

From: [Jan Coco](#)
To: [Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee](#)
Subject: Transport Legislation (Taxi Services) Amendment 2015
Date: Monday, 19 October 2015 5:17:01 PM

Dear Sir/Madam,

My husband and I have been in business operating Taxis for the past 30 years – my husband for much longer. When we were younger we operated a fleet of 52 Taxis and had approximately 120 taxi drivers registered with us. We own 3 Taxi Licences and have worked very hard to pay for our Taxi Licences, which is now considered as our retirement fund. We have even sold our private home and downsized to fund the purchasing of our Taxi Licences. We are 71 years old and we are still working and running 4 Taxis. We pay tax and submit a Business Activity Statement every 3 months. The following are some points as to the anxiety in the Taxi Industry in Queensland.

The meaning of “Rideshare” is when there is no transaction or exchange of payment for the ride, but Uber and the media like to use this word. “Ridesharing” apps are unlawful, unsafe and uninsured. All taxi companies in Queensland have had apps at least 12 months before Uber entered the Australian market. These are monitored by the despatch companies and reported to TMR. Customers can also telephone a dispatch company, SMS to a taxi call centre, access web page to book a taxi or they can hail a taxi or go to a taxi rank

Uber could not survive in Queensland without them breaking the law and not paying tax or GST, for which is about 25% of a fare. Uber may be popular amongst users, but it is a villain to Queensland taxi drivers, regulators, employment law and government revenue. I believe some UberX drivers are now realising how little money they are making, once all the operating and self-employment costs are taken into account.

Uber is illegal under the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Regulation 2005 in Queensland, which requires a person to have authorisation to operate a public passenger vehicle providing public passenger service. Queensland taxis are required to have class 3 CTP insurance (approx. \$6500 per year), compared to Uber vehicles (private) class 1 CTP insurance (approx.. \$700 per year). Queensland Taxis can be a maximum of 6 years and 60% of the state are now using low emission hybrid vehicles. Taxis must be inspected by TMR every 6 months, which is

another cost for the small business operator. Only taxis meet Government regulations designed to protect the safety of customers. Members of the Queensland taxi industry must pay a security levy to the state government to address antisocial behaviour at taxi ranks on weekend nights. Every taxi has three GPS locators installed and an improved security camera installed. These are a cost to every taxi owner, compared to Uber does not have any overheads – for the safety of customers.

Taxis are required by law not to discriminate. Taxis provide services to the disabled, school pick-ups and also carry dogs for the visually impaired. Uber “cherry pick” in peak demand times, taking away the income lost by taxi drivers in a slow week. For every taxi that Uber eliminate from the road, it effects the income of a day driver, night driver, weekend driver and operator. Taxis are a 24/7 operation, available all the time, not just peak demand times. The revenue lost by taxis because of Uber is GST and tax loss to the ATO. Taxi customers can pay by cash, credit card and debit card (electronic transfer) or via a credit account held with a taxi company. Uber’s claim that their technology is superior is just another Uber lie. Uber have price surging which means the prices can increase by 500% or more, so a regular taxi fare of \$30.00 becomes \$150.00.

Why does competition law apply to Australians and Australian companies and not a huge American corporation like Uber? Shouldn’t the laws of Australia apply to all?

Finally, these taxi licences were purchased as a small business for the purpose of earning a living (and paying tax), or as an investment for retirement. Some were purchased through a government tender, when the government released extra licences. These investments are for future retirement funds, which would not be a burden on the government’s welfare in the way of aged pension.

While competition is desirable in any market, it must occur on a level playing field where all participants are subject to the same market entry requirements.

Yours sincerely,

Janice Coco

Taxi Licence Owner/Operator

