

TAXI
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“TX4 IS HERE TO STAY” SAYS LTI

At a recent trade meeting held at M&O London, LTI confirmed its commitment to the TX4. John Russell, Chief Executive Officer of Manganese Bronze Holdings, confirmed that there is no new taxi in the pipe line and LTI will continue to manufacture in Coventry the successful TX4 for sale in the UK. Mr Russell also said that the Mann & Overton dealerships had some fantastic promotional offers at the moment and encouraged operators and drivers to visit the dealerships and make the most of the opportunity.

KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH THE TRADE

As part of their commitment to keep communicating with the trade on future plans, John Russell, CEO of Manganese Bronze Holdings and Peter Shillcock Managing Director of LTI, spoke to an invited audience of trade representatives at Mann & Overton London on Thursday 20th May. Those present included members of the Trade press, fleet owners and drivers, as well as the Radio Circuits.

The Trade got the opportunity to ask LTI and MBH a number of questions about topics that are affecting them at the moment.

Peter Shillcock introduced Mark Brown, the new General Manager for Mann & Overton London and the man tasked with improving customer service in London. Mark comes from an automotive background and making sure his customers are looked after is a high priority for him and his team.

NEW GENERAL MANAGER FOR M&O LONDON

Following the departure of Peter Rigden, the new general manager at M&O will spearhead the dealership's growth ambitions. Mark Brown, aged 51, previously held the position of general manager at Fiat Direct. With a wealth of automotive experience behind him, Mark will look to take the business forward by bringing this knowledge to the trade. “I see this as tremendous opportunity,” commented Mark upon his arrival. “With an experienced and stable team behind me, I will primarily be looking to improve on our current customer service levels.

“I'm soaking up information like a sponge and have quickly realised what makes this industry so special; the people. I see the reorganisation of the approved service dealer network as a monumental change for Mann & Overton alongside LTI Vehicles and one of my first tasks will be to tackle these challenges head on.”



Peter Shillcock, managing director for LTI Vehicles, said: “Mark and his team will breathe new life into the London taxi trade. They have the energy and drive to meet the increasing demands of our growing customer base and I'm confident that they will do a great job.”

CHINESE JOINT VENTURE

John Russell explained the latest updates with the relationship with Geely Automotive, the joint venture partner in China who is looking to take a 51% share in MBH as announced recently. Geely are also looking to produce a smaller saloon car based taxi called TXN which was shown at the Beijing motorshow as a concept vehicle. TXN will be produced in late 2012 and is aimed at international markets where it will compete with local saloon car taxis.

John also made clear that the move to Euro 5 would not mean a new vehicle, “there is no TX5”, he explained. Euro 5 would be reached by adding a Diesel Particulate Filter to the existing VM engine. “We can achieve Euro 5 emissions by working with VM, so contrary to rumours there is no TX5, no new engine and we are not moving away from VM. We are very happy with them,” said John.

The event was welcomed by those who participated and they especially liked LTI's plans to improve customer service as explained by John Russell. “We are currently reviewing our entire Service Dealer network to make sure they come up to our new standards. We are also recruiting new Dealers and would welcome applications from garages who want to become a Service Dealer. We have also created a new Aftersales Division to improve the way we deal with drivers and to ensure we keep improving standard in our Service network”

NO CHEAP CHINESE VEHICLES FOR LONDON

LTI also quashed the rumours of cheap Chinese vehicles, moving production to China or new models in the near future. “We are testing Chinese parts on the TX4 at the moment but we will keep manufacturing here in the UK in Coventry,” committed John as he finished. “Now is a great time to buy a new TX4, there is no new cheap cab coming, we are staying with the TX4 but with an imminent rise in VAT possible I would advise drivers to take advantage of the great deals we have on offer at the moment.”

REAR WINDOW STICKERS ADVERTISE RTG WEBSITE

Radio Taxis has recently launched its new website; the idea behind this is to encourage online work, particularly from credit card passengers. Now the Chairman and CEO of RTG, Geoffrey Riesel is urging drivers on the circuit to put a newly designed rear window sticker



which advertises this website on the back window of their cabs. The private hire industry has been quick to realise the benefits of rear window advertising and Geoffrey Riesel commented: “Addison Lee have been very effective by putting their ad on their back window (and everywhere else too). If we can encourage our 2500 drivers all to put our website on their back window it will be a massive “fight back” against them especially Addison Lee who do well because the trade has let them have a free hand. Well no longer, we intend to fight back starting now.”



RTG drivers imply have to visit the fitting bays at Station Road in Tufnell Park to get a sticker. RTG are running a prize draw to encourage drivers to carry the ad.

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