



WARNERS
GROUP PUBLICATIONS PLC
West Street, Bourne,
Lincolnshire PE10 9PH

EDITORIAL

Editor: S. Goodwin
Tel: 01707 885439
Fax: 01707 696034

E-mail: taxiglobeeditor@warnersgroup.co.uk

DISPLAY & CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

Sarah Hubbard
Advertising Manager
Tel: 01778 392048
Fax: 01778 392079

E-mail: sarahh@warnersgroup.co.uk

Chrissy Booty
Advertising Sales Executive

Tel: 01778 391158
Fax: 01778 392079

christinab@warnersgroup.co.uk

PUBLISHER

Simon Moody

DISTRIBUTION

DND Transport Services Ltd.
Tel 01707 272305

PRINTERS

Cumbrian Newsprint, Cumbria

PRODUCTION

Zone 1 Media LLP
Tel: 01462 491134
Fax: 01462 491137

E-mail: pauline@zone1media.co.uk

ACCOUNTS & CREDIT CONTROL

Caroline Harris
Tel: 01778 391023

SUBSCRIPTIONS

To ensure you get a copy of Taxi Globe for 12 months, please send a cheque or postal order, made payable to Warners Group Publication, for £20 inclusive of VAT and post and packing in the UK to:

Taxi Globe Subscriptions,
West Street, Bourne,
Lincolnshire PE10 9PH

Taxi Globe has been carefully prepared, but articles are published without the responsibility on the part of the publishers or authors for loss occasioned to any person acting or refraining from action as a result of any view, information or advice included therein. The publishers accept no responsibility for the views or opinions expressed by contributors. Articles published in Taxi Globe do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the publishers, nor can the publishers or authors accept any responsibility for any claims made by the advertisers.

TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENCE FEES FROZEN AT 2009 RATES

Last month, Transport for London's Board approved changes to taxi and private hire licensing fees to come into effect from 1 April 2010.

TfL state that "Inflationary pressures would have ordinarily justified an overall 1.4 per cent increase on most licence fees, but given the current economic climate, a freeze, and in some places a reduction on fees has been agreed."

The fees to be frozen at 2009 rates include:

- Taxi driver three year licence fee
- Taxi annual licence fee
- Private hire licence application and inspection fee
- Private hire operator licence application fee
- Private hire operator five-year licence fee

All funds generated from taxi and private hire fees are used to cover licensing and administration costs. The additional

funding generated by an increase in these fees would have been around £261,000; however TfL is confident of being able to make up the difference via efficiency savings instead, including reviewing existing business policies and processes, identifying and reducing waste and ceasing non-business critical activities. The taxi trade will see the increase of the re-test fee should a cab fail its first test.

For private hire operators, changes to the fee structure for removing or adding operating centres will also begin from 1 April. The fee payable for removing an operating centre from a private hire vehicle operator's licence will increase from £25 to £50, and the fee for adding a new centre will increase from £25 to £200. These fees have not risen since 2001 when operator licensing began, and reflect more accurately the significant costs involved in processing the licences.

CALLS FOR SCRAPPAGE SCHEME TO BE EXTENDED

London Assembly Conservative Transport spokesman, Richard Tracey AM, has called on the Government to extend its scrappage scheme, which incorporates London taxis. Mr Tracey told Taxi Globe: "A scrappage scheme for London taxis would be a fantastic way for the Government to complement the Mayor's efforts to reduce transport pollution and improve air quality in the capital. It would also provide welcome support for taxi drivers, as well as suppliers and manufacturers, and help their recovery from the recession."

This view was endorsed by Boris Johnson this month after Mr Tracey raised the issue at the most recent Mayor's Question Time. Mr Johnson said he "urged further extensions" as "London taxis represent a particularly good case for such an extension." Richard Tracey asked Boris Johnson: "Has any progress been made with the taxi industry and central Government in finding ways to mitigate the potential costs to taxi drivers of implementing taxi age limits in 2012 and 2015, such as through extensions to the Government's scrappage scheme, as stated in the Mayor's draft Air Quality Strategy? Has any consideration

been given to providing incentives and support for drivers to replace their vehicles earlier than these dates?" On 1st March the Mayor replied saying: "I welcome the extension the Government has already made to the scrappage scheme and have urged further extensions. London taxis represent a particularly good case for such an extension, as a relatively small amount of support could help many British businesses while enabling significant improvements in air quality. I am hopeful that the Government will respond positively to these arguments. TfL continue to investigate and explore opportunities for other grants and incentives that would support the introduction of newer, cleaner taxis to London."

The Government's car scrappage scheme was launched on 18 May 2009 and with the final possible closing date the end March 2010. It was announced on 28th September that funding is to be increased and will be available to scrap up to 400,000 vehicles, with £400m provided by Government and matched by support from vehicle manufacturers.

WESTMINSTER'S CCTV PARKING CAMERAS SWITCHED ON

Each year the West End celebrates the arrival of Christmas with the switching on of the Christmas lights. But taxi drivers and other motorists could find little to celebrate as Westminster's wireless CCTV latest cameras went live again on 8th March, following certification from the Department for Transport (DfT). These cameras were turned off back in March 2009 after the DfT requested that Westminster secure new certification to meet their guidelines. The cameras are in the West End, Belgravia, Trafalgar Square, Knightsbridge, Oxford Street and on central London's main bridges.

Approximately 100 wireless cameras are now available for use, with parking fines dropping through doors very soon. Last year Westminster issued over 680,000 parking fines with the cameras responsible for about 20% of these fines. The wireless network means that, unlike with fixed cameras, the cameras can be deployed in different locations across the city, including at accident and congestion hotspots and where motorists are known to drive irresponsibly or dangerously. The Council

has produced a map of where all the cameras are which is available on their website at www.westminster.gov.uk/services/transportandstreets/parking/parkingtickets/cctv/location-of-cameras/

CCTV is used to detect vehicles which are parked illegally and cause obstructions to other drivers and capture moving traffic violations, as listed in the highway code, including entering a road through a 'No entry' sign, driving into pedestrian zones, and making right or left turns when advised not to do so. Motorists can be issued with tickets via CCTV for driving offences such as stopping in a box junction, driving in bus lanes or making banned turns.

The criteria for using the cameras is now being widened to include a greater focus on crime and disorder and to ensure they are concentrated on areas which suffer from anti-social behaviour and local crime. Each wireless camera will now be clearly marked with a "street enforcement camera" sign.