

# Talking of Grading..



by GEOFF WRIGHT

As this is the 27th Talking of Grading many readers will be familiar with The LPHCA Grading process, why it was started and what are the benefits.

This year however there are significant changes in the pipeline as we change our role providing new services and benefits for members of the travelling public and those who wish to establish the true quality of Licensed Private Hire Operators.

Before dealing with the future role of the Grading System it will be useful to deal with how things were done in the past for those unfamiliar with the Grading process.

The Grading system was established, originally in London, to provide the travelling public, corporate users and regulatory bodies (from Government to Local level) with some form of benchmark by which they could establish the quality and services provided by Private Hire Operators.

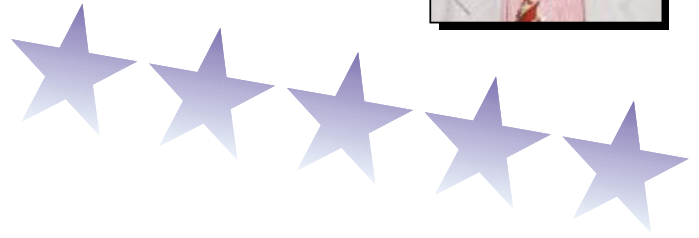
The Grading System was never intended to replace licensing or other necessary quality control measures such as ISO accreditation or Investors In People recognition.

In fact the Grading process was designed to compliment these processes where they apply and gives a far more detailed picture of the standards that a private hire company maintains, rather than any of these individual assessment processes.

The Grading System has stood the test of time as we have now undertaken several thousand annual inspection visits since 1993.

The role for the Grading Officer and the Grading process started to change radically at the beginning of the new millennium when Licensing finally started in London and we re-considered what added value services we could provide the membership.

A new demand on the Grading System came with the call for an Association Insurance Scheme to deal with the soaring price and lack of supply of Hire and Reward insurance underwriters.



*It is good to welcome Blue Anchor Cars of Bermondsey as a Graded Company. Owner George Walker has become a good friend and a useful member of The Private Hire team at our many meetings at The PCO.*

Grading Officers attended a training session to help member operators with our online insurance scheme. In addition they also helped with insurance piracy and fraudulent cover notes, which even some of the best operators got caught out with.

The underwriters of the captive insurance scheme were delighted that The LPHCA visited every member at least once a year and accepts that such visits were of real benefit to commercial suppliers of vital services such as insurance providers.

A second group – work providers, such as Government, Local Authority, Health, Hotels have also been taking a Company's Grading into consideration when awarding a contract or tender.

The LPHCA has also been working with organisations such as Hackney Community Transport to identify Graded Companies for projects such as Capital Call and Taxicard.

The Grading system will be covered in greater detail in the summer edition of Private Hire News.

GEOFF WRIGHT

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## New LPHCA Graded members

Blue Anchor Radio Cars  
London Chauffeur Drive Ltd  
Mole Valley Premier Taxis Ltd  
Page Integrated Transport Ltd  
Parkside Radio Cars Limited  
PCS (Europe) Limited  
Romford MiniCabs (1996) Ltd  
West One Passenger Cars  
Woodbridge Car Services Ltd