

**TAXI**  
**GLOBE**



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## SIGNAGE GOES BACK ON PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES

New signage guidelines have been introduced for London's licensed private hire Vehicles. From 11 July 2008, all London licensed private hire vehicles will be allowed to display licensed operator information on their vehicle, which can include a contact number. Ed Thompson, Director of Taxi & Private Hire at the Public Carriage Office, said: "This measure will help PHV customers identify their booked vehicles and allow licensed operators to promote their services.

"We want everyone in London to have a safe way to travel, whatever the time of day or night. Minicabs must be booked through a licensed operator and not just taken on the street. It is illegal for a private hire driver to carry passengers without a proper booking - the only vehicle that can be flagged down in the street is a licensed black cab."

The name and contact details (telephone numbers and/or website address) of licensed operators can now be displayed on the back window of their vehicle, next to their registration plate and on the flat surface of the roof (not protruding), where the information can only be visible from above. Signs are not allowed on the sides of licensed private hire vehicles and commercial

advertising on behalf of third parties is not permitted. As governed by regulation 8 of the Private Hire Vehicles (London PHV Licences) Regulation

2004, signs on the rear window must not obscure rearward vision and materials used should comply with current opacity regulations set out in the guidelines.

Brian Rice, Chairman of Dial-a-Cab told Taxi Globe: "I am very disappointed that the PCO will allow advertising on the rear of the vehicle, although not surprised. It is obvious that members of the public will now view this advertising as a means of authenticity that the vehicle is licensed, which it clearly isn't.

"I believe it is a matter of public safety and it will be only a matter of time before a misdemeanour is perpetrated against a member of the public who thought they were entering a licensed vehicle as it was displaying exterior signage!"



Previous signage on an Addison Lee vehicle

## LTB CALL FOR EXEMPTION FROM NEW ROAD TAX

The London Taxi Board has asked Boris Johnson to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to request an exemption for the taxi trade from the new VED tax, which is to be introduced in 2010. The hope is that the Conservative Mayor will tackle the Labour Chancellor on this impending stealth tax on drivers. Speaking up for the London trade, Brian Rice, Chairman of the London Taxi Board said; "Vehicle excise duty is a green tax and should not be applied retrospectively on older vehicles or on the purchase of new vehicles, which have the highest level of Euro emissions. London taxi drivers have a choice of an LTI TX or Mercedes Vito. The



Brian Rice

CO2 output on these vehicles is identical, so taxing drivers for buying a new taxi with the latest disability features and best emissions is simply a stealth tax. Taxi drivers don't have the same option to buy a lower emission vehicle as consumers in the car market.

"The new first year rate will add £430 to a driver's first year of road tax. VED has been developed as an environmental tax to incentivise car buyers to purchase lower CO2 emitting cars. However, the London taxi is designed around different parameters than a saloon car and manufactured to accommodate up to 6 passengers and wheelchair users. It is therefore not comparable to vehicles purchased for private use."

## HAVE YOUR SAY - OXFORD CIRCUS DIAGONALS CONSULTATION

Westminster City Council, together with Transport for London, the New West End Company and The Crown Estate are delivering a series of improvements to Oxford Circus. These are aimed at freeing pedestrian movement, tackling traffic congestion and providing additional taxi ranks and stands. Proposals include the provision of diagonal pedestrian crossings; extending pavement widths to reduce congestion and give pedestrians more space to move; the removal of street clutter; the possible relocation of public toilets on the northern arm of the circus and resurfacing footways with high quality granite and York-stone paving.

A plan and full description of the works can be viewed on the Westminster Council website, as well as at public exhibitions held at The Hub, 10 Heddon Street (at the southern end of Regent Street) on

20th August 2008 4.00pm until 8.00pm, 21st August 2008 10.00am until 4.00pm, 9th and 10th September 2008 10am until 4.00pm. The plans will also be available at the OneStop Services near the Council's offices at City Hall, 62 Victoria Street, SW1P 6QE. The Council is consulting on these plans and proposals between 10th July and 15th September 2008. Consultation forms are available at both of these locations for you to provide your comments. You can submit your comments electronically at [orbactionplan@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:orbactionplan@westminster.gov.uk).

After September 15th 2008, the City Council will examine all the comments provided through the consultation process and take the proposals forward subject to Cabinet Member approval.

