

**INQUIRY INTO OPERATION OF THE POINT TO POINT
TRANSPORT (TAXIS AND HIRE VEHICLES) ACT 2016**

Name: Mr George Mazzitelli

Date Received: 21 May 2020

Partially
Confidential

21 MAY 2020

Dear Sirs,

I have been a taxi driver since 1973, working part-time to supplement my income. I bought my first taxi in 1987, my wife and I borrowed the full amount from the bank to purchase taxi plate: . The loan was a bridging loan and at the time the interest rate was as high as 21.25%. While I worked 16 hours a day, my wife was left to bring up our family and hold own a job.

In 1988 I was retrenched from my job and so purchased a second taxi so that I would have a job and security for our life in the future. It was the same year the NSW Government prompted purchasing taxi plates as a "licence to make money". We were quite happy with our decision to purchase as it would be a solid asset for the future and to support my growing family.

In 1989 the NSW Ministry of Transport continued to promote taxi auctions. This assured my wife and I that we had made a good business decision in being an owner/driver.

I was working 12/16 hrs per day, six days a week to keep my head above water – until my health took a turn for the worse. I had a heart attack which was caused by stress and due to ill health I stopped driving full time.

In the last couple of years, it was no longer viable to manage the taxi. Drivers were very hard to find and it became clear that we could no longer run the business. So the plates were placed in the hands of the taxi company.

Before the point to point business, we were receiving \$2,300 a month in lease payments for the taxi plates. Over the years the income has gradually dropped to \$1,00 per month. This month-May 2020 due to the pandemic we received the sum of \$1, a loss of \$2,299 a month. We have no idea what the future holds. How many drivers will bother to take up a sub lease when it has become so difficult to make a living.

The crash of the taxi industry has left us with an unsecure future, and rather than looking forward to reaping the rewards of our labour, we are hoping that we can manage to survive.

Our taxi plates which we have worked so hard to secure are virtually worthless. This a total loss of my investment which we had worked so hard to achieve. The NSW Government has failed us, and all the years of hard work has been for nought.

The least the NSW Government should do is to buy back the plates whose value was allowed to deteriorate through no fault of our own. Not more than three years ago they would have been worth at least \$380,000.00 now we can't even get a reasonable return from them.

I hope you will review our pleas with compassion.