

WORKING WITH THE TAXI TRADE

John Mason, Taxi and Private Hire Director for TfL, has been reported as saying that London's taxi drivers could face mandatory classes on customer service. One national paper quoted Mr Mason as saying: "It's a world-renowned service. The drivers are always perceived to be some of the great characters you come across in London. There is always room for improvement. Perhaps it is good sometimes to keep your mouth shut if you sense vibes from the customer that perhaps they are having a bad day."

But it seems that Mr Mason was misquoted. Taxi Globe was told by a Transport for London spokesperson: "London's taxi drivers are the best in the world, providing an unparalleled knowledge of the Capital and excellent customer service. We have no plans for knowledge candidates to undertake a customer service element to their assessment, however we are always looking at ways of increasing the quality of service to passengers and we work closely with the taxi trade to see how best we can achieve this." There are discussions going on to look at the way taxi drivers could, as self employed business people, benefit from additional learning such as modules



in accountancy and stress management. But there are no plans for changes at the moment. John Mason has already told the taxi trade that he is looking at different ways to modernise the trade. "As Director of Taxi and Private Hire, I want to take a sensible pragmatic approach to working with the trade. The Taxi and Private Hire Office should be helping drivers, not putting barriers in their way," he said in a recent interview with Taxi Globe.

NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHED by Bill Munro

Bill Munro is well known in the cab trade for his writing. His books include *Carbodies*, the *Complete Story*, which is about the company in Coventry who were originally coachbuilders but went on to become London Taxis International, 'A Century of London Taxis', which was published in 2005, the 2008 re-write of Shire Books' 'The London Taxi' in collaboration with its original author, Nick Georgano and in 2009 I published 'Taxi Jubilee- 50 Years of the Austin FX4 London Taxi'. Bill started as a taxi driver in 1972; he is the third generation of his family in the trade. He also edits the "Vintage Taxi" which is the magazine of the London Vintage Taxi Association.

Bill recently told Taxi Globe that he has launched his own website which can be found at www.billmunro.co.uk where you will find more information about Bill, his publishing company Earlswood Press and how to buy his books.

THE LONDON TAXI COMPANY DELIVERS SAFETY SOLUTION

The London Taxi Company has offered reassurance to women in the United Arab Emirates after a Daijiworld.com survey revealed that 37% of women had felt unsafe whilst travelling in the country's taxis. "Women living in the United Arab Emirates would feel a lot safer if The London Taxi Service operated throughout their country," said Matthew Cheyne, International Market Development Director for The London Taxi Company. "We pride ourselves on the security and passenger comfort that our vehicles deliver. In fact, the London Taxi recently came out top in an international survey commissioned by Hotels.com. The poll showed that a quarter of travellers surveyed found the London Taxi to be the safest in the world."

AIDEN KENT...THE SINGING TAXI DRIVER by Russell Hall

A few months ago I attended one of those 'Rat Pack' tribute evenings which starred Aiden Kent and to say I was impressed is an understatement! The evening's entertainment was fabulous and then it was mentioned that Aiden is also a London licensed taxi driver! If you think of 'Frank Sinatra with Count Basie' and if you remember the Rat Pack singing songs like 'Fly Me To The Moon' and 'Under My Skin', you'll get an idea of Aiden's unique act.

Aiden is a singer and cabaret entertainer in the style of the classic age of swing music. His voice has been likened not only to the heroes of the swing era, Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin, but also to present day singing sensation Michael Bublé. Aiden doesn't pretend to be Frank or Dean or even Michael but he is a professional singer who performs 'his way' with the emphasis on voice, clarity of diction and a true understanding of the songs which has made Aiden one of the finest 'Rat Pack' performers this country has produced in recent years. Aiden has just returned from performing his 'Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin' act in the United Arab Emirates.

Aiden now enjoys residencies at The Clarendon Hotel in Blackheath, which is where I saw him, and Rendezvous Casino at Brighton Marina where



you can enjoy a spin of the roulette wheel while listening to Aiden's great sounds, as well as being available to provide high class entertainment at all kinds of corporate and private parties, fundraisers and other events. In fact I was so impressed by him that I've booked Aiden for my and my wife's joint 50th birthday party in the summer! Aiden can be booked using playback or for that really special occasion, why not book Aiden with 'The Toby Cruz Swing Band.' check out his website at www.aidenkent.com and you'll see what a great entertainer he is or why not give him a call on 07956 456360 and speak to him personally.