

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

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 21 May 2020

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Partially  
Confidential

**UPPER HOUSE INQUIRY INTO Point to Point Transport (Taxis and Hire Vehicle)  
Act 2016**

**SUBMISSION TO PORTFOLIO COMMISSION**

**NO. 6 TRANSPORT AND CUSTOMER SERVICE**

Dated: 21<sup>st</sup> May 2020

Dear Director,

My wife and I have been Taxi Owners/Drivers for over 20 (?) years. We enjoyed a comfortable and financially secure lifestyle, confident that our \$250K investment would continue to grow in value, and provide us with substantial funds on retirement; then the Point to Point regulations were introduced and the value of our plates progressively dropped in value; it now sits at \$32K, a loss of over \$220K in the last five years. This value based on the P2P website transfer rates as at today's date but listed in February 2019.

This substantial loss can only be attributed to the Point to Point reforms.

My wife and I are both at retirement age with health issues, but we must continue to work longer now, to be able to keep food on the table and a roof over our heads. Our financial security gone and our twilight years now a battle, working to pay our bills.

P2P regulations were just the beginning of our financial decline, we then had to pay the Passenger Service Levy, supposedly for our benefit in the long term, but all we have received is abuse from passengers not willing to pay it.

My wife and I are law abiding, follow the rules and guidelines professionally and with pride and passion. We paid and continue to pay the PSL, believing we would have the opportunity to gain financial assistance under the Passenger Transport Assistance Scheme - Industry Assistance Package.

We put our life, pain and suffering down on paper, only to be rejected with no reason, just an automated rejection letter from the Department of Transport. We were not requested to provide additional information as others had been. This is evidentiary that not every applicant was treated the same throughout the application process.

Our preferred outcome - is that the Government consider buying-back the taxi plates at our purchase price, or close to. This may then put us in a financially viable position to lease them back and remain in the industry, otherwise we may have no option but to shelf the Taxi and get jobs elsewhere; which given our ages and health issues will be a challenge.

**IMPACT OF THE P2P REGULATIONS**

**Taxi Plate – Impact of legislation** - In 2014, my wife and I had a comfortable lifestyle, and what we believed to be a financially secure business as Taxi Plate Owners/Drivers. We had purchased our Taxi Plate for approximately \$250K but since P2P Regulations have been in force,

the Plate value has dropped to now sit at \$32K, a loss of \$220K in the last five years. This can only be attributed to the P2P reforms.

We have lost what was a financially secure investment, our expected retirement funds, and substantial income since P2P reforms

**Substantial loss of income** - The hours we work are now regulated, restricting the amount of hours we can work, but more importantly, the income and fares we are now getting, has dropped considerably to sometimes just \$80/day. This does not sustain a household of three adults.

**Passenger Service Levy** was supposedly put in place to pay for the Passenger Transport Assistance Scheme.

- That Scheme has now concluded, so why are we still paying the PSL?
- Customers constantly abuse us and refuse to pay it.
- What is the money being spent on?

**Passenger Transport Assistance Scheme** – Industry Assistance Package.

Unfair and unequal administration and processing of applications: -

- We put our life, pain and suffering down on paper only to be rejected, with no reason.
- We could have at least been treated respectfully and provided the reason our application was rejected.
- We should have been accorded the same opportunity others had been given, to respond to any queries on our application.
- At no time were we asked to provide additional information, or asked to expand on responses to questions, as had been done with others, instead all we received was an automated rejection letter with no reason, just the rejection.
- This outcome illustrates how unfair the Scheme was administered, not every applicant was given the same opportunity to respond to queries. Isn't it a legal responsibility and obligation that all applicants are treated the same?
- Why were we rejected with no reason provided?

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Changes / Outcomes – Interventions by Government to address local transport needs

We would appreciate the Government consider the following reviews and interventions: -

### **Buy Back Taxi Plates**

The loss in the value of our Taxi Plates can be proven to have been as a result of the new P2P reforms.

- We would appreciate the Government consider Buying Back the Taxi Plates at the price we paid for them, given we can demonstrate the loss in value can only be attributed to P2P Reforms.
- Provide us the opportunity to lease them back at reasonable and fair lease rates

### **Review of the P2P and Dept Transport Assistance Scheme**

Review the P2P and Dept Transport management and implementation of the Transport Assistance Scheme - Industry Assistance Package: -

- Was every applicant treated the same?
- Was the same process followed for every applicant?

- Provide reasons for those rejected

Reopen the Transport Assistance Scheme - Industry Assistance Package, to enable those applicants treated differently are given the same opportunity others had to demonstrate their eligibility.

### **Passenger Service Levy**

Stop the Passenger Service Levy – this was implemented to pay for the Transport Assistance Scheme which finished in June 2019.

### **Green Slip Review**

Lessen the cost of Green Slips – We believe Taxi owners/drivers pay a substantially higher Green Slip fee than rideshare.

### **Even Playing Field**

Create an even playing field for Taxis and Rideshare – this was the original marketing spiel, but this is not the situation, now four years later.

## **IN CONCLUSION**

We spent many years working hard and building up a comfortable and financially secure lifestyle in the Taxi Industry. In 2015 when the market opened up for rideshare, we worked even harder, but it seems all in vain. P2P reforms put in place from 2016 have been slowly putting undue pressure on our day to day livelihoods, destroying our lifestyle and financial security.

Driving and owning taxis today is not viable, \$80/day income, cannot sustain one person, let alone a family. Our Taxi Plates, once worth \$250K each, cannot even be sold. The value now just \$32K, but who wants to buy a taxi when there is no income potential?

We continued to work through these P2P reform changes, hoping the industry would recoup and regain financial capacity and viability, even remained at the frontline through the COVID 19 Pandemic, but instead, at retirement age, we find ourselves uncertain of our financial stability and security.

We would appreciate the Government, stepping in, supporting and helping us rebuild the industry and our lives.