and suggestion about the industry by people and unions to phase out, buy back, no inheritance, no brokers, no

investors, no networks, seniority and free-bee taxi plate etc. A lot of it is a good recipe for disaster, chaos and disenfranchise hard working people in the industry.

Should you do a background check of some of these individuals, you will find that they are "rat-bags" in the taxi industry. They only work part time usually 3 to 4 hours of the 12 hour shift, own nothing, bankrupt, opportunists, no commitments and no family or even a bed to sleep on. They have a negative attitude towards everything and everybody, live on social security or other peoples' money and want everyone else to do the same. I would suggest that this honourable house to do some background checks on these 'rat-bags' before taking their advice and bringing the industry to its knees and eventually broke.

Finally these are some of the comments I would like to make regarding the taxi industry

- One needs money, hard work and determination to start any business and be successful so is the taxi business.
- The rules and regulations of operating a taxi business are firm and stringent.
- Besides the start up cost, ongoing maintenance is very high. It is only at the end of the financial year an operator finds out how much profit he has made, as opposed to a driver who after paying for gas and the pay-in, takes the rest and that is his profit determined daily or weekly.
- Workers Compensation is excessive as I understand there are not many taxi driver claims compared to other industries. It should be separated from other industries.
- For unknown reasons taxi green slips of around two thousand five hundred dollars is excessive.
- Comprehensive insurance is excessive due to the fact that all smash repairs overcharge. In my opinion each taxi driver should be responsible for the excess component of the comprehensive insurance, which

makes the driver responsible for his own actions. This will in turn improve driver quality, passenger safety and "base hopping"

- The taxi industry ( contract drivers) Contract Determination 1984 [TI (CD) 1984] is out of date and a big hurdle to taxi drivers to become operators as it frightens them. Ninety nine percent of drivers and operators work on mutually agreed lower pay- in in exchange for sick leave and holiday pay. Also now the taxi drivers have their own ABN and pay their own GST and therefore should be classed as contractors.
- Dockets and eftpos have been very helpful in running my business. It has reduced the risk of carrying cash therefore less risk of the drivers getting robbed. It has also helped both bailey drivers and operators misusing taxi money and paying their bills. Eftpos and cab charge meters have also brought some awareness, responsibility and accountability in the taxi industry where each one has to pay their share of tax to the tax office.

I hope that some of my above suggestions will be helpful in improving the future of the taxi industry.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,