

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE
BY DEPUTY J.M. MAÇON OF ST. SAVIOUR
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 19th JANUARY 2016**

Question

“Given the recent strike action taken by taxi drivers, can the Minister explain what further discussions have taken place with the Taxi Drivers Association, give an update on the situation and explain what and when changes to policy are to be implemented?”

Answer

Comprehensive discussions were held with the Jersey Taxi Drivers Association (JTDA), Jersey Cab Drivers Association (JCDA), their members and company owners and other industry representatives, as well as the public, during the consultation for and the development of the Taxi Regulatory Review ‘Green’ and ‘White’ papers (to which over 700 industry and public responses were received). Since being appointed, I have also personally held meetings with industry representatives on the following dates:

Ministerial Taxi Meetings		Discussion Type
Call a Cab	18 December 2014	Exploratory
Taxi rank visit with JDTA	08 January 2015	Exploratory
Taxi rank visit with JTDA	12 January 2015	Exploratory
Liberty Cabs and Citicabs	13 January 2015	Exploratory
Red Cabs and App Designer	13 January 2015	Exploratory
Luxicabs	27 January 2015	Exploratory
Private Hire Taxi-Cab Drivers	29 January 2015	Exploratory
Non JTDA Rank Drivers Meeting	12 February 2015	Exploratory
JTDA	16 February 2015	Exploratory
JCDA	16 February 2015	Exploratory
ECabs	25 February 2015	Exploratory
Domino Cabs	25 February 2015	Exploratory
Non JTDA Rank Drivers Meeting	25 February 2015	Exploratory
Non JTDA Rank Drivers Meeting	27 February 2015	Exploratory
JTDA (request from JTDA for increase in tariffs for 2016)	28 July 2015	Tariff request
Presentation to taxi industry representatives	28 September 2015	Presentation
Jersey Disability Partnership	12 October 2015	Consultative
Yellow Cabs	15 October 2015	Consultative
JTDA	19 October 2015	Consultative
CitiCabs	04 November 2015	Consultative
Joint Taxi-Cab Working Party	10 December 2015	Consultative
Luxicabs	07 January 2016	Consultative
JTDA and representative of non JDTA rank drivers meeting at Chief Minister’s Office	08 January 2016	Consultative

Subsequent to announcing our plans in September 2015, we have received numerous contacts from the industry expressing wide and divergent views, covering the entire spectrum of opinion from extremely supportive to denying any need for change.

The main concerns received related to how the transition from the current situation of strict quantitative control (where government decides how many taxis can operate) to more customer focused qualitative requirements could be achieved. To provide the sector with the freedom to improve productivity to better meet peak demand and modernise the quality of the service. Thus, at the launch of our proposals we invited discussion as to how best to achieve the technical aspects of the changes and requested that interested industry representatives submit their own suggestions.

To allow these concerns to be explored, following a series of industry wide meetings organised by the JTDA and a representative of Private Hire, a taxi-cab sector 'Joint Working Party' was formed. We met with the group on 10th December 2015 to listen to their ideas. As would be expected, the proposed changes to restrictions to access for on-street taxi ranks were of primary concern to the JTDA representatives.

The spirit of the meeting was positive and constructive with many common points of agreement, which all agreed would merit further discussion. However, before dates could be set for our next meeting the JTDA issued an ultimatum objecting to the easing of controls on new entrants to the industry who agree to provide and operate wheelchair accessible vehicles (part of the move from quantitative to qualitative regulation).

Evidently the JTDA were unhappy that protection of its members' position in the taxi-cab market could not be unconditionally guaranteed and decided to publically demonstrate their strength of feeling, without notice, through a day of action. Following on from this, a further meeting was chaired by the Chief Minister on 8th January 2016 with the JTDA. Again this was constructive and it was agreed that a further meeting shall be scheduled to be held in the first week of February.

The high-level strategic programme for Taxi Regulatory Reform remains as published below. At an operational level it may be necessary for some variation in order to secure further consumer benefits as a result of constructive industry engagement.

Key Dates

September
15

Taxi-cab
Regulation
announcement

March
16

Wheel chair
vehicles access
rank

Bookable rank taxis

New driver's
enhanced
requirements

Children's booster
seats

July
16

Simple universal
tariff introduced

Optional booking
fee introduced for
cabs

Disciplinary system
updated

Recognisable
branding for taxis
introduced

Minimum taxi meter
standard introduced

All PSV driver
enhanced standards
introduced

Taxi marshals paid
via licence fees

Oct 16

All taxi-cabs 100%
bookable and
affiliated to
dispatch entity.

"Company"
standards and
records introduced

Authorised Meter
agents introduced

Jan 18

Electronic
payments in all
Taxi-cabs

Jan 19

All rank taxis
wheelchair
accessible

All Taxis
prescribed
Colour(s)