



Cairns Taxis Limited ABN: 22 009 754 705

Ph: 4048 8311
Fax: 4048 8316
Mail: PO Box 200
Bungalow QLD 4870

Office: 16 Comport Street
Portsmith

info@cairnstaxis.com.au
www.cairnstaxis.com.au

Research Director
Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources
Committee
Parliament House
George St.
Brisbane

October 22, 2015

SUBMISSION

TRANSPORT LEGISLATION (TAXI SERVICES) AMENDMENT BILL 2015

I am the Chairman of Cairns Taxis Ltd and also own and operate 3 taxis, one of which is wheelchair accessible.

I congratulate Katter's Australian Party on their Private Member's Bill to amend the State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999 and the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994 and the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995 to provide the recording of demerit points against the traffic history of a person who provides a taxi service without a taxi service licence or peak demand tax permit.

Department of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR) enforcement officers have issued \$1.7 million in fines to illegal taxi drivers; unfortunately the overseas App providers have paid the fines on behalf of their employees. These App providers consider these fines as a cost of providing an illegal taxi service. Enforcement officers are now black listed by the App providers and no fines have been handed out since June 2015.

The Government has recently announced a review of the Taxi Strategic Plan of personal door to door taxi services. Early Government estimations is the review will not be finalized until August 2016. As an estimate this review could drag out for two years and not be finalized until after the next State Election

The Deputy Premier stated that enforcement of illegal taxi drivers would continue, but here weren't any details as to who would carry out the enforcement or when it would occur. As mentioned DTMR enforcement offices have been black listed by the App provider.

The only alternative is for all political parties to support the Private Member's Bill and ensure the amendments are enforced by DTMR and the Queensland Police Service (QPS). QPS have so far not enforced laws that they are authorized to.


Online submissions from other parties have highlighted the difference between fees and charges taxi owners and operators pay, which is far, far greater than illegal taxis pay, and I will not repeat what are already established facts.

It is imperative that the government of the day takes responsibility for upholding all of the laws of this State. It is not acceptable to pick and choose which laws will be upheld and which will be "ignored".

The law abiding citizens are being disadvantaged by this current stance and are understandably feeling disenfranchised by their elected government representatives.

The current safety and security measures that govern the taxi industry, and are highly regulated, are to primarily safeguard passengers, and to also protect drivers. Illegal taxi services are not subject to any form of regulations that allow them to be scrutinized in the event of an incident in the vehicle. These illegal operators can simply turn off their mobile phone and are then "untraceable" where as a taxi driver may turn off the computer dispatch system but is still able to be tracked at all times, via GPS.

If illegal taxi services are allowed to operate under any circumstances, they will dramatically impact on the earning capacity of Bailee drivers, leading to these drivers declining to drive on the quieter nights, i.e., Sunday, Monday and Tuesday nights. As an operator of a Wheelchair Accessible taxi, I can confirm that these vehicles are the least popular from a driver's perspective, and it is therefore these vehicles which will not attract drivers regularly and will consequently be parked for many shifts. This situation will have a major impact on transport of our disabled passengers, and this is an area of transport that only legal taxi services provide.



Layne Gardiner

Chairman