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# TAXITALK

MAGAZINE



Official journal of the Victorian Taxi Association  
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OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE VICTORIAN TAXI ASSOCIATION

**MAGAZINE EDITOR** ..... Toni F. Peters  
**VTA EDITOR** ..... David Samuel  
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TAXI  
ASSOCIATION**

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**CHIEF EXECUTIVE** ..... David Samuel

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## *President's Message*

At the conclusion of a difficult and confronting year for many, it is an appropriate time to reinforce the VTA's views on a number of important matters, the things we have managed to achieve and what the future may hold.

At the outset I would like to thank the VTA staff for their support during 2013 and also all the members of the VTA, particularly those who sit on our Council and Executive Council. These people do a great job for which they receive no personal reward.

The VTA itself has gone through a number of changes during 2013, I hope for the better, and I believe we remain a strong voice advocating on behalf of our members, our industry and those in the community who rely so heavily on our service.

One significant change the VTA has enacted during 2013 was to create new membership categories for taxi operators and licence holders who have or do operate a taxi licence.

We are happy to receive applications from interested parties. If you would like to know more, please contact us on (03) 9676 2635 or via email at [admin@victaxi.com.au](mailto:admin@victaxi.com.au).

Over the last 12 months or so, since the release of the Victorian Taxi Industry Inquiry Final Report, the VTA have

made it clear that while we support reform and majority of the 139 recommendations there are a number that we reject on principle as being unfair and at odds with the interests of taxi users.

For example, in regards to a number of important principles the VTA believe:

- It is necessary to regulate the number of taxi licences
- The 45/55 fare split is unsustainable and will simply see an unnecessary increase in price
- The introduction of Pre Booked Only (PBO) licences is unnecessary and the loose regulation that surrounds their operation has the potential to threaten driver and community safety
- Taxis should be required to affiliate to a Network Service Provider
- The issue of a taxi fare adjustment should have been dealt with at the time the Government responded to the Inquiry recommendations



**Kevin Gange**  
VTA President

- Recommendations relating to the Wheelchair Accessible Taxis Service are flawed and some need to be re-thought.

While this list looks long I would point out it only amounts to 6 points out of 139. The VTA's submissions to the Inquiry provide greater detail in regards to these matters.

During 2014 one of the key points the VTA will be keen to impress upon decision makers is that our industry does not fear competition, but it should be conducted on a level regulatory playing field.

Responsibility for ensuring this lies not only with the regulator but also the Government. Someone has to regulate the regulator.

While the VTA recognise that many remain disillusioned, it is also important to note the significant concessions the industry was able to achieve over our difficult journey.

There are important differences between the Draft Report, the Final Report and the Government's Response.

If we take licensing for example, the adoption of an annual index for Government leases and also the introduction of consumer test that can be applied before licences are released are very important differences. As was the inclusion of a consumer interest test to limit licence release in Regional and Country areas.

Since the announcement of the Government's response, other important amendments have also been secured.

At the VTA conference this year Commission Chairman Graeme Samuel announced that

Pre Booked Only (PBO) drivers would be required to complete the same knowledge test as taxi drivers. Mr Samuel also explained that it is his view that an occupancy rate of 28% indicates there is no pressing need for more taxis - he did preface this by explaining that they retained the ability to release licences if licence assignment prices began to rise.

However, in general terms, both these statements were positive and reflect what the VTA has been arguing.

While the more principled arguments have been underway, the VTA has also been involved in more operational work, and importantly been contributing to the transition phase.

It is important that industry experience is brought to bear on this process. We will continue to engage in the Taxi Service Commission's consultative forums as long as we are invited.

However, we are of the view that such events should be an open discussion and not simply an opportunity to tell the industry what will be done next.

Some of these discussions will be vital to industry sustainability and I encourage all to remain engaged.

Zone boundaries and driver agreements are a couple of headline issues that are likely to be broached in the near future. The industry must be prepared to respond and ensure a fair and sensible outcome is achieved.

Concurrently, the Essential Service Commission metropolitan fare model review will be ongoing.

This is a wide ranging review and industry input is both required and necessary. I am not simply referring to giving someone some data and waiting to hear how much a taxi can charge. Strong consideration also needs to be given to the structure of taxi fares.

It's been a tough few years for many and there will be more challenges ahead, however, we encourage you to remain positive and to seek advantages in this period of change.

I remain proud to represent our industry and believe it has responded in a mature and sensible way - particularly in the face of what can only be described as a very public malicious anti-campaign over the last few years.

I wish you all and your families all the best over the festive season and encourage you to enjoy it. You have earned it! ❀



**As 2013 draws to an end, the industry finds itself in a challenging position, particularly in relation to how it chooses to respond to the current context.**



**David Samuel**

VTA CEO

**A**s 2013 draws to a close I thought I might indulge myself and jot down my thoughts about the year and what lies ahead. At the outset I would like to thank my staff at the VTA, VTA members and those who sit on our Council and Executive Council. Your support and hard work is without question and I thank you for it.

Looking back over the last few years one thing that greatly disappoints me is that the focus of the Taxi Industry Inquiry, and the subsequent recommendations, centred on the desires and interests of a small number of people rather than the concerns of the wider community and taxis users.





Rather than addressing the issues that most concern existing and potential consumers of the taxi service the Inquiry focused on apportioning blame. As a result, the outcomes in some areas will not provide the improvements our customers are looking for.

Further, I have found it difficult to understand why the Taxi Industry Inquiry was so committed to presenting reform as a punishment to existing industry participants, rather than an opportunity to correct a number of structural deficiencies in the industry which had led to a decline in customer service levels.

If the process had been conducted in this manner perhaps a set of sensible reforms may have been produced that were fair and took account of the realities, while at the same time making the necessary structural changes to the regulatory regime that governs our industry. This outcome would have also made it much easier for the Taxi Services Commission to implement change: a huge job in itself. Driving demand for taxi services and providing a high standard of customer service are the key determinants of success of the industry, especially in the face of increased competition.

It has been the VTA's contention throughout the Inquiry period that there is an over emphasis on the price of taxi services and the role it plays in determining demand. Whilst price will always be a factor in the decision making of individuals, quality and safety are just as important if not more so.

As the ESC Chairperson, Dr Ben-David, highlighted at the VTA's recent State Conference, the key considerations when setting a price for taxi services are value and value-for-money.

What is perceived as good value for money is less about the most affordable option and more about the quality of service received. Fundamentally, a high quality service can only be provided if a reasonable return can be achieved by all industry participants through the income generated from the fare box.

Reform of our industry should have been presented to the community as essentially a set of choices. There is no magic bullet that will make a taxi service perfect and with every theory or approach comes a set of externalities. The community should have been asked what they wished for in a taxi service and what is it that they valued the most?

The answer to this question could then have guided the emphasis of the Inquiry. Rather, the Inquiry was directed by the high level embedded economic ideology that has often failed to deliver in other jurisdictions.

As 2013 draws to an end, the industry finds itself in a challenging position, particularly in relation to how it chooses to respond to the current context. Many are left wanting to continue to fight the principled fight, particularly in relation to the issue of licensing.

This is completely understandable and legitimate. On the other hand, the industry is required to take a pragmatic approach and do what we can to survive and prosper in the new environment. There is no easy answer to what lies ahead and the types of challenges we will face.

From a VTA perspective, we have every intention of making our view known in regards to matters of principle and simultaneously will represent the industry at a pragmatic and operational level. This will not be easy, but in the short term extremely necessary.

I would like to end on a positive note. I understand the uncertainty that has been created for many, and the concern that comes with it. It is important to remember an important fact: so many of our industry do a fantastic job and provide a great and vital service.

Do not doubt your ability to compete and remember how much goodwill exists in and towards your business.

I wish you all a very merry Christmas and look forward to working with you again in 2014. Take some time to recharge your batteries, because I am sure 2014 will again require a lot of us all. ❀

U s?

**Don't take the risk!**

NEWS  
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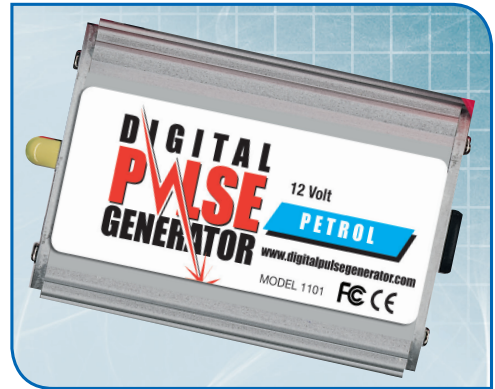
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- ✓ Installation of the Digital Pulse Generator, installed on the new car battery will immediately commence breaking down these sulphates that will progressively regenerate the battery efficiency back to where it was when it left the factory.
- ✓ In the case of an older car battery that has been in use and is losing its efficiency, even to the extent of being considered "flat", the installation of the Digital Pulse Generator will immediately start breaking down the sulphates and after a period time will bring the battery up to an operating level of efficiency. This regeneration continues and extends the life of the battery well beyond its original expected life span.
- ✓ Test results in this case suggest, operating efficiency would be achieved after running the car for about 1000kms.
- ✓ Important to note the Digital Pulse Generator only



operates when the engine is running or in association with a battery charger.

- ✓ When using a normal battery charger on a flat battery, it will take about 4 to 5 days to achieve efficiency.
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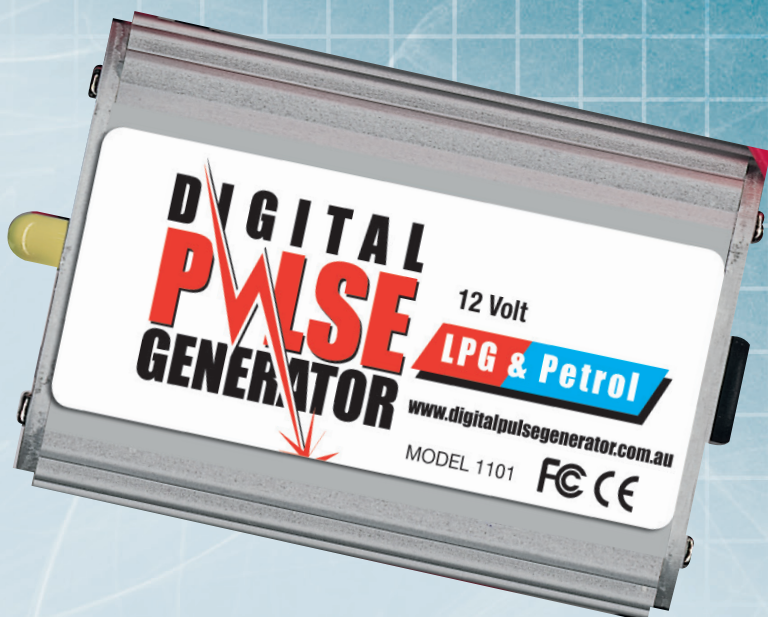
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It is the build up of these sulphates on the battery plates, that gradually reduce the efficiency of the battery.

The DPG, when attached to the battery terminals, immediately commences dissolving these sulphates back into the battery solution that then extends the life of the battery.

**T**he Victorian taxi industry has gone through some challenging times lately. As a result, finance available to the industry has undergone changes. The main effect has been to the way taxi licences are now funded.

Up until now, the value of Victorian taxi licences were relatively stable. With the reforms that were announced, a panic went through and many tried to sell - with little takers from the other side. As a result of this, the value of taxi licence plates have fallen and, for the present, are no longer treated as a form of security by the banks. Previously the banks' position was up to 60-70% of value.

Currently, banks are only using property as security - and this applies to all metropolitan and country taxi licence holders.

As a result, transactions have slowed, given the heavy reliance on licences by operators as security towards these loans. This would be reviewed when a state of normality returns to the market.

In November one lender has reinstated lending on metropolitan licences. This lender has set a \$300,000 valuation against Melbourne metro licences and lending up to \$180,000 stand alone, or up to 100% together using property (or another licence) as security.

VHA licences were being used at one point as security - this is no longer the case. However, banks look at each funding request on a case by case basis. This may be either by way of property security or unsecured funding with a significant deposit by the customer.

Taxi car finance, on the other hand, is much easier to obtain. Some of the main banks have "no financials" options; 100% funding being given and fast approvals too.

These days, lenders are more in tune to the taxi industry and are providing financing options for fittings such as taxi paint, LPGas conversion, car accessories and gap cover insurance.

Gap insurance is being requested by operators more frequently. In lay-

man terms, Gap Cover insurance covers the difference between a total loss insurance (or taxi club) payout and the balance of the taxi loan, when the taxi is written off within the loan term.

The issue here is that the high kms on taxis affect assessed car value on total losses - with payouts often being lower (often to the tune of many thousands), than what the taxi operator owes on the car finance. Therefore, Gap Cover insurance policies are invaluable in these cases.

As the lending conditions change for the Victorian Taxi Industry, we will continue to supply updates in future editions of *Taxi Talk*.

Safe driving to all of you.

**Manuel Manias** Yarra Finance ❀



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Photo shows roof light with optional twin 55 watt weather proof long life spot lights

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The VTA 2012/13 Annual General Meeting was held on Wednesday 13 November 2013. All reports were received and accepted, and Councillors for 2013/14 appointed.

Councillors are:

Kevin F Gange  
Andrew Gilmartin  
Kevin M Gange  
Nicos Andrianakis  
Philip Humphreys  
Alfred Gange

Chris Sikavitsas  
Stuart Overell  
Greg Hardeman  
Michael Thomson  
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Kevin Dunn  
Nirmal Sekhon

Stephen Armstrong  
Peter Valentine  
Patrick Holahan  
Jan Uebergang  
Carmen Giddens  
Eleanor Fitz  
Tuna Guclu

## Executive Council

Following the VTA Annual General Meeting, the Council met to elect the Executive Council, the President and the Vice President. The Executive Council for 2013/14 is:



**Kevin F Gange** (President)



**Stephen Armstrong**  
(Vice President)



**Stuart Overell**



**Greg Hardeman**



**Kevin Dunn**



**Andrew Gilmartin**



**Peter Valentine**





**Merry  
Christmas  
and  
Happy  
New Year**

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# Tougher penalties for mobile phone use

## DRIVING AND MOBILE PHONES

The State Government has strengthened penalties for motorists caught using mobile phones.

The penalties for talking on a hand-held mobile phone while driving a car will increase from \$289 and three demerit points to fines of \$433 and four demerit points effective from 25 November 2013.

Last year Victoria Police fined 59,000 people for talking on the phone.

"The message is it's not worth killing yourself or killing someone else on the way to getting to somewhere because of the mobile phone," Senior Sergeant Johnson said.

It is still legal for motorists to use mobile phones through Bluetooth or headphones.

Transport Minister Terry Mulder said the Government has made the penalties tougher because the message was not getting through.

TAC senior manager road safety Sam Cockfield said research showed taking your eyes off the road for more than two seconds doubled a person's crash rate.

It is illegal in all Australian states and territories to use a hand-held mobile phone while driving. This includes:

- Talking
- Texting
- Playing games
- Taking photos/video
- Using any other function on your phone.

It is also illegal to use a hand held mobile phone when your vehicle is stationary but not parked e.g. when you're stopped at traffic lights.

Learner and P1 drivers are not permitted to use a hand-held or hands-free mobile phone while driving. ❀



# MERRY CHRISTMAS



**FORMULA 1  
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GRAND PRIX**

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13-14-15-16  
MARCH 2014**



**and a happy and safe  
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Port of Melbourne  
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# Calling All Cabs!

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### Turnaround Visits – 3 hour peak demand after passenger departure time

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and a **full load** will embark with luggage in the afternoon.

Ship	Visit Date	Passenger Departure Time	Approx. No. of Taxis Required
Dawn Princess	Monday 02-Dec-13	7:30am	150 - 200
Dawn Princess	Sunday 15-Dec-13	7:30am	150 - 200
Dawn Princess	Saturday 21-Dec-13	7:30am	100 - 150
Dawn Princess	Saturday 04-Jan-14	7:30am	100 - 150
Dawn Princess	Friday 10-Jan-14	7:30am	150 - 200
Silver Shadow	Sunday 19-Jan-14	8:30am	150 - 200
Dawn Princess	Thursday 23-Jan-14	7:30am	150 - 200
Dawn Princess	Wednesday 05-Feb-14	7:30am	150 - 200
Dawn Princess	Tuesday 18-Feb-14	7:30am	150 - 200
Amadea	Sunday 02-Mar-14	7:30am	150 - 200
Dawn Princess	Monday 03-Mar-14	7:30am	150 - 200
Dawn Princess	Sunday 16-Mar-14	7:30am	150 - 200
Dawn Princess	Saturday 29-Mar-14	7:30am	150 - 200
Dawn Princess	Friday 11-Apr-14	7:30am	150 - 200
Pacific Pearl	Friday 18-Apr-14	8:30am	90 - 100
Pacific Pearl	Thursday 24-Apr-14	12:30pm	90 - 100
Pacific Pearl	Tuesday 29-Apr-14	8:30am	150 - 200

### Partial Turnaround Visits - 3 hour peak demand after passenger departure time

A **significant number** of passengers will disembark with luggage in the morning  
and a **significant number** will embark with luggage in the afternoon.

Ship	Visit Date	Passenger Departure Time	Approx. No. of Taxis Required
Dawn Princess	Tuesday 06-May-14	8:30am	90 - 100

### Pier Access

Taxis will be granted access to drive on to Station Pier once an identification  
check has been conducted at the front gate.

There will be a high demand for maxi taxis and station wagons during  
disembarkation due to passengers travelling in groups and luggage size.

**Note:** Cruise ship schedule is subject to change. For the latest information, please visit [www.portofmelbourne.com](http://www.portofmelbourne.com)

For more information about Port of Melbourne Corporation call 1300 857 662 and, if after hours, choose option 3, or visit [www.portofmelbourne.com](http://www.portofmelbourne.com)





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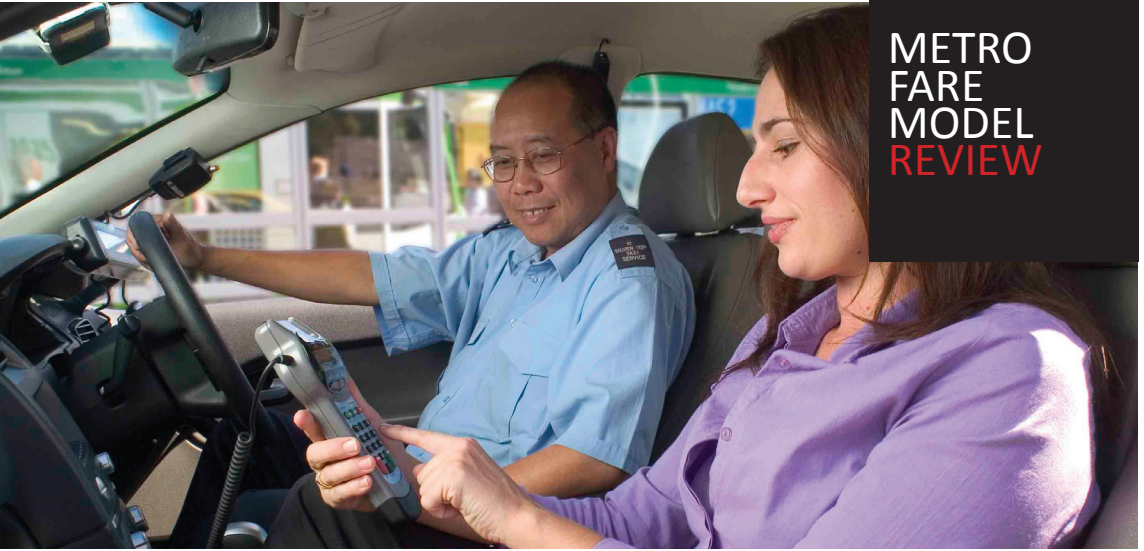
  
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[daniel@metropolitantaxiclub.com.au](mailto:daniel@metropolitantaxiclub.com.au)

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## METRO FARE MODEL REVIEW

In October, the Essential Services Commission (ESC) released their publication on the current metropolitan fare model review, called a Principles Paper.

The VTA have submitted an official response to the paper which addresses a number of points.

One key area of concern is the assertion that removing mandatory affiliation to an accredited taxi booking company will result in a cost saving to operators.

It is vital that this is not perceived as representing a reduction in costs for operators.

Once able, operators who choose not to affiliate with a network will be referred to as 'independent providers'. These 'independent providers' will still be required to make arrangements to provide the same suite of services currently provided by networks. This includes:-

- receipt and dispatch of bookings
- safety equipment including GPS tracking; duress alarms; in-car cameras
- branding
- processing of MPTP and other non-cash transactions
- complaints handling processes.



These all represent real and ongoing costs for operators.

It also needs to be considered that in the short term, a decision not to affiliate with a network would result in an immediate decline in work by between at least 30% and, up to, 70% depending on the geographic location of the business in question. A copy of the VTA's full submission is available at [www.victaxi.com.au](http://www.victaxi.com.au).✿

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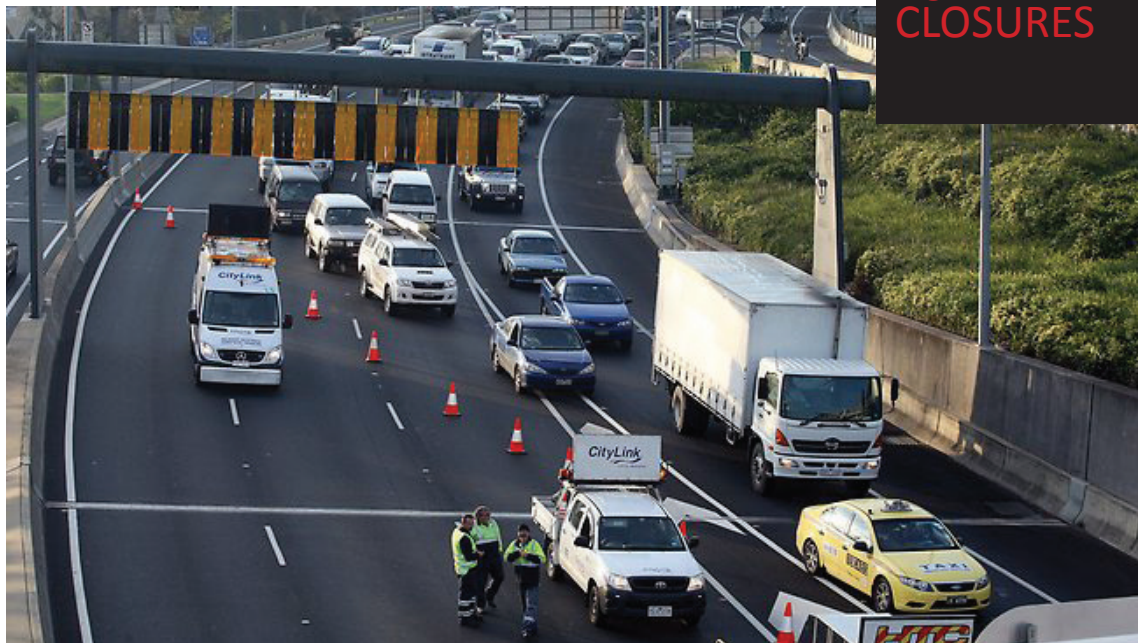


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# Roadworks

## BRIDGE AND TUNNEL CLOSURES



The West Gate Bridge and CityLink tunnels will be closed for several days due to resurfacing works during late December and early January, the first time such work has been done since 2000.

Details of the closure dates and times are outlined in the table on this page.

The West Gate Bridge would only be closed at night to minimise disruption to motorists.

Motorists are encouraged to avoid exiting at the last exit before the closures as this will add to congestion and could cause delays of up to an hour. Signed detour routes will be in place.

Motorists will be diverted to Punt Road, Batman Avenue, Alexandra Avenue and City Road during the closure of the Domain tunnel.

When the West Gate Bridge is closed, motorists will be advised to use Williamstown Road, Footscray Road and the Bolte Bridge.

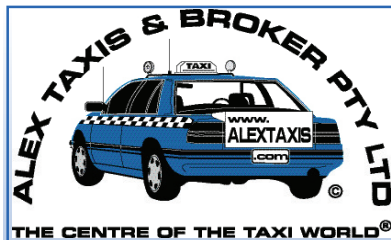
Traffic will be diverted via Kings Way, or City Road, Alexandra Avenue or Batman Avenue during the closure of the Burnley tunnel in early January.

Traffic delays are expected on and around the detour routes. Drivers are urged to plan their trip and allow extra time. ❀

Friday 27 December	Domain Tunnel closed from 10pm
	West Gate Bridge closed inbound from 11pm until 7am on Saturday 28 December
Saturday 28 December	Domain Tunnel closed all day and night
	West Gate Bridge closed inbound from 11pm until 7am on Sunday 29 December
Sunday 29 December	Domain Tunnel closed all day and night
Monday 30 December	Domain Tunnel closed all day and night
Tuesday 31 December	Domain Tunnel closed until 5am.
	Burnley Tunnel closed from 10pm
Thursday 2 January	West Gate Bridge closed to outbound traffic, 11pm until 7am on Friday 3 January
	Burnley Tunnel closed all day and night
Friday 3 January	West Gate Bridge closed to outbound traffic, 11pm until 7am on Saturday 4 January
Saturday 4 January	Burnley Tunnel closed all day and night
Sunday 5 January	Burnley Tunnel closed all day and night
Monday 6 January	Burnley Tunnel closed all day and night
Tuesday 7 January	Burnley Tunnel closed until 5am

For more information on detour routes visit the CityLink website at <https://www.citylink.com.au/resurfacing-closures.asp>.





# ALEX TAXIS

## & BROKER P/L

### SEASON'S GREETINGS



Wishing Everyone  
A Very Merry Christmas  
and A Happy New Year  
To All The Industry



HO HO HO  
MERRY  
CHRISTMAS



# CHRISTMAS BBQ

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## THE LEAD UP

For taxi drivers, especially night drivers, the demand for taxis increases early December and runs through till Boxing Day morning (26 December). Late night shopping and office Christmas parties create a demand for taxis.

## CHRISTMAS EVE

A busy day and a steady night.

## CHRISTMAS DAY/ NIGHT

The demand for taxis is quite high especially later in the day. Demand increases around 3.00pm going through to about 7.00pm. WATs are in high demand.

It is suggested that between 7.00pm and 9.00pm you have a break, a light meal (always a light meal if you've got a busy night ahead) and

a power nap. Then come out fresh for what should be a busy night. Don't forget to keep taking short breaks and keep up the fluids.

The good thing about driving Christmas night is the regularity and spread of the work and people are generally well behaved.

## BOXING DAY

It's the holiday season in Melbourne, so spend time going through the entertainment section of the daily newspapers. Find out where the action is likely to be on Boxing Day (Thursday 26 December) through to New Year's Day. Don't forget the Boxing Day Test gets underway at the MCG (Australia vs. England).

## NEW YEAR'S EVE

New Year's Eve is a busy night for taxis, but the work is not spread

evenly across the night so some planning is necessary.

## Start Late - Finish Late

Aim is to start late and finish late. The high taxi demand on New Year's Eve starts late and finishes late - as late as 8.00 to 9.00am on the morning of New Year's Day.

For the night shift, try and have the cab by about 5.00pm, do an hour or two's work to get the feel of the night, then go home and have a light meal and your power nap. Then come out around 9.00 or 9.30pm.

This plan will avoid burning yourself out early in the night because work generally runs from around 1.00am onwards. So, plan to drive in two phases, for example from 9.00pm till 12 midnight and from 1.00am until 6.00 or 7.00am, with suitable



# Working the Christmas and New Year period

breaks and light refreshments.

Between 12 midnight and 1.00am, try and fit in that power nap.

## NEW YEAR'S DAY

If you can be on the road by 4.00am on New Year's Day, you've got around five hours steady work ahead of you.

## CONCLUSION

Well, now it's over to you. So keep cool and work steadily to a plan, take regular breaks and keep up the fluids, and the Christmas/New Year's period should be a good one. ❀

## Road works and closures

Over the summer period, there will be major disruptions to CityLink's Burnley and Domain Tunnels and on the West Gate Bridge. CityLink and VicRoads have been working together to co-ordinate major road works during this period so disruption to the road network is minimised. These essential resurfacing works will take place in late December 2013 and early January 2014.

### CityLink Closures:

- Domain tunnel will be closed day and night from 10pm Friday 27 December 2013 through to 5am Tuesday 31 December 2013.
- Burnley tunnel will be closed day and night from 10pm Thursday 2 January 2014 through to 5am Tuesday 7 January 2014.

### West Gate Bridge:

- All lanes on the Westgate Bridge inbound will be closed from 11pm to 7am on Friday 27 December and Saturday 28 December 2013.
- All lanes on the Westgate Bridge outbound will be closed from 11pm to 7am on Thursday 2 January and Friday 3 January 2014. ❀





In the near future, a hostile alien race has attacked Earth. If not for the legendary heroics of International Fleet Commander, Mazer Rackham, all would have been lost.

In preparation for the next attack, the highly esteemed Colonel Graff and the international military are recruiting and training only the best

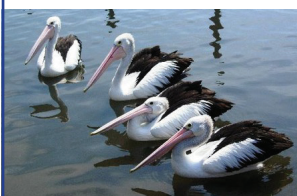
young children to find the future Mazer (the military leader).

Ender Wiggin, a shy but strategically brilliant boy, is pulled out of his school to join the elite. Ender is soon ordained by Graff as the military's next great hope.

He is soon to be trained by Mazer Rackham, himself, to lead his fellow

soldiers into an epic battle that will determine the future of Earth and save the human race.

Starring Harrison Ford, Asa Butterfield and Hailee Steinfeld and screening at IMAX Melbourne Museum, Rathdowne Street, Carlton from 5 December 2013 . ❀



## Regional News

During October and November, the VTA held its last round of region meetings for 2013 in the midst of the State Government's reform implementation to the Victorian taxi industry.

The meetings were held in Heathcote, Hamilton, Sale and Benalla and they provided an opportunity for the VTA to bring members up-to-date with the reforms and the timeline for implementation as far as known and what is expected in the next few months.

There was lively discussion on matters of regional significance. The main areas of concern were around fare setting, licence zones, and the 55/45 driver-operator split.

Brent Morgan and Greg Crotty from the Department of Veterans' Affairs presented at the Gippsland and North East meetings and Rova Media sponsored meals at all four meetings.

The VTA are planning the next series of regional meetings early in the new year. ❀



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# Another Christmas of **uncertainty & despair** for the taxi industry

## TAXI TALK MAILBAG



It will now be nearly six months since the Government established the jurisdiction of the Taxi Services Commission (TSC) and the essential Services Commission (ESC). The Government charged the TSC with implementing the recommendations of the Inquiry (Professor Fels') and the ESC as an independent body to implement a fare structure model that would give the public an efficient, safe and reliable taxi service and make sure that the industry would be viable.

It looks like Professor Fels could not have done a better job in trying to destroy the industry than the Government did. The Government will argue that they acted on the best advice that was available to them.

The TSC will argue that they only did what the Government told them to do, and the ESC will say that they can only act within the Government guidelines. This is a typical case of passing the problem to somebody else.

The problems in the Taxi Industry are blamed continuously on the industry. One time it is the greedy licence holder. The next time it is the unscrupulous operator. Another time it is the taxi driver.

The real problem is the fact that in the last 12 years the Government acted no longer in the role of the regulator but became a player in the industry and acted in its own financial interest.

The Industry does not want any criminals working in the industry and yet many of the old safeguards have been removed and shady characters have been allowed to prosper in the industry.

The industry needs a fare increase as soon as possible but it is also essential that the model used is based on facts and is transparent. The Public should know how much of the fare is attributed to the leasing of the licence. The public should also be aware of the cost that they are paying for the inefficiencies created by the oversupply of licences.

Taxi drivers are on the average only occupied 28% of the time and if all the cars would be on the road all the time this figure would be even lower.

The total fare box available to the industry has to be properly established and divided by the number of taxis so that a reliable possible revenue per taxi can be established.

By leasing licences into an already oversupplied market the Government has been shrinking the piece of the pie (fare box) for everybody who is reliant on living from it. The Government is taking a huge part of the pie without contributing and any regards to increase the pie. On the contrary it blames the industry for its own failings and preaches that competition (more licences) will solve all problems in the industry.

The piece left for the operator is now too small to pay all the bills and a lease fee to the Government or private licence holders.

If the Government continues with their policy of making the Taxipie smaller and smaller (issue of PBOs) we will see more problems in the Industry.

If every taxi in Melbourne had to pay a lease fee to operate a taxi, the fares to the public would have to increase by at least 40% to pay for it. It is therefore no wonder that operators who lease licences from the Government are in trouble and take all kinds of shortcuts in order to survive.

We can only hope that the Government, the TSC, the ESC and the industry can come together at the same table with an open mind, no preconceived ideas and work together for the benefit of the public and the industry.

I wish everybody a merry Christmas in these difficult circumstances and leave you with one last statement.

"There have been contradictory statements made with respect to the valuation of taxi licences by banks. The bank assigns at the moment a value of 300K to a licence. But they will not lend one dollar against the security of the licence. This is fact and God help the people who have to renegotiate a loan."

**Hans Althoff**

Owner/Operator ❖



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*Wishing you a  
safe and happy  
Christmas...*

**Merry Christmas**

*...And a  
Happy New  
Year!*



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LED Combo-Dome Only \$ 440**

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It's hard to believe that December is upon us already, and soon enough, so will the festive season. It's a busy time of the year for us all, especially with many people relying on taxis to get around.



**Marnie Williams**  
CEO, Taxi Services Commission

I ask all wheelchair accessible taxi drivers to please prioritise wheelchair work during this time.

As part of the Taxi Services Commission (TSC) commitment to keeping stakeholders informed, a Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG) has been established to provide input into the implementation of the government's reform agenda. Membership of the SRG has already been determined with both the taxi and hire car industries and other key stakeholders represented. The Stakeholder Reference Group convened on 24 September and 29 October 2013. The minutes from the Stakeholder Reference Group are now available on the TSC website <<http://www.taxi.vic.gov.au/taxi-reform/consultation/stakeholder-reference-group>>.

It has been a busy year at the TSC with some key reforms now taking shape. We thank our industry participants for their support as we work to create an industry that is focussed on building a more competitive and customer orientated industry for all.

eNewsletters are the main way we communicate with industry participants on the reforms. You need to register to ensure you are kept informed. So please sign up on our website <http://www.taxi.vic.gov.au/about-us/subscribe-for-news>. ❀



# Do not let your Accreditation expire



A reminder to all taxi and hire car participants to be vigilant in ensuring their accreditation does not expire. Renewal notices are sent up to four months before the expiry date providing more than enough time for industry participants to renew before their accreditation expires.

You must allow the Taxi Services Commission sufficient time to assess your renewal prior to the expiry date. In most circumstances a minimum of two weeks is required for Driver Accreditation and four weeks is required for industry accreditation.

If you are planning to travel overseas and will be away when your accreditation is due to expire please contact the Accreditation and Licensing team on 1800 638 802 to ensure your renewal application is submitted. Details on renewing your driver accreditation are available on the TSC website. <<http://www.taxi.vic.gov.au/drivers/taxi-drivers/metropolitan-taxi-and-hire-car-accreditation> ❀

## Fraud Prevention Interactions

The main function of the Taxi Services Commission (TSC) Investigations Unit is to enhance the integrity of the Multi-Purpose Taxi Program (MPTP) by implementing processes that reduce fraud; and investigate, with the view of prosecution, fraud against the program.

The MPTP supports the most vulnerable members of our community and despite the fact that there are significant penalties for those found guilty of committing fraud, some drivers and operators continue to defraud the program. This program is not a victimless crime: MPTP funds – like all government funds – are finite, and every dollar defrauded from the system diminishes the ability for the government to provide the supplement to others with severe and permanent disabilities.

One of the fraud prevention programs used to reduce suspected low level fraud against the MPTP is a letter to the industry participant advising them of the identifiable processing irregularities.

Operators, drivers, members and/or members' carers receive written correspondence describing the identified improper conduct, requesting a correction of behaviour and advising that their MPTP transactions will be monitored accordingly - with non-compliance triggering a more formal investigation.

This fraud prevention program has, to date, proved to be



very effective in putting an immediate stop to improper conduct resulting in financial loss to the MPTP.

The program has also given the TSC the opportunity to directly communicate with drivers, operators and NSP's to discuss and clarify the correct procedures for processing MPTP fares. This has had a flow on effect with operators and NSP's being able to educate their drivers thus serving as a preventative/deterrent measure.

The Unit continues to refine data collection to assist in identifying suspicious processing patterns that aid in the development of new initiatives for preventing MPTP fraud. ❀

## Roadworthiness requirements

In February 2013, the Taxi Services Commission (TSC) informed all taxi operators in writing that the TSC would no longer send a reminder notice when a vehicle was approaching the due date for its annual inspection by a licensed taxi tester.

While the issuance of reminder notices ceased on 31 January 2013, the requirement to have the vehicle inspected and to display a current inspection label has remained unchanged, as per item 11.5 of the specifications.

TSC authorised officers, in conducting inspections have identified a high number of vehicles operating with overdue inspections.

When a taxi is found not to have a valid inspection label one of the following compliance actions will be taken:

- If the inspection is overdue by less than three months the driver/owner will be issued with a notice to present the vehicle to the Taxi Inspection Centre. If the vehicle presents and has not had the annual inspection completed, an infringement notice may be issued.
- If the inspection is overdue between three to five months, a penalty infringement notice may be issued to the owner/operator. A notice will be issued with the request that an annual inspection be conducted within seven days.
- If the inspection is overdue by six months or more, the owner/operator may be issued with a penalty infringement notice. A rectification notice will also be issued and the taxi may be restricted from operating until the annual inspection has been completed.



For further details please refer to the TSC website <http://www.taxi.vic.gov.au/owners-and-operators/taxi-owners-and-operators/vehicles/annual-vehicle-inspection>. ❀



## TSC Holiday hours

Regular operating hours for TSC Call Centre and Customer Service Centre are Monday to Friday: 9:30am - 4pm. Taxi Inspection Centre at Melbourne Airport is open Monday to Friday between 8:30am - 4pm. During December 2013 and January 2014 the following closing times apply. ❀

	Call Centre	Taxi Inspection Centre	Customer Service Centre
Thursday 5 December 2013		close @ 12noon	close @ 12noon
Wednesday 18 December			closed 12:30-2pm
Tuesday 24 December 2013	1pm	1pm	1pm
Wednesday 25 December 2013	closed	closed	closed
Thursday 26 December 2013	closed	closed	closed
Tuesday 31 December 2013	1pm	1pm	1pm
Wednesday 1 January 2014	closed	closed	closed
Monday 27 January 2014		closed	closed

# Fair and reasonable pricing

The taxi and hire car industries in Victoria are going through extensive reforms to improve standards, and as would be expected in such circumstances, the industry is experiencing some fluctuations in the value of licence assignment and transfer prices.

The key to these reforms is about trying to unfreeze the industry and these fluctuations in price are part of opening up the industry to competition and new opportunities.

Taxi Services Commission Chair, Graeme Samuel, has publicly stated in the past that the TSC does not currently see a pressing need for the issue of new licences provided that the holders of existing licences deal 'fairly and reasonably' with taxi operators.

The agreement between a licence holder and an as-

signor is a commercial agreement and as such not regulated, however, the TSC considers fair and reasonable pricing to be in the range of \$22,000 to \$25,000 (inclusive of GST) annually. Statistics released in October 2013 suggest that the average assignment price in the market is still around \$27,000 annually, slightly higher than September 2013.

While the release (or suspension) of new licences in the future will be based on a number of indicators (ie. complaints, vehicle standards, passenger wait-times, passenger feedback, efficient fleet utilization, etc.), the inability of the industry to offer fair and reasonable pricing may contribute to the timing of any new licences being released into the market under the current regulatory scheme. ❀



**STOP THE TRAFFIK**  
PEOPLE SHOULDN'T BE BOUGHT & SOLD

**TAXI DRIVERS CAN HELP  
STOP HUMAN TRAFFICKING!**

Human trafficking is a terrible crime where vulnerable people are exploited and taken advantage of through forced labour, domestic servitude, sexual exploitation, street crime, forced marriages and other types of abuse. Criminals sometimes use taxis to move their victims around. This crime is happening right now in Australia.

Taxi drivers can be the eyes and ears of the community. If you know what the signs are, and who to report it to, you can be a major force for good in tackling this crime.

One sign on its own doesn't mean someone has been trafficked, but several signs together should give you cause for concern.

**These signs include, but are not limited to, a passenger appearing:**

- ▲ distrustful, fearful, anxious or traumatised
- ▲ to be controlled, threatened or spoken for by someone else
- ▲ to have injuries such as cuts, bruises, or cigarette burns
- ▲ to be travelling to or from overcrowded properties
- ▲ to be confined or isolated in the workplace or only leaves at odd times
- ▲ unaware of the address of where they live or work
- ▲ to have little interaction with family or the wider community
- ▲ to speak very little English

**CALL 131 AFP  
(131 237)**

[www.stopthetraffik.org.au](http://www.stopthetraffik.org.au)

**In an emergency  
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## DRIVER FATIGUE A ROAD KILLER



Recently a taxi driver was jailed over a head on collision which claimed a life due to fatigue.

Driver fatigue is not only a risk to the health and safety of taxi drivers – it is also a risk to the safety of passengers and other members of the public.

As the taxi industry leads into the busy festive season, strategies to manage fatigue are the responsibility of all industry participants.

Taxi drivers, due to their work and hours, are at risk of suffering from fatigue having long term effects on their health.

Taxi operators have a responsibility for monitoring their drivers.

Under the Taxi Services Commission's taxi industry accreditation regime, taxi operators have an obligation to ensure that no taxi is operated by a person whom the operator is aware is not fit to be in possession or control of a vehicle at that time.

The TSC encourage all industry participants to read the Fatigue Management Guidelines provided on the TSC website: <http://www.taxi.vic.gov.au/drivers/taxi-drivers/driver-safety>. ❖

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# TALKING ABOUT ALZHEIMER'S ACROSS AUSTRALIA

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IS IT  
DEMENTIA?  
CAMPAIGN

Alzheimer's disease is the most common form of dementia, affecting up to 70% of all people with dementia

On 17 October 2013, the Victorian Taxi Association partnered with Alzheimer's Australia Victoria to launch their new 'Is It Dementia?' campaign and resources.

The suite of short video scenarios are designed to help people working in industries recognise the signs of dementia.

The resource features Dr Andrew Rochford who delivers the message that dementia isn't always obvious, and through such a resource we can raise awareness of the everyday impact dementia has within our community.

The twelve short films were created in consultation with industry groups, including fire and emergency services, correctional services, retail, banking and transport. The Australian Taxi Industry Association responded to a call for assistance and was involved in the development of a video for the taxi industry.

The event to launch the national campaign in Victoria was hosted by the Parliamentary Friends of Dementia group at Parliament House, with convenors from both sides of politics.

Attendees heard from a lady who cares for her husband with dementia, and offered reflections on their experiences using taxis.

An experienced taxi driver, Mr Bruce Tootle, also addressed the room and spoke passionately about the need for taxi drivers to conduct their business with compassion, while at the same time highlighting the reasons that can make this work difficult both personally and financially. The VTA thanks Bruce for his participation on the day.

The VTA would also like to thank Roy Wakelin-King, CEO of the NSW Taxi Council, for making the trip to Melbourne. He spoke warmly about the experiences of the NSW Taxi Industry, their recent launch of the resources and their plans to get the message out through industry training.

The VTA looks forward to continuing our relationship with Alzheimer's Australia Victoria. ❀



Bruce Tootle



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## \$2.5m - a new record for New York taxi medallions

The New York taxi industry made history last month with record medallion prices for handicapped-accessible cabs.

The highest bid was a whopping \$2.5 million for a pair of medallions (approximately \$1,259,000 each) from Richard Chipman of Westway Medallion Sales.

During the last 2008 auction, a pair of handicapped-accessible cabs went for only a little over \$1.3 million.

The Taxi and Limousine Commission sold 100 pairs of medallions for handicapped accessible cabs last month.

"People in wheelchairs have historically had no access to the taxi and car service industry," said TLC Commissioner David Yassky. "We're finally changing that."

Currently, passengers can call 311 for a taxi that is handicapped accessible.

There are 233 of those cabs on the road.

"The disabled community deserves better taxi service," said bidder Gene Freidman, who owns the majority of wheelchair accessible cabs in New York City as CEO of Taxi Cab Management. "Now many will get it."

The medallions sold in November are expected to almost double the fleet of handicapped cabs, lowering waits of an average of 14 minutes when riders call 311.

Yassky added that the high medallion prices are a "vote of confidence in the city, and the industry".

Auction participants submitted their bids over four days during November in sealed envelopes, and their bids were unsealed and posted on a board throughout the day at the Borough of Manhattan Community College.

Andrew Murstein, president of the

Medallion Financial Corporation, said his company wrote commitment letters to finance the bid of 60 other participants.

"Taxis are a lot better than art, real estate," he said. "We're pretty bullish on the industry."

He added that the auction was stronger than he anticipated—with 245 bids for 100 pairs of medallions.

The city plans to auction off 1800 more medallions for handicapped accessible vans over the next three years.

The Metropolitan Taxicab Board of Trade said in a statement that the sale shows there is a market for wheelchair-accessible cabs, and described the auction as a "historic day for yellow taxi service in New York City, particularly for those New Yorkers with wheelchairs."

**Rebecca Harshbarger** ❖

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The survey, conducted by The Australia Institute and **beyondblue**, found that 3.8 million people routinely don't take a lunch break, with one in two of them saying it's because they are 'too busy'.

In addition, of those who said they do usually take a lunch break 72 per cent said they either choose to eat lunch at their desks, cut short or postpone their break until mid-afternoon.

**beyondblue** CEO Ms Kate Carnell AO said many bosses and workers have lost sight of how taking a break can improve their mental health and increase productivity.

"It's great that people are committed to getting the job done, but it is sensible to take a break away from your desk or the production line to exercise and think about other things. A regular walk at lunchtime improves both your physical and mental health and you will resume work feeling refreshed," she said.

A majority of people acknowledged that taking a break, even a short break to clear their head, makes them more productive. One in four said taking a full lunch break makes work less stressful and one in three said breaks make work more enjoyable.

The Australia Institute's Executive Director Dr Richard Denniss said despite Australia's reputation for being a land of 'sickies' and 'smokos' the evidence suggests otherwise.

"Lunch breaks have always been a part of modern workplaces, but in recent decades more and more people report that they are too busy or too rushed to do something as simple as walk away from their desk to eat their lunch. While Australians used to celebrate the practice of taking a long lunch, we're now struggling to even manage a short one," he said.

With over 11.5 million Australians (61 per cent of the population) in employment, workplaces can play a



## AUSTRALIA NO LONGER A NATION THAT LUNCHES

**beyondblue** survey shows that taking a lunch break has become a thing of the past for millions of Aussie bosses and their employees.



significant role in supporting the mental health of employers, employees and the community in general.

Workplaces can affect mental health, either positively or negatively. Although employment is generally associated with better mental health, some job roles and working environments can present risk factors for depression and anxiety.

Mental health problems are Australia's leading cause of non-fatal disability, with depression and anxiety accounting for over half of this burden. Unlike many physical illnesses, mental health problems affect people during their prime working years.

This can have a direct impact on workplaces through absenteeism, reduced productivity and increased costs.

A 'mentally healthy workplace' promotes and protects employee mental health and can have a positive im-





pact on productivity, performance, staff retention and being perceived as an employer of choice.












**beyondblue** believes that everyone involved in an Australian workplace has a responsibility to contribute to the creation and sustainability of mentally healthy workplaces through:

- raising awareness of mental health
- ending workplace stigma and discrimination against people experiencing mental health problems
- enacting and following supportive policies and procedures
- providing and being aware of pathways to support and guiding others towards them. ❀

# Melbourne Major Events Calendar

WHAT'S ON  
AROUND  
MELBOURNE

DECEMBER 2013			where.....
1		<b>Variety Santa Fun Run</b> - you can run it, walk it, skip it, hop it - finish it however you like, but just make sure you do it in your official five piece Variety Santa suit. The Variety Santa Fun Run is a family-friendly national event promoting healthy lifestyle decisions.	at Albert Park Queens Road Albert Park
1		<b>Soccer</b> - Melbourne Heart vs Adelaide United	AAMI Park Olympic Bvd, Melbourne
2 & 3		<b>Justin Beiber in concert</b>	Rod Laver Arena Batman Ave, Melbourne
3 to 6		<b>ISAF Sailing World Cup</b> - where the world's top Olympic and Paralympic sailors compete. The opening ceremony will take place on the balcony of the Sandringham Yacht Club and the all-important flag raising, signalling the event has commenced.	Sandringham Yacht Club Jetty Road Sandringham
6 & 7		<b>Muse in Concert</b>	Rod Laver Arena Batman Ave, Melbourne
6 to 8		<b>Australian Dancesport Championships 2013</b>	Hisense Arena Batman Ave, Melbourne
7 and 8		<b>Stereosonic Music Festival</b> - a two-day festival where, for the first time ever in Australia, the world's biggest acts from all spectrums of the electronic world, will be playing at one event.	Melbourne Showgrounds Flemington
8		<b>Soccer</b> - Melbourne Victory vs Newcastle Jets	AAMI Park Olympic Bvd, Melbourne
8		<b>Alicia Keys in Concert</b>	Rod Laver Arena Batman Ave, Melbourne
13		<b>Soccer</b> - Melbourne Victory vs Perth Glory	AAMI Park Olympic Bvd, Melbourne
21		<b>Soccer</b> - Melbourne Heart vs Melbourne Victory	AAMI Park Olympic Bvd, Melbourne
23 and 24		<b>Carols by Candlelight</b> - presented by Myer and a part of Vision Australia for 76 years. 10,000+ people come together to enjoy this smorgasbord of Christmas entertainment, which brings together an array of top entertainers performing a mix of the season's contemporary and traditional favourite carols. Rehearsal on 23/12/13 with live carols on 24/12/13.  <b>Road Closures</b> - Linlithgow Avenue (north/south between Government House Drive) & Linlithgow Avenue (east west)	Sidney Myer Music Bowl Linlithgow Avenue Melbourne

26 to 30		<b>Boxing Day</b> Ashes Test Cricket Series Australia vs England	Melbourne Cricket Ground Brunton Avenue East Melbourne
27		<b>Soccer</b> - Melbourne Heart vs Wellington Phoenix	AAMI Park Olympic Bvd, Melbourne
28		<b>Soccer</b> - Melbourne Victory vs West'n Sydney Wanderers	AAMI Park Olympic Bvd Melbourne
31		<b>New Year's Eve celebrations and fireworks</b> - The City of Melbourne presents an annual New Year's Eve fireworks spectacular and free entertainment in the city from 5pm to 2am. HUGE amount of festivities taking place throughout Melbourne and Victoria! Kings Domain is the new official venue for the city, between St Kilda Rd and the Yarra River.  <b>Road Closures</b> - Flinders Street, Wellington Parade and Batman Avenue.	Midnight live sites include Kings Domain Flagstaff Gardens Treasury Gardens Docklands
31		<b>Family fireworks</b> - The 9.30pm fireworks display for families at Yarra Park returns this year.	Yarra Park
<b>JANUARY 2014</b>			
12 to 2 Feb		<b>Midsumma Festival</b> - Midsumma is Melbourne's annual queer celebration. This festival brings a diverse mix of artists and performers together under a single umbrella for an impassioned celebration and innovative presentation of queer arts and culture. The festival has a wide range of events and activities including visual art, theatre, spoken word, cabaret, film, live music, sport and social events.	Alexandra Gardens St. Kilda Road Melbourne
13 to 26		<b>Australian Open</b> - the tennis grand slam of the Asia/Pacific region. Every year the Australian Open gets bigger, better, more intense and more breathtaking as stunning athletes leave nothing to chance in their quest for the ultimate prize.	Melbourne Park Batman Avenue Melbourne
18 to 19		<b>Brickvention</b> - an Australian-based convention for LEGO fans. The two-day event brings together LEGO fans of all ages from all over Australia to view original and unusual creations built by Australian modellers and collectors.	Royal Exhibition Building Nicholson Street Carlton
23 to 26		<b>Geelong caravan camping and outdoor expo</b> - Caravans, motorhomes, campervans, pop-tops, tent/camper trailers plus a mountain of camping equipment and outdoor accessories will be on show. Family entertainment includes Australia's largest outdoor fishing show.	Geelong Showgrounds Carr Street Geelong
26		<b>Australia Day Parade</b> - Victorians from all walks of life take part in the annual Australia Day Parade along Swanston Street to King's Domain. Participants include special interest organisations that represent Victoria's diverse history, heritage and culture.	Swanston Street Melbourne
26		<b>Australia Day Fireworks</b> - family-friendly games, entertainment and the Australia Day fireworks, bigger and better than before, a new location with great viewing points - 4pm-10pm.	Dockland Precinct Melbourne



# TRADE Directory



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## VICTORIAN TAXI LICENCE STATISTICS

All data on this page is provided  
by the Taxi Services  
Commission and is for  
the month of  
October 2013

### ASSIGNMENTS

average metro assignment price \$2,296

### LICENCE TRANSFERS

metro taxis	7	country taxis	0
outer suburban	0	hire car	6
urban taxis	0	special	4

### LICENCES ISSUED

taxi	2	special vehicles	1
hire car	4	RH vehicles	3

### Number of Taxi

## Licences

**METROPOLITAN** 4,317

including 500 WAT vehicles

**COUNTRY** 520

including 115 WAT vehicles)

**OUTER SUBURBAN** 161

including 34 WAT vehicles

**URBAN** 237

including 35 WAT vehicles

**TOTAL** 5,235

including 684 WAT vehicles

### NUMBER OF DRIVERS

Active drivers 15,870

Accredited drivers 28,538

### HIRE CAR LICENCE VALUE

**\$46,308**

average metro hire car licence  
transfer value for the month of  
October 2013

### Number of Victorian Hire Vehicle Licences

Metropolitan Hire Cars	949
Country Hire Cars	85
Special Purpose Vehicles	949
Restricted Hire Cars	656
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,639</b>

## Compliance outcomes

Taxi Inspections	2,871
Rectification Notices	248
Infringement Notices	248
Notices of Unroadworthiness	22
Official Warnings	25

The metro taxi licence average price of \$276,071 is based on the seven genuine market based transactions that occurred in October.

The Taxi Services Commission's standard practice is to only count those licence transfers where a genuine market based transaction has occurred. They do this by applying a number of standard business rules. The aim of these business rules is to identify genuine market based transfers of taxi licences and to base average price calculations on these transactions only.

Therefore, where it appears a non-market based licence transfer has occurred, these transactions are excluded in the calculation of licence values. An example is where a licence holder transfers the licence to a new business name but still retains ownership of the licence. ❖



## MELBOURNE AIRPORT TAXI OPERATIONS

In order to make the taxi system efficient and fair for all taxi operators, all drivers need to follow the same rules. Those drivers who don't follow the set procedures disadvantage the other taxi drivers.

**Pre-booked Taxis** must park in the Short Term Car Park. Public Pickup Lanes are for the public only. Pre-booked WAT or Maxi cabs uplifting non-disabled passengers must also use the car park as there are parking spaces with suitable vehicle clearance available.

The one exception to this is WAT cabs uplifting disabled passengers, which may be preformed in the designated disabled bays in the Public Pickup Lanes.

**To access Taxi Ranks** in the forecourt the following procedure must be followed. Fines and penalties will be applied to any taxi driver who does not follow this system.

- Enter the Melrose taxi yard and queue in the next available row.
- After the row to your right has emptied, move forward to the exit gates.
- When the Taxi Head of Rank needs taxis, the exit gates will become active.
- Your PCDC card will be charged when you exit Melrose.
- Follow the approved taxi route:
  - Melrose Drive
  - APAC Drive
  - Francis Briggs Road
  - Landside Road
  - Service Road
  - Depot Drive
  - You have 15 minutes to reach Depot Drive Taxi Yard. After this time it is deemed that you have gone to another job and you will need to re-enter the taxi system at Melrose Taxi Yard.

*Note: In the event of accidents on the road, ab-*

*normally heavy traffic, or other such emergency, Melbourne Airport can work around this.*

- At the Depot Drive Taxi Yard, enter one of the four gates and swipe your PCDC card. The display will show a charge of \$0.00. Alternatively, a message stating you are outside the 15 minute tolerance will display. If this is displayed return to Melrose Taxi Yard and re-enter the system.
- The gate you enter Depot Drive is the lane you need to queue in – A, B, C or D.
- Enter your lane. Follow the taxi in front until reaching Service Road.
- At service road four lanes become two. If you are in lane A or B merge to the left, lanes C or D merge to the right.
- At Taxi Head of Rank, both lanes merge into one. Merge and move forward to the taxi rank.

*Note: Station wagons and maxi-taxis may be called forward in front of you to meet specific passenger needs, please ensure you allow them past. ❀*





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## HONEST CABBIE REWARDED

Lord Mayor Robert Doyle with taxi driver Lakhwinder Singh Dhillon, Deputy Lord Mayor Susan Riley and Mr Dhillon's daughter Mantirah

# Cabbiegetshisreward

An honest Sikh taxi driver in Australia, who returned 110,000 Australian dollars left behind by its owners, has been honoured by the City Council in Melbourne for his integrity.

Lakhwinder Singh Dhillon, 47, found the money in bundles of 10,000 Australian dollars after dropping off a group of people at Crown Casino last month.

Mr Singh said the seven men and two women, whom he picked up from Chinatown in his cab, seemed quite drunk.

"When I saw all that money, I thought, what is happening, it is something amazing, what I should do," he said.

Mr Singh decided to inform the police, but soon received a call asking him to return the money to the passengers who were at the casino, the Herald Sun reported.

"They gave me a 500 Australian dollars reward. One of them said: 'You're very honest, you're a very good man, you've helped us a lot'," Singh said.

Mr Singh was presented a Certificate of Commendation by Melbourne's Mayor Robert Doyle at the Melbourne Awards.

"He is truly an inspirational Melburnian- it was the act of an honest man of integrity," Doyle said. ❀



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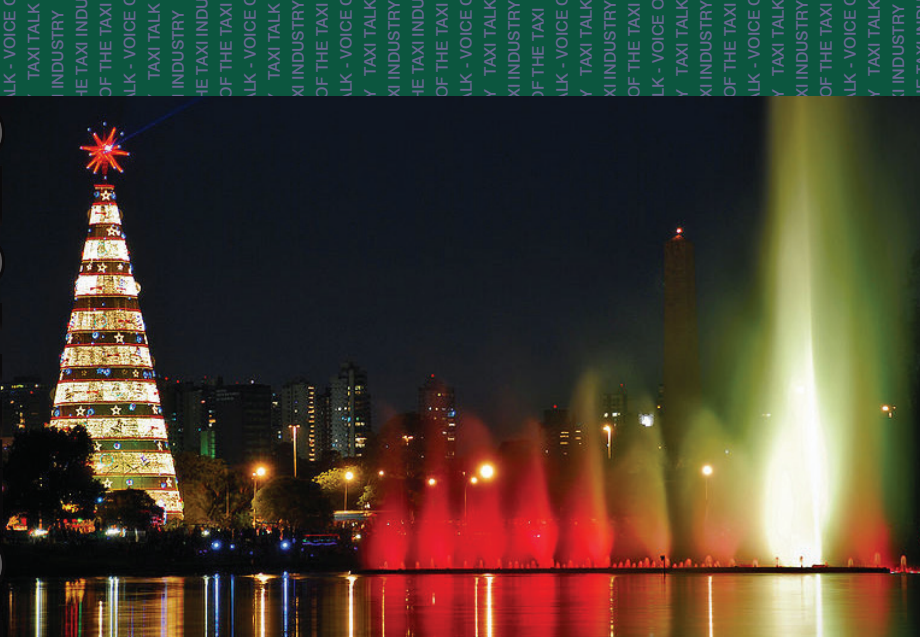
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## TAXI APPS

