

RE: Transport Legislation (Taxi Services) Amendment Bill 2015

As both an owner operator and Depot manager of taxis in Brisbane, I strongly urge the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee to adopt the proposed amendment to the current *Transport Legislation (Taxi Services)* in the interest of protecting a world class taxi industry and safeguarding the livelihoods of thousands of owners, drivers and others involved.

Under my Operator Accreditation, I run five taxi leases and seven managed cars.

In total, I am responsible for the employment of 10 people, not including drivers.

With the leases, I own the five vehicles, facilitated by a loan, along with the supporting infrastructure (office, computers, parts et cetera).

I also manage the *Cabs 2000* company, for which, at present I do not receive any payment, as it is not viable to do so. It was intended that as part of the growth of *Cabs 2000*, I would begin to draw a wage at a point of critical mass – which should have been about the level we reached approximately two years ago.

However, with the appearance and growth of illegal taxi services, such as uber, this has not been possible, so my income is derived solely from what I can make from the cabs.

This amount has similarly diminished over the same time frame.

Margins have fallen in the range of at least 30% over the past four or five years, with a sharp decline in the past two years. In fact the drop in the past two years alone has been more than 25%. Margins continue to fall so that any level of profitability is becoming more difficult, or impossible, to achieve.

It is difficult to overstate the personal impact the financial stress is having, not only on the businesses running taxis, but also at a personal level.

Within my family alone, stress and anxiety have resulted in medical issues directly related to the financial impact caused by ride-sharing services such as uber.

We, including employees, are working longer and harder, for less (sometimes no) return. We are working consistently between 70-80 hours a week.

*SH*

RECEIVED  
22 OCT 2015  
4127.  
IPNRC

Planning for the future is currently impossible and we certainly cannot grow our business. There is no time to focus on promotion of our workshops; and there are no funds to do it.

If uber and its kind are permitted to stay and operate in the industry as it is, I am certain that there is very little chance for the taxi industry as we know it to survive. Put simply, if uber continues as it is, I don't think the taxi industry will.

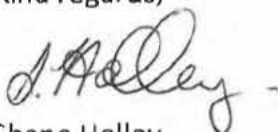
Our margins have always been extremely tight and relative levels of success have really only been achieved where economies of scale come into play. The ability to save money to compensate for quiet periods, and by taking advantage of and making money through our workshops has also helped in the past, but not currently.

Time is now currently spent trying to combat the effects of uber on our business, and livelihood, and our ability to survive financially.

Initiatives such as this proposal to introduce demerit point for drivers of illegal cabs might go some way to help the legitimate taxi industry survive this period and help undo the toll taken by uber and its ilk. There seems to be very little acknowledgement that this is an illegal practice – and there is certainly no real penalty for being involved at any level; be it as driver, customer or parent company.

Without uber, I am certain the industry would flourish, and more importantly we, as owners and operators, could get back to focussing on what we do best – the business of taxiing. We are one of the best, most efficient taxi industries in the world. Or, were.

Kind regards,

  
Shane Holley  
21.10.15