

## COMCAB WELCOME TAXIWORLD METERS

Taxiworld, dealers for Lucastronic and Cygnus meters have moved their West London operation to Advantage House, the award winning driver facility for Computer Cab plc.

Taxiworld were previously based in nearby Acton and needed to move due to redevelopment work at their old premises. With the benefit of Computer Cab plc having a large driver facility in nearby W10, the move has enabled drivers in West London to still have access to a local meter dealership. Malcolm Paice, General Manager for Computer Cab

plc commented: “Our facilities here at Advantage House have been designed specifically for London taxi drivers and therefore adding the availability of London’s largest taximeter dealer makes good sense for us, Taxiworld and of course the drivers themselves. Computer Cab drivers who are customers of Taxiworld now have everything they need under one roof and Taxiworld can also service the rest of the 12,000 customers in this great facility.”

Taxiworld install and service all LucasTronic and Cygnus meters and

also change the meters ahead of annual inspections. They have their own fitting bay within Advantage House and all the supporting equipment they need to carry out all taximeter work. Since opening Advantage House in 2007 Computer Cab plc has included a unique driver training facility, Nitrogen tyre inflation, radio fitting facilities and taxi insurance services. Adding taximeter services gives Computer Cab plc drivers a true one stop shop.

Taxiworld also have premises at Richmond Road Cab Centre in



Hackney. They can be found at Advantage House, 7-8 Mitre Bridge Industrial Estate, Mitre Way W10 6AU.

## VEHICLE FREE DAY FOR CHRISTMAS SHOPPING

Taxi drivers take note – from midday on Saturday 5th December, Oxford Street, Regent Street and Bond Street will all be taking part in Shop West End VIP Day. The streets will be traffic free to encourage Christmas shoppers. Boris Johnson, Mayor of London, said: “Year after year, VIP Day continues to be a resounding success and a highlight in the Christmas shopping calendar. London’s West End is renowned across the globe as a fantastic place to shop, attracting millions of visitors from across the country and overseas. This year, there is the added bonus of the new Oxford



Circus diagonal crossing providing a more spacious and pleasant shopping experience. The VIP day is a

unique event in the capital and is now regarded as the world’s biggest shopping day. I look forward to hearing that the West End was packed to the rafters once again this year.”

Festive revellers will also be enjoying a Winter Wonderland at Hyde Park, starting on November 21st and running until January 3rd, opening at 10:00 and closing at 22:00. Highlights include the largest outdoor ice rink in central London and the Capital FM big wheel, which features 40 heated pods offering stunning views across the West End and the rest of the city.

## TAXI RANKS, SATELLITE MINI-CAB OFFICES AND THE NEED FOR A PUBLIC INQUIRY by John Kennedy

At long last a new taxi rank has been appointed outside the venue Nobu in Berkeley Street, W1, and a thank must go out to all the taxi cab drivers involved who ranked and complained long before any trade organisation got involved. I must also say well done to all for getting the taxi rank appointed but let’s stop the back slapping there and put this rank and the bigger issue into context. Under the previous Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, satellite mini-cab offices were created by Transport for London and many mini-cab operators chose to place staff outside venues with clipboards whilst blatantly touting for business, along with an illegal rank of cars all waiting on the highway and available for immediate hire.

Two trade organisations had the ear of the previous Mayor of London – the LTDA and the union UNITE (formerly known as TGWU). The question we need to ask of these two bodies is what did they actually do to stop the creation of the satellite mini-cab office, if anything? Both these trade organisations have been very quick to have a go at the newly formed RMT London taxi branch but seem to spend less time telling the trade what they have actually been agreeing to in the past let alone the present.

Satellite mini-cab offices are one of the biggest threats to the London taxi trade and couple this with very low numbers of enforcement and compliance officers and we are heading for a meltdown in night work for the London taxi driver. The rank at Nobu is a start, but that is all it is, for hundreds of satellite mini-cab offices have sprung up all over the capital with little opposition

from the very two trade bodies that had the ear of the Mayor whose team created this idea in the first place.

We should remember Taxi-cabs are the only vehicles allowed to rank and ply for hire and we need to have ranks at every venue where a satellite office has been granted by Transport for London for we earned that right. Senior management at Transport for London should be concerned that not only did our high standards fall recently under their watch but the definition of the right to ply for hire appears to be interpreted in a very different way to common/case law judgments which to the best of my knowledge still remain authority. So a campaign will be starting shortly linking the many decisions that have greatly affected our trade which only a public inquiry can solve for something isn’t right in the way our trade is presently managed and governed.

A mini-cab should be pre booked via a telephone, a taxi-cab can be pre booked and hailed on the street or from a rank, the rules are very simple but it seems that someone somewhere wishes to muddy the waters and create a second class late night taxi replacement service. A Public Inquiry is the only way forward to deal with the many issues that have arisen at the Public Carriage Office in recent months and years.

