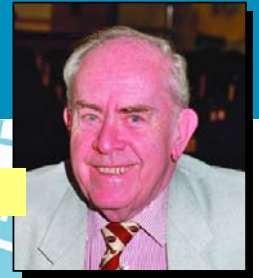


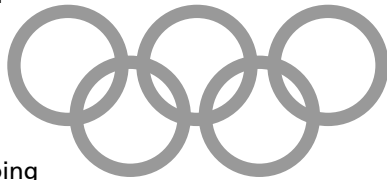
Talking of Grading...



by GEOFF WRIGHT

In five years time, as the retirement clock is ticking away, I may well not have the pleasure of being **The LPHCA's Chief Grading Officer**, however given that I am still around one thing for sure is that I will be watching the **2012 Olympic Games**.

For sixteen days **London** will be host to some **10,500 Athletes** from over **200 Nations** many of whom, with their delegations and teams, will need transportation of some kind before, during and after the games.



Of course many will be based in the **Olympic Village** but there is still going to be a great demand for the **Private Hire** services that our industry so professionally provides.

If you add to this the **eight million** spectators and minor team officials who will also need transportation of some kind, you can quickly work out that this is going to be busy time for the **transport industry** and without doubt we will play a major role in providing our unique mode of **'Door to Door' Public Transport**.



For good measure those wonderful **4,000 Paralympics disabled athletes** will be following on from the main **Olympics** for a further eleven days of competition and it is expected that no less than **one and half million spectators** will be supporting their events. It is a certain fact that not all of them will be able bodied themselves.

It is therefore essential that you as **Graded Members of The LPHCA** should prepare yourselves to provide the greatest possible supporting services to ensure that your mode of **Public Transportation** sits nicely alongside that of other **Transport** providers.

Those of you who already have **specialist vehicles and drivers**, with a proven track record of **service for the disabled**, may very well find yourselves at the forefront of delivering such services. Indeed I would like to think that when the **Olympics** are being staged some of your **'wheelchair accessible' and 'specialist vehicles'** might very well be available with the school holidays being in place.

Although **2012** may seem a long way ahead no doubt that many of our **East and Central London Graded Members** are already thinking of a long term plan on how best they can benefit from **the Olympics**.

A quick look at the **Olympic Transport Strategy** document tells you a great deal about the requirements and expectations for all modes of **Public Transport**. The document also sets out how **transport requirements** will go way beyond the perceived main areas of **Central and East London**.



It would be easy to think that the **Olympics** will have just a short term affect on your businesses, however in the next few years many delegations will be arriving prior to the **Olympics** and after the event there will be a much higher tourist profile as **London** will be advertised to billions throughout the world.

One thing that is certain is that **The LPHCA** will be delivering a considerable input on your behalf to ensure that you benefit from the business that these wonderful events are bound to generate. We have already started working on an outline plan for the **Olympics** and the potential **'Private Hire'** requirements / issues.

Of course at the end of the day it is all about service and the ability to deliver with careful planning and cooperation with those who are spearheading the overall **transport strategy**.

We are confident that our industry will pass with 'flying colours' (**Olympic of course**) and will be prepared for the challenges on the road to **2012**. **The LPHCA** has formally been consulted on the **transport strategy** and we will keep **all our members** in touch with developments and opportunities as they arrive.

We will also be looking at any new training and development requirements, such a customer care, disability awareness and language skills, that some are saying may be needed for the games.

Our website **www.lphca.co.uk** will be updated in the newly pass-worded **'members only area'** and other information will be distributed by newsletter, fax or email.

