

# Crackdown on illegal cabs and touts in Central London

**ROUT THE TOUT**   
update

 Transport for London

 METROPOLITAN POLICE Working together for a safer London

## The Metropolitan Police Service and Transport for London (TfL) continue to tackle illegal cabs and touting

24 arrests were made in one weekend following **Operation Helvellyn 2**, part of an ongoing drive to tackle illegal cabs and touts operating in **Central London**.

The **Metropolitan Police Service's (MPS) Cab Enforcement Unit**, part of the **TfL funded Transport Operational Command Unit (TOCU)** targeted illegal cabs during a high visibility policing operation overnight on Friday 31st July and Saturday 1st August 2009. **Uniformed Police Officers** and **Police Community Support Officers** patrolled touting hotspots to tackle touting, illegal operating, taxi ranking offences, illegal plying for hire, and unlicensed drivers and vehicles. They also offered advice to members of the public on safer travel options and the danger of illegal cabs. Bar and club managers whose venues attract high numbers of illegal cabs were advised on the danger these cabs pose to their customers.



**Chief Superintendent Royle, Transport Operational Command Unit said:**

*"We are working together with our policing partners to keep London moving safely by driving down crime and the fear of crime even further.*

*"Illegal cabs and touting undermines the legitimate cab trade and raises the fear of crime.*

*"The Transport Operational Command Unit regularly targets policing activity on unlicensed and uninsured vehicles, and carries out major operations targeting offenders who pose as taxi or minicab drivers.*

*"The safety of the public is paramount and I would advise everyone not to get into any cab vehicle that they have not booked and always book a cab through a reputable PCO licensed company."*

**Andy Thompson, Deputy Director of Community Safety Enforcement and Policing said:**

*"This operation was a great success and should serve as a reminder to touts that our cab enforcement officers are out there and we will take action if they are found touting.*

*It is also worth remembering that only licensed taxis (Black cabs) can be hailed in the street or picked up at a rank without booking. Any minicab journey that has not been booked through a licensed operator is illegal, uninsured and unsafe.*

*This is why operations such as Helvellyn 2 are a priority for us, particularly as we want Londoners to get home safely and for the law abiding private hire and taxi trades not to be undermined."*

**Mayor Boris Johnson** has taken a tough line on touting, and any licensed private hire driver convicted of touting will now lose their **Public Carriage Office** driver's licence. He also announced last year that the number of dedicated cab enforcement officers in the Capital would be doubled to 68. The **Cab Enforcement Unit** has made over **4,000 arrests** for touting and cab-related offences since 2003.



This weekend's operation also involved TfL's **Public Carriage Office** and the **Vehicle & Operator Services Agency (VOSA)** who carried out roadside checks and compliance checks in the **Strand** and in **Haymarket**.

The **Metropolitan Police Service Transport Operational Command Unit (funded by Transport for London)** was set up in 2002 to fight crime on buses, tackle illegal taxi touts; and assist with the control of traffic congestion. There are now more than **1,000 uniformed officers** in the unit

The **TOCU Cab Enforcement Unit** made 442 arrests for touting between 1 August 2008 and 31 March 2009. This led to 93 Magistrates' Court convictions involving licensed **Private Hire Vehicle drivers**. Of these drivers, **over 60** have had their **PHV licenses revoked** by the **Public Carriage Office** to date with the remaining still being processed.

'**Safer Travel at Night**' (**stan**) is a partnership between the **Mayor of London**, **TfL** and the **MPS**, who are working together with organisations across the capital **to help make London safer** at night by offering, and raising awareness of, more safe travel options – a key element in improving safety for all private hire and minicab passengers has been the **licensing of the private hire and minicab industry**.

The **LPHCA** has been involved with **STAN**, **TOCU** and the **Cab Enforcement Section** of the **Metropolitan Police Service** for many years. **LPHCA Chairman Steve Wright** meets regularly with all these groups and is on all their **Stakeholder Committees**.

The **LPHCA** welcomes these operations and the **Mayor's Initiatives** in conjunction with **TfL**, the **MPS** and **London Councils** to eliminate illegal activity in the taxi and private hire sector.

### **ROUT THE TOUTS !!!**

The **LPHCA** has been contacted by Officers in the **TOCU Cab Enforcement Unit** to work on the **reporting of Touts or Touting** activity by **Members**.

We are setting up in the **Member's Area** a **Touting Activity** reporting page on our website [WWW.LPHCA.CO.UK](http://WWW.LPHCA.CO.UK) where **Members** can send details of suspected touts, touting and illegal activity directly to the **Association**.

We will then pass on this intelligence to the **TOCU Cab Enforcement Unit** to process and follow up.

This is part of the '**working closely strategy**' that **Chief Superintendent Joe Royle**, his team and others are putting in place. **Members will get an E-Alert as soon as**