

Submission No. 012

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Research Director
Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee
Parliament House
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Submission to Support
Transport Legislation (Taxi Services) Amendment Bill 2015

Dear Committee,

I wish it to be known by “the Committee” that the Illegal Taxi Service in Queensland, known as Uber, is not working to the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994. It has not ever worked to this Act either in kind or by practice.

Some background into the Illegal Taxi Service known as “Uber” is:

They are very loose with the truth. Seemingly, this Illegal Taxi Service’s management personnel have been indoctrinated into telling these lies from the outset. They lie about the worth of the company they represent, about the training of the drivers, even the selection of their drivers. The cars their drivers are now driving are now being accepted up to 10 years of age and this Illegal Taxi Service allow and has even recommended their drivers to drive cars of this age. I would like to point out that the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994 notes that taxi’s used in Queensland must not be used over 6 years from the date of manufacture. Yet, these Illegal Taxi Services seems to flaunt the safety of every Queenslanders that pays for this service.

They have no In Car Security Camera Systems that make possible and available, the download for Police evidence as per the Queensland Passenger Transport Act. In fact they do not even have meters fitted to their vehicles as prescribed in the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994. The Illegal Taxi Services have stated that they do not need meters, as they are a “Technology Company.” Well, I refute this point. The Taxi Companies in Brisbane and in fact many across Queensland have had better technology for years before this Illegal Taxi Service came along. Yet the Legal Taxis in Queensland have always complied with the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994 in every way and have always fitted meters to their vehicles specifically because of the Act.

The Legal Taxi Services in Queensland all have Hire Driver Licences and are trained. Both Yellow Cabs and Black & White Cabs are “Registered Training Organisations,” and employ professional trainers for the professional training of their driver trainees. The Illegal Taxi Services have no training at all for their drivers apart from the sign up process where the driver can ask questions. The Illegal Taxi Services have no training for understanding the relevant legislations that they will be working under, Legal Taxi Drivers are trained and made aware of all relevant legislations

The Illegal Taxi Services have no police checks, other than the drivers signing a Statutory Declaration saying that he or she is of good character; we all know how good this process has been with Illegal Taxi Services. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Yes, he signed a Statutory Declaration to say that he was police checked (and of good character, when he was sacked by a cab company and immediately took up with an Illegal Taxi Service). As opposed to Legal Taxi Drivers where each Legal Taxi Driver has a thorough Police Check for DTMR prior to the correct Hire Drivers Authority being issued by the Government Department and a check on this, each day that the Legal Taxi Driver signs onto the in car computer system. No Technology Company or Illegal Taxi Service performs daily checks, or even random checks, on their drivers, as they do not have the “Technology.”

Once a Driver has passed the initial checks to sign on to an Illegal Taxi Service, (precious little they are) and the vehicle that they will be driving has been checked (by whatever means they use), the driver is allowed loose on the roads with vehicles up to ten years of age and in some cases older. The Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994 protects the public. In this Act, there is not one paragraph, not one line, not one word of protection for the Taxi Industry. This whole Act is specifically for the safety and protection of the Passenger yet these Illegal Taxi Services and Drivers do not comply with it in any way.

The Legal Taxi Services have a good working relationship with the Queensland Police Service accessing data for information to fight crime and for missing persons etc. The Legal Taxi Services readily share this information with the QPS. If the same is to happen with the Illegal Taxi Service, firstly an injunction is to taken in a court of law here in Queensland and then the case workers will be expected to file this injunction in the Netherlands or USA as this is where the information is stored. Stored seems to be a loosely used word as well, as there has been no response from this Illegal Taxi Service just how and for how long this information is stored.

Best of luck with that.

In Queensland, the Legal Taxi Services store data and regularly shares that data with the relevant Government Departments at their request, with all necessary haste.

To summarise the Challenge of the Illegal Taxi Services compared to the True, Real Taxi Companies:

- The Illegal Taxi Drivers are driving without the proper Hire Driver Authorities.
- The Non Existent Driver Training of Illegal Taxi Services as opposed to the “Registered Training Organisations” of Yellow Cabs and Black & White Cabs.
- No Police checks of the Illegal Taxi Drivers as opposed to the Legal Taxi Services stringent daily checks on all Legal Taxi Drivers.
- No Meters fitted to Illegal Taxi Vehicles, fitted to Legal Taxi Vehicles, as per the Act.

- No In Car Security Camera Systems in Illegal Taxi Vehicles which are fitted in Legal Taxis to produce real time Video and soon to be Audio footage of the happenings in Car.
- The Challenge for Police to gain access to Illegal Taxi Services Data for the purpose of Crime fighting and Missing persons etc.
- The Illegal Taxi Services do not use a recognized service for regular Mechanical Inspections. All Taxis are inspected at least every 6 months by the DTMR Vehicle Mechanical Inspectors.
- Illegal Taxi Services do not have a Lost Property Priority. The Legal Taxi Services do, and adhere to it via the Cab Company Superintendents Office.
- The inability of Illegal Taxi Service passengers to have the ability to complain to a person, yet Legal Taxi Services have fulltime Superintendents specifically for this purpose and for keeping the fleet of drivers in check.
- By its own admission the Illegal Taxi Service, operating under the noses of the government, has confirmed that it was identifying and blocking the telephone numbers of the Transport Compliance Officers from booking the Illegal Taxi Service, after 1500 drivers have been fined a total of more than \$1.7 million.

I would like to point out to the Committee, that the above list is in no way exhaustive as the Illegal Taxi Service does NOT intend on complying to the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994 and therefore, will remain Illegal by the terms of both the last LNP Government and the current Labor Government and as per the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994. Therefore, all these above points will remain points of Illegality, and then there is the looseness of their ability for complying with the simple art of telling truth.

Your Committee will be inundated by the Illegal Taxi Service submissions. You must find the truth in their statements and balance their statements to their ability to comply with the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994.

The Taxi Service in Queensland was not broken before this Illegal Taxi Service came along and started ripping untaxed money out of the country. Yes, the Legal Taxi Services need work; they are the first to admit this, but the Legal Queensland Taxi Services are surpassing “Worlds Best Practices” on a regular basis. Even the so-called “Fels Inquiry” in Victoria used the Queensland Taxi Industry as a Shining Example with regular monotony for the Victorian owners, operators and drivers to repair their industry.

Competition on the other hand is not something that the Legal Taxi Services shy away from. If this Illegal Taxi Service was made to comply with each and every facet of the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994, I am sure that it would fade away to a very minor player in the taxi industry and eventually fade into obscurity. Meanwhile, with the onset of Competition, both the entrenched companies would sharpen their act and the eventual winner would be the Passenger.

In short, “If it is not broken, don’t fix it.” Certainly do not allow a “Technology Company” from San Francisco that relies on the Internet for bookings come in and rip the Governments of Australia and Queensland off for GST and Income Tax. If the Internet goes down for any reason, their business model does too. While the local Legal Taxis can communicate with their customers on the Phone & on Locally produced

Apps. The drivers have the ability to get to passengers needing their services via a radio system that is linked to the computer system for Storage of Data, Traceability of the vehicle, Speed of the Vehicle in fact for all necessary data for each and every phone booked radio job, Hail from Ranks and hails from the road side to be traced and recorded. Do not believe that their App is “New or Improved” as it is neither New nor Improved. Taxi Companies have used Apps for booking taxis for years now.

As a Technology Company, their business model is looking decided poor, as the Legal Taxis have had everything that this Technology Company have to offer and more for many years and are willing to share this information with the Emergency Services and Police and have done so on many occasions.

One other thing that the Illegal Taxi Service has not got is the conscience of a Disability Service. All Legal Taxi Services in Queensland have a fleet of Wheelchair Accessible Taxis as well as the ability for all Legal Taxi Drivers trained to a Level to service the Disabled Community. This is also a requirement of a Taxi Service under the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994. This is just another service that the Illegal Taxi Service has turned its back on. If a person was confined to an Electric Powered Wheelchair because of a Disability, the Illegal Taxi Service has no intention to provide a vehicle for them and will have no alternative but to leave them on the side of the road.

They also do not want to pick up the Aged or Infirm from their home to go a shopping Center and return them to their home and assist them with their groceries.

The Legal Taxi Service has a Social Conscience. They support the Disabled, the Aged and the Community. The Community with Supporting Schools, Sporting Clubs and many others with sponsorships totaling hundreds of thousands of dollars each year all going back to the people that make the Legal Taxi Service worth working for.

Your Committee should find this submission supporting the Transport Legislation (Taxi Services) Amendment Bill 2015. The points raised prove that Legal Taxis in Queensland are a work in progress, yet every day they comply and adhere to the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994. As the Illegal Taxi Services current plying trade in Queensland do not, they are plainly illegal by the Governments own Legislation and this Legislation has to be amended by the Transport Legislation (Taxi Services) Amendment Bill 2015 for the addition of Demerit Points being attached to the transgressors drivers licence.

All the Governments monetary penalties issued to these Illegal Taxi Drivers clearly have not had any impact on these Illegal Activities as the drivers are still driving and the Transport Compliance people are still out there issuing more monetary penalties. The Head Office of these Illegal Drivers is paying the fines for them as they have seemingly an inexhaustible supply of overseas monies to top up their coffers as the Government tries as it might to drain them.

I firmly believe that if you have not read or understand the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994 to make it your business to know it and judge this submission by it.

There can only be 2 suitable outcomes for the Illegal Taxi Services in Queensland:

1. Complete acquiescence by the Illegal Taxi Service to the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994 (and this submission is not to support a further possible Bill making this point possible), or
2. Demerit Points added to the Illegal Taxi Drivers Licence by the Transport Legislation (Taxi Services) Amendment Bill 2015.

I remain respectfully yours,



Gary L. Walter

