

GREEN FUEL CELL HYBRID TAXI UNVEILED AT CITY HALL by Sandie Goodwin and Bob Fisher



John Russell

London's Deputy Mayor, Kit Malthouse took the cover off the new Fuel Cell Hybrid London taxi outside City Hall on Monday, 7th June. This Fuel Cell Hybrid Taxi is not yet commercially available and is presently undergoing track and road-testing prior to wider deployment. The vehicle will also need to meet the London Public Carriage Office conformity for use as taxi on public roads. Running costs, or servicing details are not yet available, nor the cost of the hydrogen to refuel with. John Russell, Group Chief Executive at Manganese Bronze, parent company of LTI Vehicles spoke at the presentation. He said: "We need greener cabs and the solutions come in a variety of forms. This one will truly work – it is a workable taxi, easy to refuel, built with fantastic technology. Funding is an issue at the present time, but the green industry is an opportunity for a mini revolution for growth in the country. This taxi will present the taxi trade with an opportunity to refresh itself; it is a perfect showcase for the technology."



Kit Malthouse

DEVELOPING THE TECHNOLOGY FOR THE FUEL CELL TAXI

Fuel cell manufacturer, Intelligent Energy has developed the taxi in partnership with Lotus Engineering, London Taxis International, TRW Conekt and funding from the UK Government's Technology Strategy Board.



"The Fuel Cell Black Cab is a hackney-carriage fit for the 21st Century and its ever larger urban centres, where the reclamation of good air quality matters hugely to all of us. The LTI TX4 is an internationally recognised and iconic symbol of London, and to put an entirely new fuel cell hybrid electric zero emissions 'engine' into the existing vehicle design in such a short amount of time and still deliver performance, refuelling speeds and range, is a fantastic achievement for all the companies involved," explained Dr. Henri Winand, CEO at Intelligent Energy. "We now look towards the introduction of the first fleet of these vehicles into London for 2012. The launch at City Hall demonstrates that we are well on course to achieving this goal."

The taxi looks exactly like an iconic London Black cab. It is powered by an Intelligent Energy hydrogen fuel cell system, hybridised with lithium power batteries. The cab which was unveiled was not available to test drive on the day, but those present were told it also drives like a TX4, although it is quieter. The taxi can operate for a day without the need for refuelling as it has a range of more than 250 miles on a full tank of hydrogen. It can reach a top speed of over 80mph. Refuelling takes around five minutes, although during a longer period of standing still, such as overnight, the taxi can be plugged in to charge the batteries too. It produces no emissions other than water vapour at the point of use.

