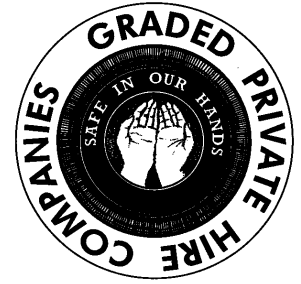


PRIVATE HIRE NEWS

WINTER 2005
ISSUE 30



The news magazine of the Graded Private Hire Companies
Incorporating the London and Southern Private Hire Car Associations

Welcome to edition 30 of Private Hire News. It has been a very busy time since the autumn edition the magazine and once again we have a magazine crammed full of news for members, the industry and those connected to it.

Our front cover asks 'to see or not to see that is the question' and the association once again thoroughly re-visits the topic that seems to animate operators and drivers more than any other - signage on Private Hire Vehicles.

For London operators and drivers the benefit of hindsight is a wonderful thing and we now have been in a Licensed Private Hire environment for quite a while, more importantly we have had time to assess the impact or lack of impact of the tiny screen discs that TfL deemed appropriate at the initial stages of vehicle licensing.

Our 'to see or not to see' feature article examines the impact or lack of impact of this signage, its value to the industry and more importantly its contribution to the safety of the travelling public.

We have a considerable amount of good news in this edition and just before going to press we were delighted to learn that another court case supported by the association on behalf of a licensed driver has ended in success.

Those of you who visit our Internet message board or have followed some of the printed extracts in earlier editions of Private Hire News will have seen the post on our website from Licensed driver Daniel Olev about his being prosecuted for not wearing a seat belt whilst carrying a passenger last summer.

Well on Friday 4th of February 2005 at Horseferry Magistrates Court in London

supported by Guy Bishop our lawyer and an LPHCA appointed barrister, the case was dropped against Daniel, so yet another victory in the courts for The Association and an LPHCA assisted licensed driver.

More good news, this time in the area of the unnecessarily onerous medical requirements for Private Hire Drivers in London. The LPHCA has in principle secured a review of the DVLA group 2 standards that form part of the requirements for a licence to be granted to a Private Hire Driver applicant in London.

In our 'meeting the man from The Mayor's Office' article we outline our progress on medical requirements and our latest meeting with Mark Watts - Mayor Ken Livingstone's personal transport advisor.

In addition to our meeting with Mark Watts I was delighted to be invited by Annie Marjoram another of the Mayors special advisors on Women's Issues to speak at City Hall about the progress of The Mayor's Safer Travel at Night initiative in November, details of that event are also covered.

As you will gather, it is essential to have dialogue with the Mayor and his key policy advisors and The Association is able to make great progress on many of the topics of great concern to the Industry.

One such topic of course is the essential usage of bus lanes for the industry and we are following up our formal campaign on this which we started early last year and mentioned in last winter's Private Hire News.

Other publications are now picking up on the need to mount a concerted effort on behalf of the Industry and we cannot have too many people in our industry calling for this necessary and long overdue

requirement for Licensed Private Hire Vehicles.

It would however be foolish to believe that bus lane usage, can be granted by The Mayor alone, because the power to grant such usage lies in a matrix of regulators including all the London Boroughs.

The LPHCA will continue with its campaign and welcomes initiatives from others in the sector.

Further meetings between The LPHCA, The PCO and SGS have also taken place on vehicle licensing and these meetings are smoothing out some of the early teething problems in vehicle licensing.

The LPHCA was also pleased to attend a touting forum that was set up by Heathrow Airport Limited in November and illegal activity will be getting more and more attention from the Police backed with a strong commitment for new Transport Minister Charlotte Atkins to support anti touting measures.

Some of the issues facing the police at Heathrow are very interesting and these are covered in this edition.

A visit to Croydon Council, further whistle stop visits, trips to Birmingham, London's City Airport and to the Institute of Chartered Engineers to discuss Go Skills and Private Hire Driver future Training and certification requirements are amongst other topics covered in this edition.

Our regulars - Talking of Grading, Private Hire Board and our Internet message board also feature in this edition, so many thanks to Eddie, Geoff and the internet message board posters for their regular contributions.

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