

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

**Organisation:** Taxi Owners Small Business Association Inc. (TOSBA)

**Date Received:** 31 May 2020

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Partially  
Confidential

## **Submission to the NSW Parliament Legislative Council**

Portfolio Committee No 6 Inquiry – Point to Point Transport (Taxi and Hire vehicles) Act.

### **INTRODUCTION :**

The Taxi Owners Small Business Association was originally formed to fight for the rights of Taxi Owners unjustly penalised by the introduction and administration of the Point to Point Transport Act.

The organisation has since grown to recognise and fight for justice not only for plate owners in the Industry but also to bring recognition to the plight of the Operators and Drivers whose livelihood has also been progressively destroyed, not as a consequence of fair competition or new technology, but as a consequence of excessively unfair unconscionable legislation instigated to favour and establish rideshare at the expense of the regulated Industry.

Unlike other organisations purporting to represent the interest of the Taxi Industry, our members are charged no fees and all works performed on their behalf are on a voluntary basis.

Members of the Legislative Council may say “Who is this organisation? We have never heard of them.

The reason being since inception, our voice representing the actual owners, operators and drivers in the industry has been systematically vetoed or even obstructed to the point that our website has recently been hacked and is currently shut down until it can be made safe again.

Quite simply, the government, aided and abetted by vested interest does not want the public to know of the impost they have brought against a defenceless section of the community.

Cast aside by a government hell bent on its agenda regardless of the well known and well documented disastrous consequences it would bring to the lives of those and their families in the regulated industry.

Cast aside and virtually boycotted or alternately castigated by the news media including radio, news papers and television.

A media content to follow both the government and Uber diatribe fed to them regarding the so called “monopoly” of the Taxi Industry and content to promote and accept the advertising dollar from the avaricious gig economy.

Cast aside by the very Taxi networks established to support the Industry but now content to treat the Owners , Operators and Drivers as mere milking cows to enrich their own enterprise.

Cast aside by the general public brainwashed by the social media saturation instigated by Uber into believing that rideshare was cheaper (a lie), that rideshare was “new technology” (a lie) and that rideshare was safer (a lie)

## **CURRENT INDUSTRY INQUIRIES :**

Currently there are two “independent” inquiries (reviews?) being conducted.

### **TfNSW**

One heralded by Minister Constance and Transport for NSW on 28<sup>th</sup> Oct 2019. The wheels of justice turn slowly and this announcement was followed up by an announcement on 11 March that the “review” of the point to point transport sector has been instigated and will be led by Ms Sue Baker-Finch, the Associate Non Executive Director at Peoplecare Health Limited.

The “Terms of Reference” for this review with comment are included with the supporting attachments at the rear of the submission.

NOTE: Our members have little faith in the TfNSW “review” having attended several previous so called “reviews” where no real notice of submissions occurred as the desired results were already preordained to suit the government agenda.

(A classic example being the Peter Boxall chaired IPART review into taxi fares while already advertising “you will pay no more for a taxi than you did in 2014”.)

Why do they ever bother to ask for opinion from the industry?  
Possibly to carry on the ruse of “the people have spoken & we are listening” so as to obscure their true intent.

### **Legislative Council.**

The second inquiry by the NSW Legislative Council offers at last a ray of hope that at least the Legislative Council will look seriously at the real life situation of members of the Taxi community.

There is hope that this learned body will make recommendation to right the wrong that has been tragically inflicted on essentially hardworking people through the imposition of what one day, history may record as the most unfair draconian regulation ever imposed by any political party on an industry comprised of defenceless citizens of NSW.

IN ADDITION Reference to other States is relevant.

Recently, the Parliament of Victoria Legislative Council conducted an inquiry into their own Passenger Vehicle Industry Act 2017 reforms.

If anything, what Victoria has achieved against their Taxi Industry has been even more horrendous than the impositions placed upon the NSW Industry.

It is recommended that members of the NSW Legislative Council avail themselves of the Victorian report as it raises some questions that need to be addressed for the current NSW situation.

The major questions of concern to our members are:

Like Victoria, is it the final intent of the NSW Parliament to totally destroy any equity NSW plate owners have in their plate investment by introducing \$1 per week taxi licences thus rendering plate values equal to be zero?

Is it the intent of the NSW Parliament to release lease plates in unlimited numbers as has been allowed with rideshare and now in Victoria where under their regime of \$1 per week “new” taxi licences saw 4,800 taxis metamorphosed into 11,800 taxis within weeks.

In addition Victoria now has over 50,000 hire cars (rideshare) all plying for work from a consumer base from which the taxi industry had already been struggling to make a living.

Note for NSW:

A recent report stated 75,000 for hire vehicles for NSW and 123,000 PT licence holders creating an unsustainable market.

Is it the intent of the NSW government to instigate a phony “buy back” scheme like the scheme thrust upon the Industry in Western Australia?

A sliding value scheme whereby many received only \$100,000 for licences that had a previous market value of \$325,000.

A scheme that allowed the W.A. government to strip from owners their equity in licences previously worth \$715 million for the miserly sum of \$119 million. (Government theft?)

Note:

Colin Barnett the past Premier of W.A. - When informed that their policies would destroy their taxi industry - in a marvellous display of political distain is reported as replying “well, if it happens slowly, it will not hurt so much!

For most of our members it is felt that this Inquiry is the last throw of the dice for the survival of the industry.

There also is a fear that any good ideas to bring justice and equality to our industry put forward during the Legislative Council Inquiry may be vetoed along party lines as has happened with the Victorian Inquiry.

It is time to make a stand.

## **THE ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE**

The online questionnaire unfortunately demonstrates how profoundly disconnected the perpetrators of the questionnaire are from the real issues confronting the industry. Alternately, the questionnaire has been prepared along party lines, solely to downplay the seriousness of the real situation and deny genuine revelation of the facts leading to and resulting from this travesty of justice.

Sadly, although perhaps prepared with good intent, the questionnaire fails not in the questions it asks but in the questions it does not ask.

However, this submission will initially address the pro forma questions.

These questions will be answered with additional comment where appropriate and be followed with additional questions deemed important to the industry.

**Q 1** Contact:

Name:

**Q 2** Capacity – representing Taxi Owners Operators and Drivers.

**Q 3** Regulatory system – Answer e) – Very dissatisfied. Refer following comments.

**Q 4** Operation of the regulatory System. Refer following comments.

**Q 5** Bailment –  
Bailment is a moot point and a ludicrous question to put to the Industry when Owners are making no money.  
Operators are making no money.  
Drivers are making no money.  
Networks are screwing all with exorbitant radio fees and charges.  
When these issues are resolved, the question may have some relevance

**Q 6 & 7** Refer above

**Q 8** Many members have. – Some 4,600 (out of about 5,700 that should have been eligible) received the initial \$20,000 – a year late after losing \$15,000 in lease payments and the rest in taxation. Essentially the result became “No assistance”

**Q 9** Satisfied with the process?  
Any reply other than **e) very dissatisfied** –  
should be followed by the following clarification.  
Are you any of the following?

- a) Insane
- b) Stupid
- c) A public sector employee

**Q 10** Comment about the Industry Assistance package.  
Comment extensive – Refer following.

**Q 11** Comment about Passenger Service Levy.  
Comment extensive – Refer following.

**Q 12** Comment about Impact on Value of Taxi Plates  
Comment extensive – Refer following.

**Q 13** Aware of The role and function of the Point to Point Transport Commissioner.  
Yes – Both current and past. – Refer Following

**Q 14** Have comment about the role and function of the Point to Point Transport Commissioners. – Yes - Both current and past.  
Comment extensive – Refer following.

**Q 15** Positive Impacts – Minor. – Believe almost all have been detrimental.

**Q 16** Have reforms improved customer engagement and satisfaction – Not really.

Rideshare will naturally extol its manufactured virtues, aided by its saturation of the social media into brainwashing the young, and the gullible into believing its hype.

**Q 17** Have reforms encouraged the adoption of innovative ways to service needs of customers?

Reply supplied in terms of knowledge of the Industry in general.

### **EXTENDED REPLIES TO QUESTIONNAIRE.**

It is noted that the questionnaire states that it is not intended to provide a forum for respondents to make adverse reflections about others.

This submission will respect that intent where possible, but if it is the desire of the Committee to understand the true happenings leading to the current state of affairs in the Taxi Industry, it is impossible to do so without naming names or events, such as Premier Mike Baird declaring “rideshare” legal when it was not until approved by Parliament.

In that context, some may regard a particular revelation involving a Government member or public sector official as an adverse reflection on them, while others may praise those mentioned for their actions.

In this regard, this submission will attempt to make no judgement, and leave it to others to make their own individual assessment of the issues raised.

The intent of the submission is to simply present events and facts that should be reasonably verifiable and available in the public domain. If not in the public domain, any issues presented are certainly known by the majority in the Industry.

Questions remaining unaddressed since inception of the regulations.

- A) The intent to legalise Uber (aka “rideshare”) from the outset .
- B) The true intent for the future of the regulated Industry.
- C) The inequity, lies and broken promises perpetrated against the industry.
- D) The modus operandi of Uber and the lack of government control.
- E) The current status of the Industry.

### **Q 3 The Regulatory System**

The majority of the reply to this section was prepared in 2016 and sent to various politicians. No replies were ever received. Little has changed in the interim.

A brief history. It is self evident and verifiable that the intent to deregulate and the subsequent financial demise of the regulated industry had been planned for a long time.

Of relevance to our current situation can be traced to the former ACCC chairman Professor Allan Fels Taxi Industry Inquiry prepared for the Victorian Government in 2012.

Of note is that Professor Fels, then went on to a job with Uber , being appointed to Uber’s Global Advisory Board on public policy.

A paid position compensated by Professor Fels by receiving equity in the Uber business. Naturally, no conflict of interest there.

The subsequent “independent” Point to Point Report prepared by Sturgess & Parry (both Ex IPART) was little more than a plagiarised version of the Fels report.

Consequently, the “recommendation” that Uber be legalised was pre ordained and in accord with Mike Baird’s intent to legalise them from the beginning.

The regulations introduced were a carbon copy of the recommendations from the Point to Point report accepted by the government.

The Government accepted 56 of the 57 recommendations made by the taskforce in its [final report](#), which formed the basis of the *Point to Point Transport (Taxis and Hire Vehicles) Act 2016*.

*The only recommendation not accepted was to turn permanent taxi licences that owners had paid hundreds of thousands of dollars for into nine year leases.*

*(Akin to turning ones mortgaged home into a nine year lease without compensation)*

*Even the Baird Government balked on accepting that issue, but potentially only initially as although not accepted, it was not rejected either and there is a great fear that the intent remains for it to be introduced by stealth by some means such as a future compulsory buyout when taxi values have been decimated.*

**NOTE: The above statement was made in 2016 and the question still remains.**

The Regulation was passed by both Houses of New South Wales Parliament on 22 June 2016.

The Regulation commenced on 8 July 2016 and was published on the NSW legislation website.

*Government statement:*

**The Act is designed to encourage more choice and flexibility for customers, greater autonomy for industry and a renewed focus on safety standards.**

Really? Virtually all the safety standards were written off to favour rideshare.

No mention of the demise in store for Owners, Operators or Drivers.

Greater autonomy? The word means freedom from external control.

For Uber it meant freedom from **any** control and hard luck for the regulated industry.

The Regulation is a canker on what is called the Democratic Process of this Nation and a travesty of the Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986.

#### **The Inequity of the Regulation can be demonstrated as follows**

- 1) Taxis must have four doors – Not a requirement for Uber
- 2) Taxis fitted with **in car** security cameras – Not a requirement for Uber
- 3) Taxis fitted with a duress alarm system. – Not a requirement for Uber
- 4) Taxis fitted with **in car** GPS tracking – Not a requirement for Uber
- 5) Taxis fitted with safety release systems. Not wanted by Uber  
Regulation removed.

- 6) Taxi vehicles max age 6 years – Not wanted by Uber  
Regulation removed.
- 7) Taxi drivers to be appropriately trained. - Not wanted by Uber  
Regulation removed.
- 8) Taxi drivers to be appropriately licensed for passenger transport -  
Not a requirement for Uber drivers.  
( originally, only standard licence required now replaced with PT Licence)
- 9) Taxi drivers to have bona fide health checks. –  
Not a requirement for Uber drivers.
- 10) Taxi drivers requirement to provide bona fide confirmation that they may lawfully  
work in Australia. - Not wanted by Uber  
Regulation removed. (Illegals welcome?)
- 11) The National Minimum English Standard be retained for Taxi drivers.  
Not a requirement for Uber. (Solly, no uderstan U – U point way to go OK! )
- 12) Taxi drivers to wear uniforms- Not wanted by Uber-  
Regulation removed. (Stubbies and thongs?)
- 13) Taxis to display bona fide in car driver identity.- Not a requirement for Uber  
(a picture on a mobile phone is NOT bona fide identity)
- 14) Taxi regulation requirements for air conditioning, driver protection and child  
restraints. Not wanted by Uber Regulation removed.
- 15) Taxi regulation to ensure that the vehicle interior, exterior & fittings to be in  
good condition, clean and undamaged.  
Not wanted by Uber- Regulation removed.  
(does that mean “dirty , smelly Ubers are OK)
- 16) Taxis required to carry guide dogs for the blind. Not a requirement for Uber
- 17) Taxi fares regulated by the government - Not a requirement for Uber
- 18) Booked services to be “deregulated” - Purely to accommodate Uber so that they  
can charge whatever they want. (“Knowing your driver” is simply a ruse. Try  
identifying someone through a tinted window late at night)
- 19) Booked fare pricing can be an “**estimate**” not a firm price.-  
Enables Uber to whack on the iniquitous and avaricious “surge price” for which  
they are notoriously famous.  
(fares that could have taken a customer to L.A. have been recorded)
- 20) Taxis required to have fares calculated & displayed on a registered meter.  
Not a requirement for Uber.  
(Refer latest utterances from Commissioner Wise in Commissioners section))
- 21) Taxi vehicle roadworthiness checks to be performed by an Authorised Taxi  
Inspection Station (ATIS) inspection. (Taxis inspected 3 times a year)  
Not wanted by Uber- Regulation removed.



- 22) Taxi registration number & maximum fare pricing to be displayed in vehicle.  
Not a requirement for Uber
- 23) Taxis to have exclusive access to the “rank & hail” market.  
A requirement laughed at by Uber from the outset & still essentially unenforced.  
Customers “hail” from the street and even ranks using the “rideshare” App.

Q. When is a Taxi Rank not a Taxi Rank?

A. When it is an Uber designated pick up point.

Q. When is hailing a Taxi not a hail?

A. When the “App happy” **hail** from the street by phone.

Q. When is a Taxi not a Taxi?

(a vehicle for conveying paying public passengers)

A. When it is a “Rideshare” vehicle.(doing precisely the same thing)

Not A Taxi?

Even though the word “**rideshare**” has been debunked by the European Court and their service declared nothing more than a Taxi service.

However, our Government persists with the charade & continues to call the service “rideshare” & Taxis having the “exclusive right” to Rank & Hail.

- 24) Taxi drivers subject to a maximum blood alcohol limit of 0.2.  
Initially, not a requirement for Uber drivers because they are “private drivers”,  
(oops, should have said “**partners**”) their passengers are not passengers just  
“**ridesharers**” (paying passengers) so initially a blood alcohol limit of 0.5 was OK  
for “rideshare” (pirate) taxis.  
And the Government accepted this “playing with words rubbish”

- 25) Taxis to be “identifiable” - Not wanted by Uber so that they could engage in “rank & hail” services with impunity, pick up & drop where they like and not be subject to compliance or random roadworthiness checks.

Consequently – originally no special identity requirements for Uber either by vehicle identification or registration plates was recommended in the original legislation.

**Two years later!** Since Nov.1 2017 identifying stickers have been mandatory on ride share vehicles.

This was of great concern to Uber drivers who felt that Police & RMS inspectors may “**target**” them for breaking the law. **How unjust!**

They need not have worried.

The new regime of “tough inspectors” regard them as a protected species.

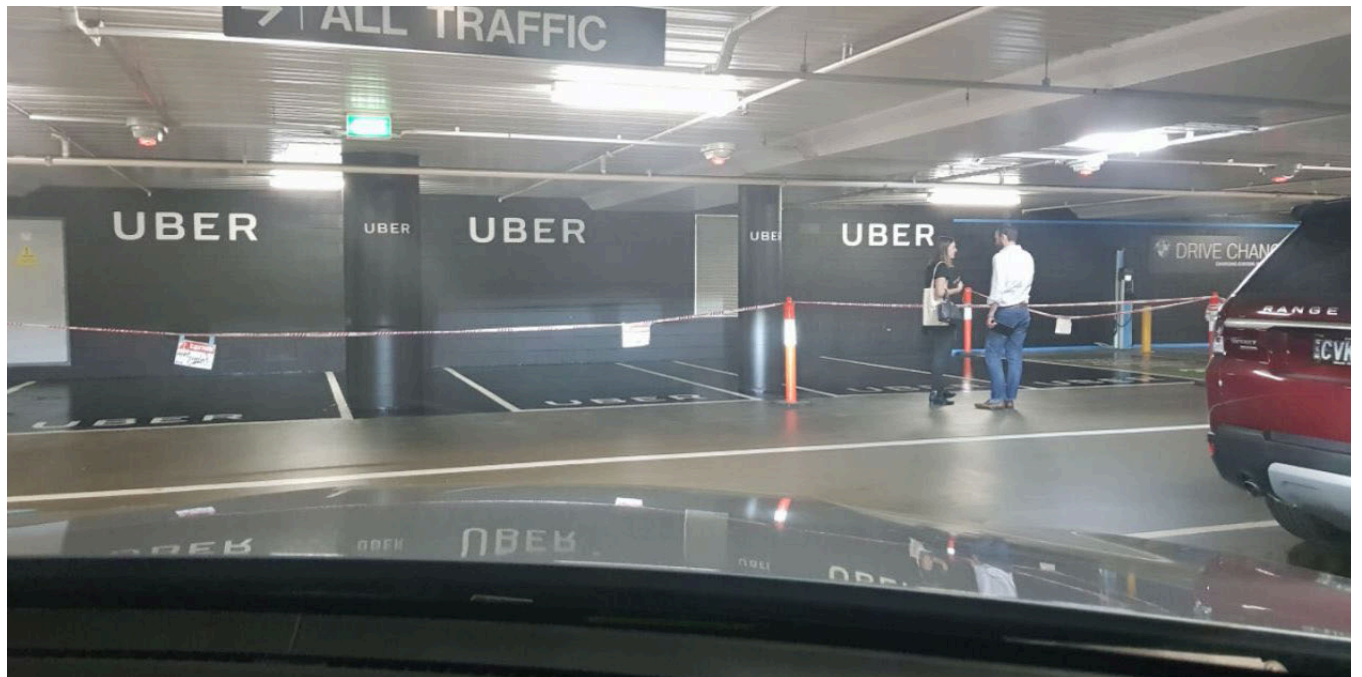
**The following photos are of “non taxi ranks”**

**The “designated pick up locations” are proliferating throughout the State.**



© AAP Image A pick-up zone for Uber in Melbourne.

Not a Taxi rank? Only when it is a designated pick up zone!



Ranks exclusively for taxis? Here's one inside Bondi Junction Shopping Centre

- 26) Previous Taxi CTP insurance was at some 12 to 18 times the private vehicle rate. No legislated “special” insurance rate was proposed in the P to P Report originally for Uber as they claimed their service was “private use” . They got away with it for almost two years prior to being legalised and another two years after with no formal legislation in place. The incredible differences in running costs between the alternate services were simply glossed over in the Point to Point report.

NOTE

Regarding Insurance:

An example of how inequitable the situation had become. (documented evidence available)  
 Two vehicles – same brand – same year model - same body style –same premium start date  
 youngest driver almost identical 60 & 65 – same no “at fault “collisions status  
 –same period of cover – same insurance company (NRMA) Nature of Cover GREEN SLIP

Use declared car a – Full time UberX business vehicle	Total premium	\$604.54
Use declared car b – Full time Taxi	Total premium	\$10,486.10

The previous example is only the tip of an iceberg of inequities faced by the regulated industry.

After years of obscenely unjustifiable insurance rates, followed by two years of promises of a fairer rate for Taxis and a two year free run for Uber, the new insurance rules (due to the way they are proposed to be implemented –) means that the “regulated” taxis are now only paying about six times that of “ride share” for comparable service.- All part of the “level playing field” & “getting the balance right”

- 27) Dividing “Rank & Hail “ & “Booking” services into two separate entities. Seemingly, purely to favour Ubers so called “rideshare” services when in reality their service is nothing more than a “taxi service”. Originally booked services were metered without any issue. The pathetic excuse regarding “knowing the driver” & “less risk” is spurious. The other pathetic excuse of “encouraging competition” is no less spurious. The iniquitous practice of “surge pricing” is simply glossed over.

There is no **legitimate reason** why booking service could not be regulated and metered to a maximum fare price the same as rank & hail. (prior to the concession to Uber it was)

There is no apparent mystery as to why the service was split into separate entities.

Uber wanted “carte blanche” approval to charge whatever it wanted, whenever it wanted.

So the “pre ordained” Point to Point transport report recommended it and the Baird government gave it to them.

All under the guise of “creating competition” - “serving the public”.  
 “Getting the balance right” & “Creating a Level playing field”

**And not a soul in the media or political arena questioned it.**

#### Q 4 The regulatory System in Operation

In Operation, the so called regulatory system has been little more than a farce.

Rideshare with little rules appear to ignore the few they do have.

The regulated industry on the other hand are subjected to a barrage of infringements for any misdemeanour.

Originally, Minister Constance vowed the creation of a new, stand-alone, watchdog in the form of a specific Commissioner would be - quote

**“the toughest regulator the NSW point to point transport industry has ever had.”**

Shame “toughest regulator” did not apply her talents to Rideshare.

When questioned at a meeting whether the new regime of “tough inspectors” were going to be the same old RMS inspectors with new hats?

Commissioner Wise replied

**Pretty much!**

So the Industry apparently retained the majority of the same inspectors who were incapable of catching Uber “lawbreakers” (or were they ordered to leave them alone?)

In the 14 months after Uber X commenced illegally, apparently some 57 inspectors managed to catch only a dozen lawbreakers - none of whom proceeded to Court or were fined.

At a meeting between Authorities & Taxi owners/drivers in September 2015 (prior to Premier Baird declaring Uber Legal) when challenged as to why no Uber lawbreakers had proceeded to Court, the RMS Director of Safety and Compliance – said it was due to “Operational Reasons”. Operational reasons that he refused to divulge. Refer Attachment Re: Baird? Rideshare booking/

The consensus in the Industry was that Uber were **“being protected”** and that consensus has not changed since.

The right to Rank & Hail for Taxis only is to express it in the vernacular “a bloody joke”

The “App happy” population, most of whom are unable to attend a toilet without their mobile, permanently hail from the street and often will not walk 20 metres to a rank.

Rideshare take street hail by App (thus calling it a booking) and even pick up from ranks with total disdain.

The law seems to be very sparsely enforced with only a “token” booking taken now and again. Is Uber still paying their “partners” fines or are they throwing them to the wolves now that they have plenty of partners to waste?

The previous Commissioner became known as the Commissioner for Uber. Other titles attributed to the Commissioner were less polite.

“Rideshare” is now fully established, with many more joining the fray every day as there are apparently no rules or regulations to restrict their entry or number.

Our inaugural Point to Point Commissioner has achieved the major requirement of her commission and now moved on.

Her totally biased conflict of interest has been rewarded with an Australia Day Public Service Medal for outstanding public service in the promotion of Uber.

Her award was a slap in the face and an insult to every member of the Taxi Industry.

With the primary aim of promoting rideshare achieved it would appear that our new Point to Point Commissioner – Anthony Wing is embarking on a new primary objective

**“Out and about with Compliance” featuring Anthony Wing is the new crusade.**

Commissioner Wing, since appointment has been swanning around the countryside or attending in particular, the airport as well as city events in a constant search to catch and fine “lawbreakers”.

Even though “rideshare” outnumber Taxis by many multiples to one, the number of inspections made of taxis seem to outnumber rideshare.

Maybe Taxis are easier to find ( or should we say fine?).

## **QUESTIONS 5 to 9 Previously addressed**

### **Q 10 Industry Assistance**

The amount established appears to be based a figure seemingly plucked out of the air as it has no relevance to the losses and damage imposed on owners and the industry in general.

(Financially the loss of over \$2 billion in plate value equity in NSW alone as well as 70% income loss since regulation.

Now with the impact of COV19, - 100% loss in lease return – Note: at the time of writing, lease payment by 13 Cabs April were \$1.10 per month – not a typing error , one dollar plus GST per month)

Also taxing any payout on the recipients maximum gross income rate is grossly unfair in the circumstance, and greatly diminishes the effective intent of any so called “Assistance” Refer to Q 9. Naturally, none of the tax issue was ever revealed to the public.

The taxed package is essentially no more than an expensive personal loan to the industry that the Industry is compelled to pay back over many years.

The “generosity” of the government will cost the government nothing, - in fact the Levy will make the government money in the long run.

To our knowledge, no disclosure has ever been made whether the government is charging “administration costs” from the levy or whether payments to the NSW Taxi Council have been made to have members on the adjudication panel for financial distribution of moneys allocated.

### **Taxis**

The initial \$20,000 Transitional Assistance heralded as being “immediate” took over a year to instigate and distribute.

#### **Refer Q8.**

\$98million was to be distributed to 4,900 applicants deemed eligible.

Apparently, only \$92 million was distributed with no accounting for the “left over” \$6 million or explanation as to why 300 missed out.

It was later claimed the unallocated moneys had been distributed - apparently under an introduced scheme called TAP-2 but no one seems to be able to verify the amounts distributed or the recipients.

Of disbelief is the advice that Operators of **eligible taxi training schools** (which essentially meant the NSW Taxi Council) were then to be considered for payment for loss of business even though they had not lost the investment value of taxi plates or be required to contribute to the Passenger Service Levy or be subject to a five year (now 6 year) “freeze” on fare income as had been imposed on the Taxi Industry. Any amount allocated, unlike the allocation for Taxi Owners was not restricted. The amount was to be determined by TfNSW in accord with guidelines set by the “Panel” (no guidelines are known to have been published).

Note 1: Allocation of funds to Training schools was not mentioned in the recommendations of the Point to Point Report.

Note 2: The distribution of funds were intended for Taxi Owners, not “others.”

Note 3: With the release of lowered requirements to obtain a Taxi licence there was an increase in applications. The NSW Taxi Council driver Training School advised it had enjoyed a 21% rise in driver training applications following the changed requirements.

Note 4: A reliable source has indicated that the NSW Taxi Council Driver Training enterprise received an amount in excess of \$400,000 even though they had previously advised an increase in business.

(The Legislative Council should investigate this claim and if true the NSW Taxi Council should be required to justify why it was awarded.)

## **Hire Cars**

With the original TAP scheme, there was also an Additional Assistance Hire Vehicles Payment Scheme (AAHVP) allocation of \$10million to “**compensate**” hire vehicle owners for having their far cheaper hire vehicle licences converted to quasi taxi licences. TfNSW own advice was that \$8.3 million was distributed to 99 applications for 150 eligible hire vehicles.

Note 1: An **EXPLANATORY STATEMENT** noted “**Social Security (Exempt Lump Sum –New South Wales Additional Assistance Hire Vehicle Payment ) Determination 2017**. Sheds light on Hire Car payments Refer Attachments The Committee should source this document so that it may be referenced in full.

The section relevant to this submission regarding payments to Hire Cars states as follows:

These payments are one off payments to holders of a hire vehicle who have been affected as a result of structural changes in the taxi and hire vehicle service industry.

A minimum payment of **\$30,000** will be made for perpetual hire vehicle licences outside of Sydney, and **\$80,000** for licences within Sydney. Single licence payments could be as high as **\$235,000** with total payments for all licences held by an individual party as high as **\$418,000**

Clearly, there has been a huge discrepancy in the financial treatment of Taxi Owners in comparison to the financial treatment of Hire Car Owners.

This is not to suggest that Hire Car owners did not deserve to receive their compensation but it does highlight how unfairly the regulated Taxi Industry was treated in comparison.

The situation is particularly compounded by the fact that the market value of Hire cars was less than a quarter of the market value Taxis prior to the regulation.

The excuse that Hire Cars were being deregulated and Taxis were not when the actions of government in promoting rideshare over the regulated taxis has rendered the value of taxi licences virtually worthless is cruel and vindictive.

Following “deregulation” many Hire Car owners claimed they had never had it so good and purchased new vehicles with their windfall.

### **Taxi Owners Hardship Assistance**

**Application and distribution of the so called “hardship” package to “eligible” taxi owners was unjust to many, particularly the aged, the infirm and those with limited literary or computer skill.**

The Application requirements were so draconian that apparently under 1,300 Applications were received when the true impact on the Industry should have attracted several thousand.

( 1,258 applicants being a figure revealed by NSW Taxi Council but no information has been forthcoming on how many were successful or the range of payments )

The bureaucratic impost of the Application process was extensive, demeaning and so invasive of private personal information together with no guarantee that privileged private information could not be distributed plus the warning given that unless the applicant was already on the pension that their application would likely be unsuccessful caused many to simply give up attempting to make an application.

The fact that it took 31 pages of advice material, a 26 page information kit, a set of control conditions comprising 46 requirements, personal information even on health issues for not just the applicant but household members as well, current household living expenses, tax records for three years for applicants as well as their partners and a list of other issues is unconscionable and needs to be read to be believed.

It is difficult to imagine that the ludicrous conditions for application were not purposely set to restrict the number of applicants.

As stated, many of the elderly and those with limited computer or literary skills simply found the application process impossible.

For those interested in ascertaining the impost of the process it can be found at :  
[Individual Application Information Kit \(PDF, 466.14 KB\) \(https://www.-transport.nsw.gov.au/system/files/media/documents/2018/Individual-Application-Information-Kit\\_0.pdf\)](https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/system/files/media/documents/2018/Individual-Application-Information-Kit_0.pdf).

The schedules set for distribution of the Additional Assistance package were as follows:

Originally advertised :	Open November 2016	Close July 2017
Later amended to	Open January 2017	Close Nov. 2017

The scheme eventually opened **unannounced, 20 months late on the 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2018** with a closing date of 1<sup>st</sup> **October 2018**

Members were not advised that the scheme had commenced for several weeks after the 2<sup>nd</sup> July thus shortening the application period.

Even the “notification” notice that the scheme had commenced was dated the 13<sup>th</sup> July with actual postage received by potential applicants some time later.

After the “closing date” of the 2<sup>nd</sup> October, TfNSW then embarked on a second round of “additional information” requirements to be certified and submitted by the **26<sup>th</sup> November 2018**

Initial advice from TfNSW was that **payments** were set to **commence** on the **18<sup>th</sup> December 2018**. **To anyone’s knowledge - None commenced.**

On the 21<sup>st</sup> December, TfNSW advised that “**notices**” would be going out to **all Applicants** over the following six weeks.

There was no mention that actual payments would commence following the 21<sup>st</sup> December, only that “**notices**” were to be **sent to all applicants** by the **1<sup>st</sup> February 2019**.

TfNSW subsequently advised that it had started making offers to Applicants in December, however after extensive canvassing, during January, no one in the industry could name a single soul who had received a so called “**offer**” let alone any money. None were in any position to reject any **offer** regardless. It was never a negotiable offer with any explanation how derived. It was a case of simply take it or leave it.

TfNSW then advised that the “new” distribution period for payments had been extended to **March 31<sup>st</sup> or longer**.

Later TfNSW advice was that the **distribution period for payments** had again been extended to **no later than 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019**.

**Two years later than originally advised. During the period of delay, 132 deceased estate sales were recorded. (approx. 50% of sales – a ratio unprecedented prior to the acceptance of rideshare) Was the Government simply waiting for us to die?**



Note:

The initial “Transitional Assistance” allocation **was** considered as an **exempt lump sum** for the social security income test.

**THE ADDITIONAL TRANSITIONAL ASSISTANCE IS NOT!**

**Why did the ATO and Social Security change tack in the circumstance?**

A famous Scott Morrison quote while Treasurer:

**“It would be unethical for me to interfere in the operations of the Tax Office”**

Apparently it is **ethical** to wipe out an industry consisting hard working Australian citizens to favour avaricious, tax evading foreign corporations stripping millions from the community **to be sent to their tax havens** – but **unethical** to interfere in the operations of the Tax Office.

The grave injustice perpetrated is that the majority who were deemed “eligible” were already elderly pensioners and declaring the payments “taxable” and not a lump sum for the social security income test has ripped the guts out of any real hardship support.

Victoria also followed the same route by taxing those who received moneys from what they called “The Fairness Fund” –

Now commonly called the “Unfairness Fund” by their members in the trade.

(The Victorian Parliament are learning from Uber how to give a warm and mothering name to something that is the complete opposite)

The ATO has now sliced into all the “hardship” payments made and will continue to do so to those who had chosen to take their “hardship” allowance in three payments instead of one.

The “take it in three payments” con job, so that the recipient will not be taxed so heavily results in many instances of the following:

- a) Most likely the loss of any pension for three years instead of one.
- b) The likely requirement for the recipient to pay quarterly BAS payments to the tax office for three years as the tax office will assume a following year annual gross income inclusive of the payout added to any tax or pension income.
- c) It will be done even though current lease payments are effectively zero and will unlikely return to previous value for years or never if the Berejiklian government has its way.
- d) The government, by delaying payments over three years will be able to have the payouts funded by the Levy as the dollars roll in.

## **Q 11 The Passenger Service Levy**

**The Levy is the only “promise” delivered on time. 1<sup>st</sup> February 2018**

It is in essence taxed, and has GST applied. (A tax on a tax)

The industry receives no compensation for the downtime and cost for its collection although it has not been confirmed whether the government will withdraw from the fund for its own administration fees.

The Industry is being “blamed” for the introduction of the levy.

Initially, the levy was alienating the public and used by Uber to foster the blame and claim to be unfairly treated. (as always)

Now over time, the public seem to take little notice of it.

Although “rideshare” (aka Uber) is the only beneficiary of the governments largess in granting them **an unlimited licence to trade for free**, it is the taxi industry that has essentially carried the burden of collection for a levy that should not in any fairness have been applied to it considering the billions collected from it over many years.

When Commissioner Wise was questioned on radio as to why the Levy was applicable to the Taxi Industry when only Uber was the real beneficiary, Ms Wise replied –  
**We discussed that but thought it would be more appropriate to maintain the level playing field.**

“Level playing field”?? The level playing field has never existed nor was it intended.

## **Q 12 Impact of the Act on the value of Taxi Plates**

Does this really require an answer that the Legislative Council would not be already aware?

Between Mike Baird’s announcement and the end of June 2016, Plate values that had already dropped prior to the announcement, then dropped by an additional \$200,000 to \$150,000

Prices rose again after that time to a high of around \$230,000 by the end of 2016 followed by a slow fall after.

By the end of 2017 they were down to \$170,000

By the end of 2018 they were down to below \$100,000

During 2019 they hovered up and down between \$100,000 and \$65,000

The year to date has varied between \$60,000 and \$110,000 which is puzzling for the following reasons.

The banks regard the plates as having no equity and will not advance loans for their purchase.

With COVID 19, as lease values currently at virtually zero, the current plate values will be effectively the same until circumstances improve.

Whether values improve at all now will be dependent on whether the Government returns any equality to the trading conditions imposed on the industry.

## **Q 13 The Role and Function of the Point to Point Commissioner**

The roll and function of the inaugural Commissioner is difficult to report on without seeming cynical or biased.

However, those reading this submission are most unlikely to be aware of the havoc wrought against the Industry during her tenure.

Barbara Wise, NSW Point to Point Transport Commissioner was appointed to the position in October 2016

Previously Ms Wise was the Director for Point to Point Implementation at Transport for NSW responsible for reforms to Taxi, hire car and rideshare industry.

Her complicity in the production of that most flawed and biased production left the Taxi Industry members with little faith that any justice or equality was to follow.

Perhaps the observation at the time may have seemed to be a little unkind in the circumstance.

Either way, the result of her commission ended up as predicted, and the result achieved has had a particularly cruel and almost vindictive outcome.

In November 2016, Minister Constance outlined his expectations relating to the Commissioner's service delivery priorities under the following title :

### **Functions of the Commissioner**

#### ***Working together to achieve safer point to point transport in NSW***

*Safer?*

*Most safety conditions were abandoned with the regulation.*

*Working together?*

*Putting Uber & Taxi drivers together was like putting two tom cats in the same box.*

*We seem to be missing something ?*

### **The Functions of the Commissioner**

- The role of the Commissioner was announced to instigate and implement the following:
- To administer the Act including authorization and licensing schemes.
- To manage the enforcement of the Act and the Regulation.
- To recommend safety & standards for passenger and booked services
- To administer the new safety regime.
- To establish duty of care compliance.
- To assist in the determination of liability for and enforcement of payment of the passenger service levy
- To advise the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure on passenger services and booking services matters
- To maintain the preserve of "rank & hail"
- To oversee the setting of fares.
- To establish the criterion & a time schedule for the release of the Industry "Hardship package"
- To establish the new regime of "enforcement inspectors"
-

- **Q 14 Comment regarding Point to Point Commissioner.**

- Between commencing her appointment in 2016 and January 2017, at the time it seemed that the only utterances the Taxi Industry heard from the Commissioner was an address at the 2016 Taxi Industry Association AGM where the audience sat open mouthed and spellbound at her lack of knowledge of the real issues facing the Industry.
- For the rest of the 3 months, we were told that she was “organising” her office. Apparently, she had been provided with pretty nice digs in the circumstance.
- Some of her **non achievements** may be listed as follows, remembering that most were proposed to have been organised or implemented by Feb 2017.
- *The Management and Enforcement of the Act –*  
Never really implemented and any enforcement taking place has only ever appeared to apply to taxis.
- *Recommending safety standards –*  
Current standards are a retrograde step from standards that were previously in place while Uber still does what it likes with allowance to implement its own “standards”.
- *To maintain the preserve of “rank & hail” -*  
A standing joke from the outset as rideshare take “hail by App” from the street with gay abandon and dedicated Uber pick up zones (ranks) are cropping up everywhere from originally the Airport (promised to be reserved for Taxis only) to now popular venues to even several shopping centres.
- *To oversee the setting of fares.*  
With the collaboration of IPART and apparent direction of the government, Taxi fares have been frozen since 2014 and indicators are that they will remain frozen until 2021 or beyond before the next round of fare investigations take place. In the meantime rideshare charge whatever they think the market will bear and tell the public that they are “cheaper” even though RMS research has indicated otherwise when taking into account Uber’s “surge pricing” and all the dirty tricks they apply to a brainwashed and gullible public.
- Did not the Commissioner have a duty of care to reveal to the public the true nature of Uber’s operation?
- *To establish the new regime of “enforcement inspectors” -* This took over a year to implement and when questioned at a meeting whether the “new” inspectors would be the same old RMS inspectors as before with different hats, MS Wise reply was “pretty much”

The operation of the “new inspectors” has been little different than previous whereby the Taxi Industry is hounded and for the most part Uber left alone.

*To assist in the determination of liability for and enforcement of payment of the passenger service levy.*

The implementation of the levy was the only criteria established on time.

*To establish the criterion & a time schedule for the release of the Industry "Hardship package"*

An answer to this issue is extensively covered in the section titled Taxi Owners Hardship Assistance.

*"Hardship package" (cont.)*

Scheduled to close by July 2017, payments did not commence until after July 2019. Two years late!

During the period of delay, 132 deceased Estate sales were recorded.

Was the delay due to Incompetence or Design?

A few of the Commissioners Gems should be tabled  
( probably originating from "ideas" she received from Uber)

**"If you're hailing it (a taxi) in the street or taking it from a rank, it will be a maximum fare. They'll need to have the price (per km) on the window. But if it's through an app or on the phone, or any other way that it might be booked, it would be a negotiated fare," Ms Wise told The Australian.**

So according to the Commissioner, the App happy clappers who "book" from the street could now "negotiate" for a fare to their destination.

Would they "do a deal" for cash?

In addition, would the negotiation result in a fare up or down?

What about the Levy and the GST?

Shock, horror, was the Commissioner advocating for drivers to break the law?

How many irregular travellers (particularly tourists) would actually know what the correct price would be when traveling from A to B in Sydney traffic?

**"Taxis carrying booked customers would not have to use a meter. "I expect that some of them will for quite a while ... but they won't have to."**

Ah, excuse us madam Commissioner, but doesn't the Act call for regulated taxis to use a meter & in not doing so is breaking the law ?

Should make for some "interesting" pay-ins and collecting the levy should be fun.

Could result in an amazing number of "broken down" meters.

**It is perfectly OK for a taxi driver to take a booking from any source.**

So according to the Commissioner, Owners and Lease Holders would be required to be providing vehicles, registration and insurance for Uber to run its operation.

Is there not a legal term for that?

From memory, the legal fraternity call it FRAUD.

Oh, by the way, Fraud carries a custodial sentence - but it is only a maximum of six months for amounts under \$5,000 so it is hardly worth worrying about.

And gee! The Commissioner has declared fraud to be OK anyway.

**In a few years, there will be no difference between Taxis and Rideshare.**

The Commissioner revealing the governments true intent for the future of the regulated industry .

### **The New Commissioner**

The roll of the new Commissioner seems to be collecting fines from an Industry already on its knees.

### **Q15 Positive Impact from Industry reform**

Answered originally and requires no further comment

### **Q 16 Have reforms improved customer engagement and satisfaction?**

### **Q 17 Have reforms encouraged the adoption of more innovative ways to service needs of customers**

**Questions 15,16 & 17 raise a particular attitude toward the Taxi Industry that the politicians & bureaucrats who reign over us for some reason fail to comprehend.**

The questions presented are obviously politically motivated so that those who have instigated the “review” can use any positive replies to justify their actions and indicate to the public that the regulations they have enacted have resulted in a great benefit to the travelling public.

“The people have spoken and we are listening”

Evidently the taxi fraternity are not classified as “people”

Essentially since the inception of the arrival of Uber and the subsequent “liberation” of the Taxi Industry, **has any** politician, public sector department head or employee ever championed the rights of the Taxi Owners, Operators or Drivers?

Every single review or enquiry has been focussed entirely on the “**customer**” and not those who have serviced the public. For a great many in the Industry, their service has consisted their entire working lives.

Our current situation raises the following questions.

Are those of the taxi industry not citizens of this nation due the same rights and consideration as the vast majority of our fellow citizens or are we to be considered merely as beasts of burden placed in the community to service its needs?

For a great number of good people, the taxi industry provided a new start in life for those coming from other countries where they had been burdened by the tyranny of oppressive governance.

They worked hard and debilitating hours that only those escaping oppression know how to do.

Eventually, after years of striving, many were able to purchase their own taxis.

As the industry was a government controlled enterprise and this nation was free and democratic, they were comforted and proud of attaining their own small businesses, secure in the belief that it would not be stolen from them.

They believed their future retiring years would be secure without needing a pension or being a burden on the State.

They now feel betrayed by the very country they grew to cherish and believed in.  
The actual tragedy of this sorry episode is that they have been.  
Cast aside as collateral damage for a heartless government instigating its political intent.

Are taxi people non citizens not entitled for consideration for their losses incurred due entirely by government edict.

The financial ,emotional and even physical loss as a result of this governments action has been well documented and impossible to ignore.

The profound tragedy of the current situation is that the government, from the outset, were perfectly aware of the repercussions of their action, yet proceeded with their intent regardless.

Now the Government has the audacity to ask the Industry what are the positive impacts from their reform. Would eleven known suicides be a good start?

Some of the platitudes from our politicians are particularly cringeworthy in their hypocrisy.

From Premier Gladys Berejiklian

On the NSW Culture :

**“We like the idea that everyone is equal and you’re judged by your actions and not where you came from”**

On her advice to colleagues:

**“For everything we do I say how are we demonstrating heart in this decision?**

**How are we showing compassion?**

**Because we’ll be measured by how we treat the most vulnerable”**

It is difficult to condone such statements in the light of the Governments action against the regulated Taxi Industry

Currently, with the imposition of COVID 19 on the Community, the government is doing all it can for those in the general community whose livelihood is being challenged. The affect on those whose jobs are in disarray is profound and clearly understood in the taxi industry as we have been subject to similar wage loss and job uncertainty for over 5 years.

In the circumstance is it wrong to spare a thought for those in the Taxi Industry?  
The Industry has had its fares (ie. Its wages) frozen since 2014 with no reprieve in sight.

The Industry has had its plate value (ie Its superannuation) diminished by 80% and with the effect of covid19 - potentially 100% unless the government restores fair trading to its operation when normality is restored.

Daily takings by drivers has been reduced by over 50% since pre Uber .  
Now they have the impact of covid19 . Takings of \$40 or often less for a 10 hour shift are not uncommon.

Currently those still endeavouring to service the public are actually losing money in doing so. It costs more to put a taxi on the road than the drivers can earn. Many owners have provided their cars to drivers for free in what they feel is their duty to serve.

Have they been lauded as heroes? NOT A WORD!

Has the government or the general public with their attitude toward us is that we have been deemed to serve ever acknowledged our effort?

Over half the entire fleet of Taxis have been placed on hold due to covid19

Lease payments for owners has been reduced by 70% pre Covid19 and currently 100%

\$1.10 per month /April - \$ 9.75 per month / May - Things are “looking up”

The Owners, Operators and Drivers have suffered this continual diminishment of their livelihood for five years with no support in sight.

We are currently on the verge of a No more regulated Taxi Industry.

If the public and the government only want “rideshare” they will be crying one day when they get it and that is all they have.

For this submission, it is difficult to describe the hurt and anguish being experienced by so many members of our Industry.

Surely there are members among our current MP's unwilling to see so many go under.

REGARDING THE UNANSWERED QUESTIONS MENTIONED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SUBMISSION

**A) The intent to legalise Uber (aka “rideshare”) from the outset .**

The intent to legalise Uber from the outset remains a puzzle to many in the Industry despite the hype surrounding its introduction. To get votes?

Prior to Uber X commencing, Deloitte Access Economics had reported that the Taxi Industry generated a \$1.2 billion economic advantage to the State.

Why would the State jeopardise that financial boost to its coffers to allow a parasitic enterprise strip \$millions from its revenue to be sent to overseas tax havens?

To the uninitiated, it doesn't make sense. What are we missing?

Perhaps one day the Berejiklian government will provide an answer.

**B) The true intent for the future of the regulated Industry.**

The governments so called ten year plan for the industry has apparently never been presented to the public. If it has, there seems to be no one in the Industry aware of it.

One would assume in the circumstance that the same would apply to the Committee.

Could the Committee request that the government present its “ten year plan” to the Industry.

We would like to know what is ahead of us if we are still around.

**C) The inequity, lies and broken promises perpetrated against the industry.**

Regarding the late distribution of the Assistance moneys, the Commissioner stated at a meeting “the money was never going to be paid by the scheduled time as it had not even been allowed for in that years budget”



The Commissioners statement turned out to be incorrect (not unusual) as a check on budget allocations revealed that the money had been allocated.

What was unconscionable was that they were not prepared to distribute it.

Mike Baird:

Legislation has been brought before us but the Government has not determined how it will protect those who have current plates or transition them to the new regime. I do not know how any government can be run that way.

Neither did the Taxi Industry.

Mike Baird

The thing that has made the taxi/ride-share situation difficult to manage is that, unlike other businesses facing disruption (say, video stores facing disruption from Netflix) **the Government has sold and regulated taxi licence plates and has a responsibility to offer some protection for the mums and dads and investors who own these plates,"**

\$20,000 Taxed Transitional Assistance after losing an initial \$200,000 and \$15,000 in income payments was not the "most generous in the world."

Andrew Constance.

**"It's important that we don't forget those** who have poured their savings into taxi licences over the past decades and ensure they get equitable assistance as this industry adjusts to changes in our economy."

Andrew Constance.

**"We are not willing to see in some cases people who are in their seventies and eighties, who are dependent on the income from these plates, go under."**

Andrew Constance

**"Customers, taxi and hire car operators, drivers and new entrants have all made clear they want change and today we are making it happen,"**

Andrew Constance.

**"Taxis will continue to have exclusive access to cab ranks and hail jobs".**

**"We don't want rank & hail"** claimed Uber while they engaged in it with gusto.

### **Airport Access**

It was stated –

**"Taxis to have exclusive access to Sydney Airport"**

It was originally announced that Taxis would have exclusive access to the Airport and Uber be banned from pick up at that location..

The ban was not enforced from the outset.

Within 4 months following "legalisation" Uber unilaterally announced that it would commence operations at Sydney Airport.

***In total defiance of the government legislation directive and with no legal repercussion for their action.***

## **Taxi Releases**

The apparent abandonment by the Berejiklian Government of the requirement for Transport for NSW to regulate taxi numbers in accord with community demand and viability is just another item to be added to the long list of betrayals perpetrated by an unfeeling and uncaring Parliament.

The Point to Point web site provides the following information in regard to s73 of the Act

### **Taxi licence determinations**

The Point to Point Transport (Taxis and Hire Vehicles) Act 2016 (the Act) requires Transport for NSW to determine before 31 March each year the number of annual taxi licences to be released commencing on the following 1 July.

In making the determination for licences, Transport for NSW must consider factors outlined in s73 of the Act including:

- Likely passenger demand and latent demand for taxi services.
- The performance of existing taxi services.
- The demand for new taxi licences.
- The viability and sustainability of the taxi industry.
- Any other matters Transport for NSW considers relevant, having regard to the objective of ensuring improved taxi services.

How can Transport for NSW begin to justify granting "Ride-share"(pirate cabs) an **unlimited** license to trade while ignoring the true plight of the Taxi Industry and release plates in contradiction of factors outlined in s73 of the Act?

Apparently Rideshare are not Taxis , they are invisible and do not cause road congestion.

**No one is above the Law claim our pious politicians.**

**Except the government apparently.**

#### **D) The modus operandi of Uber and the lack of government control.**

With the submissions to the committee , Uber will undoubtedly not miss the opportunity to make a submission.

They will, as usual extoll the virtues of Uber, how wonderfully popular they are with the travelling public, how they are creating highly paid employment for thousands, how they are easing traffic congestion by adding 60,000 vehicles to the nations roads, how they are at the forefront of modern technology and how in a few months they will be introducing flying taxis to Melbourne – all electric and driverless naturally. And don't forget to keep looking up if walking down Collins St.

Unfortunately, the Berejiklian government has embraced them with unbridled enthusiasm. (Birds of a Feather?)

In spreading their pernicious influence through the social media, radio, newspapers, television, and the political arena they have now turned their attention on State government transport, with the view of eventually providing ticketing and payment options on their App.

Naturally their latest foray into anything and everything could not have been achieved without the great support of the Transport Minister.

This issue is somewhat puzzling really as when questioned recently the Minister claimed little knowledge of the arrangement even though it was plastered all over the newspapers.

Apparently he is so popular that people like to take selfies with him.

Wonder how much more money that should stay in the State will find its way to the Netherlands.

Another little Uber foray into areas they should not be entitled to go that should be of serious concern for any thinking person is Uber are trialling in Newcastle their own version of wheelchair Accessible Cabs .  
Their new product is called uberWAV.

Apparently, if you have the ear of the government you can do anything you like.

WAT taxis are NOT “rideshare!

So the Berejiklian government is allowing UBER - WAT taxis for free.

Who gives the permission for this? They claim their vehicles are certified.

Or is it with UBER – no permission needed – we are UBER, we don’t need permission, we don’t like your rules so we will not obey them.  
Besides, Gladys and Andrew love us so we can do whatever we want !

Are their drivers (called top rated **driver partners**) to be trained to the same standard as the regulated industry?

Or are they going to be signed up in 4 minutes as Uber advertise for their regular **“partners”**

Can’t the government at least ask UBER to please drop the **“partner”** CRAP?  
It has been flogged to the stage where people in the genuine industry are nearly throwing up when they hear it.

Apparently Uber taxis are to be subsidised out of the public purse in the same manner as genuine WAT Taxis. The following attachment suggest so.

What is this government going to do when the genuine WAT Taxi owners say – that’s it – we have had enough - we have had it with this government and dump their Taxis?

Our members are saying

“What next is this government going to do in their effort to destroy us”?

It is self evident that this new betrayal was planned behind the industries back and has been planned for some time without the knowledge of the regulated industry.

Excerpts from the government Transport Disability Incentives and Subsidies Review are attached

- The **free** WAT licence is a valuable incentive to ensuring the supply of WATs in NSW; and there is capacity within the existing fleet to complete additional WAT jobs.
- Along with free licences, **the loan scheme** provides a valuable incentive in ensuring the supply of WATs in NSW.
- **As the scheme is gradually extended beyond taxis, consideration will be given to extending the loan scheme to any service provider providing wheelchair accessible point to point transport services.**
- The WATDIS is a strong incentive to prioritise wheelchair jobs. **As the scheme is extended beyond taxis**, increased competition in the wheelchair accessible market may lead to improvements in customer service outcomes.
- The Centralised Booking System is viewed by the customers and the taxi industry as an essential service that ensures that WAT bookings are efficiently allocated amongst Sydney's WAT fleet.
- 

**The entire Taxi industry has been so betrayed, this government may never hold the peoples confidence again.**

In the States UBER now has a division called Uber Freight.

Should be interesting when they move into NSW

The TWU will be most pleased.

Or will Gladys allow them to quietly slip in hoping no one will notice

.

**New Taxis – no licence or permission to trade required.**

Another issue of mention brought to us by your friendly multi billion dollar American gig economy parasite Warren Buffett. His crusade for us is to reduce our nasty emissions by providing a wonderful bunch of Chinese electric Taxis. About 2,000 of them actually. Attached is copy of parts of their their blurb

A fleet of 120 electric taxis offering a “zero contact” transport alternative will launch in Sydney in coming weeks, the first in a planned 2,000 fleet as part of a “Clean Air Taxi” initiative by new e-taxi platform ETaxiCo.

The program has the support of Northern Beaches mayor Michael Regan as well as federal member for Warringah Zali Steggall, who ousted former PM and **climate science denier (shock horror , not THE denier)** Tony Abbott from the seat in 2019 on a platform of climate change initiatives

## **What right does Zali Steggall have to get her fingers in State matters?**

The fleet will be operated from three sites in the Northern Beaches council area as part of a six month trial, but Todd says that ETaxiCo is keen to partner with more councils to reach their goal of 2,000 electric taxis on the road by the end of 2021.

## **Are licences or authorisation no longer required in NSW ?**

In the Northern Beaches we have **three prime spots and an electric taxi is permitted to move to front of queue**, and that promotes the Clean Air Taxi initiative.”

**Moving to the front of the queue eh! That should produce some great t.v evening news. No need to cross to the USA to get some good stoush footage.**

Nexport is looking to partner with taxi operators, rather than compete against them, and also wants to reach out to corporate customers wanting to reduce carbon emissions to meet sustainability goals.

### **E) The current status of the Industry.**

Quite simply the current state of the Industry is that it is on its knees.

Our members are distraught.

Our life savings and superannuation has disappeared.

Our incomes have been reduced below the poverty line.

Any so called “Financial Assistance” has been decimated by taxation.

A quite prolonged answer had been prepared for this section of the submission but it contained information alluding to the demise of so many members of our fraternity that just trying to describe what many have endured has become too emotionally difficult to describe.

## **CONCLUDING**

Normally, for the submission, in representing the Taxi Industry a number of suggestions would have been put forward.

As the attitude of the government is impossible to determine at this time we would need to ascertain whether it is the intent of the government to “steal” our licences from us as has been achieved by the Victorian and Western Australian governments in forcing a buyback on their own Industry.

Essentially, the Owners have never wanted a buyback.

All that has ever been asked is that we be allowed to retain our businesses and be given the opportunity to earn a respectable living for the hard work we perform.

A living free of “destroyer pricing” that has been railed against our industry for the past five years.

We hope this is an opportunity for Members of good heart and compassion in our Parliament to recognise the plight of our industry and those who serve it.

It is an opportunity to right the wrong that has been inflicted upon us.

**TOSBA -**

Providing a voice for the Owners, Operators and Drivers of the NSW Taxi Industry