

Roy Ellis retires



Roy Ellis and Alan Matthews share one of many 'Private Hire moments' at numerous LPHCA Member's meetings that Roy kindly attended.

Roy Ellis retired at the end of last year, very appropriately as the same time as he had completed the massive task of licensing Private Hire in London.

Roy's retirement signifies the end of a very special relationship between Regulator and Regulated that started when Roy took the post of Head of The PCO in the mid nineties.

Such was the working relationship and respect between our industry and Roy that we collectively put our hands deep into our pockets to buy a special retirement present for Roy in the form of a full scale working model of the fastest steam train ever, the *Mallard*.

For the first time Roy was lost for words when it was presented to him just before Christmas by Eddie Townson with John Griffin, George Walker, Diana Kendall, Bill Edwards and myself at The PCO on behalf of the Trade.

Prior to this I had been asked by Ed Thompson to say a few words about Roy at *The PCO's 40th anniversary* at Penton Street in November.

Back in the late 80's when many said the licensing of the Private Hire Industry would never happen, my predecessor Gideon Fiegal impressed on me the importance of having a single body to regulate us.

That body we agreed was the PCO and as the momentum gathered in the mid-nineties a meeting was arranged with the then new Head of The PCO – Roy Ellis.

At that time none of us had any idea of the journey we were about to embark on.

The good news for us was that Roy knew that Private Hire licensing was wanted and needed by both the industry and the travelling public.

Since that first meeting Roy has gone every inch of every mile to work closely with the industry - in particular with my association The LPHCA, who for a long time were the only active industry trade body supporting The PCO and the call for licensing.

Roy and I have now attended and met at hundreds of meetings including visits to operators, parliament, government departments, the Mayor's office and the GLA.

We have also met at the PCO on many occasions to discuss CRB checks, medicals, topographical skills, vehicle requirements, driver requirements, regulatory issues and a host of other topics.

In addition to this we have also met in forums and AGMs held by NATPHLEO (now NALEO) and most importantly at our own LPHCA meetings.

It is a great tribute to Roy that he personally attended around 95% of our LPHCA meetings, which due to the demands of our industry were mainly in the evenings. This was of great benefit to both of us as we built a fantastic understanding on Roy's part of what the industry needed and on my part what our regulator wanted.

Roy once attended one of our meetings and apologised for his absence during the final hour as it was his birthday, that commitment and dedication says a lot about him.

The fact that Roy took the time and trouble to visit operators all over London and to listen to them in their own operating environment and at LPHCA meetings has meant that Private Hire Licensing has been a tremendous step forward for Londoners and their safety.

I wish to thank Roy on behalf of the Private Hire Industry for taking on and completing the massive task of the Licensing of Private Hire. I wish to thank Roy for always being prepared to listen to the industry. I wish to thank Roy for always being available to me personally and for his honest and candid views.

Finally I wish Roy a relaxing and healthy retirement and express the thanks of the Private Hire Industry and Londoners for his tireless work and dedication.

Steve Wright (speech at The PCO's 40th anniversary)



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