

PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE (PHV) SIGNAGE RESPOSES

ISSUE RAISED	COMMENT
<p>Safety of stickers for customer to recognise the vehicle</p>	<p>This is current practice and has been in place for many years.</p> <p>It clearly identifies the vehicle as a licensed vehicle which is a public safety matter.</p> <p>Provides clarity for customers at locations frequented by PHVs such as night clubs and travel hubs.</p> <p>Removal of the operator detail will make it easier for an unscrupulous driver to take another company’s booking.</p> <p>The operator details provide a clear line of communication for anyone in relation to the use of that vehicle.</p>
<p>In favour of stickers with operator details</p>	<p>Concern removal of operator detail will make it easier to take a job not booked to that driver.</p> <p>Elderly customers and the vulnerable are high use taxi users and often rely on traditional methods of communication so looking for a company on a door sign is important for them.</p> <p>The local operators have developed their business on the policies of Southampton, the removal of the company details on the door stickers will have a significant impact on them and could result in them taking advantage of the current state of legislation and licence elsewhere but continue to provide a service in Southampton. They would have to abide by that authority’s policy and conditions so very unlikely to have cameras or local enforcement officers which will undermine our policy and conditions.</p>
<p>Should only work for one company</p>	<p>Removal of the company name from the door sticker although making it a lot easier for a driver to work for multiple operators at the same time will prevent operators from being able to regulate the work as they will not know which drivers are going to be available. The vulnerable in our society are more reliant on the taxi trades and will therefore be adversely impacted.</p> <p>The removal of the company name will not increase the amount of work for the trade overall, all it will do is improve the chances of those that decide to use more than one operator. A reduction or perceived reduction in the safety element of the policy is more likely to reduce the overall number of journeys for the trade.</p> <p>Working for more than one operator is likely to increase the distraction of the driver as they will have multiple apps or devices to manage.</p> <p>Making it easier to work for more than one company at a time will allow drivers to be more selective on the jobs they accept. i.e. a short trip with company A comes in worth £5 as a longer trip with company B comes in worth £30 is likely to result in an operator having difficulty fulfilling the short</p>

	trips. It should also be noted the vulnerable and those with mobility issues are more likely to require these shorter journeys.
Should be allowed to work for multiple operators	<p>Drivers are free to choose which operator to apply for.</p> <p>Hackney carriages are not required to display door stickers, it is only PHVs that are required to display the door stickers.</p> <p>This is not going to increase the amount of work for the private hire industry.</p> <p>Any operator unable to fulfil a booking with their own vehicles can pass that booking to another operator, either one licensed by Southampton or any other licensing authority. The national companies that tend to be app based companies are more likely to pass the booking to one of their own operators licensed elsewhere.</p> <p>We will make Southampton a more attractive authority to licence with as an authority of convenience leading to an increased number of vehicles being licensed in Southampton but working in other towns and cities.</p> <p>A vehicle remains licensed all of the time regardless of the use it is put to, the policy is a choice of stickers so the vehicles will remain clearly identifiable as licensed vehicles.</p> <p>Suggestion to remove all signs and use a roundel similar to London, this will make unlawful plying for hire much easier and poses a risk to the public in making vehicle identification more difficult.</p>
Magnetic door signs	<p>A lot of modern cars use less steel in vehicle production preventing magnetics.</p> <p>Magnetics are an insecure load, they are prone to coming off during a journey, particularly on motorway trips, which is a hazard and could result in an accident.</p> <p>Magnetics would also make it very easy to steal and use on an unlicensed vehicle.</p> <p>Portsmouth licensing advise allowing magnetic signs is a trial and already has evidence of cars with no signs.</p>
No signs or stickers	<p>Reference to the Competitions Market Authority suggesting the proposal to have door stickers is contrary to the CMA guidance. The CMA's view is that competition should only be restricted by regulatory rules to the extent that is necessary to protect consumers. The purpose of the stickers is to protect the public and in particular the vulnerable.</p> <p>Suggestion the stickers attract damage and theft. On a few occasions we have been advised by the police thieves are targeting taxis, however it is a legal requirement to have a plate so the vehicle will still be identifiable as a taxi but not so clearly.</p>

	<p>Making a vehicle easily identifiable as a Southampton licensed vehicle supports the safety aspect of the policy. Customers will know these cars have a high standard, with cleaner engines, taxi cameras, thorough testing regime and more.</p> <p>Comments are made the signs are just advertising for the city and this is another benefit, the taxi trades are often the first contact visitors have and first impressions have a lasting impact. The better that first interaction is the better the impression and these are often people who will attract more business and visitors to the city, improving the opportunity for all.</p>
<p>Customers given other details/Do not notice stickers</p>	<p>Not all companies have an app, the local companies that do have an app also operate a traditional call centre, albeit some have some levels of automation. The national companies tend to be purely app based. This means not all customers receive details of the driver and vehicle coming for them. Certain locations making bookings for their customers, such as hotels, will not always be sending details of the vehicle and driver, making the vehicle identification important.</p>
<p>Other comments on vehicle signage</p>	<p>Restricted vehicles are predominantly chauffeur work carried out by way if a contract rather than the traditional private hire of making a phone call to an operator. The vehicles have to be high spec and are predominantly high spec Mercedes. They carry out a lot of MOD and top business contracts with very little public safety risk. The only other vehicles are a small number of novelty hire vehicles, these are often unique vehicles used very rarely as private hire and the risks are minimal. The proprietor of a restricted vehicle can ask for an exemption from the need for stickers.</p> <p>Operators will naturally wish to fulfil a job with one of their own vehicles but are able to pass the booking to another operator to ensure the customer receives a service and is not left stranded.</p> <p>The legislation was applied and a change of policy was adopted by the committee to allow a more modern means of communication be used on the door sticker instead of a traditional phone number.</p> <p>The licensing policy is about public safety, the benefits of setting these standards is to improve customer confidence which should result in increased use of Southampton licensed vehicles in our city.</p>
<p>More clarification on door stickers (Under other comments)</p>	<p>The legislation allows the licensing authority to apply conditions as it sees fit. Conditions cannot go against other legislation. A condition for door signs in either option is lawful</p> <p>Licensed vehicles, unlike a normal private car, are able to travel to nearly any location at any time of the day or night and not raise suspicion, making it an</p>

	ideal vehicle for criminal activity. For this reason, it is important they are clearly identifiable, and licences are only granted to those worthy.
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