

TIME FOR ACTION SAY PETROL RETAILERS

‘Motorists could soon find it more difficult to refuel their vehicles if filling stations continue to close at the current rate,’ said Ray Holloway, director of the Petrol Retailers Association (PRA), commenting on the shrinkage of the UK forecourt sector. 150 forecourts have already closed this year, according to figures released by oil industry body Catalist. There are now less than 9,500 forecourts in the UK, including supermarket filling stations. This is the lowest number of filling stations in the UK since 1912. The situation could become critical if the total number of forecourts continues to drop at the rate of recent years.

Holloway commented: ‘Motorists are now noticing gaps in fuel availability, and if it gets worse as expected, they will certainly be inconvenienced when searching for a forecourt in some areas. Closures are not just in rural areas either. Urban closures are causing equal inconvenience for motorists. Oil company outlets are being closed as fast as independents are forced out of business. Strong supermarket outlet growth since the 1990s and resulting squeeze on margin has made motor fuel retailing a very unprofitable business.’

The PRA believes that Government involvement is critical to save the nation’s fuel stations. Holloway explains: ‘Structure plans developed by local authorities must allow for maintenance of essential services such as forecourts. Some business rate relief is available to forecourt operators in rural areas but not in urban locations. From the evidence available they must extend this minimal support.’

‘The Scottish Executive has a grants scheme available to assist forecourt retailers in Scotland with capital investment. The idea is to preserve businesses, and contribute to the continuation of fuel availability in all areas. Westminster must consider a similar scheme for England and Wales.’

ILLEGAL LIMOUSINE OPERATOR FINED £14K

It is estimated that there are currently 11,000 stretch limo vehicles on the roads in Great Britain. Growth of the limo business across the UK has also seen growth in illegal operators. Recently a Bradford-based limousine operator was fined £14,200 including costs at Leeds Crown Court. Trading as Oasis Limousines Ltd., Mohammed Saleem Nawaz was given a £10,200 fine plus £4,000 costs for a range of offences including driving without insurance, fraudulent use of registration plates, fraudulent use of Vehicle Excise Duty and not having a PSV operator licence or a Certificate of Initial Fitness (COIF). He also had 31 points endorsed on his driving licence at Leeds Crown Court.

VOSA’s Head of Traffic Enforcement Policy Neil Barlow said: ‘Although we are more than aware that the majority of limousine operators conduct their business in a safe fashion, VOSA will continue to crackdown on the reckless minority who put the public at risk in this way. The fines imposed show just how seriously we take this issue, and this was an exceptionally good piece of work from our team in Leeds.’

‘VOSA is continuing to work with the Police, Department for Transport and industry groups to ensure safe operation of this type of vehicle. We advise members of the public to check at least the following points prior to making a booking. Does the driver hold a PCV driving licence and has he been screened by the Criminal Records Bureau? Does the vehicle contain basic safety items (first aid kit, fire extinguisher)? Do the forward-facing seats have seatbelts? Anyone in doubt should call VOSA’s hotline on 0870 60 60 440.’

Stretched limousine with eight or less passenger seats are normally licensed by Local Authorities as Private Hire Vehicles. In some cases they can be licensed by the Traffic Commissioners. Stretched limousine with more than eight passenger seats are classed as Public Service Vehicles and are licensed by the Traffic Commissioners. These vehicles will require a COIF.

DO YOU RECOGNISE THIS TAXI DRIVER?

Dear Editor,

One of the images in my recently published book “London Past and Present” (contrasting images of London in the early Post War years with today’s 21st century city) was a photograph of a female taxi driver (unheard of in those early Post War years). This I was able to achieve, but in such a rush I was only able to get the briefest of details from the charming operator.



The only known details are that the charming driver’s name was Alex and she was driving a gold taxi, with part of the registration plate being ALX. The lady passed The Knowledge about five years ago.

I wonder if it is possible through your publication to contact the lady - I would be delighted to send her the photograph. My telephone number is 0208 780 0143.

Michael J Barrett

PCO Notice 28/07

Transport for London
Public Carriage Office



Access to O2 – Limehouse Link

In response to concerns about access to and from the O2 at North Greenwich, the programme of engineering works in the Limehouse Link has been revised. On nights when there are events at the O2, works on the Link will be starting at midnight which is later than previously planned.

The programme of Link closures to late October is attached. Closures normally take place on Tuesday to Saturday nights, and finish at 5 am.

The main events at the O2 finish at 11 pm (10.30 on Sundays). Smaller numbers will be present at after-show parties and some film showings finish later.

We will provide further information on events at the O2 as this becomes available.

Len Simkins
Head of Strategy and Planning

22 August 2007

Limehouse Link – closure programme to October 2007

Date (night of)	Start	Date (night of)	Start
Tuesday August 21st	00:00	Tuesday September 25th	22:00
Wednesday August 22nd	22:00	Wednesday September 26th	22:00
Thursday August 23rd	00:00	Thursday September 27th	22:00
Friday August 24th	00:00	Friday September 28th	22:00
Saturday August 25th	00:00	Saturday September 29th	00:00
Tuesday August 28th	00:00	Tuesday October 2nd	22:00
Wednesday August 29th	22:00	Wednesday October 3rd	22:00
Thursday August 30th	00:00	Thursday October 4th	22:00
Friday August 31st	00:00	Friday October 5th	22:00
Saturday September 1st	00:00	Saturday October 6th	22:00
Tuesday September 4th	22:00	Tuesday October 9th	22:00
Wednesday September 5th	00:00	Wednesday October 10th	00:00
Thursday September 6th	00:00	Thursday October 11th	22:00
Friday September 7th	22:00	Friday October 12th	No Closure
Saturday September 8th	00:00	Saturday October 13th	No Closure
Tuesday September 11th	22:00	Tuesday October 16th	22:00
Wednesday September 12th	00:00	Wednesday October 17th	00:00
Thursday September 13th	00:00	Thursday October 18th	00:00
Friday September 14th	No Closure	Friday October 19th	00:00
Saturday September 15th	No Closure	Saturday October 20th	00:00
Tuesday September 18th	22:00	Tuesday October 23rd	00:00
Wednesday September 19th	00:00	Wednesday October 24th	00:00
Thursday September 20th	00:00	Thursday October 25th	00:00
Friday September 21st	00:00	Friday October 26th	00:00
Saturday September 22nd	22:00	Saturday October 27th	00:00