

David Thomas

27th September 2018

Committee Secretary
Transport & Public Works Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane QLD 4000

Re: Enquiry into Transport Technology closing on Sept 28th 2018 at 4pm

I thank you for the opportunity to make a submission to the committee. My background is 28 years in the Personal Transport sector (Licensed Taxis) hence my submission focusses in this area.

- a) The transition to new fuels has long been recognized by the Taxi sector with most fleets using low emission hybrids.

Moving to all electric will happen when 1) technology is able to meet the demands

2) cost of vehicles enables a ROI.

The taxi industry must be recognized as highly innovative & be given the opportunity to lead the way. This will require some restoration of viability & profitability to our industry.

Govt reintroduce mandates on vehicle ages & safety standards.

Light touch, hands off, deregulation hasn't worked. Theory sounds good but leave everything up to individuals & it's Wild West & a race to the bottom. A race no one wins.

- b) The Taxi booking networks are best equipped to manage every transition involving new technology incl. electric vehicles. The networks are best equipped to handle all operational aspects incl. vehicle servicing & repairs.
- c) The driverless technology whilst advancing quickly will not be the norm for many decades to come. Technology aids like e.g. blind spot recognition etc. does provide better & a safer driving.

There will for the distant future always be a need for drivers to assist young, old, infirm & disabled passengers.

Planning needs to be for now.

Getting it wrong now will make future transitions out of reach unless we achieve some strong viability.

The race to the bottom with uncontrolled numbers has created a situation where drivers no longer make a living wage.

Simply expressed the cake is not shared by cutting into slices but into crumbs so no one gets fed.

Society is suffering the consequences of massive traffic congestion due to the large numbers (rideshare quoted at 15,000 in Brisbane?). 15,000 cars is 150kms of bumper to bumper traffic.

These large numbers whilst having a devastating impact on Taxis are now having an even greater impact on our public transit systems.

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Sadly the explosive uncontrolled growth in rideshare numbers has abandoned our disabled brothers & sisters. Rideshare don't offer wheelchair accessible vehicles which is in violation of human rights.

The rideshare business model being discriminatory & all pervasive is reliant on oversupply whilst externalizing all its costs & responsibilities. Its model relies on driver wages theft to give an illusion of value.

Employment arrangements must take into account not only the ability of drivers to make a living wage but to do so in a safe working environment. The food delivery riders on bikes are without doubt being cruelly exploited & exposed to huge dangers on our roads.

There can be no advancement without the understanding of what the Gig Economy is and acting to align it with existing rules in place for businesses & the workforce. The "Gig Economy" is not modern sharecropping or feudalism. It's extortion, plain & simple. These app- based services operate like pimps, taking a cut of what the worker earns in exchange for the illusion of protection & the right to work. The beneficiaries being subsidized by us all are the offshore billionaires safely ensconced in their tax havens.

The Future

Rideshare is transient i.e. make it work to rules & it dies. It has no future ie none are making money & all losing money. Uber has hemorrhaged \$billions. It is only a matter of time.....

The Taxi Industry has been unfairly treated but also learnt some lessons. The Taxi industry will survive but in order to do so & be innovative it needs the govt to acknowledge its very important role.

A decent boost would be to give all current Taxi Plate owners an allocation of licences ie 2 or 3 per plate to fill the services gap when rideshare finally implodes. This would restore some order & control plus local ownership.

The following publications/ papers can be referenced & I urge the committee to study them.

<https://cashmank.com/2018/01/can-uber-ever-deliver-a-fantastic-series-from-naked-capitalism/>

<http://www.schallerconsult.com/>

Sincerely

David Thomas