

Transport Legislation (Taxi Services) Amendment Bill 2015

Name: Derek ROBINSON [REDACTED]  
Contact Number: [REDACTED]  
Position: Taxi Driver (Full-time)

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I have been driving taxis on and off for well in excess of 30 years. Currently I am driving six days a week, predominantly day shifts, and this is the worst state I have ever seen the taxi industry in, in that time. I fear for the future of the industry and the people whose livelihoods depend on it.

The impact of Uber cannot be overstated, it is devastating. For most of us our incomes have dropped by somewhere between 30-45%. I have recently been working (a lot) longer hours just to survive, but have still been making less money. I am in my 70s, but I cannot afford to stop working.

I think the idea of introducing demerit points is good, as it puts the onus back onto the illegal drivers, and it actually tells them they are doing something *illegal*. It seems to me that the Uber company fails to tell their drivers they will be/are involving themselves in something illegal.

At the moment, the way it is, if you don't get an airport job in the first couple of runs, it is likely it will be a very bad day, financially. A definite change that I have noticed in the past six months is that the average wait, first thing in the morning, is to wait at least two hours (or more) to get a job. Everyone is so lean for work that it is creating a lot of competition and tension even among legal drivers. It is creating a lot of angst. It is made worse by Uber drivers just sitting around, scavenging our work.

The taxi industry is a highly regulated one – the Government has added and sold plates – at a high price, to generate Government revenue – based on population growth. This has been tightly controlled in the past. Car/licence owners pay big fees to the Government for levies and insurances, not to mention the licences alone. Now we have a situation where the Government are selling these licence owners out, and it appears is not prepared to do anything to take on a blatantly illegal activity.

Uber has no safety guarantee, no regular safety checks on vehicles, no fatigue management policy, and no Workplace Health and Safety standards. I thought you couldn't work for a company if it didn't have a WH&S policy.

Again, I commend the proposed demerit point system as a good place to start to fix the damage brought about by Uber.