

PATON GROUP ACQUIRES LUCAS TRONIC SERVICES LIMITED

It has been announced by the Paton Group that it has acquired Lucas Tronic Services Limited from the Wayfarer Group. Commenting on the move, Paton Group Finance Director Robert Rollo said: “Patons has been involved in the taxi business for over 50 years and the Group’s acquisition of Lucas Tronic Services represents our long term commitment to grow our business through diversification within the taxi market. Lucas Tronic Services has an excellent reputation for supplying a great product and service, particularly in the London market. When the Paton Group learnt the business was available to purchase it seemed an ideal opportunity for us to further develop our overall business. We look forward to working with the existing management team to ensure Lucas Tronic Services continue to be a major player in the taximeter market.”

Lucas Tronic Services is one of the largest suppliers of taximeters in London and the Southern Counties. The company has 13 staff working in Richmond Road, Hackney and in Acton, West London. Over the years Lucas Tronic has expanded its taxi meter sales operations abroad, into Malta, Cyprus, Ireland, the Channel Islands as well as the United Arab Emirates.

Linda Cain, who is the well-known General Manager of Lucas Tronic Services, commented: “The great advantage for customers in Patons acquiring our business is that the Group is totally dedicated to the taxi market. Patons will also bring a wealth of experience and contacts in lots of different areas to help us make the Lucas brand name even bigger!”

Roy McMaster, Head of Sales & Marketing at the Paton Group told Taxi Globe that Lucas Tronic and Cygnus will be run as two separate operations within the Paton Group business. He said: “We are very pleased with the team at Lucas Tronic, they have a vast experience in the London taxi meter business, they are extremely close with their customers and they have some fantastic products. The Paton Group want to build on this success with Linda Cain and her team. That’s not to say there aren’t synergies that we will explore and develop, to give our customers an even better product range and service for the future, after all Patons has been in taxis for over 50 years!”

THUMBS UP FOR THE TX4

Nearly 140 potential new drivers of the TX4 tested the vehicle at the PHM show held at the RICOH Arena in May. Drivers requesting a test drive at the show were taken to the LTI Vehicles factory in Holyhead Road Coventry where they were able to see the taxis being made before getting the chance to get behind the wheel.

These drivers were asked to rate their experience of driving the TX4 on driver position, driver comfort, driver features, power/torque, manoeuvrability, passenger accessibility and recognisability. For each they were asked to score the TX4 excellent, very good, average or poor.

Nearly 95 per cent said the vehicle was easily recognisable as a taxi – scoring excellent or very good – giving it an advantage over other vehicles used as taxis and enabling it to bring in more trade for drivers. More than 90 per cent scored it very good or above for driver comfort, 93.5 per cent said it had very good or excellent torque, 78.7 per cent rated it excellent for manoeuvrability, while 95 per cent rated it highly for passenger accessibility.

“We have been getting great feedback from drivers who have bought the vehicles but to have such overwhelming support from drivers who had just got behind the wheel for the first time is incredible,” said Matthew Cheyne, Sales and Marketing Director for LTI Vehicles. “We know the TX4 is good. We spent more than £5 million on its development and did over 1,000,000 km of testing. It has a Euro IV-compliant engine, redesigned suspension over previous models and anti-lock brakes as standard while retaining it’s famous looks and being the most socially-inclusive taxi ever.



“But having first-time drivers backing it so enthusiastically, as they did at the PHM show, is the best endorsement. Taxi drivers have the right to demand high standards from the vehicle in which they earn their living and spend a large amount of time – and the TX4 is ticking all the boxes for the majority.”

MINIMISING IMPACT OF ROADWORKS

New powers which will enable councils to cut the congestion and disruption caused by roadworks have been introduced. These regulations will benefit taxi drivers as they go about their daily work. Local authorities will be able to minimise the impact roadworks have on motorists, pedestrians, businesses and local residents. Transport Minister Rosie Winterton said: “There’s nothing more annoying than a road being dug up time after time in the same place, or seeing work taking place at the most inconvenient times for road users. Of course, companies like gas or water suppliers need to carry out repairs and improvements but it should be possible to co-ordinate their work

better, and do it when the road isn’t so busy.

“These regulations enable local authorities to minimise the level of disruption to the public - for example, councils will be able to co-ordinate work by two separate companies and prevent work being carried out during the busy rush hour.

“We want councils and utility companies to work together to reduce disruption. These regulations will help authorities plan ahead, ensure the works don’t take longer than necessary and give new powers to allow them to issue fines where necessary.”