

RMT TAXIS NATIONAL MEETING *by Eddie Lambert*

Following the successful launch of a London taxi branch of the Rail, Maritime & Transport Workers Union, General Secretary Bob Crow decided to hold a meeting in London of delegates from all the RMT's taxi branches around the country. Letters went out to all taxi members. This took place on 26th March at 1pm at Unity House, Chalton Street, Euston.

On the morning of the 26th after listening to traffic and travel reports I started to wonder if the rail news from Coventry would affect the turn out. Delays of over an hour on Mainline Midland and Virgin services were reported on routes through Coventry. In the event although some expected delegates from the north of the country didn't make it, delegates from the South West Region, Wales, and the Midlands did. The meeting was chaired by Mick Cash, Senior Assistant General Secretary. Members were shown a new National recruitment leaflet which is hoped will help a campaign to spread membership across the country. A new one for London was also promised. An adapted membership application form suitable for self employed taxi drivers was also shown to members and accepted.

Much of the talk around the meeting was focused on the ongoing government "consultation on access to taxis" with which the government appear to have consulted with everyone except the people who are going



to be affected the most and no doubt to bear, the costs the owners/drivers. The trade needs this consultation to be extended to enable them to take part in this process. A failure to take account of the drivers/owners positions could mean in many parts of the country a severe reduction in the number of taxis as drivers/owners take the easy and cheaper route of going Private hire. (It has already happened in some areas, where full wheel chair access became a requirement for taxi fleets but the work couldn't sustain the costs. Often not helped by other arms of the same councils seeking to reduce transport costs on their Local Education and Social Services etc and using Private Hire companies and meagre fixed prices that the taxi companies

found they could not compete with.)

We would also like to thank Steve McNamara (LTDA) for providing some copies of the 2006 LTDA report on Pedicabs they commissioned from the TRL Limited (Road Research Laboratory). These were made available to delegates to take home to use in attempts to stop the spread of this pestilent scourge across the country.

At the end of the meeting it was agreed to hold regular National meeting every 3 months and to move it around to encourage more interaction between the different branches.

NEW CAB DRIVER CHOOSES CABCARD

Having passed the KoL on 19th March, Nick Lanning immediately got out on the road. It took him two years and 7 months of heading out every day on his moped in between his part time job delivering bread for Warburtons - to pass this most gruelling of tests.

This has been a very stressful time for Nick, aged 33. His wife Kirsten was made redundant last November and they have two young children, Imogen, 23 months and Sam, born in late February - so plenty of pressure to pass! "As much as people tell you what is involved, you get so far into it you never realise the depths you go into," he said. "If I knew what I know now, I would not have done it. But then you get to Thursday, the day I passed, get the badge and it made me glad I did it."

Nick wanted to hit the ground running. One of his first calls was to sign up for the CabCard Service which would mean that he could take credit and debit card payments by Chip & PIN. "You hear stories of people getting out at cash points and running off or if you pull over at a cash point there is a chance of getting a ticket this is unfair, but it's there. I thought I want to be set up from the word go to maximise my options and the CabCard Service ticks all the boxes.



"It's safer for you as a driver because you have to carry less cash and from the customers point of view they don't have to worry about carrying cash either."

Black Cab collection

Available from your LTI Vehicles main dealer network

12.5% discount on all orders of the
BLACK CAB COLLECTION*
offer is extended until end of April 2009

*This does not include the carriage cost

*excluding Model Taxis



To purchase visit our dealership or
the LTI e-Store: <http://blackcab.cmcgifts.co.uk/>

12.5% discount will be deducted once order is placed and a revised order acknowledgment will be sent to confirm the discounted order value.

For Further information please contact Julie Rogers on +44 (0)121 698 2003
Email: j.rogers@cmcmerchandise.com



Vehicles