

OBJECTION TO VARIATION OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARES

(Email addressed to the Licensing Team, received on 24 November 2010)

From: The Smith [REDACTED @ REDACTED.■■■]
To: Licensing
Subject: Comment on proposed new fares

Sent: Wed 24/11/2010 07:46

Sirs

Your notice on the web site invites comments on the proposed new fare structure before November 25.

Whilst I fully understand that you only want consultation from people who agree with you and that anyone else will simply be ignored, I have two main points to raise....

It seems a real insult to drivers to even suggest a 20p fare rise when this is the first increase of any sort in more than two and a half years, and it is about 6-7 years since the last realistic increase. In that time, fuel costs have risen from 60p/litre to £1.20+ -- a 100% increase, radio circuit subs have increased by about 25%, car rentals by more than 15%, and even the annual license fee has gone up by 20% or more.

An increase of the 20p (day time) and 25p (night time) jumps each 200+ yards to 25p and 30p would seem to be the absolute minimum increase needed cover the rises in expenses since the last significant rise, without taking into account the meteoric rise in the number of cars now competing for the same amount of work or inflation.

A 20p rise has virtually no effect on income. A fare that was, say, £9.45 just becomes £9.65 and you get the same £10 in either case.

Indeed, this increase is not even worth the cost of having the meter changed.

Secondly, the idea of reducing the Christmas rate is truly bizarre. After 11pm the rate should have been double the NIGHT rate rather than the DAY rate anyway. Even at the old double Tariff 1 rate, night drivers were working Christmas holidays for less than normal meter plus 50%. With the new proposal, the difference between the normal night rate and the Christmas rate is barely 10%. How many Southampton city council workers would even consider working for less than double time, let alone time plus 10%. It is time for those making these decisions to get out into the real world.

I fully realize that you could not care less than drivers are making about 50% of what they were earning 10 years ago, and working more hours to do so. Every extra car and driver is just extra income for the council. The result, though, is that there are less and less experienced taxi drivers out here, those who have worked for years without regular complaints and who do not rip passengers off on a regular basis, and more and more cowboys. The result of the sort of proposals set out in this fare revision can only impact negatively on those drivers who follow the regulations, whilst of course those who simply charge whatever they want and refuse short jobs will be nil.

Yours

Marc Smith