

Motion 2 - Better regulation of private hire vehicles

Conference notes:

- The growth of the digital economy and its growing importance as part of London's economy.
- The increased use of digital technology in improving the safety, convenience, availability and value for money of taxis and private hire vehicles through services like Hailo, Gett, Kabbee, Uber, GetTaxi, Green Tomato and MiniCabster.
- That Private Hire firms are not currently under any duty to provide wheelchair-friendly cars.
- That Transport for London are currently consulting on new rules for the regulation of private hire vehicles.

Conference believes that:

- London needs a thriving taxi and private hire sector.
- Customer safety must be the paramount concern in Taxi and Private Hire licensing.
- Technology has a useful role to play in improving the services to passengers and reducing costs.
- All drivers and minicab firms should pay the requisite tax on UK earnings and that the use of technology to track journeys, and in some cases fares, will help to improve tax compliance.
- All taxi and Private Hire drivers should have a level of basic competence in English so that they can communicate easily with their passengers.
- Firms which provide large numbers of Private Hire Vehicles (such as Addison Lee and Uber) should be obliged to provide a substantial number of wheelchair accessible vehicles.

Conference welcomes a number of elements in the TFL Consultation, including:

- The requirement for Private Hire drivers to speak English.
- The proposed 100 new taxi ranks by 2020.
- Improved enforcement of rules against 'touting' and unlicensed drivers.
- The proposal that a copy of the Hire and Reward insurance must be displayed / carried in the vehicle at all times
- The proposal to establish an Ombudsman type role for complaints about Private Hire Vehicles.

However, Conference does not support artificial restrictions on Private Hire which will not improve safety or customer service in particular :

- A forced waiting period after booking.
- Restricting the information that can be seen on apps - unless it can be shown that an App is not generally displaying accurate information
- Forcing drivers to only work for one firm.