

# BEING GREEN MATTERS

**A**s the manufacturer of the iconic taxi, LTI Vehicles faces many issues in building a purpose built vehicle. In today's climate, being green is an important issue and LTI are doing much to ensure that their vehicle production is as green as possible. This also means the vehicle itself can be hailed as a green vehicle when all of its attributes are taken in consideration. No other vehicle can offer so much to so many different passengers, with a wide variety of needs whether able bodied or with disabilities.

## ACCUSATIONS ABOUT EMISSIONS OF "LONDON BLACK CABS" COMPLETELY UNFOUNDED

LTI Vehicles were quick to put the record straight over recent accusations about the taxis' emissions output by the Retail Motor Industry Federation's (RMIF).

In an attack on taxis and buses used in London's transport system Alec Murray, non-executive chairman of the RMIF, claims that the proposed measures in the Mayor of London's consultation over the Congestion Charging Zone ignore the environmental impact of buses and taxis, which are currently exempt from the congestion charge, and said that cabs are more environmentally harmful than a comparable saloon car.

The consultation contains proposals to increase the congestion charge on vehicles with large CO<sub>2</sub> outputs, such as 4x4s and executive saloons, with a daily £25 charge inside the congestion zone. LTI Vehicles say his comments fail to take into account the Mayor's existing policies to reduce emissions of London's 21,000 taxi fleet. Taxis in the capital are currently subject to the Taxi Emissions Programme, which will reduce emissions from the fleet by up to 37 percent by July 2008. The strategy, set up by the Mayor of London, will bring all of the London taxi fleet up to Euro 3 emissions standards and significantly reduce pollution in the capital.

LTI Vehicles also makes clear the fact that the latest London taxi, the TX4, has manual emissions under the 'Chelsea Tractor' limit of 225g of CO<sub>2</sub> per kilometre.

London's taxi fleet accounts for only 0.5% of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the Capital, while the transport sector

accounts for 22 percent of all London CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

An average London taxi journey has 2.5 people in the vehicle, giving an average per person emissions of 84g CO<sub>2</sub> per km. LTI Vehicles also asserts that Mr Murray's comparison of saloon cars with purpose-built taxis is misguided.

London taxis meet strict licensing conditions, including full disability access and facilities for wheelchair passengers – all of this adds significant weight to the vehicle. Saloon cars do not have such licensing conditions so it is not possible to compare the two vehicles. Managing Director of LTI Vehicles, Peter Shillcock added: "The Mayor's Taxi Emissions Strategy will significantly reduce harmful emissions from older taxis in London, which will ensure the whole fleet has much lower emissions by July next year. LTI has cut emissions from our taxis by 55% since 1994 and the current emissions are 50% lower than the latest legal requirements.

"We have strong sales in London so the fleet is being quickly renewed with the latest most environmentally efficient model and this also contributes to the overall reduction of emissions from the London taxi fleet."

## CHOOSING YOUR FUEL

**W**hichever taxi you are driving, brand new or an older model, the fuel you choose and the way you drive your taxi will make a difference to the fuel consumption. Another factor is keeping the tyres correctly inflated.

One important factor in any taxi driver's life is what kind of fuel to use and where to buy it. For some drivers, the options of buying a high cetane diesel such as BP Ultimate will be their choice. This type of diesel is a premium rate but some drivers agree that the extra cost is a worthwhile investment as they get better fuel returns in terms of mpg and their engine performs better. For others, the choice is made by one of cost and it is certainly true that some of the diesel sold at supermarkets is cheaper than local filling stations. For others the choice is determined by loyalty cards and bonus schemes, or even the location of where they live.

The green ethics behind fuel is a constant headline grabber. Bio fuels are being seen as a greener choice but there are concerns about the problems of growing the products used in the manufacture of the greener fuel. Biodiesel is available in different percentages but not all of these are suitable for the engine used in LTI taxis, in particular the TXII and the TX4. One London radio circuit is launching an lpg conversion taxi, whilst another has just launched its own biodiesel, but this is a 30% biodiesel, which will invalidate the warranty on both



the TXII and TX4. 5% biodiesel is perfectly acceptable to use in these taxis.

LTI Vehicles issued the following warning about the use of 30% biodiesel in their taxis. "LTI are committed to working to minimise the impact of our business and our vehicles on the environment and recognise that bio-fuels can play a valid part in this.

"LTI use the Ford Duratorq engine in their TXII and the VM Motori engine in the new Euro 4 compliant TX4 purpose built taxis. Both manufacturers specify that only a maximum mixture of 5% Bio fuel can be used in their engines and will only provide a warranty to LTI for a maximum 5% mix. LTI is therefore only able to endorse a mix of up to 5% bio fuel in their vehicles for the warranty to remain valid.

"Failures associated with the fuel system, engine or related parts resulting from the use of a bio fuel mixture greater than 5% are not covered by the LTI warranty and all claims should be referred to the supplier of the bio fuel mixture."



## THE LIFESPAN OF A TAXI

**T**oday's TX4 is the result of a multi million pound investment by LTI.

The models which have preceded the TX4 have all been improved upon in terms of accessibility, driver comfort, fuel economy and this has been achieved in a number of ways. Listening to drivers and proprietors, working to find the right partners to provide components such as the engine all play an important part.

Out on the road across the country, older vehicles are still helping drivers to make a living taxi driving. In many places Fairways are still being used; indeed in London with emissions equipment fitted these vehicles are meeting Euro III requirements, helping clean up the air quality. Once a taxi has come to the end of its working life as a licensed taxi, many are being used by other drivers, some to make a living in other ways and some as ideal private cars for those with particular accessibility needs. One has even been spotted on the island of Jersey being used as a plumber's means of transport. Exports of the world famous icon are made through companies who sell the used vehicles abroad, whilst some are customized into stunning wedding transport. The longevity of a purpose built taxi proves it's suitability to the type of work it is required to do.

All vehicles manufactured today are required to meet the latest European Directive for End of Life Vehicles (ELVs) (2000/53/EC). This Directive means as much of the vehicle as possible has to be recycled at the end of its life. The average life of a purpose built taxi from LTI is estimated to be in the region of 15 to 20 years so a purpose built taxi is an environmentally friendly vehicle in this respect.



has Chrysler 5 speed electronically controlled auto gearbox or Eaton 5 speed manual