

PRIVATE HIRE NEWS

SPRING 2010 ISSUE 49



The news magazine of the Licensed Private Hire Car Association
incorporating the London Private Hire Car Association

Welcome to the **SPRING 2010** edition (49) of **Private Hire News**. With **General and Local Elections** just weeks away it is a timely reminder that just about everything that happens in the world of **Private Hire** is determined by politicians.

Whilst the **Mayor in London** is comforted by the thought of another two years in office before an election, most of the country's politicians are in 'listening mode'.

It is our view that whilst they are paying attention, we should be raising the temperature for them right now and getting election pledges about the inadequacies of regulations and the overly bureaucratic world we have to work in.

Coincidentally, (I am sure), we have been blitzed with consultations, conferences, workshops and strategy documents. All good news but only if there are outcomes that benefit those who are now heavily regulated whilst also considering the wellbeing and safety of the travelling public.

Most recently we have responded to the **Mayor's Transport Strategy in London** and our response is published in this edition.

In other recent editions we have published our response to the review of the **U.K. Domestic Drivers Hours**, the review of the **Impact of the Repeal of the Private Hire Vehicle Contract Exemption** and the review of the **Government's Best Practice Guidance Consultation for Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing**.

We will also be publishing the new **Government's Best Practice Guidance in Edition 50 of Private Hire News** and making considered comments.

Members who wish to get details should have received a link by **E-Alert**, if that is not the case please call us.

The review of the **U.K. Domestic Drivers Hours** has not reported yet and will be published in due course but we do report heavily on the review of the **Impact of the Repeal of the Private Hire Vehicle Contract Exemption by The Department for Transport's (DfT's) Buses and Taxis division's 'In House Policy Consultancy' (IHPC)**.

We privately responded to this last year and the findings are timely, especially for **Members in London** who allegedly still find themselves competing with unlicensed competition.

Following yet more alleged unlicensed activity at the recent **London Fashion Week**, the **LPHCA's Platinum Chauffeur & Executive Committee** met to discuss options following dialogue with our **Political and Legal advisors**.

A letter has been written to **TfL's** newly appointed **Director of Taxi & Private Hire – John Mason** seeking assurances that **Operators, Vehicles and Drivers** potentially undertaking **Private Hire** work at **Wimbledon** and other events, are **fully licensed** as set out clearly in both the new guidance and recent court cases.

We have also sought and arranged an urgent meeting with the **DfT** as we go to press and we will be **'politically and legally'** pro-active if necessary to secure a level playing field for **Members** in this area.

The process for compliance is – **Consultation – Regulation – Enforcement**. We have spent much time on the former and we now seek action on the latter.

The **LPHCA** has never been so busy and yet another area that has reached the radar is the **licensing needs for specialist vehicles**, many of which are being required to meet new requirements in **London** from the 1st June 2010.

The **LPHCA** will once again manage this by setting up another **Platinum Committee (Accessibility & Specialist Vehicles)**, which will be convened very soon.

The issue of **Touting and Rules at Nightclubs** also remains a very live topic and yet another **Platinum Committee** will be convened to seek clarity and work with all agencies involved to ensure compliance within current regulations.

Platinum Committees are now growing in number and mainly comprise of **Platinum Members** who kindly contribute beyond normal membership with their time as well as funding.

All members are asked to consider **Platinum Membership** if they seek to be more involved with the association and any member can arrange to attend a **Platinum Committee** or general **Platinum Meeting** to see the hard work that takes place.

Whilst discussing meetings, consultations and workload, as well as **Platinum Meetings**, in **London** we can expect one or two **General Members Meetings** before our main **AGM**, which we hope to hold early in **October** at the **Heathrow Marriott** again. Likely topics will be all those mentioned above plus several new consultations, which will probably include signage and the environment (Air Quality), which is a big political issue for **Great Britain**, as we potentially face **European 'Poor Air Quality Fines'**.

The **LPHCA** has been taking part in talks with **TfL** in a series of workshops held at the **Public Carriage Office** and our **Platinum Environment Committee** has also hosted the **Mayor's special Air Quality advisor Isabel Deding** with senior **TfL Officials** and fellow **Board Member Steven Norris**.

Other meetings attended included a successful presentation to **London Councils** on **Future Bus Lane** use with the **PHB** and a session with **TfL** on **Smoothing Traffic Flow in London**.

Whilst this edition is crammed with regulatory information, I urge you to read it all, it's a slog but you will see the progress we endeavour to make as your **Trade Association**.

There are also updates and features on a host of things, so please enjoy this edition and hopefully the end of the bad weather. Last but not least **Phil Alexander** has set the date for this year's **LPHCA Member's golf day** on **Tuesday 14th September** – book early, last year was a sell out!

Steve Wright,
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In this issue...

Talking of Grading	4
Mayor's Transport Strategy – Response	6
Time to Act!	11
In House Policy Consultancy – Extracts	16
Graded Listing	27
Drink and Drugs Driving Law	42
Platinum Members Feature - Proximo	48
Wheelchair and Specialist Vehicle Difficulties	51
Odds and Ends	52