



ERIC AUBORT

6 April 2017

To the Public Works and Utilities Committee

I purchased my Taxi Licence from the Qld Government in December 2002 about a year before my retirement and paid over \$400'000 for the privilege to operate or lease my licence as I wished.

Having worked hard all my life, supporting my family single handed, I decided, at the age of 67, to stop work and lease my licence to a third party.

The revenue was adequate for my investment and the value of my licence increased to a point where, in 2007, the average sale of the licence was about \$665'000.

The Labour Government has now legalized ride sharing, but omitted to protect it's own regulated industry with the imposition of like condition of trade.

My own revenue has now decreased by 30% and the licence is not worth the paper it's written upon.

No one seem to realize, or care, that 16000 taxi operators, some with multiple licences, have been profoundly affected by this irrational and poorly planned decision from what I thought was a responsible Government.

As a result I, and many others have lost face in politicians who, it would seem, are in office to feather their own nests, introducing legislation for political and populist advantage, or because they prefer to follow other States rather than fight to protect their own industry.

There was no considerations for the debacle and devastation it has created in the Taxi Industry, nor for the impact it has had on those small businesses operators and associated businesses.

The compensation of \$20'000 from the present Labour Government is a farce considering that some licence holders have paid as much \$700'000 plus stamp duty for the dubious privilege of a, so called, secure investment.

The Taxi Council of Queensland is not opposed to fair competition, and neither am I. I support their list of requirements in its entirety and without compromise as long as it is fairly and practically **enforced**.

Yours sincerely,

Eric Aubort

Attached: Taxi Council list of requirements
"Taken for a ride" by Nikki Gemmell



List of Requirements

1. Establish an independent Personalised Transport Commission with legislative amendment, policing/enforcement, regulatory and policy development capacity.
2. Bailment Agreements must be retained, with the minimum work conditions and standards for all personalised transport drivers enshrined in legislation.
3. Security Camera requirements must establish a minimum standard, be consistent and uniform across all personalised transport providers to ensure the safety of all drivers and passengers (regardless of the service chosen) and to meet Queensland Police requirements.
4. Commercial-grade, anti-tamper GPS units must be fixed to all personalised transport vehicles and be remotely accessible to authorised parties.
5. All personalised transport vehicles to have emergency systems in place to support driver safety.
6. The Bill and Regulation must be fully consistent with all other relevant legislation including, but not limited to, disability discrimination and work, health and safety.
7. All personalised transport vehicles be required to have dedicated number plates (akin to "T" plates), rather than easily removable stickers. Plates to be provided only when evidence of appropriate CTP, public liability and certificate of inspection are provided.
8. Immediately define, and establish appropriate and equitable premiums for, the class/classes of Compulsory Third Party insurance for all personalised transport providers to address continued uncertainty.
9. All personalised transport providers must hold public liability insurance to prevent the State Government becoming the default insurer and to minimise potential risks to the community.
10. In the absence of vehicle age restrictions, establish clear vehicle quality and usage rate standards and hold operators accountable.
11. Increase licence fees for Booked Hire Service Drivers and Authorised Entities to help fund expected increases in regulatory and enforcement costs for Government and to better reflect the level of "trust" being placed on licence holders.
12. All drivers must have an ABN and be registered for GST before receiving a Drivers Authorisation.
13. The Government must establish a process for managing the risks of multiple affiliations by drivers in terms of both "chain of responsibility" and fatigue management. This includes drivers operating across both personalised transport and other transport (i.e. truck, bus) sectors.
14. Fully integrate taxis into the GoCard public transport network in the short-term.
15. Clearly define what constitutes a "hail" and "touting".
16. Expressly prohibit the establishment and operation of Booked Hire Service pick up/and drop off zones, on public and private land, which represent pseudo taxi ranks.
17. Establish and maintain a register of drivers that have been disaffiliated or removed from platforms to prevent drivers from simply shifting to a new platform.
18. Establish clear and enforceable requirements for Government access to all data related to the delivery of personalised transport services in Queensland.
19. Expressly identify Police Check requirements in the Bill for all personalised transport drivers as part of Driver Authorization approval.
20. Maintain the capacity of the Minister to enter into Service Contracts at their discretion to ensure the Government has the capacity to respond quickly, and at the lowest cost, to changing or unique circumstances without the need for regulatory or legislative changes.

front

RECEIVED

10 APR 2017

PWUC

What's this? Oh, a friendly email. Titled, most helpfully, "Your Thursday Morning Trip with Uber." "\$10.00," is bold at the top. A cancellation fee. Freshly extracted from my credit card. Uber has provided the last four digits so I know it is absolutely my money they're taking. All so beautifully modern, gleaming, efficient. Except I hadn't booked an Uber. And so I unsuspectingly whooshed down the rabbit hole of fret and frustration as I attempted to rectify a case of blatant money-napping – and lost several years off my life in the process.

First thought: someone's illegally hacked my Uber account. Second thought: get card details removed fast, because I do not trust whatever is going on. Easier said than done. Because in the all-too familiar way of the warm, matey start-up designed to extract your money with millennial efficiency, you cannot remove card details without providing another card's details. Cue: sinking feeling of implosion as you realise you've been had. "No. Bloody. Way!" screamed Ninja Mum from Distant 20th Century. A tenner had just been snaffled here without permission.

Uber's Australian website informs, in piqued tones: "There are no contact numbers for Uber. Do not even attempt to find one, because there is no contact number at this point." Of course. An actual person will be possible to talk to because we phone customers are too pesky, messy, unpredictable, right? Return is hit on the original email, the sorry predicament explained. "We have received your request & will respond within the next 12 hours," is the automated response.

Twelve hours? To find out if there's some Uber driver going rogue with customer account details? Whether a card should be cancelled? No. I cannot work, write, function within this most unwelcome plunge into Uberland's dank and rapacious underbelly. Cue hours of curdling fury as I wait for the



BY NIKKI GEMMELL

Taken for a ride

A TENNER SNAFFLED:
CUE HOURS OF
CURDLING FURY

great Uberland beast to respond to prodding. Eventually the Chap gives me that look that says, Planet Wife is spinning off its orbit her and we're all going to suffer in the long run. "Why don't you just tweet about it," he suggests. Bingo. A response within a minute. So that's the language these people understand.

A lass with a Californian accent eventually calls. How do I get card details removed from the app? "I don't know myself." What about concern over fraudulent activity on my credit card? "It's up to you to take it to your bank or the police." Then an Uber man with a British accent rings and mansplains that it could not possibly be fraud; I must have accidentally activated the app while it was in my handbag gasp that I was in a meeting at the time but he goes, over the top of me (reminder to self: uber in German means "over" – quite possible in an infuriating and condescending way).

Aldous Huxley described the drug of choice in his modern nightmare world as "the warm, the richly coloured, the infinitely friendly world of soma-holiday. How kind, how good-looking, how delightfully amusing every one was!" That is how these millennial start-ups like to present themselves: kind, fuzzy, good-looking. On your side. Yet scratch the surface and you wonder they're all created by awkward 20-something with no idea how society actually wants to interact: with warmth, humanity and meaningful connection. I just wanted a "we're sorry"; I craved the soothing human equivalent of a B and a lie down on the other end of the line.

Uber made me feel small, hopeless, useless – and furious. The impression given: We do actually want to talk to a real person here, irritating things that they are. The company now worth \$51 billion – and \$10. My \$10. Until it's refunded. They've promised. But I don't trust that this infuriating situation will never happen in the future – and couldn't bear to jump down that rabbit hole of start-up obfuscation all over again. Life's too short. I'm heading back to taxi land.