

TAXI TALK

VOICE OF THE TAXI INDUSTRY

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ON THE RANKS SINCE 1966

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EDITOR'S DESK



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Melbourne

During the past month every time taxis were mentioned in the media, so was Uber.

The latest news is that Uber is entering partnership with the Royal Australian Regiment Association employment group, Enabled Employment and defence member discount organisation, APOD (Australian Partners of Defence) to promote a special deal to defence veterans. Veterans and their spouses who sign on as an Uber driver partner before December 31, 2015 won't have to pay any commission for their first three months. This is just another area that Uber has thought about, investigated and nurtured, offering employment opportunities for many more Australians.

The peak motoring body in the ACT and New South Wales, NRMA, says that UberX is "here to stay". NRMA's president, Kyle Loades, believes a more competitive and sustainable industry can be established.

"The reality that we face today is that Uber is popular and here to stay. Uber need to come into the regulatory framework to some degree, while the taxi industry needs to become more competitive in a fast-changing market," Loades said.

The Japanese are joining many other countries by announcing that they will start testing driverless taxis in 2016, just a few months away. The testing phase will transport people from their homes to local stores and back, on a route which is only three kilometres. If the trials are successful, Japan is planning to have the vehicles on the roads by 2020 servicing routes where public transport isn't provided and to help tourists get around.

Japan is not the only country testing driverless vehicles. The Netherlands already have a driverless shuttle capable of transporting up to six people, the United Kingdom, Arizona and Las Vegas are also testing some vehicles. New York City and San Francisco have nearly finished their testing and are set to have driverless taxis on the road servicing passengers by 2016.

The latest industry app to be launched in Victoria, Ticktoc, is in direct competition with Uber and iHail. Ticktoc combines the good of the Uber app, taxi and hire car apps and booking systems. It does not charge any debit/credit card processing fee and no surge pricing either.

John Sajadi, CEO of Ticktoc said, "With the government crack-down on illegal ride-share services and growing passenger dis-

content over price monopolisation of the taxi industry, there is a pressing need for an alternative option in the hire car and taxi market which incorporates the latest technology, is price-competitive but also meets regulation standards."


Payment is made when the passenger gets in the car with a tap of their debit/credit card. The bottom line is these new apps make it safer for the taxi and hire car drivers as all fares are cashless and at the same time there is less fare evasion.

Cabcharge's iHail app is most likely not going to receive approval from the Australian Consumer and Competition Commission (ACCC) primarily because it will give the iHail investors a huge advantage over any other app, as they represent the biggest networks in every state in Australia. Also, if approved, it would

award Cabcharge the monopoly of the industry's fare processing payment system as all iHail fares must be handled by Cabcharge. iHail also encourages passengers to offer dollar incentives to the driver to pick them up before anyone else. This priority dispatch payment could reduce access for passengers to get a taxi during peak periods.

Last month Cabcharge Australia Limited saw its share price fall to a new low - less than \$2.90. Also the Federal government has adopted most of the proposals from the recent Financial System Inquiry and the main one to affect the Australian taxi industry is the banning of excessive credit/debit card surcharges.

Toni Peters

Editor, Taxi Talk - Voice of the Taxi Industry 



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MOVING PAST THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

“I love Airbnb, it is fantastic! What a great opportunity.” This was said with a lot of enthusiasm by one of the speakers at the TAXIntell conference. It was shocking to me to hear the same person state: “But come on, Uber is something completely different.”

An elephant has marched into the field of passenger transport shaking up the earth, the yield and how people have ploughed and harvested the field for a long time.

The likes of Uber have replaced call-centres by algorithms, have revived trust through reputation systems and online payments and have effectively made several public efforts to improve the quality of personal transport irrelevant, although this has not yet been realised everywhere.

Thus far I am telling you nothing new, it is clear that many of the existing players have failed to recognise the approaching elephant but now, app technology is being adopted rapidly.

What I am worried about is the deep focus on ‘the elephant in the room’ by the existing players, heavily emphasizing all the illegal activities of the elephant and failing to realise that the elephant is not unique to the world of passenger transport but part of a much broader shake up instead.

Having co-founded shareNL, the Dutch network and knowledge organisation for the collaborative economy and sharing the economy, I have the privilege to work with companies from many different industries.

It keeps surprising me to see how people can love the elephant in another conference room, and look at the elephant in their own market as completely different.

I can assure you, there are similar

elephants marching into banks, hospitals, universities, utilities, hotels and many more.

Across sectors people are getting ‘the extra option’.

Instead of buying a drill from a store they can borrow one from a neighbour. Instead of staying at a hotel people can choose to stay at another individual’s place. Instead of buying energy from a utility we can now choose to buy directly from a producer.

I could continue this for a few more pages, but you get the point.

Consumers are rapidly becoming more independent from traditional institutions and more dependent on one another, enabled by technology and two-sided market places, safe-guarded by trust mechanisms and made efficient by algorithms.

As a consequence anyone can instantly become a hotelier, banker, caretaker, teacher, etc and yes a personal driver too.

I would strongly recommend to turn off your legal/illegal pair of glasses, because professions defined and regulated in past centuries are fundamentally changing. Therefore the real

value is in focusing on what passenger transport, or personal mobility will look like five years from now and how your brand fits in the picture.

Dare to think outside of the box, what else can a driver deliver except the driving?

I learned at the TAXIintell conference how drivers can act as a city's business card but also as psychologists.

Dive deeply into consumer needs and do not forget one thing - You have been a two-sided market-

place for a very long time. While you might be a bit behind on the consumer side when it comes to providing a service of constant quality, you are probably ahead on the provider (driver) sides of the marketplace.

This is crucial, as only those who take good care of both side of the market will define how the field of passenger transport will be ploughed over in the next decades.

Pieter van de Glind



ON DEMAND ECONOMY

Uber now delivers lunch within 10 minutes with the push of a button – UberEATS is the name of this game.

Many companies continue to experiment and refine their approach to enter and market the on-demand economy (ODE) whilst Uber and UberEATS are being launched internationally.

Uber is not just about ridesharing – it is so much more.

According to SherpaVentures, on-demand enterprises must reach the mass market cheaply while removing anonymity. UberRides does this with their free app that includes driver ratings, which provides a form of self-policing.

Uber harnesses the supply of available cars effortlessly because their workforce is essentially any person with a smartphone and a car. Sharing and access

by phone is nothing new, but Uber was one of the first to apply it to the ODE in a massive scale.

Much of this is achieved thanks to GPS technology and all transactions are done by app.

Of course, Uber's huge success has inspired a vast range of new marketplaces providing on-demand service, such as:

Wag!
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GOVERNMENT FIDDLES - INDUSTRY BURNS

Labor
Government
fiddles... whilst
the Taxi and Hire
Car Industry
burn.

It is the
government
who has sold
hire car licences
to industry
operators
and it is the
government who
is the largest
holder of taxi
licences.

In 1960, like thousands of newly arrived Greek immigrants, my father, Theodore Kapnias, began his career driving a taxi for my late godfather, Mr Peter Sorocos.

In 1989, I also chose to make a career in the Industry and have invested millions of dollars over more than 25 years, in order to be able to provide a quality service to the travelling public that complies with State Government legislation, regulations and Federal tax laws including:

- Commercial passenger vehicle insurance
- Driver accreditation
- Commercial passenger vehicle licence for each vehicle
- And we comply with tax and GST requirements.

For 55 years, my family has made the taxi and hire car industry its livelihood – an industry in which thousands of small businesses have been involved.

Mine is not a unique case.

This onerous costs structure - particularly the cost of commercial passenger vehicle licences - has been imposed upon industry by successive State Governments.

Over the years, the State Government has profited handsomely from the sale of licences to the Industry.

It is the government who has benefited to the tune of tens of millions of dollars and has created an artificial market value for licences, thus imposing a huge cost structure on existing operators.

These costs have been ultimately passed on to the travelling public through higher fares.

The recent arrival of UberX to Australia has enabled thousands of private motorists to operate as (illegal) taxis via an app without having to comply with the aforementioned costs.

The popularity of UberX is underpinned by the fact that it can – logically - operate far more cheaply than existing (taxi or hire car) services.

Prior to the last State election, the industry received written assurance from the then shadow Minister for Transport, Ms Jill Hennessy, that an Andrews Labor Government would immediately hold a Ministerial Forum to develop strict rules that would apply equally to all operators, regardless of the technology used to book that service.

continued page 10

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GOVERNMENT FIDDLES WHILE INDUSTRY BURNS

continued

The (purported) aim of the Forum would be to introduce reforms that would create a level playing field for all commercial passenger vehicle operators in Victoria.

Labor has now been in Government for almost a year and existing industry operators are witnessing their businesses – and licence values – go into freefall, whilst this grossly inequitable situation continues unabated.

And yet the government continues to procrastinate.

In the meantime, UberX continues to gain traction and reportedly, there are now in excess of 5,000 vehicles on the UberX network in Melbourne alone... and growing.

Has it not occurred to government that if the costs of compliance were totally removed from existing hire car and taxi operators, the industry would be able to provide a far more cost competitive service, reward drivers more generously and negate the massive cost disparities enjoyed by UberX?

Uber has been heralded by politicians on all sides (including State Opposition Leader Mathew Guy and our newly minted Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull), as a darling of the new “agile” economy.

Yet, to date, neither UberX nor their ‘partners’ (drivers) have contributed to government coffers in licencing fees or GST!

Whilst none of us like paying tax and it is costly for business to adhere to laws, they are nonetheless, two pillars of any civilised society.

All businesses in all sectors across the economy are looking to see how State Governments are going to respond as, they too, are keen to ‘Uberfy’ their business models – that is, avoid regulatory and tax costs.

If this situation is extrapolated across the economy, our already cash strapped State and Federal governments are going to witness their revenues follow the same trajectory as licence values!

This will have massive consequences for government budgets into the future and their capacity to fund basic services upon which all Victorians depend.

And yet, I fear that the government is considering sacrificing these basic foundations of modern Australia at the altar of hyper-consumerism.

Sadly, there is a simple solution at hand.


A solution which recognises the immediacy and convenience of technology, the right of the travelling public to travel in licenced and insured

vehicles, their preference to enjoy choice of operator but also one which recognises the huge capital investment that has been made by existing taxi and hire car operators over many decades.

All of this can be achieved without impeding access to new operators entering the industry, promoting fair competition and also guaranteeing the government a growing annuity into the future.

However, the Government has to be willing to consult and consider the genuine concerns of existing operators. To date, the Orwellian titled “The Ministerial Forum” has been a ‘closed shop’ that has failed to seriously engage with industry.

Industry operators who are dedicated to the rule of law, a just taxation regime and a sustainable industry, are deeply disheartened by the inertia of the Andrews Labor Government.

George Kapnias
Managing Director 
 **SouthernCross**
CHAUFFEUR DRIVE



Send your opinion letter to

email: yoursay@taxitalk.com.au

post: PO Box 2345 Mt Waverley VIC 3149

Please include your name and full contact details for verification.

ARE YOU BEING TOLD THE WHOLE TRUTH?

Important message to all Schmidt G4 Taximeter Owners and users of the Fareway Plus meter app

20/10/2015

1. Will the 2G network be turned off in December 2015?

No! Telstra has advised that the 2G network will be turned off in December 2016 i.e. in over 12 months time. The 2G network will definitely NOT be turned off in December 2015.

2. Can you keep your current Schmidt G4 Taximeter?

Yes! You absolutely can keep your Schmidt G4 if you wish. In addition, Cabcharge is under a legal obligation in Victoria to ensure that the new Fareway Plus fully integrates with the Schmidt G4 Taximeter.

3. Is Cabcharge in breach of the law by giving away its Fareway Plus meter app?

In 2010 Cabcharge was penalised \$14million by the Federal Court for abuse of market power. Part of that penalty was for predatory pricing by supplying Cabcharge taximeters below cost for anti-competitive purposes. Cabcharge is now supplying its Fareway Plus meter app free of charge, which may be below its cost to develop, distribute and maintain. If so, Cabcharge could be re-offending against the same laws. This conduct has been reported to the ACCC which is currently reviewing our complaint.

4. Should you permit the Fareway Plus meter app to be installed in your taxi?

If you are concerned that Cabcharge could again be in breach of the law, it is your right to refuse to allow the Fareway Plus meter app being installed in your taxi. It is your right to insist that your Schmidt G4 taximeter remains in your taxi and is interfaced by your installer to the Fareway Plus EFTPOS terminal.

5. Does the Fareway Plus meter app meet the proposed new Victorian taximeter specifications?

As of the date on this notice, the new Victorian taximeter specifications have not been released. Therefore when Cabcharge released its Fareway Plus meter app it is unlikely to have known whether or not it would be approved under the new specifications.

6. What should you do if your Taxi Network wants to remove your Schmidt G4 Taximeter?

It is your absolute right to keep your Schmidt G4 Taximeter. The Fareway Plus display unit can be installed in an alternative location.

7. What should you do if you are feeling misled or bullied?

You can report it directly to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission. Alternatively, call us and we can pass on your complaint.

If you are confused about any rumours that you have heard, you can call us on (03) 9546 6990.



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THE INDUSTRY NEEDS TO CHANGE

If taxi drivers want to feel the love, they must adapt.

Melbourne's taxi industry is behaving like that clingy ex-partner who won't let go. The one who had their chance to change, but didn't. They didn't show up to dates. They were late, left you stranded, did not know how to communicate.

A trip to the Yarra Valley was not far enough and no money was good enough.

For too long, cabbies were content to be complacent and now they have been dumped for what is perceived as a better option.

Passengers are tired of waiting outside their home despite a text message from the company saying "taxi now approaching".

They are also tired of being refused because the ride is too short.

The taxi industry thought it was untouchable. It ignored decades of warnings demanding change.

Now there is a genuine competitor in the market, UberX, and they don't like it.

It's like they're seeing their ex with a new love who is bold, defiant, pushes boundaries and is providing something they couldn't.

Complaints about cabs have been constant over the years: the cars are unclean; drivers don't know where they are going; some, frankly, have BO (body odour).

Every now and then you might get lucky and find a cabbie who engages in conversation rather than muttering into their hands-free.

But what do drivers and owners do

to win back your love? They sideline 500 cabs in Melbourne's CBD during a four-hour tram strike while 2000 protesting drivers block our streets.

More than 300,000 riders in Melbourne have signed up to UberX. That wouldn't have happened if taxis were delivering what commuters wanted.

Think of it: if you can jump into a car, tell the driver where you're going without having to pull out Google maps, be offered mints and water, a clean car and a friendly driver; it's a fairly obvious switch.

And if Uber can do it, so can other ride-sharing companies.

Another San Francisco-based company, Lyft, has also flagged it is coming to Melbourne.

Then there's the prospect of driverless taxis.

The ACT announced recently it would be the first government to legalise Uber and it's likely others will watch closely and learn from its benefits and mistakes.

A recent taxi report found Uber was getting a free ride in Victoria, avoiding about \$208 million in taxes. Those are big bucks the state and federal governments won't want to let go of.

And there is still a need for taxis.

They are part of our landscape, crucial to our public transport system.

Former Premier Ted Baillieu deserves credit for initiating a wide-spread review into the taxi industry before Denis Napthine implemented the biggest shake-up to the industry that Victoria had ever seen.

In a bid to boost standards and get passengers back into taxis, fares went up, drivers received a pay rise — 55 per cent of fares, up from 48 to 50 per cent — and credit card surcharges were cut from 10 per cent to 5 per cent.

But drivers had to pass a test dubbed 'The Knowledge', ensuring they knew landmarks and how to get to popular destinations.

And more controversial changes meant new entrants to the taxi industry could buy licence plates for

\$22,000 a year, sparking fears existing licences, currently worth about \$260,000, would be devalued.

Many owners have spent their working lives operating taxis and have served passengers for decades. They need to be here but they need to raise their game.

We have seen hints of that recently with 13 CABS and CABiT unveiling a mobile app that virtually mimics UberX and also the introduction of a cashless and cardless pay system.

Of course, not everything about UberX is ideal. Questions remain on insurance, tax and its driver screening process.

But, despite government efforts to stamp it out, its operation grows.

Public Transport Minister Jacinta Allan has not ruled out allowing Uber to operate and has said she will assess the future of ride-sharing.

But the fact is that the taxi industry needs to adapt or passengers will find alternatives.

Without that change, taxi drivers and owners will remain the annoying ex-partner.

And when the affair is totally over, all they'll have to remember us by is an empty yellow car.

Aleks Devic
Herald Sun transport reporter
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We are determined to fight the regulations, fight against our loss of income and fight against longer hours for less reward. We are victims of the system. The Victorian Taxi & Hire Car Families appeal to everybody (taxi drivers, taxi operators and taxi licence holders) to register themselves with us and be part of a united voice.

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**Unity will
achieve our
goal**

NEW APP FOR TAXIS & HIRE CARS

Australian company Ticktoc has launched a cutting edge mobile app and website which lets passengers book hire cars and taxis at highly competitive rates and unlike competitors, its services are completely legal.

Initially launching in Melbourne, Ticktoc customers will have immediate access to over 250 hire-cars and over 500 taxis, all accredited and licensed.

The app incorporates advanced technology such as a patented barcode reader and accurate GPS mapping technology so customers know exactly how far away and where their car is.

John Sajadi, CEO of Ticktoc said, "Ticktoc's cars and drivers are accredited according to the Transport Legislation Amendment (Taxi Services Reform and Other Matters) Act 2011, so passengers have reassurance their hire car and taxi service is credible."


"While services offered by taxis using Cabcharge are regulated, they're not customer-friendly. On top of the five per cent surcharge for credit and debit card payments, there is no flexibility for options such as advanced booking, or mobile payment. But with Ticktoc, users make advanced bookings weeks in advance, and hop into their booked car and tap for payment without worrying about any surcharge."

Some of the benefits of Ticktoc are:

- drivers are experienced and TSC accredited;
- all vehicles are registered and insured;
- no surge pricing;

- service is comparatively less expensive than other hire car options;
- unable to tamper with the meter;
- zero charge for paying with credit or debit card;
- zero network fees;
- all fares are cashless;
- passengers can rate the drivers at the end of the trip;
- passengers can make advanced bookings.

Ticktoc plans to launch in Sydney Brisbane and Perth next year and will have all of Australia covered by the end of 2016.

The Ticktoc app can be downloaded for free from the Apple App Store and Android's Google Play Store as well as accessed online at www.Ticktoc.net. 



Important Message to owners of Martin Taximeters in the 13CABS network.

1. YOU DO NOT NEED TO REPLACE YOUR MARTIN MK6 METERS

If you have recently been advised by staff at 13CABS to remove your proven and trusted Martin Mk6 Taximeter and have it replaced with a Cabcharge Fairway Plus taximeter app, there is no impending reason to do so. Mr Stuart Overall, Chief Operating Officer of Black Cabs Combined advises that taxi drivers may choose to use the Fareway Plus device for payments, and a Martin Meter for metering. It's your choice!

2. DOES THE EFTPOS SYSTEM NEEDS TO BE UPGRADED NOW ?

If you have been told by 13CABS staff this was necessary because the Telstra 2G network would be turned off in December 2015, our research indicates Telstra has guaranteed 2G network service until December 2016.

3. DO METERS NEED TO BE CHANGED NOW FOR TSC "FARE DEVICE" SPECIFICATION ?

NO. If staff from 13CABS have indicated the Fairway Plus meets the yet to be released TSC "Fare Device" specification this appears to be misleading. No meter is approved for this specification at this time and it may take many months before one or more is approved and possibly years before you are required to install one that is approved.

We believe there would be at least four "Fare Device" manufacturers and you have a right to choose which one suits your business best and provides the features that suit you and your driver. We would advise you to sit back and wait until you can make an informed choice rather than be railroaded into one system that may not suit your business.

Martin Meters and at least three other Australian Taximeter manufacturers have been working with the TSC for the past 2 years on the implementation of TSC specification for a "Fare Device" that will eventually replace all Victorian Taximeters. Each manufacturer has invested large amounts of time and venture capital on meeting the future Fare Device specification. Martin Meters have been engaged in research, design and development of our Taxi Information Processing system (TIPS) for the past five years. This system was purpose designed for taxi owner usage. As we see it, the TSC Fare Device specification is geared more towards government controlling authority usage and appears to be an expanded example of our TIPS system. Armed with our extensive work and expertise in this area, we hope to deliver the best TSC approved Fare Device solution to the Victorian taxi market.

Please contact us urgently on 9335 1551 if you feel you have been given incorrect or misleading information that has influenced your decision to replace your trusted & reliable Martin MK6 taximeter.



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IHAIL AN AUSSIE MONOPOLY

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) is set to deny authorisation to Cabcharge's ihail app as according to the watchdog, it would have a significant impact on competition in the taxi industry.

The competition watchdog, ACCC, is being accused of protecting ride sharing service Uber after it flagged it may stop the taxi industry introducing a rival booking app.

Taxi representatives are furious that the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission plans to block the release of ihail, an app that acts as a one-stop booking service for major taxi networks nationally.

In a draft decision, the watchdog said it has fears about ihail's impact on competition and Cabcharge's role in handling payments.

Australian Taxi Industry Association chief executive Blair Davies said the decision would hurt local taxi companies and commuters.

"The ACCC has sided on the side of Uber against Australian companies and that's not it's role," he told AAP on Monday.

"We've got a niche product that we believe a significant number of customers want and have been crying out for and they've forgotten completely about those consumers."

If launched, the app would allow customers to make bookings across the networks, which represent more than half of all taxis in Australia and an even greater proportion in capital cities.

"The ACCC accepts this app would provide a more convenient way for consumers to book taxi services, but

in the draft determination the ACCC takes the view that this comes at too big a cost to competition," said ACCC chairman Rod Sims.

Current ihail shareholders include:

- Yellow Cabs (Qld) Pty Ltd – operating in Queensland and Tasmania
- Silver Top Taxi Service Ltd - operating in Sydney and Melbourne
- Black & White Cabs Pty Ltd - operating in Brisbane, Perth, Redcliffe and Toowoomba
- Suburban Taxis – operating in Adelaide
- Cabcharge Australia Ltd – as well as providing taxi payment processing terminals to around 95 per cent of taxis in Australia, it also has taxi networks in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Newcastle
- Overseas taxi companies, Texas Taxis and Taxi Services Incorporated Minneapolis.

The taxi networks operated by ihail shareholders represent more than half of all taxis in Australia. Prices and quality of service would probably be affected as a result.

"If you go to each city there are two main taxi networks which probably have over 80 per cent of the taxis. That's who's getting together and that's one of our problems," Mr Sims said.

The taxi industry had been banking on iHail to compete with ride-sharing service Uber and intended to run the niche platform alongside individually branded apps. Each of the major taxi networks in Australia currently has their own smartphone booking app.

ACCC Chairman, Rod Sims also pointed out that, "There are also a number of third party booking apps such as goCatch and ingogo which individual taxi drivers sign up to use. These third party apps provide the convenience of being able to book taxis from a large fleet across a number of major cities throughout Australia."

"The growth in these existing apps is being driven by competition to attract drivers and customers. iHail will achieve a potentially dominant position from launch – not through competition, but because of the larger fleet of taxis its ownership structure delivers," said Mr Sims.

A key sticking point for the ACCC was iHail's requirement that all payments be handled by Cabcharge.

Passengers will only be able to pay for fares using their registered credit card or Cabcharge card.

As the proportion of fares booked through iHail increases, the amount of in-taxi non-cash payment processing will decline, which may limit emerging competition between Cabcharge and other providers of taxi payment processing services.

Cabcharge, which owns 10 per cent of iHail, said that the mandatory in-app payment was nothing new and its provision of the service was no different to the function being provided by a bank.

Cabcharge Chief Executive, Andrew Skelton said the ACCC's draft

decision wouldn't affect the company's rollout of its own app.

The ACCC considers that the iHail app is likely to result in a public detriment by reducing competition between taxi companies in supplying services to customers using the app.

The proposal also allows passengers to offer to pay an extra amount above the metered fare at the time of requesting a taxi. This is designed to encourage drivers to accept their booking over other fare requests.

The ACCC is concerned that the proposed priority dispatch payment could reduce access to taxis during peak periods for financially disadvantaged people.

The ACCC will seek further submissions about iHail before making a final decision at the end of 2015. **TT**



MONEY, MONEY, MONEY!

Why is Uber still operating in Australia?

The simple answer to the above question is: “MONEY”. Uber seems to have an unlimited amount of it.

Investors fall over each other whenever Uber raises another \$1 billion or so of private equity. The more money Uber burns the more the investors cheer. The new age name for this is called “burn rate”.

In old time speak we call it “buying customers”.

Many startup tech companies have gone through this process, and some like Facebook or Amazon have become extremely successful, whereas others have fallen by the wayside.

It is the lure of making a lot of money quickly that awakens the greed of Wall Street. Once Wall Street and Silicon Valley think they are on a winner they go hell for leather to reach their goal. They do not respect or obey the laws of their own, or other countries. They feel that laws are obstacles that they can go around, trample down, or change to their liking.

They use their seemingly unlimited amount of money to hire the best lawyers, lobbyists and publicity experts in order to achieve their goals without regard to what damage they do to others. They only spruik what people want to hear, like our technology is new and sophisticated, and we are cheaper and better than the others. So let's have a close look at what Uber has done and said to get a foothold in Australia.

Uber claims to be a rideshare company. What a joke. They get one of their drivers to pick up passengers for a financial reward. Where is the sharing?

Uber claims to be a high tech company with cutting edge new technology. The reality is that they use available technology in a different combination. Apps were already available and in use by other companies. Taxis used them on a daily basis. The difference is that taxis used them in an environment that is **regulated by government in the interest of the public**. Imagine taxis operating in an environment of **UNREGULATED FARES**.

Uber claims to be 30% cheaper than taxis. This is the message that gets repeated over and over again by Uber and the press accepts it as fact. Yet there is no mention of the fact that Uber has **NO** regulated fare structure and that they use an algorithm to calculate the fare.

So, in high demand times surge-pricing might apply and the customer might have to pay up to seven times the regulated taxi fare. This is called “price gouging” and has always been condemned by the taxi industry.

Uber spruiks that their drivers get 80% of the fare. They fail to mention that the driver is lumbered with all expenses, like fuel, car maintenance, insurance (albiet not taxi-cab insurance), etc.

Uber claims that their drivers earn more than \$ 25 per hour. Anecdotal evidence suggests that Uber does pay its drivers at certain times more than they receive in fares. This is called predatory pricing. In this case the company does not use market power but the power of money.

Uber has been very good in using their propaganda in Australia. They have politicians and journalists on

their side, who go in and bat for them.

I wonder what persuasive powers these companies have, to blind people so that they cannot see them for what they really are. They are not here to make things better for Australians. They are only here to make billions of dollars for themselves and their American investors. They do not care how many Australian lives they ruin. An Ameri-

can presidential candidate recently said that it is a sad state of affairs for America when Wall Street turns fraud into a business model.

Uber's Business model is flawed. It can only succeed by disregarding our Australian laws. We should follow France and Germany and not bend to the demands and wishes of an American bully.

Hans Altoff

Taxi Owner/ Operator **TT**

THINK GREEN, STAY GREEN

While at the Melbourne Airport Taxi Holding Bay last month I noticed a huge amount of rubbish just left lying around on the ground.

There are plenty of bins provided all around the holding bay, but it seems that some drivers are just too lazy to walk to the bin and deposit their rubbish.

In a recent survey it was found that only 10% of humans actually bin their trash all the time, 30% are lazy couch potatoes, 40% are just lazy, 20% sometimes throw out their rubbish. If we stop littering our eco system will be clean and we will no longer need to worry about making our streets, carparks, roadsides, etc. look gross and untidy. Are you part of the 10% who respects our environment and makes the right choice of disposing rubbish correctly.

"Who cares if I litter? What harm can it do? I can't be bothered walking to the bin."

This is what most people say about littering.

Believe it or not littering causes a lot of things that you wouldn't want to happen. When you put rubbish, papers, cigarette butts, food, etc. on the ground you are littering. Many people don't realise the effect that they are having on the environment. Littering causes pollution which hurts our lungs when you breathe it in.

This doesn't just have an effect on us but also on animals. This can

make the animals sick or even kill them. Littering also makes the earth look ugly. Ask yourself - this do you want a clean earth? I bet that you never thought one wrapper could cause such a big event.

So when you are waiting for your next fare, don't throw your rubbish out the window - place it in the nearest rubbish bin.

We only have one Earth - look after it and it will look after to you.

E M Peters **TT**

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IT'S ABOUT SERVICE & SAFETY

I am a concerned operator, owner, driver and President of the Victoria United Taxi Industry, which was formed to represent the 5000+ small businesses who provide a constant 24/7 point-to-point passenger transport service.

Uber have a rule regarding Blood Alcohol Content (BAC).

Uber's rule is that drivers must have a BAC 0.00 reading when driving for Uber. Uber's rule of BAC 0.00 is totally unenforceable in a private vehicle.

However the BAC laws apply differently to Uber as to accredited vehicles. Both carrying customers, the identifiable (taxis and hire-cars) and the unidentified (Uber) both stopped by Police and, for whatever reason, undergo a breath test.

The identifiable driver has a reading 0.02 (faces loss of licence, fine, demerit points, loss of income). The Unidentifiable Driver has a reading 0.045 (no penalty).

In this case SAME (providing transport for reward) is VERY DIFFERENT (BAC Laws)

Identification enables enforcement

Airline pilots, train drivers, tram drivers, bus drivers, taxi and hire-car drivers are required by law to have a BAC of 0.00 (and rightly so) for passenger safety, but not if you are an Uber Driver.

ATO GST compliance

Uber says: We're not taxi travel. Another example of SAME is

DIFFERENT. Uber seem to use whatever label they choose in an attempt to circumvent rules, regulation and legislation.

Money leaving the industry

- Uber claims they need 20% to maintain operations
- Electronic payment processors told they cannot charge 10%
- "Rich Investor Taxi Mogul" told you take too much out of Industry
- Uber (\$50 billion American company) takes 20% of EVERY FARE... nobody says anything REALLY?

Industry inquiry

We have had an Industry Inquiry and are part way through the implementation of the reform package.

Some of the areas of concern highlighted through this process were:

- Driver Standards
- Driver Remuneration - the industry was accused of driver exploitation
- Vehicle Standards
- Money leaving the Industry through the so called taxi mogul investor
- 10% charged by electronic payment processors





What reforms have been introduced?

Driver Standards were addressed with the introduction of The Knowledge.

Driver Remuneration was set at minimum of 55% of farebox (no costs). The fares were set by the Essential Services Commission (with no allowance for assignment or licence costs) to give a fair return for the driver and to operate the vehicle. A profit margin of 14.5% was allowed.

Vehicle Standards are monitored through compliance activity and annual RWC checks

Legislation limited electronic payment processors' charges to 5%

Our Commissioner, Mr Graeme Samuels says that the satisfaction rate has increased to 72% and he attributes this to the reforms.

Illegal Transportation Service (ITS) in this case UBER

Driver Standards - How many have done the Knowledge as was offered to them? Not many – they believe they don't have to.

Driver Remuneration - When you analyse this considering the claims of cost being 70% of a taxi it can be

seen that ITS (Uber) driver partners are far worse off than taxi drivers/ owner drivers.

- If a Taxi earns \$1
- Owner/driver receives \$1 fare (all costs)
- If driver only he/she receives 55c (no costs)
- ITS (Uber) becomes 70c. Partner driver receives 56c fare (all costs)
- $\$1 \times 70\% = 70c \times 80\% = 56c$
- Under this model of cheaper fares for the consumer it is abundantly clear that an ITS (Uber) partner driver is 44% worse off than the taxi owner/driver.

Taxi owner/driver's costs were analysed and set independently by the Essential Services Commission. NOT by his Partner (ITS) – recipe for financial disaster.

The only way to increase this return to an acceptable level is to surge price – consumer benefit lost – and partner drivers have already worked out how to manipulate the system.

Partner drivers are being hoodwinked by the 80% vs 55% not understanding that each % is of a totally different value.

$80\% \times 70\% = 56c$ (all costs)
 $55\% \times 100\% = 55c$ (no costs)

I ask you – Who is exploiting the driver?

Vehicle Standards - Who knows what monitoring is done.

Money leaving Industry - 20% of total income to a Silicon Valley Multi Billion Dollar Company is to be considered okay but the so-called taxi mogul investor was severely frowned upon.

Electronic Payment Processor (EPP) - If you consider the income comparison which gives the Partner Driver 56c (The Fare) and the EPP (in this case Uber) 14c it is clear to see that the EPP charge is 25% clearly in breach of Victorian Legislation.

Uber have mounted a relentless campaign to manufacture a perceived need for their wonderful so-called new innovative technological masterpiece that will revolutionise transport and make drivers wealthy and passengers happy with lower fares.

This model as proposed, cannot provide both acceptable income for partner drivers AND at the same time cheaper fares for the customer....not possible.

The framework is already in place if an ITS (Uber) wishes to participate legally – they appear to choose not to.

Brian Gammon
President

Victoria United Taxi Industry **ti**

WORLD TAXI NEWS

ENGLAND

A High Court judge has rejected accusations from the black cab trade that the smartphone app constituted a fare calculation meter reserved for use in vehicles used by licensed cabbies.

Uber company bosses have welcomed the ruling, calling it "great news" and a "victory for common sense".

The service is already widely used in London and looks set to come to Brighton and Hove.

But Mr Justice Ouseley, sitting in London, ruled Uber apps did not constitute taximeters and there was nothing to prevent minicab drivers and their customers enjoying "any improvement which technology might bring in the speed and accuracy of their fare calculations". **TT**



SCOTLAND

Uber was launched in Glasgow last month.

A spokeswoman for Glasgow City Council said, "Uber, the mobile phone app for taxi hire, was granted a licence for a booking office in Glasgow for one-year following a decision by the Licensing Committee on April 29".

Uber has also applied to launch its app in Edinburgh but a shortage of suitable candidates to oversee the business north of the Border is expected to delay its launch in the capital until 2016. **TT**

SOUTH INDIA

The Kerala unit of the CPI(M) is planning to take on taxi aggregators like Uber and Ola by arming taxi and auto unions with software and technical support.

Majority of the auto-taxi drivers in the state are organised under various unions linked to political parties. The CPI(M) has taken the lead and is considering proposals by two independent software consultants who have volunteered to help the party to launch a software platform for mobile app-based taxi service.

Uber and Ola drivers are currently facing violent protests across the state from the traditional taxi drivers and service has been disrupted on several occasions. **TT**



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- > TAXI YELLOW RESPRAYS FROM \$1090 (inc GST)

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AROUND THE STATES

QLD

Greg Collins, owner of the Brisbane cab company Complete Taxi Management, admitted on the Brisbane Taxi Driver Facebook page last month, that he had physically assaulted an Uber driver.

"F---ing slap him like I did to the prick in Warner St the other night, I am f---ing over them. You wait I will f---ing get them. They won't and can't

defend themselves they are illegal.

If it was 30 years ago in my time, they wouldn't last five minutes," he wrote, in response to a post by a taxi driver who claimed to have been assaulted by an Uber driver while trying to take his photo.

"We need to get more militant about this issue. The (sic) are the f---ing scabs stealing what we have all worked for."

When contacted for comment, Mr Collins tried to dismiss the post as a joke. "I've never slapped an Uber driver in my life, we were mucking around," he said, "It's not true, I don't break the law.

The social media revelations come



Greg Collins 30-year taxi industry veteran

as three men, including two Uber drivers, were bashed by the same group of men in inner Brisbane early one morning last month, in what appeared to be attacks specifically targeted at Uber drivers.

Kim Stephens **TT**

SAFETY IS PARAMOUNT

TWU urges states to abide by a United Nations body ruling on rights of passengers and drivers before approving Uber.

The Transport Workers' Union is urging state governments to abide by a United Nations labour body resolution which demands that countries ensure passenger safety and drivers' rights before considering

allowing ride-sharing apps such as Uber to enter their markets.

Employers, government and employee groups voted for the resolution last month after a meeting at the International Labour Organization in Geneva.

It states that all parties involved in transport must abide by rules guaranteeing safety, security and the rights of passengers and drivers.

"Ride-sharing apps must not operate in violation of passenger and driver rights to safety and

workplace protections. Australian states must respect our obligations on this," said Tony Sheldon, TWU National Secretary.

"Uber does not have the adequate safety standards for passengers. It boasts about creating jobs for drivers in Australia – but what kind of jobs? They are jobs with no rights to sick leave, annual leave, maternity leave, retirement with dignity, minimum pay and with no protections against unfair dismissal." **TT**

taxi talk

magazine

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AROUND THE STATES

ACT

The ACT has become the first Australian jurisdiction to allow ride-sharing services like UberX to operate legally.

New laws to take hold in the ACT from October 30 will require all “on demand” drivers to be registered and accredited, as well as to pay to undergo police and vehicle safety checks.

But only regular taxi drivers will be allowed to pick passengers up at cab ranks or accept hails on the roadside.

“Canberra will be the first capital in the world to enable ride-sharing to operate legally ahead of ride-sharing businesses operating,” the ACT government says. “As a result, Uber and other ridesharing businesses will be able to legally enter the Canberra market from 30 October 2015.”

The notion of a taxi network will be replaced by “transport booking service”. Taxi licence fees will come down from \$20,000 at present to \$10,000 from October of this year

and \$5000 next October. Licence fees for hire cars such as those used for weddings will also be significantly reduced, from \$4600 to \$100 a year.

However, Uber and others will be required to pay an application fee of \$600 and an accreditation fee of \$50 per driver.

In addition they will have to pay vehicle inspections and police checks running into the hundreds of dollars.

Rideshare cars will only be allowed to accept passengers through a booking service, which typically takes the form of a smart phone app. **TT**

NSW

40 UberX drivers have been suspended and thousands of fines issued as part of a major crackdown on illegal ride-sharing in NSW.

NSW Roads and Maritime Services safety and compliance director Peter Wells, said there was a concern for safety if there were insurance risks, and no medical or criminal checks on drivers.

The vehicle suspensions came into effect in October for three months.

Any of the 40 vehicles found operating after October 1 will be treated as unregistered and uninsured, and cop a fine of \$637 per offence. **TT**

NT

Talk of Uber entering the Northern Territory has escalated – as Labor calls on the Country Liberal Party (CLP) to release their review of the taxi industry.

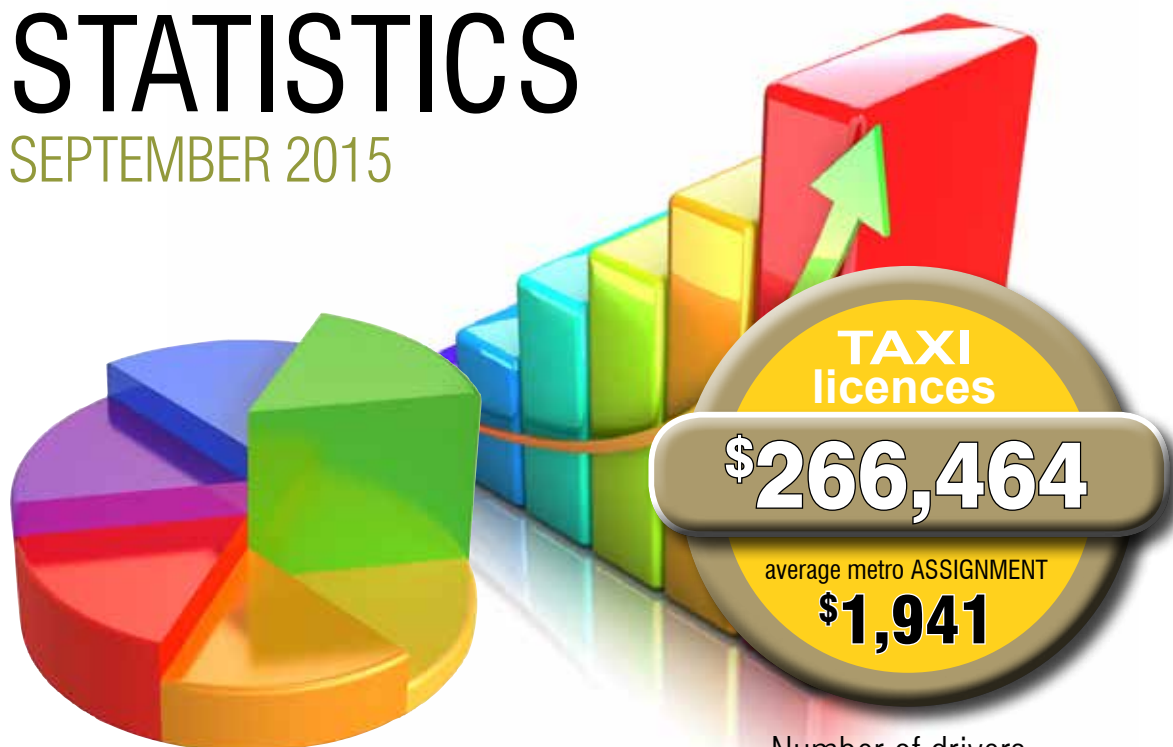
“It’s important that the Government prepares for the introduction of Uber to the Northern Territory,” said Labor transport spokesman Ken Vowles.

“It’s coming, make no mistake. The current legislation is completely incapable of dealing with Uber and ride sharing.”

NT Transport Minister Peter Chandler said he was committed to working with Uber and the local taxi industry to develop the best transport options for Territorians. He added that the report would be released in coming weeks. **TT**

STATISTICS

SEPTEMBER 2015



Number of drivers

Active drivers15,351
Accredited drivers (taxi, hire car & bus)44,273

Compliance outcomes

Vehicle Inspections2,348
Rectification Notices196
Infringement Notices112
Official Warning notices11
Regulation 19 notice6

Taxi zone	Licence type	# of licences 30/6/14	# of licences 30/6/15	# of licences 18/10/15	Changes since 30/6/14	Changes since 30/6/15
Metro	Conventional	3,826	4,399	4,325	499	-74
	WAT	504	492	482	-22	-10
	Total	4,330	4,891	4,807	477	-86
Urban	Conventional	357	400	409	52	9
	WAT	75	79	81	6	2
	Total	432	479	490	58	11
Regional	Conventional	253	261	262	9	1
	WAT	75	77	74	-1	-3
	Total	328	338	336	8	-2
Country	Conventional	126	126	128	2	2
	WAT	36	34	34	-2	0
	Total	162	160	162	0	2
Totals	Conventional	4,562	5,186	5,124	562	-62
	WAT	690	682	671	-19	-11
	Total	5,252	5,868	5,795	543	-73

The above figures are updated and published on the Taxi Services Commission website each week. Figures shown consist of both active licences and those that have been approved but have not yet been operationalised at the time of reporting.

HIRE CAR LICENCES **\$36,246**

Number of Victorian Hire Vehicle Licences

Metropolitan Hire Cars1,097
Country Hire Cars62
Special Purpose Vehicles965
Restricted Hire Cars618
TOTAL **2,742**

The **metro taxi licence average price** of **\$266,464** is based on the **3 genuine market based transactions** that occurred in the metropolitan zone during **September 2015**.

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. **TT**



AARON de Rozario


Taxi Services Commissioner

INDUSTRY

Review of driver accreditation decisions

Drivers and other industry participants can seek internal review of certain decisions made by the TSC affecting their accreditation. One of the things the TSC cannot review is your score on any module of the Knowledge test. This is because your Knowledge score is not a decision made by the TSC. Rather, your test score is electronically generated by the Knowledge test software program at the conclusion of the test. Applications seeking internal review of your Knowledge test score, requesting extra 'grace' marks or review of the Knowledge test generally are unable to be accepted for internal review by the TSC.

The types of decisions the TSC can internally review include a decision to impose a condition on your accreditation, take disciplinary action against your accreditation, or refuse your application or renewal for accreditation. More information about what can and cannot be internally reviewed is available on our website (link to <http://www.taxi.vic.gov.au/drivers/internal-review>).

If you are unhappy with your score on the Knowledge, remember that you can attempt each module twice in any three month period. The TSC encourages you to familiarise yourself with the Knowledge handbooks before re-sitting a Knowledge module. The Knowledge handbooks are also available on our website (link to <http://www.taxi.vic.gov.au/drivers/taxi-drivers/driver-accreditation-training>). 

CEO on INDUSTRY UPDATE



The Taxi Services Commission has reverted back to using legislative terminology; **taxi booking services reverted to NETWORK SERVICE PROVIDERS** and **permit holders reverted to OPERATORS**. This aligns with current legislation.


Get your taxi business on the move

Are you thinking of becoming a new taxi operator or wanting some help with your existing taxi business? Business Victoria (through Small Business Victoria) offers tips, tools, news and events to help you run and grow your business.

They also operate a small business bus across Melbourne and regional Victoria, which offers free specialist advice from an experienced business mentor to assist you in starting or building your small business.

To book a one-on-one mentoring session to get your business moving go to www.business.vic.gov.au



For further information on becoming a new taxi operator visit <http://www.taxi.vic.gov.au/owners-and-operators/taxi-owners-and-operators/information-for-new-taxi-operators> 

TAXI CAB UPDATE

Help make a better


Multi Purpose Taxi Program

Consultation is now under way for the Multi Purpose Taxi Program review. The program has been supporting Victorians with limited mobility for over 30 years by paying 50 per cent of each regulated taxi fare for users, up to \$60.

The Victorian Government is considering new ways to improve transport for Victorians with limited mobility and create a better Multi Purpose Taxi Program.

As part of consultation, a series of workshops (<http://economicdevelopment.vic.gov.au/transport/rail-and-roads/taxis/multi-purpose-taxi-program-review/get-involved-in-consultation>) will be held with interested stakeholders including the taxi industry, program users, carers, disability advocacy groups, and the transport and hire car sector. Workshops will be held in Traralgon, Wangaratta, Bendigo, Ballarat, Geelong, Sunshine, Ringwood East and the Melbourne CBD.

Anyone interested in improving transport for mobility limited Victorians is encouraged to get involved and help create a better Multi Purpose Taxi Program.

To have your say you can attend a workshop, complete the online survey, make a written submission, email the team at mptp-review@ecodev.vic.gov.au or phone the team on 1800 064 887. 



This year the TSC is sponsoring the

DISABILITY SPORT & RECREATION FESTIVAL

3 December 2015
Federation Square

Want to play basketball?

Ever played basketball in a wheelchair?

We need you !



As part of the TSC's involvement in this year's Disability Sport and Recreation Festival, we will be participating in the wheelchair basketball challenge.

We need drivers to volunteer to play on the TSC team on the day.

The event takes place over the lunch period and is a great opportunity to engage with the disability sector.

Interested in participating?

email Crystal at crystal.serblan@taxi.vic.gov.au



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MELBOURNE CUP CARNIVAL



AAMI VICTORIA DERBY DAY

Saturday
31 October 2015


The Melbourne Cup Carnival shifts gear with what is arguably the most outstanding day of racing on the Australasian calendar: AAMI Victoria Derby Day.

The feature race of the day, the Group 1 AAMI Victoria Derby, boasts an impressive prize money of over \$1 million.

Considered by many to be the most prestigious day of the Melbourne Cup Carnival, AAMI Victoria Derby Day embodies a world of glamour and sophistication.

The fashion stakes are high with the start of the Myer Fashions on the Field competition for women and men.

This is the day for classic elegance, and sets the pace for the entire week.

The official flower for AAMI Victoria Derby Day is the cornflower. 



EMIRATES MELBOURNE CUP DAY


Tuesday
3 November 2015

The Emirates Melbourne Cup is a truly spectacular event: each year on the first Tuesday of November at 3pm, the greatest thoroughbreds from around the world gather at Flemington and battle it out for a stake of the \$6.2-million prize money and to cement their names in history.

There's nothing like being there amongst the 100,000+ crowd to experience the day that puts Australia firmly in the international sporting spotlight.

Trainers from around the world set their sights on the Emirates Melbourne Cup, a race widely considered to be the best staying handicap in the world. Over 3200 metres, the Emirates Melbourne Cup offers the richest prize in Australian sport and a 18ct solid gold Hardy Brothers trophy valued at \$175,000.

As the jewel in the Melbourne Cup Carnival crown, this iconic day is a heady mix of revelry, spectacular racing and fashion, and exquisite hospitality and entertainment, making it an unmissable sporting and cultural event.

Official flower for Emirates Melbourne Cup Day is the yellow rose. 




CROWN OAKS DAY

Thursday
5 November 2015

Traditionally known as 'ladies day', the racing highlight of Crown Oaks Day is the Group 1 Crown Oaks, a classic for three-year-old fillies over 2500m, with \$1 million prize money and a stunning crystal winner's trophy.

The elegant atmosphere of Crown Oaks Day fittingly plays host to the national final of Myer Fashions on the Field Women's Racewear competition.

Crown Oaks Day is a wonderful social occasion for friends to gather on this most stylish of days, and soak up the atmosphere in a glamorous environment, surrounded by manicured gardens, fine dining and beautiful marquees.

Official flower of Crown Oaks Day is the pink rose. 




EMIRATES STAKES DAY

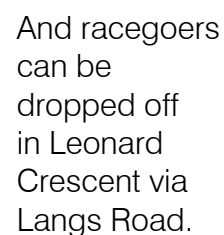
Saturday
7 November 2015

The Melbourne Cup Carnival concludes its festivities with this great Emirates Stakes Day. It is packed with fast action and excitement, featuring Victoria's foremost 1600m event, the \$1 million Group 1 Emirates Stakes, and the unforgettable weight-for-age VRC Classic, previously won twice by the unbeatable Black Caviar.

As a week of world-class racing winds down, it all heats up off the track with free activities and live entertainment for children of all ages.

Highlights include the Emirates Stakes Day Fashions on the Field for younger racegoers and families, offering the opportunity to impress in the fashion stakes and claim fantastic prizes.

Official flower for Emirates Stakes Day is the red rose. 





TAI CHI IN AN APP

When you have 10 minutes to spare, what do you do? I find myself pulling out my iPhone all too often to obsessively check my messages, Instagram, Twitter, or whatever else I have unread at the time.

Smartphones have made it possible to stay more connected with each other than ever before, but they also give us endless reasons to be stressed.

Ustwo has a new app called *Pause*, that uses basic meditation principles to reduce mental stress and make you feel more relaxed. Certain meditation techniques have been scientifically proven to work, and trying this one is just a \$2 download in the App Store.

Pause is one of the simplest apps you'll ever use, and that's by design. You press your finger and move it around the screen to collect lava-lamp-like orbs of color. The goal is to fill the screen with orbs anchored to your finger. Move too quickly or suddenly, and the orbs start slowly falling away.

"It's a digital expression of a core element of meditation, which is voluntarily sustaining attention on an object," explains Peng Cheng, founder of the mental wellness company *PauseAble*. In normal meditation, the point of focus could be your breath or a physical object, but in this case it's your finger on a screen.

The experience is just as much about sound as it is visuals. A peaceful, ambient soundtrack plays in the background and fades out whenever your finger movement becomes too jerky (it's strongly recommended that you use *Pause* with headphones). You're even recommended to close your eyes and let the sound guide your finger.

"The idea was inspired by the Chinese tai chi movement," says Cheng. "That's a kind of deliberate, slow, continual body movement. What if we could move that movement quality down to the fingertip, and the phone could sense that?"

Alex Heath 

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THE ADRENALINE GAME

Alcohol and ice [the drug] make a lethal combination. We tend to become a bit blasé about the impact of different drugs in the community. Just like a car crash – they make headlines one day, and are forgotten the next, however drug use is an issue we need to address, especially within the hospitality industry.

Together with the euphemistically called "recreational" drugs which are causing all sorts of issues, ice in particular is a problem that's putting pressure on both sides of the hospitality divide. Let's not convince ourselves that it is a problem for someone else; ice is causing all sorts of problems that should be addressed with rational thought, compassion and with some responsibility taken by both the users and those around them.

If you look at one of the key battlegrounds of pubs and clubs, the answer to me is so clear: there needs to be a greater enforcement of responsible serving of alcohol. Seems really simple doesn't it?

Teach your bar teams to assess customers who are not at their peak and pull their service. Unfortunately, it is not that easy. Pubs and clubs are profit driven businesses with enough regulatory headaches from councils, licensing boards, local residents and fierce competition. It actually feels mean to ask them to do more.

The ice part of the equation is bought into play when anecdotal research is showing that punters with ice in their system are drinking more and have the strength of 10 red headed Irishman in a fight. The problem won't be solved by keeping them less drunk, but it could at least mitigate part of the messed up thought processes.

When I have been at the hotel, restaurant, function or club coal-face and have a customer giving the booze a red hot thrashing, it takes some backbone to have the conversation that enough is enough. But it still has to happen and the risk of a loss of a few dollars should be offset by an improvement in your premise's reputation for taking a stand against boorish behaviour.

I am also aware of the 'loyalty' factor and the fact that old mate behind the jump reckons that his customer is 'usually' alright – they are not taking the broader picture

into mind. The family seated next to the unruly drunks are not going to be rapt and they will 'share' their experience.

Unfortunately the problem doesn't stop when your security team asks a couple of rowdy souls to move on – ask the police and firefighters who cut them from the wreck of a crash, or the nurses and doctors getting belted up in the emergency wards.

This pervasive menace is stuffing up the lives of people left, right and centre.

And if we are having honest conversations with the public, we should be having them with our teams. Take note of those having a few extra 'big nights' and how they present for work. Look for signs of changes in behaviour and being short of cash before payday. Check out how healthy they look and whether they appear anxious or not. I'm no doctor, but I am observant and there are plenty of signs that people give off without coming out and saying – 'look boss, I'm on the gear.'

Talk to your HR departments about appropriate strategies for managing these people within your sys-


tem, because whether you admit it or not, they are there. We're kidding ourselves if we think they're not. Hospitality is an adrenaline game and there have always been players who push the addiction envelope to get them through.

This era sees ice and booze as a combination from hell.


When you find them, use counseling, education and compassion as better options than punishment as the long-term benefit to the offender is sure to be better. I am worried for the generation who sit today in their mid-twenties to mid-thirties – often they are the kids of the living large, big spending, have-it-all generation that were the same age through the excess riddled 80s. Little of what I saw as a young barman or waiter gives me any faith that the children will not prove to be heightened versions of their parents – and that is a truly scary thought. I hope I am wrong.

"There have always been players who push the addiction envelope to get them through, but this era sees ice and booze as a combination from hell."

Industry Observer
Hospitality magazine
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HEALTHY DADS

THE CHALLENGE OF BEING A NEW FATHER



Many of us know that depression related to pregnancy and birth can affect mothers, but it's important to remember that fathers are at risk as well.

Depression can start in pregnancy and in Australia up to 9 per cent of pregnant women experience antenatal depression.

About 16 per cent of all new mothers (that's about 1 in 7), and 5 per cent of fathers develop postnatal depression in the year after having a baby. Anxiety conditions are likely to be at least as common.

In a recent research undertaken by beyondblue it was found that four out of five new dads feel the need to be "the rock" for their families after the birth of their child.

Half of the new fathers said this expectation caused them to experience stress and anxiety.

- While new fatherhood is often a time of great joy and happiness, many men can feel overwhelmed by the weight of their new responsibilities. In the face of this pressure, 79% of dads feel the need to be "the rock" for their family; with 47% of dads saying this causes them a lot of stress and anxiety.
- 56% of new dads did not seek out information or support from any source during stressful times.
- 39% of first time fathers experienced high levels of psychological distress in the first year of their child's life.
- In the face of this high risk for depression, 45% of dads were

not aware that men could experience postnatal depression (PND) as well as women, and 43% of first time dads saw anxiety and depression after having a baby as a sign of weakness.

beyondblue CEO Georgie Harman said these findings showed that new dads felt significant pressure to be 'strong' and provide financial and emotional support, with psychological distress often seen as a sign of 'weakness'.

"With so many men feeling the need to be the rock for their family, it's no surprise many reported that their feelings and experiences were less important than their partners. Worryingly, almost half of the men surveyed didn't understand that PND can affect men as well as women," she said.

"The relationship between the parents of a newborn is critical, with fathers tending to rely on their partners for advice and direction, but couples who have planned ahead together are better prepared for changes to their relationship after the birth of a child."

Statistics show that depression and anxiety may be more common for those dads and mums who:

- have been depressed before
- have less practical, emotional or social support
- feel the burden of financial stress
- experience a difficult birth
- have current or past experiences with drugs or alcohol
- have a sick baby

- have major life and relationship difficulties, past and present
- find the reality of parenting is different from their expectations.

"I encourage new dads and their partners to check out beyondblue's information and resources for tips on looking after yourself and your partner after the arrival of a new baby, such as talking to friends who are already fathers, making time for exercise or relaxing, and nurturing your relationship by spending quality time with your partner at least once a week and talking to each other every day," said Georgie Harman.

If you, or your partner, is experiencing depression or anxiety, the baby and other children in the family will be impacted, so it's important to get professional help sooner rather than later.

In a recent research conducted by beyondblue they found four out of five new dads feel the need to be "the rock" for their families after the birth of their child.

beyondblue will release several new initiatives in the next year to provide new dads with the knowledge, tools and support to increase resilience during the transition into fatherhood. These will also be funded with donations from the Movember Foundation.

beyondblue's Dad's Handbook: A guide to the first 12 months, is available at beyondblue's website www.beyondblue.org.au 



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MAJOR EVENTS

this month in Melbourne

30 Oct - 2 Nov		WANGARATTA FESTIVAL OF JAZZ AND BLUES - boasting a world class program of local and international jazz and blues artists. Also there is opportunity to venture out into a region renowned for its wines and gourmet food, natural landscapes and cycling adventures.	Wangaratta Performing Arts Centre, street and garden stages, pubs and nearby wineries Wangaratta
31 Oct, 3, 5 & 7 Nov		MELBOURNE CUP CARNIVAL - four days of first class horse racing, fashions on the field, superb food, wine and entertainment. The Melbourne Cup, run on the first Tuesday in November, is the richest "two-mile" handicap in the world and one of the richest turf races.	Flemington racecourse Epsom Road Flemington
6 - 8 Nov		BEECHWORTH CELTIC FESTIVAL - a diverse range of concerts, performances and workshops all with a Celtic flavour. The Grand Parade on Saturday afternoon will feature the firing of historical muskets, colourful floats, energetic dancers, national Celtic costumes and flags, and will culminate with the stirring massed pipe bands.	Main Street and surrounds Beechworth
15 Nov		POLISH FESTIVAL - enjoy live music performances, traditional dances, special acts and entertainment all day on The Stage. Stroll down River Terrace and explore stalls selling a variety of Polish crafts, artworks, books, jewellery and other trinkets. Taste some of Poland's finest treats at the food market or head to the beer garden, relax and sample from the world-class ale on offer.	Federation Square Melbourne
19 - 22 Nov		AUSTRALIAN MASTERS - an annual golf tournament on the PGA Tour of Australasia. Players and spectators will enjoy the wonderful facilities afforded by the stunning new clubhouse and the challenges of the Huntingdale layout.	Huntingdale Golf Club Windsor Avenue Oakleigh South
24 - 27 Nov		BROADWAY TO OZ - Hugh Jackman in concert. Showcasing some of Jackman's greatest successes, including The Boy from Oz and Les Miserables and watch out for his irreverent nod to the mighty Wolverine. Jackman croons, twirls and shimmies through several medleys, including stunning tributes to classic musicals.	Rod Laver Arena Melbourne
27 - 29 Nov		QUEENSCLIFF MUSIC FESTIVAL - an intimate festival experience that threads its way through the quaint little venues in town, the festival grounds and gorgeous seaside views all within minutes walking distance.	Princess Park and various venues in Queenscliff



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CONFERENCES

this month in Melbourne

30 Oct - 1 Nov	PAX AUSTRALIA combines an exciting program of international & local features, connecting the world's leading gaming publishers & developers with local game industry representatives to showcase games.	Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre
9 - 10 Nov	AUSTRALIAN LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYMENT CONFERENCE will focus on improving transitions for job seekers to help them achieve positive outcomes. For the long term unemployed there are barriers to employment that need close examination and dialogue.	Pullman Melbourne on the Park
10 - 13 Nov	NATIONAL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EDUCATION CONFERENCE 2015 reflects on the progress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and considers how our communities can shape the future of education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families.	Hotel Pullman Melbourne Albert Park
16 - 18 Nov	IMPROVING HEALTHCARE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION Learn about the latest solutions and take away practical ideas that will enable you to re-think service delivery to meet the challenges of providing the highest quality of healthcare.	Pullman & Mercure Melbourne Albert Park
17 - 18 Nov	NATIONAL ENERGY EFFICIENCY CONFERENCE 2015 300 efficiency leaders, innovators, energy users and policy makers will connect in Melbourne to hear, debate and analyse the latest Australian and global thinking about maximising productivity by saving energy.	Pullman Melbourne on the Park
23 - 24 Nov	THE DEFENCE HUMAN SCIENCES SYMPOSIUM is the principal Australian forum for those interested in the application of human sciences research to enhance Defence capability. The theme for this year's symposium is 'Adapting human sciences for the future'.	Rydges Melbourne
25 - 26 Nov	ITS IN TERTIARY EDUCATION With tertiary education moving towards a global service environment, the importance of ITS capability is reaching unparalleled levels. All the core business functions of an institution rely ITS to deliver strategic and operational support, with the long term aim of delivering more complicated and innovative service capability.	Pullman Melbourne Albert Park

EXPOS & TRADE SHOWS



5 - 8 Nov	SEXPO is the world's largest adult lifestyle exhibition. It's vibrant, it's educational and it's a celebration of all lifestyles and sexualities.	Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre
13 - 14 Nov	FUTURE ASSEMBLY is Australia's newest emergent technology festival and an event designed for everyone with a focus on a connected world.	Melbourne Showgrounds
20 - 22 Nov	MINDBODYSPIRIT FESTIVAL is Australia's largest and most popular health, wellbeing and natural therapies event.	Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre
21 - 23 Nov	ULTIMATE SPORT EXPO is the largest sport expo in the Southern Hemisphere. 50,000sqm of retail, education, sports stars, competitions and demonstrations almost every sport.	Melbourne Showgrounds

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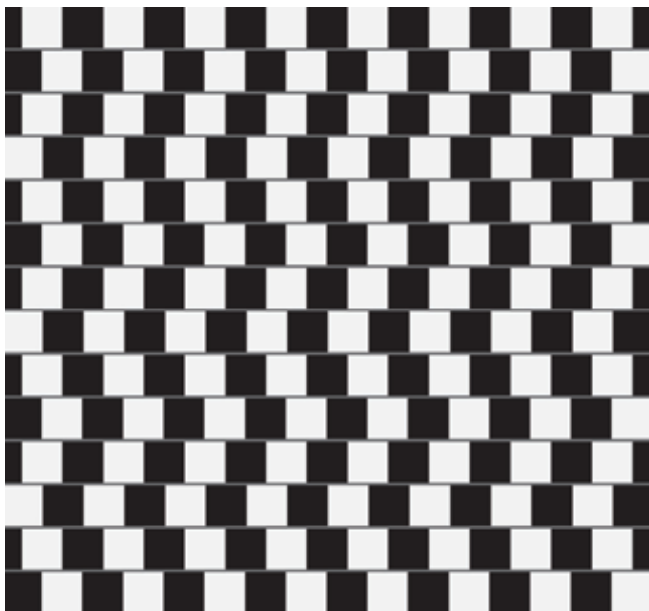
ILLUSIONS

making your brain flip out



CHECKERBOARD

This illusion is all about foreshortening—the strict law of perspective tells your brain that the blue line at the far back stretches longer than the green line at the front. But if you remove the checkerboard, the two lines are the same length.



CAFÉ WALL ILLUSION

The gray lines in between the rows of white and black squares seem to converge, but they are actually parallel. Your brain, overwhelmed by the intense and closely-spaced black-and-white contrasts, sees the gray lines as part of the tile either above or below it. The lines end up appearing higher on alternating sides, creating the trapezoidal illusion.




ROAD CLOSURES

this month in Melbourne

Street	Dates	Details	Purpose
Todd Road Port Melbourne	8pm Friday 6 November until 5am Monday 9 November	Full closure of carriageway (both directions) between Lorimer Street and Williamstown Road.	Road works
Collins Street and King Street Melbourne	until 9 November 8:30pm to 5am Sunday to Thurs nights 6am to 3pm weekends	Full closure of Collins Street eastbound between Spencer Street & King Street Partial closure on King Street northbound between Flinders Lane & Collins Street	Drainage Renewal Works
Pearl River Road Docklands	Until 20 November 7:30am to 5:30pm weekdays 8am to 5pm Saturdays 10am to 5pm Sundays	Full closure of carriageway south of Docklands Drive.	Water utility works
Therry Street Melbourne	Until 27 November 3pm to 11pm Fridays only	Full closure of carriageway between Queen Street and Elizabeth Street.	Food Truck Market
Racecourse Road and Boundary Road Nth Melbourne	Until 24 December 9am to 4pm weekdays 7am to 5pm weekends	Partial closure of Racecourse Road westbound between Flemington Road and Boundary Road. Full closure Boundary Road (alternating directions) between Flemington Road and Macaulay Road.	Power upgrade works
Tattersalls Lane Melbourne	2pm 19 November to 2am 20 November	Full closure of laneway between Little Bourke Street and Lonsdale Street, including closure of Stevenson Lane.	Event Closure
St James Lane Melbourne	21 November 8am to 3pm	Full closure of laneway between William Street and Church Lane.	Crane lift of materials
Melbourne Place Melbourne	13 November 7am to 5pm	Full closure of laneway from Russell Street.	Installation and removal of scaffolding

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