

# Taxi Engagement Policy



(Updated April 2017)

## **Background**

In accordance with the Mayor's Taxi and Private Hire Action Plan (published in September 2016), a commitment was given to review the engagement arrangements with the taxi trade to ensure wider inclusivity. Following written feedback from the five major taxi trade groups in late 2016, the following meetings and principles will be followed from March 2017.

Transport for London (TfL) recognises the important role associations representing licensed London taxi drivers provide to drivers, their customers and TfL itself. We place a high value on the input and contribution that the taxi trade provide, particularly in terms of:

- Identifying and addressing issues of concerns affecting drivers;
- Devising and implementing taxi policy and changes to fares;
- Working in partnership to maintain and further enhance the world renowned status of London's iconic taxi service.

## **Taxi Engagement - meetings**

From March 2017, an improved new plan for regular engagement with the five major taxi trade groups will be adopted. The following meetings/engagements will take place:

- A meeting with the Transport Commissioner three times a year, approximately every four months. One representative from each of the five major taxi trade bodies will be invited, along with the Director of Service Operations and the General Manager for London Taxi and Private Hire.
- The Transport Commissioner or General Manager will write to the above mentioned trade representatives with an update mid-way between the three scheduled meetings.
- Quarterly meeting to discuss strategic issues with senior trade representatives of the LCDC, LTDA, RMT, UCG and Unite, with the General Manager and Head of TPH Stakeholder Relations.



- If trade representatives also wish to meet on a one to one basis from time to time that can be facilitated on an ad hoc basis to discuss member issues specific to that organisation.
- Taxi Operational Performance Seminar – this meeting will be structured in three parts:
  - licencing operational updates and questions
  - compliance operational updates and questions
  - a flexible agenda point to discuss a topical policy item, agreed by all parties before the meeting

One representative from each of the five major taxi trade bodies will be invited to attend, along with appropriate senior TfL officials. Other parties (e.g. subject matter experts or a representative from a local borough) may also be invited as appropriate, to discuss the topical policy item, by prior agreement.

- Other methods of engagement include: ad hoc meetings with smaller organisations and stakeholders; suburban taxi forums (combined by geographical area to encourage attendance); and occasional workshops on key issues (for example, ULEZ) which may require specialist attendees from additional trade bodies.
- TfL attendance by request from the trade at regular and ad hoc trade led meetings such as the London Cab Ranks Committee or the Heathrow Compliance Meeting.

### **Taxi Engagement – principles**

TfL is committed to engaging formally with taxi driver associations and representatives through structured, regular meetings and workshops, with those associations that:

- Are formally established, registered friendly societies or trade unions;
- Represent no less than five per cent of licensed taxi drivers at the start of the TfL financial year (1 April);

Principles for formal engagement with taxi driver associations:

- **Agendas:** agenda items to be agreed prior to meetings.
- **Chairing:** meetings will be chaired by the organisation hosting and administering the meeting. The chair will work to ensure appropriate time is given to all meeting attendees, and that they respect each others right to talk and share the views of their organisation.

- **Conduct:** We are fully committed to open and honest dialogue with all parties involved in formal engagement. However, meeting attendees are expected to conduct themselves in a courteous and respectful manner. Any breaches of confidentiality, harassment (including sexual harassment, racial harassment, harassment on grounds of disability, age, religion or belief/non-religion or non-belief, and homophobic bullying/harassment on grounds of sexual orientation), or comments of a personal nature, including comments made either in meetings or externally (such as on social media), will be dealt with by exclusion from the meetings.
- **Confidentiality:** confidential information will always be treated as such. Meeting attendees, including TfL representatives, will always be clear if information is being provided in confidence.
- **Exclusion from meetings:** in any instances it is appropriate for an individual to be excluded from a meeting, the following process will be followed:
  - **In meetings:** If a representative's behaviour becomes a cause for concern in the meeting, they will be alerted as such by the meeting chair. If the behaviour continues, they will be excluded from future meetings and the senior representative of their organisation will be contacted by TfL to discuss appropriate future representation.
  - **Outside of meetings:** If a representative's behaviour becomes a cause for concern outside of the meeting (for example, on social media), the senior representative of their organisation will be contacted by TfL to discuss appropriate future representation.
- **Meeting representatives:** trade organisations to put forward one representative per meeting (unless covered elsewhere in the policy).
- **Summary notes and actions:** TfL will provide brief summary notes and actions for each meeting they chair. The notes will reflect the views of an organisation on key points. In the case of the Taxi Operational Performance Seminar, these will also be published, along with the presentation provided at the meeting, on the TfL website (however, there will be an option to discuss certain items in a confidential session; those items would not be published in the summary note of the meeting).

### **Taxi Engagement – other TfL channels**

- In addition to the meeting schedule, key trade representatives are welcome to contact us with any issues that may arise outside of the formal meeting process, via email or phone. In the first instance, it is helpful to direct your enquiries to the Head of TPH Stakeholder Relations, who will coordinate a response on behalf of TfL.
- We will continue to communicate with licensees through other established channels, such as online information, the weekly email, the bimonthly magazine, OnRoute, and through the social media platform, twitter.

### **Taxi Engagement – Trade channels**

- We understand that driver associations communicate with their members and the wider taxi driver community through a wide range of channels, including trade press publications, printed and online material and social media. We ask that you carefully consider the substance and accuracy of articles in such media, and would be happy to provide you with a comment or right to reply.
- We understand and respect associations and individuals rights to free speech and protest, in the event of a dispute. However, we ask that you carefully consider the need for such demonstrations and offer us the opportunity to address the issues of concern.