



TAXI COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA, INC.

MEDIA STATEMENT

Attention: News Editor/ Chief of Staff

TAXI INDUSTRY BACKS SMALL CHARTER VEHICLE REFORMS

The Taxi Council of Western Australia (TCWA) supports the Government's move to tighten up the licensing, standards and operations of Small Charter Vehicles.

The taxi industry has long advocated the need for Government to step in and clearly distinguish the taxi and small charter vehicle services.

The taxi industry has previously called on Government to intervene and stop the unfair and illegal practices of some charter operators. The TCWA is continually reporting incidents of charter vehicle operators misleading the public, operating outside their licence conditions and jeopardising the viability of taxi services that are so vital to the community, particularly the elderly and those transport disadvantaged.

The TCWA is very pleased that this Government has taken action to address these problems. Council Chairman, Kevin Foley said "The Minister's proposed changes are welcomed by the taxi industry and they will go a long way towards creating a fairer playing field between taxi and charter vehicle services. It is good news for the public as increased standards and enforcement will ensure that high standards of service and safety are maintained".

Mr Foley stressed that the Government should not consider the suggestion from the Small Charter Vehicle Association to place vehicle restrictions on taxis. He said, "some taxi operators choose to provide upmarket Statesman and Fairlane taxi vehicles. Suggesting that these quality vehicles cannot be licensed as taxis is nonsense and would result in very strong backlash from the taxi industry and outcry from taxi passengers".

The Taxi Industry in Perth operates in a strict regulatory environment that is vital to maintaining high levels of vehicle and driver standards, safety and service. The public have a right to expect other transport providers to also adhere to service and safety standards.

TCWA CEO, Joanna Ammon, said that the taxi industry is the only public transport provider not subsidised by Government. "The taxi industry pays it's own way", Ms Ammon said. "Unlike buses and trains and small charter vehicles, fees and charges imposed on taxi operators generate revenue to sustain the regulatory environment, taxi standards and service. It is therefore reasonable that the Government charge Charter Operators a licence fee that will recover their licensing and enforcement costs".

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