

# Private Hire Board



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Chairman Private Hire Board

## Is a Minimum Fare a Step too far?

The number of meetings and subjects that are on the agenda for your representatives these days are phenomenal. In the last few weeks we have covered **proposed driver medical requirements at The PCO (Public Carriage Office)**, had meetings with **SGS UK Ltd in Dublin** relating to future **Vehicle Inspections**, attended **The Mayor's** new licensed driver presentation and covered many other commitments.

I mention just a few of the commitments that **The PHB (Private Hire Board)** has attended recently; most of which will be reported on by the indefatigable, **Steve Wright** elsewhere in this magazine.

That started me thinking about the many companies, and when I say many, some 80%, who do not belong to any association. As a result they do not contribute valuable information, perspective and strength through sheer numbers, and of course any funding to the associations.

When I talk to these companies it's normally the same old answer "why should I join, you lot do what we need." Or "It doesn't matter, they're going to do what they want anyway", however that's not the case and never has been.

This industry had over 40,000 drivers, 2500 operators and about 20,000 office workers, when licensing started, making it one of the largest industries in the UK, and has the potential to be a seriously powerful lobby.

The various factions of the **Taxi industry**, have organised themselves extremely well, with very effective organisations and unions, you have to admire that strength, which only comes from their solidarity and imposing memberships.

Our **Private Hire Associations** represent a sector that is twice the size of the **Taxi industry** and whilst we are effective we are not as powerful as we could be, because the funds available to the taxi organisations are considerably more than we have.

At the end of the day a lot of what has and can be achieved has to be funded by the minority for which we are very grateful, and I ask the question of all of you, who do not belong to **The LPHCA**? "Is a minimum fare a step too far for

you?" Yes the cost of membership is less than one minimum fare per week, so let's stop hiding behind the cost of joining, get your car out and do one job per week and start supporting your trade association.

**The Private Hire Board's** Political consultant **Robin Hulf** has been at The Party Conferences fighting our corner with the politicians this month. He's spoken to **Ken Livingstone** and told him about the driver shortages, he has also bent the ears of other very important politicians, giving us a better chance of changing things. The **Taxi Industry** has teams of people commissioned in their corner, so we need more support.

This magazine has been produced as a tool for the industry; in this edition surely you can see the benefit of the work of **The PHB** and **The LPHCA**.

In addition to the political work **LPHCA members** can now enjoy cost saving benefits by being a member. The **captive** insurance scheme has already saved those who backed it over **£100,000** in premiums, in addition the online scheme has eradicated any chance of fraudulent cover notes and given the drivers with these companies a reason to stay put.

The **Minicab Link** is about to start and **The LPHCA** networking system is still very widely used and will go in the members only area on the new website.

So join us now, and together we can achieve great things for our industry once we have dealt with the driver-licensing crisis. Bus lane usage, proper pick up and set down points are just a few of the objectives on the horizon, which should and can be on the agenda sooner rather than later with enough funding and support.

**Eddie Townson**