

TAXI TRANSFER CONTRACT AT HEATHROW

Computer Cab plc is now half way through their trial contract with BA at Heathrow providing an airport taxi transfer service for some of British Airway's most valued customers. Malcolm Paice, Head of Operations at Computer Cab plc, told Taxi Globe: "The BA contract is going well, and our drivers have stepped up to the plate to ensure a solid service is delivered. We have worked very hard to make the whole meet and greet process as slick as possible." Passengers are pleased with the two minute transit time from arrivals to where the cab is parked which makes the whole process very easy for them. When the news first broke that ComCab had secured this work for their drivers, some of the executive car firms were not very happy that the work was not going into their vehicles. Some even went so far as to say publicly that taxis are not well suited to this work but Malcolm Paice told our reporter this is not the case. "I am pleased to say that we have been able to support a very good dress code amongst the drivers doing this work and that the standard of taxis being used

is also very high. This is an initial 3 month trial with BA, so it remains to be seen whether this becomes a permanent offering to their long haul customers, but for now the prompt service, attention to detail and the use of the M4 bus lane are all helping us to ensure BA's customers are enjoying this added value extra."

BA is of course affected by the credit crunch and so will be watching the financial implications of the trial with ComCab. But with many passengers now saying that Terminal 5 is a good experience after its initial problems, onward journeys that are hassle free are good news. There are those within the taxi trade who always maintain a high standard of dress but there are some drivers who prefer a more casual approach. To keep passengers on side the vehicle and driver from the airport need to be smart; this is particularly true of the business passengers and executive private hire car companies insist on their drivers being well dressed. A new advertising campaign has been launched for London Heathrow Airport itself to promote the gateway's reputation as a world-class hub. With a

strapline of 'Making every journey better' Heathrow is 'Europe's hub of choice', appearing at London Underground stations and supplements distributed with high-end publications. "Brand Heathrow is about creating real understanding amongst our audiences as to why they should fly through our airport," explained BAA Marketing and Insight Director Nick Adderley. "We are proud of what we do well, but also recognise that we must continuously improve."



DIVERSITY AT KNOWLEDGE POINT

Unlike the London Development Agency who have been helping ethnic minorities and women to enter the cab trade with millions of pounds of funding, Knowledge Point School has been quietly embracing the full range of diversity that now represents London's population. However this has been done in the traditional way, with trainees funding themselves, achieving confidence, camaraderie and mutual respect as they reach their goal of a Green Badge by their own hard endeavours.

The epitome of such a trainee is Mary De Villiers, the first South African to qualify with Knowledge Point Taxi Drivers School. For her it was a personal triumph, having suffered a family tragedy in South Africa whilst on the Knowledge and having to make frequent visits there. She has now finally been issued with her Green Badge with the added bonus that she received it on her birthday.



Mary De Villiers with Knowledge Point Head Tutor Derek O'Reilly

NEW ADDRESS FOR HATDU

Please note the new address for HATDU as from 10th June 2009 is:

HATDU
c/o Carley Partnership
St James's House
8, Overcliffe, Gravesend DA11 0HJ

LTCPR UPDATE by John Kennedy, Founder of Ltcpr

Just a very short update for those of you who subscribe to Ltcpr. Over the next couple of weeks you'll receive a email from me asking you to join a network I have set up so I can improve communications with you as a subscriber. The website of Ltcpr is under construction and will continue to be developed with online application and payment facilities soon to be added, please do click on the picture of St Stephen's tower & the taxi light at the Commons. Please do let me know what you think by way of email, please log onto www.Ltcpr.community.officelive.com next time you're near a computer.

Now we have since Jan the 31st made an impact within the London trade, the work of Thomas the Taxi at the Anderson Shelter continues to put other wealthier organisations to shame. Thomas is still highlighting and breaking news stories that other organisations just fail to mention or pick up. The creation of the London taxi branch of the Rail Maritime & Transport Union (RMT) is and will be of benefit to the working taxi-cab driver and trade, this union will if it's not already

become the second biggest driver organisation/union within the trade and I'm sure they will continue to grow at a blistering pace.

Presently I'm waiting for the date for the 3rd reading of the London Local Authorities and Transport for London (no.2) bill when I will submit a petition and object to two clauses, one which involves the voluntary registration of pedicabs/rickshaws (which will lead to pedicab/rickshaw ranks), the second where local councils and TfL seek powers to fine drivers who encroach on the green advanced stopping area designated for cyclists. Only recently TfL confirmed to me they consulted with the LTDA, the LCDC, the union Unite plus many other organisations before this Bill was placed before parliament but none responded.

I have also responded to the consultation on motorbike mini-cabs and yes the very popular "carry on complaining" is back and will be taking full advantage of the recent PCO notices which have highlighted the complete and utter failure of placing

mini-cab offices in bars and night clubs. Far from safer travel just even more instances of touting and a vastly increased number of passengers riding in vehicles which are uninsured.

Oh before I head off into the sunset and go to work can I say a massive thank you to the members of the LTDF & the RMT who attended the picket at City hall on the 24th of June 2009. I haven't been well of late and it is at times like this that you really do find out who you can rely on. The good news is I'm back and working towards getting and feeling much better, remember we shall "prevail and prosper".

PS: I understand Ed Thompson, Director of taxis and mini-cabs is resigning from his post, so let us all watch with interest to see who shall be the next Director of the PCO! In fact this would be an ideal opportunity to split the PCO in two and implement some drastic changes to the recent disastrous policies of the present and past regimes at Penton Street.