

**Submission
No 10**

INQUIRY INTO NSW TAXI INDUSTRY

Name: Mr Robert Hodge

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Robert Hodge

The Hon. John Ajaka MLC
Committee Chair
Committee on the NSW Taxi Industry
Inquiry into the NSW Taxi Industry
taxicommtee@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Sir,

I am fifty eight years old. I have been driving a taxi for over twenty years in Sydney. The co-op that I prefer to drive for is the RSL Cooperative P/L. I am a day driver.

As a baillee, I am driving for the operator Sanjay (on a first name basis), Kismet Ventures P/L for five years and three months, and four other operators in this time, three of them on a first name basis.

Over this period of time I have become aware of some adverse conditions, these are set out below:

1. Conditions:

- a) 12 hour shifts. (day shift 3.00 am to 3.00 pm, night shift 3.00pm to 3.00 am)
- b) Drivers are encouraged to work semis or reverse semis. (eg. Sunday day shift, Sunday night, and Monday day)
- c) Fatigue from driving unregulated hours.
- d) Occupation Health and Safety, no training, no policy.
- e) Dropping off or picking up on the Sydney city and suburban centres streets is almost impossible not to breach parking regulations. Park rangers take a photo and the Penalty Notice is in the post.
- f) Only benefit, over private cars is that you can travel in bus and transit lanes.
- g) Operator make drivers who are in "at fault" accidents pay insurance excess.
- h) Operator should pay when a driver is fined for a defective vehicle, even though the driver inspects the car before taking it out. We pay for the taxi to be 100% roadworthy.
- i) New regulation on child restraints (early 2010). Children up to 7 have to travel in an approved child restraint. Taxis, how will they carry these restraints?
- j) Pedestrians in the city and suburban centres, they walk across the road ignoring lights or pedestrian crossings, they cross anywhere. Those on mobile phones, listening to iPods or eating a sandwich are totally oblivious to cars, TAXIS and other traffic around them. Get the park rangers to issue fines, great revenue raiser for councils.
- k) Operator increase pay-in in between I.P.A.R.T.'s annual increase, which operator claims 50% rounded up.
- l) Uniform not supplied

2. Entitlements:

- a) Set pay-in (I'm paying \$127/day shift – excluding LPG)
- b) No sick leave
 - No holiday pay
 - No long service leave
 - No superannuation
 - No down time

3. Representation:

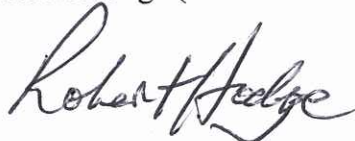
- a) Taxi Council, represents owners and operators
- b) Australian Taxi Drivers Association Inc, (M. Jools, President) industry magazine, represents drivers and owner drivers.
- c) Transport Workers Union, represents so few, in twenty years only seen representatives on two occasions. I've been a member since 2004.
- d) Cab Charge, a cash cow for Reg Kermode and his associates. ACCC investigation is long overdue.

4. Recent News Paper Reports:

- a) "Cabbies take us for a ride" (Sunday Telegraph)
<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/opinion/cabbies-take-us-for-a-ride/story-e6frezz0-1225769781328>
- b) "Greedy cabbies taking us for a ride" By Rosie Squires (Sunday Telegraph)
<http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/sunday-telegraph/greedy-cabbies-taking-us-for-a-ride/story-e6frewt0-1225769816591>
- c) "Australia's taxis are a 'national embarrassment'" By Emma Thelwell (Ninemsn)
<http://money.ninemsn.com.au/blog.aspx?blogentryid=547811&showcomments=true>
- d) The Sydney Morning Herald: Linton Besser (02 9282 1310), Journalist.

Thank you for this inquiry and receiving my submission.

Yours Faithfully,
Robert Hodge (Driver Authority AA9931)



C.c. Transport Workers Union - <http://www.twu.com.au/home.shtml>
Attention.. Darcy Waller