



Three strikes and you're out?

REPLY 28th March 2008

Roger Evans AM
LONDON Assembly
Transport Committee
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
London SEJ 2AA

Dear Roger,

Many thanks for the communication regarding this excellent piece of work by the **London Assembly Transport Committee**.

You will almost certainly be aware that **Transport Committee Member Peter Hulme Cross** picked up a lot of information from our **Private Hire News** magazine article called '**Rout the Tout**', which is always sent to **Assembly Members**.

We have for some time been calling for a '**touting forum**' and we will be committing to this during **April**. Whilst we are very happy with most of your recommendations, I am very dismayed that the serious offence of '**illegal touting**' merits a '**3 strikes and you're out**' consideration. This is not only my view and but the view of all **118** of our '**Licensed Operator Members**' who work closely with over **10,000 Licensed Drivers** at a meeting we held in **London** on **4th March**.

At that meeting our membership unanimously rejected the '**get caught 3 times before losing your licence**' recommendation and I concur with their views that '**touting is a cancer undermining the whole of the Licensed Industry and the safety of Londoners**'.

In light of this I would like the opportunity to visit you once again at a convenient moment to set out succinctly why this part of the recommendations is not strong enough.

I should also mention at the time of writing that we share a very positive and supportive relationship with **TOCU's Cab Enforcement Team**, which does a **fantastic job with very limited resources**.

I look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Yours sincerely

Steve Wright MBE
Chairman LPHCA

Steve Wright
Chairman
Licensed Private Hire Car Association
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14 March 2008

Dear Mr Wright,

Tackling Taxi Touting in London

As you may be aware, I recently completed an investigation into taxi touting on behalf of the **London Assembly Transport Committee**. Please find enclosed a copy of the **Committee's final report**.

As part of this investigation we examined what effect the **TOCU Cab Enforcement Unit**, a joint operation between **Transport for London** and the **police**, had had on the level of touting in London.

We examined the current performance measures used to assess the **Cab Enforcement Unit's work** and sought written views and information from private hire trade organisations. We accompanied **Cab Enforcement officers** on a night shift to discuss their work and observe operations firsthand.

We also held a meeting with representatives of the **private hire industry** to discuss the issues raised in greater depth. The information gathered via the written responses, meetings and site visits have informed our final report and its recommendations.

In Tackling **Taxi Touting in London** the **Committee** makes a number of recommendations aimed at tackling the root causes of touting and improving the **Cab Enforcement Unit's work** further, including:-

The Public Carriage Office (PCO), in partnership with the **TOCU Cab Enforcement Unit**, should set up more marshalled ranks in touting hotspots to provide people with more legitimate options for getting home;

* **Applicants for private hire driver licences should be required to provide evidence to the PCO of which operator they are or will be employed by, and this information recorded on a database;**

* **The PCO should adopt a policy of revoking driver licences after three convictions for touting to send a clear message that touting is taken seriously; and**

* **The TOCU Cab Unit should set up an email address, phone number and text service so private hire and taxi drivers can report illegal activity quickly and easily.**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your contributions to the **Transport Committee's work** on the subject and for so generously giving of your time.

We would welcome any feedback on the report's findings and recommendations.

In the meantime, if you have any immediate queries, please contact the **Scrutiny Manager** at **City Hall** by Friday, 9 May 2008.

Yours sincerely,

Roger Evans AM
Chair of the London Assembly Transport Committee



Roger Evans AM



Peter Hulme Cross