

## Submission to Support Transport Legislation (Taxi Services) Amendment Bill 2015

**An Act to amend the *State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999*, the *Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994* and the *Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995* to provide for the recording of demerit points against the traffic history of a person who provides a taxi service without a taxi service licence or a peak demand taxi permit.**

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### INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this submission is to support the amended bill and address concerns that may arise if ridesharing is legalised.

### RIDESHARING IS A TAXI SERVICE

A "ridesharing" passenger is required to make a booking, be picked up and dropped off in a designated ride there is no differentiation to that of the traditional taxi, it is the driver providing the service not UBER or a Cab Network and the driver is paid for providing that service; provides the vehicle as a means of providing the service, whether it be hired or owned.

Rules and Regulations evolved in the 20th C were to protect consumers; advocates of ridesharing may not fully comprehend the need for a regulated fare structure to control pricing. If the taxi industry deregulates to meet competitive market the fiscal effect that it may have not only the service providers but to the most vulnerable consumers, unable to negotiate or identify price surges. There should be no difference to taking other modes of public transport with fares controlled by government.

The Australian community is in a better place today for structuring certain commodities and have a moral obligation to conform or respect standards, rules and regulations. UBER to date appears that it has not been respectful in conformity to rules and regulations of the transportation industry in Australia and for all intent and purposes may never accept government regulations.

***Uber C.E.O. and co-founder Travis Kalanick has long argued that his company doesn't need government officials to regulate it because it's a technology platform, not a transportation provider, and it self-regulates itself through customer feedback.***

*<http://www.capitalnewyork.com/article/city-hall/2014/10/8555191/uber-lyft-and-end-taxi-history>*

From the UBER CEO's perspective one only could assume that UBER is not the problem, the problem is the drivers that wish to affiliate with the company with intent to fragment the taxi industry, an important sector of a well regulated public transport system.

Ridesharing is threatening the livelihood of many taxi drivers as their main source of income, already at low levels of remuneration, long shifts in a uncertain work environment for both Bailee Drivers and Owner Drivers with too little alternatives in generating an income from other sources in regional Queensland.

Albeit, legalising ridesharing is favoured to promote competition and ultimately be good for consumers; the prices may come down but as the competitive market pressurises an environment that becomes saturated and many enforced to leave the traditional taxi industry the prices could become chaotic.

To meet a more competitive market the effect on Wheelchair Accessible Taxis' (WAT) may become unsustainable as operating in a saturated market limits the prospect to retain solvency.

Our records indicate with a total amount of Jobs 34918 for the period July, 2011 to June 2015 the percentage for WAT requirements 16.6%. Total day jobs represent 49.09% and the peak Friday and Saturday nights 50.51%.

This is an example that peak periods would be targeted by ridesharing drivers, without these peak periods of Friday and Saturday nights it would **not** be feasible to continue operation.

If there are changes that imposes disproportionate losses due to restricted usage it should be considered unfair and inequitable and interested parties able to seek compensation.

## **CONCLUSION**

The trend to Uberification is not only a potential threat to the taxi industry but also to the integrity of the Queensland transport systems.

If Australian governments bend to disruptive technology the unsettling of many industries thought to be protected by rules and regulations will be affected, funds going off-shore facilitating tax avoidance practise.

In reiteration; Ridesharing is a taxi service it is the driver providing the service not UBER or a Cab Network and the driver is paid for providing that service and providing the tools of trade; such act is a violation of Qld Transport Rules and Regulations (Taxi Service).

In support of the Taxi Services Amendment Bill 2015, I believe that there is a need to enforce harsh penalties such as demerit points and as a final solution if penalties are non effective the vehicle be impounded.