

Transport Legislation (Taxi Services) Amendment Bill 2015

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Position: Taxi Driver (Full-time)



I have been driving taxis, full-time, for four (4) years.

I support the introduction of demerit points for drivers of illegal taxi services. In light of nothing else being done to stop this activity, it is a good idea. Drivers of illegal taxis themselves are not feeling any pain, for any fines are supposedly paid for them.

In my time as a taxi driver, that is the past four years, my working hours have remained on balance unchanged, however my take home income has decreased dramatically.

Since illegal taxi services (specifically Uber) appeared in the local taxi market, beginning about two years ago, but more noticeably within the past six to twelve months, margins have dropped to a level that now makes driving virtually unviable.

On average, over a 14 hour day-time shift, up until 12 months ago, I would expect on average to complete 14-15 jobs, of varying sizes (but nearly always including a couple of large fares). Now, I get about seven or eight fares for the same length shift.

Twelve months ago, we would expect to take home as a minimum \$400 over a twelve hour shift. Now we consider ourselves lucky to make \$200-\$250 for the same shift. We drive the same hours, use the same ranks and have the same cars. The only thing that has changed is the rise of Uber.

From this take home income we have to pay income tax, GST, insurance levies, fuel and other expenses.

As recently as three or four months ago, the company with which I am associated, Cabs 2000, seldom, if ever had spare cars for drivers. There are now spare cars available all of the time.

Another noticeable change that I have noticed since the stresses placed upon legal taxi drivers has increased in recently, is that previously our industry was characterised by a sense of courtesy between the drivers, even those between companies. Now, however, it is obvious that there is a sense of urgency and growing competition between drivers, even within the same company. Along with this is a growing angst.

If you go to pick up a phone job currently, it is not uncommon for it to have been taken by another cab. This previously seldom happened.