

London Travel Watch Update 6 December 2012

Taxi Driver Identifier

It is a requirement for all licensed taxi drivers to wear a badge around their neck which shows their unique licence number. In addition, every licensed taxi driver is required to carry a copy of their paper licence when working which contains a photo of the driver and their personal details, including the area that they are licensed to ply for hire in.

All taxi vehicles carry a fare chart and a new sticker was introduced in 2010 which provides details for securing wheelchairs into taxis but also provides details to the passenger of how to complain.

Following discussions with the licensed taxi trade, a new taxi driver licence identifier is being introduced from December 2011 onwards. This identifier will be displayed in the front and rear windscreen of every taxi and will clearly show the driver's licence number and whether they are an All London or Suburban driver. The suburban driver identifier will also show the areas the driver is licensed for. They are A5 size and the back will contain details for passengers of 'how to complain' however it should be noted that this is not the main purpose of the identifier.

The roll out of these identifiers will begin in late December 2011 with the 'All London' (green badge) drivers receiving these. Suburban identifiers will be issued at a later date with the planned rollout complete by 1 March 2012, which is the date that the cab order which mandates the display of these identifiers coming into force.

An example of the front of these new identifiers is pictured below. On the rear, which will be visible from inside the taxi in the front and rear compartments, they will contain details of how to complain.



On 1 December 2011, a 'taxi licence checker' was launched on the TfL website. This enables a member of the public to check whether a taxi driver or vehicle licence is active. This has historically only been possible for private hire licences.

A consultation is also planned for late 2012 on a number of taxi related matters. A proposal will be contained within this consultation to make part of the taxi driver paper licence visible to passengers by inserting it into a clear plastic wallet which will be affixed to the partition. As part of this proposal, the details on display to passengers will include:

- A photograph of the driver;
- The driver's unique badge number;
- The area the driver is licensed to ply for hire in;
- The date the licence is due to expire; and
- Details of how to complain.

This consultation will be a public consultation and London TravelWatch, along with members of the public, will have the opportunity to respond with their views and comments. Given the need to undertake additional consultations with the trade regarding exemptions to the Air Quality Strategy, the annual fare revision and essential consultations with the trade in the lead up to the Olympics it isn't possible to do this consultation sooner.

Private Hire Driver ID

All licensed private hire drivers are required to wear an ID badge when working which displays a photograph of the driver, the driver name, the licence number and expiry date of the licence.

TfL recently consulted on a range of proposals covering private hire licensing which included additional requirements for driver identification. Responses to the consultation were mixed with some parties, such as the police, strongly favouring the addition of driver identification which is visible within the vehicle and other parties, including some elements of the private hire trade, feeling this is unnecessary. Workshops are being held with key private hire trade representatives and the police to identify a suitable way forward with this proposal. The next workshop is planned to take place in January 2012.

Intelligence and Information Manager

Following a recent organisational change and an extensive recruitment campaign, a dedicated Taxi and Private Hire Intelligence and Information Manager has now been appointed. This role acts as a single point of contact with the Metropolitan and City of London police forces on taxi and private hire matters.

In order to enhance the exchange of information between the police and TfL a regular taxi and private hire information sharing meeting has now been established and all police requests for information from LTPH and disclosures of information to

LTPH are now logged, to ensure that all cases are formally tracked and the information is appropriately analysed so that regular reports can be established.

Illegal Cab Activity

Work is ongoing to tackle the issue of touting and other illegal cab activity with a number of different activities planned or underway. Most activity relating to touting will be included within the update from Siwan Hayward, Deputy Director of CSEP. However, there are specific activities underway within the London Taxi & Private Hire Directorate. This includes the creation of a permanent dedicated night shift to provide advice and guidance to licensees, particularly private hire operators in late night venues, act as a visible deterrent to touting and tackle any incidents of non-compliance. The team works predominately on an intelligence basis and tasking is planned from the information that is reported to TfL via the new online reporting tool. The team also work closely with the police and other agencies on joint operations.

The Taxi & Private Hire directorate is also investigating the possibility of undertaking private prosecutions against licensees who continue to flout the rules.

Driver's Medical Regime

TfL is planning to review arrangements around taxi and private hire drivers medicals during 2012 to ensure the current arrangements are still appropriate.

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