

Review of the UK Domestic Drivers' Hours Rules

We responded to the **Department for Transport** drivers' domestic hours' rules consultation document following discussion at this at the **AGM** on **8th October** where **Members** working with up to **15,000 Private Hire Drivers**, rejected the need for any changes to rules *unanimously*.

Members believed that there is little or no evidence that there is a problem and regardless it would be *costly, bureaucratic* and *virtually unenforceable*.

In the response we set out points and questions, like those set out below, to illustrate why the maximum driving time is unquantifiable and unnecessary for lighter vehicles that are physically easier to drive.

- Is someone who has been at a PC for 12 hours or standing on their feet at work for 8 hours and then drives dangerous?
- Is an automatic vehicle less tiring than driving a manual?
- Is a driver who drives at low speed on short journeys with regular interruptions from driving likely to be unsafe to drive or in need of rest periods?
- What evidence is there to substantiate a change in rules?
- Private Hire Operators already have a duty of care responsibility covered by other laws.

Rather than respond directly to all of the questions posed in the consultation, (*which were not applicable to Private Hire*), we also included a press release, which we issued soon after the consultation came out.

The **Licensed Private Hire Car Association (LPHCA)** having

campaigning for the safety of **Passengers, Drivers** and the **Travelling Public** are *always interested* in looking at measures to *improve safety*. However the call for drivers to have enforced rest periods to improve safety, is in our view is a reaction to a problem that does not exist.

The safety record of the **Taxi** and **Private Hire Industry** is superb and 'at fault' accidents per mile driven are way below those of private motorists.

BRAKE who are calling for mandatory rest periods, clearly do not understand the industry, its working practices or driving patterns and have not been in touch with the **LPHCA** as the primary trade association in the sector.

The **LPHCA** has had dialogue with **GMB Trade Union** representatives who several years ago also called for reduced hours and other restrictive practices. To date the **GMB** have not produced any evidence to us that **Taxi Driver** tiredness has caused accidents.

Furthermore the **Department for Transport** is undertaking a formal review by way of public consultation on driver hours at present to see if there is any evidence of a problem.

It would seem appropriate for these groups to produce the evidence (if they have it) for the **Department for Transport** to consider if a problem exists before calling for arbitrary, knee jerk reactions to what we feel is rhetoric and innuendo about an 'alleged problem' that has not been established in fact.

Steve Wright MBE - Chairman
Licensed Private Hire Car Association

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