

LONDON TAXI BOARD AND LONDON MP WORK TOGETHER

Chair of the London Taxi Board (LTB), Brian Rice, recently met with MP for Ilford North, Lee Scott to discuss the growing concerns that the LTB have regarding the Mayor's recent comments on Private Hire Vehicle (PHV) access to bus lanes. Lee Scott's constituency of Ilford North has a high number of taxi drivers and he was keen to offer ongoing support to the industry in light of these damaging announcements from the Mayor. Mr Scott shared the view with the LTB that a policy of allowing 40,000 Private Hire Vehicles into London's Bus Lanes will result in a significant rise in traffic flow in the Bus Lanes, which will have a profound impact on congestion and will jeopardise the smooth running of these high speed priority lanes. Additionally, Mr Scott expressed safety concerns about the possibility of motorists following Private Hire Vehicles into Bus Lanes, regardless of any external signage.



Following a successful meeting Lee Scott tabled a number of written Parliamentary Questions about this issue. Newly appointed Secretary of State for Transport, Ruth Kelly MP will have to respond when Parliament returns from summer recess in October. In addition, Mr Scott has also written to the Mayor to express his personal concerns about the comments. This campaign stems back to February 2007 when the Mayor announced on Capital Gold radio that he believed Private Hire Vehicles would be granted access to bus lanes in the near future. In a further concerning development, the Mayor has also indicated that the forthcoming announcement on PHV signage would enable this to take place by allowing the display of operator advertising on the rear window.

The following questions were tabled by Mr Scott:

- To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans she has to reduce the number of illegal minicab drivers operating in (a) London and (b) England.

- To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions her Department has had with (a) the Mayor of London's office and (b) Transport for London on the access of private hire vehicles to bus lanes.
- To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions her Department has had with the Transport Occupational Command Unit regarding (a) the number of crimes committed by illegal minicab drivers and (b) proposed measures to reduce the number of illegal minicabs operating in London.
- To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what projections have been made of the number of taxi drivers that will be operating in London for each of the next five years.

Following the meeting Lee Scott said, "The Black cab trade is a real asset to London and this needs to be recognised by the Mayor of London and TfL. In my view it would be quite wrong to allow private hire to use bus lanes. London's 'Black Cabs' are instantly recognisable PHV's are not. How could the authorities regulate bus lane use? We would get to the situation where every Tom, Dick and Harry is driving down bus lanes claiming to be minicab drivers. I am keen to support the interests of the trade and was delighted to meet again recently with Brian Rice, Chair of the London Taxi Board, to discuss current issues."

LTB Chairman, Brian Rice was equally encouraged by the success of the meeting and commented: "Mr Scott has a number of taxi drivers within his constituency and has been a friend of the trade since his election in 2005. We welcome his continued support, and in particular his active role in this campaign and I am very much looking forward to working closely with him in the future. In light of the upcoming London elections, we will continue to seek urgent clarification on this issue and reassurance that London's transport infrastructure will not be jeopardised by this development and all further policy developments will be subject to a full and transparent consultation process."

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Journeyman Drivers

Would need to obtain receipts for cab rental and fuel and keep daily records of cash takings. Where the driver has a radio fitted he/she must produce radio statement sheets of account work and must NOT add these with cash takings. Any radio cash work should also be included in daily takings.

Owner Drivers

Would need to keep all repair bills, meter rentals, HP agreements, insurance costs, PCO licence fees, Derv bills, in fact anything to do with costs of Taxi.

Again if radio fitted, same as for Journeyman. Partners would need to keep separate daily takings etc.

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