

**Transport Committee – 8 July 2015****Transcript of Agenda Item 7 – Taxi and Private Hire Services in London**

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Thank you very much for coming. We have Garrett Emmerson, who is the Chief Operating Officer of Surface Transport at TfL. Thank you for coming. We have Leon Daniels, Managing Director of Surface Transport for TfL, whom we have seen more often in the context of buses but welcome again. In a moment, Isabel Dedring, Deputy Mayor for Transport, will be coming back to join us. We can probably kick off while we are waiting for Isabel to come back.

This is our follow-up session, as you are aware. We published our report on taxi and private hire, *Future Proof*, in December last year and so that has certainly been around for a long time and other public debate and controversy about this area. We would like to hear from you at this stage an update on how you are getting on with developing a strategy for the long-term future of the taxi and private hire trades in London, which was one of the key requests that this Committee made of TfL.

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** It might be just appropriate to say that of the 19 recommendations in the report, 13 of them are or were planned and so we are able to report on the progress for that. One of the recommendations is a matter for the Law Commission and of course the Committee's support for the changes that are recommended by the Law Commission is, clearly, very welcome.

However, your question specifically was about the long-term strategy for the taxi and private hire trade against the context of a rapidly changing environment, especially to do with technology. It would be fair to say that there is so much change taking place in the industry at the moment that we are certainly have to get our minds around what this longer-term strategy should be. Of course, when progress is faster than the industry is able to absorb it, then we have to think very carefully about going downstream even further into what that might be. It is being formulated.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** It was one of our key requests that TfL did try to do some thinking and upgrade its response to the winds of change coming in on the industry. When will be seeing your initial draft taxi and private hire strategy? What stage are you at?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** You are seeing a lot of evidence of action in that regard. You will hear later about some of the extensive engagement and conversation that is now going on with both of the trades around what the future should be through the work that Isabel [Dedring], I am sure, will speak about that she is leading on. You have seen the private hire regulations initial consultation that has come out that asks a load of wide-ranging questions about what the regulations should be for private hire. You have seen the consultation that is ongoing on credit card acceptance in the taxi trade. You have seen engagement around the future requirements for vehicle standards in terms of the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ), taxi age limits and so on.

There is an awful lot of work going on that is formulating various aspects of that strategy, but it is probably too early to bring it all together into some sort of document and to say, "Here is the vision in the future". As Leon says, we are still working through a lot of those aspects of what should be in that strategy.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** When do you think you might be able to pull some of that together? To some extent, it seems to be going a little bit detail-to-macro rather than you having some kind of overview vision for what you want to see for London and for Londoners in the future. When are you going to be publishing something that says, "This is our picture and this is what we want to achieve for London"? When will we see that? Are we going to see it? Are we going to have one?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** It depends at what level you look at that because obviously, as we have said previously, at the highest level, at the macro level, the Mayor's Transport Strategy does indeed set out exactly that. We have stated and the Mayor has stated on a number of occasions around the vision for the trade --

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Sorry. Is TfL going to be publishing, within the next year, say, a strategy for the long-term future of taxi and private hire trades, yes or no? Leon?

**Isabel Deding (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** Shall I have a go?

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** You are being dumped on here, Isabel, if you would like to answer for our colleagues who are unable to answer.

**Isabel Deding (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** I could have a stab at it. As far as I am aware, nobody is producing such a thing and I will explain why, but it is easily done and we can all agree here that we should do it. Where Garrett and Leon [Daniels] and I got to was that we wanted to focus on --

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** There is not going to be --

**Isabel Deding (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** Hold on a second. Let me finish. I am trying to be open and honest and so let me see if I can finish my sentence here. We thought we would be better off focusing on doing the things that we need to do rather than producing a document. However, it is easily done to produce a document that encompasses all the things that are going on and more as they emerge. What we all agree is that we do not want a 200-page, boring document that nobody can get through but a summary of, "Here are the objectives that we are aiming for and, therefore, here is what we are doing", if that is a strategy, more like an action plan or something like that. That is easily agreed here.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** I do not see developing a vision and doing some of this work - which needs doing, obviously - as mutually exclusive. You are kind of implying that you cannot act and think --

**Isabel Deding (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** I am not saying that. I am merely describing an empirical state of affairs. That is the current state of play. However, I agree with you that it would be a good thing to do.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Are you not at some point planning to bring it together and to put together a document that says, "This is what we see as a good future for the taxi and private hire trade"?

**Isabel Deding (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** What I am saying is that I am happy to agree here that that is a good thing to do, subject to Garrett [Emmerson] and Leon [Daniels] being happy with that.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** In fact, the question that Caroline [Pidgeon MBE AM] asked Sir Peter Hendy [Commissioner, TfL] when he was here was:

*“You are committing that TfL will look to develop a strategy that will sit alongside all the other ... transport strategies and that will have a vision of where you want to see taxi and private hire in the future and what infrastructure and other support you need to do to support those industries?”*

Sir Peter Hendy said, “Yes”.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** I am certainly not saying anything in contradiction to that. What I am saying is that there is a lot of work going on towards developing that strategy. What we are not yet in a position to do is to write it --

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** When do you think we might see it, Garrett? I have given you a great big wide goal here and we are sitting here.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** We do not have a date. If you are wanting me to put a date by which we will publish a document, we do not yet have one.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** In this year? Next year?

**Isabel Dedring (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** Before the end of the year. I am sure we can agree that before the end of the year.

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** It is essential that it is done before the end of the year because as soon as we move into the new year we will be into a Mayoral election and a new Mayor’s Transport Strategy. We should have our one in play by the end of the year.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Given that we have already had a commitment that there will be one in February, it is poor --

**Darren Johnson AM:** It is sounding a bit *ad hoc*, to be polite.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** It is astonishing.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** It is very poor, actually. It sounds as though you have only just decided that you will do it. The Mayor’s Deputy Mayor for Transport has just pledged that we will have a document and Leon Daniels has just agreed that it will be delivered by the end of December and then that will be a very helpful thing. Leon, you said that of our 19 recommendations, 13 are in hand and make sense. What happened to the six? Are they the ones that you are not --

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** I am sorry if I misunderstood. I said that of the recommendations, 13 of them were already in train or were planned when the recommendations were made. I was not suggesting that we were doing only 13 of them.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** What is happening to the other six? Are they the ones that are a little bit delayed?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Without going through all the 19, in summary, we agree in whole or in substantial part with all of the recommendations.

They are acting on all of them, the one exception being the one that is directed towards the Government instead of us.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Which of the six though that Leon mentioned are not completely underway at the moment and are you intending to carry those --

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** They are all underway. No, they are all underway. What Leon said was that 13 of the 19 were underway before you even published your report.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Are you going to be implementing everything that you said, apart from the one directed to the Government?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Yes, as we have replied to you in response to your document.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Who is going to be responsible for ensuring that all of these are seen through? Where is the buck stopping?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** The buck always stops with me, but of course I am entirely supported by Garrett and his team in the delivery of this because Garrett is responsible for, amongst other things, the Taxi and Private Hire Directorate.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** It would be very helpful to have, if you do not mind, a written update going through each of the recommendations again and just saying where you are at with all of them.

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** I am very happy to do that.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** One of the ones that has been of particular interest to me - because, as you know, I did a rapporteurship on customer service in the other areas of TfL - was this whole area of the need to develop a complaints systems for taxi and private hire users, private hire in particular. What is TfL doing to make a complaints process for private hire passengers simple and available so that they can and should complain to TfL?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** We are going to put in place a straightforward hotline that private hire customers who wish to make a complaint will be able to use. That will come through to inside TfL and we will investigate those complaints.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Would there be other ways of contacting TfL? For every other transport system in London, there are multiple access points.

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Indeed. What I was trying to be clear about was that whilst of course you will always be able to contact us by email and through the internet and so on, a proper --

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Yes, but people need to know that there are clear portals for complaints about private hire.

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Indeed. Through our customer services, there will be all the usual ways of accessing TfL, including email, including on the internet and so on. What I was making clear though was that for a lot of people, speaking to a warm body on the end of the telephone is very welcome, and we are undertaking to make sure that there will be those warm bodies on the end of a telephone for people to be able to make complaints.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** What will you be doing to publicise the fact that people can make complaints to TfL about private hire?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Through all our avenues and we would propose that the number is obvious inside every private hire vehicle for customers to use.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Fantastic.

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** That of course requires the agreement of the --

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** That would be real progress because one of the things we felt, doing the work on this this year, is that there is a lack of a clear database of what customers are saying is going wrong, particularly within the private hire area. With taxis, it is very clear that you can complain to TfL and how to do it, but for private hire what we want is an evidence base of what is working and what is not. Would you be able therefore to use that data to help plan your service delivery and your regulatory functions?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Frankly, it would be of great value to be able to separate out the noise from the facts. The advantage of direct complaints into TfL is that we will be able to investigate those complaints and establish what the facts were and use all that evidence as part of shaping the regulations, shaping the development of it and so on.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Yes, we would welcome that because then we would also have a clear evidence base to move from. When will that be in place?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** We will have that by the end of the year as well.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** By the end of this year? OK. Not faster than that? It is not very difficult, is it?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** I am not sure I said that it would not be faster than that. I am saying that it would definitely be in place by the end of the year. There are one or two issues to go through to make sure that it works properly, make sure that it does not fall over on its first day and so on. We want to make sure that it works properly, but by the end of the year is perfectly achievable.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** What will you do for people who have had a ride in a taxi that is licensed outside of London? Increasingly, that does seem to be happening.

**Isabel Deding (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** Do you mean minicabs or ...?

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Private hire, I mean.

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** We are talking about people who might complain to us about a vehicle that is not licensed by us?

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Yes, but have picked them up in London.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** In the first instance, the right thing to do would be to refer it to the licensing authority that they were licensed by. If, on the other hand, it is not a licensed vehicle, then that is a matter of enforcement that we would very much be looking to pick up.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** You would have a way of treating --

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** You would have to establish the facts of the case first.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Yes. That was helpful. Let us move on.

**Richard Tracey AM:** We would like a bit more detail about how you envisage the private hire regulation working. To start with, what advice has TfL given the Mayor in regards to his decision to press for a cap on private hire licences?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** If I understand the question, our view is that we have seen a significant growth in the number of applications and granted decisions for private hire drivers growing at a rate that is faster than we have ever seen in our history. We have taken the view that were all those driver licence applications to be translated into vehicles on the street - which is not necessarily a direct correlation but could be - the situation could easily be that long before the market was saturated with too many private hire vehicles and the streets would be, and there would be an unacceptable contribution to congestion and to air quality and so on.

We realise, of course, that we have no powers to cap the number of drivers, vehicles or operators for taxi or private hire. It seems only reasonable that we should seek to get those powers so that they could be deployed if required. It does require primary legislation and we have jointly, through the Mayor, made it very clear to the DfT that we would like those powers because only if we have them are we able to even consider what the level of capping should be, what the numbers should be and which categories of what should be capped. It does seem to us that without those powers, the growth of any of these markets, including the private hire market, could continue ad infinitum and, at the end of the day, it would be very bad for London if the streets were clogged and we could not go anywhere.

**Richard Tracey AM:** Yes. Are these meetings with the Government, the DfT and presumably the Home Office going ahead urgently? How many meetings have been held?

**Isabel Dedring (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** Yes. It has been discussed between the Mayor and various Secretaries of State, the Chancellor, etc. There are very active discussions underway. I have to say that central Government is not feeling warm and fuzzy about this and so it needs more political pressure. We are putting on all the pressure we can apply, making the case, but it would certainly not hurt for others to be making the case as well because, ever since the Mayor made the announcement about seeking a cap on private hire vehicles, there has been a vast amount of lobbying that I have seen of MPs and of Ministers against that proposal but there has been very little lobbying for it. The Government is already very tentative about even

considering this, which we are trying to change, but we need more support in terms of making the case, if people are minded to do that.

**Richard Tracey AM:** We have some figures: there are 78,690 of these private hire vehicles.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** No, there are now 82,500.

**Richard Tracey AM:** It has gone up again?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** It is growing by about 500 a week.

**Richard Tracey AM:** We have a lot of help coming from behind you.

**Isabel Deding (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** That is exactly why we have asked for the cap, for that exact reason. We are right there with you.

**Richard Tracey AM:** Yes, it is going up at a very great rate. What number of drivers and/or vehicles do you believe is about right, then?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** We are currently asking our colleagues in planning to carry out some surveys as to what the mix of traffic currently is. This is information that we collect from time to time, but of course this growth in the number of private hire drivers has taken place relatively recently, so we need to get the accurate, up-to-date position of the composition of traffic. As I said before, we believe there is a correlation between the number of the licensed drivers and the number of vehicles in use. That is not necessarily the case because one of the features of the trade is that it is possible to be a licensed driver and work for an hour a week. We need to prove that the correlation between the number of drivers and the number of vehicles is true. We believe it is, but we need to prove that. Once we have an accurate assessment of the current traffic mix, it would allow us to come to a view about what the number for the cap could be.

**Richard Tracey AM:** Would the Mayor and TfL be seeking a reduction of the existing numbers of licensees?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** I do not think we are in a position to make that view, I am afraid. We would have to wait because, as I say, we know the number of licensed drivers and vehicles. We need to know the number of vehicles that are in use on the street by time and by day.

**Richard Tracey AM:** Yes.

**Isabel Deding (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** It goes back to the political will point, too, because it is not a popular measure in central Government. Even trying to get a cap on where we are at the moment will be extremely difficult, in my assessment. This is despite our best efforts. The Mayor has had, as I said, extensive discussions already on the subject and has very strong views on the subject, but you are making the political hurdle even greater if you are trying to ratchet the number down, whatever we all might think about that, but that is the political reality.

**Richard Tracey AM:** Did you say earlier, Isabel, that a number of MPs are opposing the idea?

**Isabel Dedring (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** No, what we are seeing is a lot of correspondence in from MPs, who are getting a lot of correspondence in from private hire vehicle drivers and operators. We have had direct correspondence as well, and we are getting correspondence from Ministers, but from private hire vehicle operators and drivers.

**Richard Tracey AM:** Moving on to the congestion elements, what is the impact of growing private hire numbers on traffic congestion levels? What is your assessment there?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** I have to refer you to the answer I gave a moment ago: we are currently carrying that out. There is no doubt that traffic speeds in London are worsening and there is no doubt there is a significant increase in congestion, much of which can be attributed to increased interventions in the network, including construction sites, developments and of course increased economic activity. There is increased congestion; everybody can see that. We will need to know to what extent the private hire trade is contributing to that.

**Richard Tracey AM:** Here is a grenade I am going to throw into the middle. Has the Mayor or TfL considered making private hire vehicles subject to the Congestion Charge?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** It was certainly something that was considered at the time the Congestion Charge was brought in and it was, as I understand it, a decision at the time not to charge them. I am not aware that that has been reviewed or whether it should be reviewed.

**Richard Tracey AM:** It should be reviewed, perhaps?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Are you suggesting it should?

**Richard Tracey AM:** Clearly, you have a problem with this vast growing number of these.

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** It is certainly one of the elements that could be considered, for sure.

**Richard Tracey AM:** You are not actively considering it at the moment?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** What we are saying is that we are looking to prove the extent to which the increased number of private hire driver licences being granted is contributing to congestion. Because congestion in London is worsening for a number of reasons, if we discover that private hire vehicles are a material contribution to that, then changing the basis may well have to be something that can be done, but --

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Without prejudging any of that, there are two facts I would probably just throw into it. Historically - and whether this is still true, this work will find out - the number of private hire vehicles inside the Congestion Charging Zone is typically a lot lower than the number of taxis, for instance. It is generally around -

[Interruption from the public gallery]



**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Sorry, can the audience just bear with us? We are trying to ask some questions here. We want to hear the answers and we cannot. Can I just ask you to be quiet, please? We do not want to have to clear the hall. We would like you to hear the answers. Even if you are not happy with them, we would like you to hear the answers.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Historically - and the data will support that from our group planning colleagues - the numbers have been about a third of the numbers of taxis operating in central London during the Congestion Charge times. Whether that is still the case is what this work is going to find out.

The second point I would make is the evidence that I have seen, certainly anecdotally, is that the time when increased private hire vehicles in central London are causing the most additional congestion is actually in the evenings around nightclubs and those sorts of locations, where there is potential demand for hire - which I am sure the audience will be well familiar with - where I have seen evidence of them causing congestion, but of course that is not a time when the Congestion Charging Zone operates.

[Interruption from the public gallery]

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Sorry, we cannot hear. Audience, we cannot hear these guests if you banter in the background. I know you feel very emotional about this. We understand that, but we do need to hear what they have to say. It has to go on the record.

**Victoria Borwick AM MP:** We are having difficulty hearing.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Our colleagues here are not loud enough, from our point of view.

**Victoria Borwick AM MP:** If I could just ask for something to be repeated because I did not hear it?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** If I could just conclude by saying that we have to get this evidence because any such change would have to be consulted upon and we would have to have the evidence to prove in the consultation that it was the right thing to do.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Yes, fine. We are happy with that.

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** Totally. There has been an increased number of private hires. What is driving this? Is it the sudden realisation that this is the best career in the world? What is driving this exponential growth? I see it as a doctor who sees people who come for medicals for these things, and I want to know what the reasons are. Why are people choosing to apply for licences?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** I have to say that I do not think there is a question on the form that asks applicants why they have chosen to get a licence.

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** I am asking you the question and I will tell you what the answer is or what I think the answer is.

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** We do not know, but there is no doubt that one element is that the population of London is growing, there is increased economic activity, there are more --

**Dr Onkar Sahota AM:** They are all choosing to become private hire --

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** There are nine more residents in this city every hour. The London economy is growing not just during the day; it is growing during the evening and at night, and people are demanding the ability to travel in the way in which they want to travel more and more during the day, in the evening and at night. One of the reasons almost certainly will be the increase in population and the increased economic activity.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Another of the likely causes is that the advent of the app-based and technology-based operators is allowing much more flexible working patterns and we certainly see a lot of evidence that instead of, for instance, private hire operators looking for drivers to sign up for shifts of whatever duration and so on, using technology-based apps and so on, it is possible just to take one or two jobs a day and work on a very part-time basis. It may be that you are seeing a very much larger number of drivers and a large number of vehicles, but not necessarily providing a proportionately greater number of trips, actually doing a very small amount of work.

[Interruption from the public gallery]

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Please, audience, let us get on with this.

**Victoria Borwick AM MP:** Could I just go back because I did not hear some of your previous answers? You were talking about the investigation and the range of things it was going to cover. Could you just repeat that again because it is quite difficult sometimes to hear, just for the reassurance of what you are going to ascertain?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** The point I was making earlier about the Congestion Charging Zone?

**Victoria Borwick AM MP:** Yes.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** The point I was making earlier about the Congestion Charging Zone is that historically - and the data now needs to be reviewed and needs to be updated - the data suggested that there was only around a third of the number of private hire vehicles in the central London Congestion Charging Zone than there were compared to taxis during the times that the charge applied.

**Victoria Borwick AM MP:** That is historical data, yes.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Whether that is still the case or not, we do not know, and that is one of the things we would have to find out and would be material.

**Victoria Borwick AM MP:** In this review you are going to do, you are going to check the number of vehicles inside?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Yes.

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** We are surveying now to get the exact composition of the categories of traffic as it is now.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** The second point I was making was that my own observations around when and where increased numbers of private hire vehicles are causing congestion in central London has often been in the evenings and at night time, around nightclubs and potential sources of revenue and so on, that have certainly been disruptive to the taxi trade and blocking up ranks and so on and so forth. We have seen that. That is why we are acting with operations like Operation Neon to try to deal with that.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** We are going to be asking about that.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Of course that is at a time when the Congestion Charge is not in operation anyway and so taking the Congestion Charge benefit away would be of no material effect.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Have you finished, Dick?

**Richard Tracey AM:** No, there is the other interesting bit that we ought to just explore, which is the matter of licences, vehicles and insurance.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Victoria was going to pick those questions up on the regulatory issues.

**Victoria Borwick AM MP:** As Dick has very happily articulated, perhaps you could give us an update because it is one of our concerns. We are talking about the growth and we really wanted to ask you about what you are doing about the link between the driver, the vehicle, the operator, licences, insurance and so forth and how you are going to make that all very clear for people.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** All of that is very much the subject of the regulations review and the consultation that has just concluded. We have had somewhere north of 4,000 responses to that. We are currently going through them. I spent the whole of yesterday afternoon locked in a room reviewing where we were and what comments have been made. I can tell you there are a lot of very in-depth and very thoughtful consultation responses from all aspects of both trades that we are working through. I am aiming to meet the Deputy Mayor for Transport later this week to talk her through our first thoughts on that, and included within that are a number of recommendations, suggestions and proposals from both trades around how we might go about improving the requirements we have around insurance, around vehicle notification, around operating notification and the links between all of those.

**Victoria Borwick AM MP:** When we are overlaying the work that you are doing on the congestion on the effect on air quality and the general congestion in London, we can then overlay that, hopefully, against the responses you are getting here and have therefore a much more in-depth picture of what is happening at parts of the day, and that will validate - or not - your views, presumably. One of the concerns is that people are getting into private hire vehicles and are not as well-trained, as insured, as skilled or as capable as the black-taxi drivers, who obviously are the cream of the crop and the gold standard.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Yes, absolutely. I appreciate that is one of the concerns. The Mayor has already set out his desire to see an enhanced topographical test requirement and use of English included in that requirement. That is something we are actively progressing and we will look to be launching soon, potentially in advance of the revision of the full-scale regulations. That is one aspect of the work we are doing.

**Victoria Borwick AM MP:** One of the things we have seen everywhere is an increase of technology, apps and whatever, but is there some way of knowing that every single person who is driving a private hire vehicle has the appropriate insurance? At the moment, there is this great mistrust. It is not something I have an answer to. What I am genuinely saying is that there is this feeling out there, which may be absolutely valid, that we are not talking about a level playing field here, and that is one of the concerns around.

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** What we want and what we are pressing for is the ability for TfL as the regulator to be able to check online instantly the validity of insurance for road users, particularly the ones that we are talking about. The current situation is that we do check the validity of insurance. In the case of a black taxi, of course, an insurance certificate is posted in the vehicle.

In the case of private hire, because these vehicles are cars, they may only be used as private vehicles for some of their time and it is perfectly within the law to switch on and off the hire-and-reward insurance element of ordinary insurance, and some of the fleet operators do that extensively. The hire-and-reward insurance is switched on and off only when the vehicle is being used as a private hire vehicle. The paper trail that follows those is quite difficult, but our enforcement process works in the way of visiting an operator and checking the days on which those vehicles were used as private hire vehicles, because there are bookings live on the system, and making sure that the insurance is valid at the time and on the date in question. This is quite a laborious way of checking and it would be fair to say that all the way up the chain, including to the insurance companies and the agencies that supervise insurance, it is hard work to do and we would like to be checking thousands more.

The best way to do that would be just like the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency now has with road tax and you no longer need to have a tax disc because, through automatic number plate recognition and through online checking, you can prove whether a vehicle is taxed or not instantaneously. We are pressing very hard with all of the agencies we can approach that we would like the same arrangement for insurance so that insurance compliance could be checked with 100% accuracy and in immediate time, whereas currently it only works with a lower level of accuracy because it is such a hopeless, manually driven system, where it is perfectly possible, I can assure you, to get contradictory answers from the same insurance company on the same day. We would want to be able to check a larger number of people as well as with a higher degree of trust in the answers.

**Victoria Borwick AM MP:** Theoretically, one could use the cameras to check that the people going past the cameras in London had the right insurance?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** You could, in the same way that you can check that they have valid road tax.

**Victoria Borwick AM MP:** As it is now being checked that the cars coming through have a valid licence, presumably their insurance data could also be checked?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** To be clear, the police can check the existence of insurance. We need to check that the hire-and-reward insurance is valid at the time and that subtlety is not yet available.

**Victoria Borwick AM MP:** I used the word 'insurance' in its loosest sense, but you could check the validity of their driving materials and licence?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Yes. As I say, we would like to get to a position where we can check the validity of hire and reward insurance in real time.

**Isabel Dedring (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** It is worth saying that the way that information is collected by the insurance industry means that we cannot do it at the moment. Sorry, I am not totally clear on this point, but either Garrett or Leon can comment.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Yes. The challenge in this is not so much around the technology of checking the registrations and so on. It is actually around the accuracy and verifying the accuracy of the data within the insurance industry around the hire-and-reward element of insurance.

**Isabel Dedring (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** It is basically not systematically collected and so, when you go to check it, there is no database that you can check it against. We have started talking to whoever those guys are that run this insurance database to say, "Can we systematically collect the hire-and-reward insurance information?" Otherwise, you are not checking it against anything. It is empty; the database is empty.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** To be fair, we are receiving a very positive and warm welcome. It is obviously in the insurance industry's interests for this to happen as well and so we would be very hopeful of getting to a position. I cannot give you a date by when --

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** It would be a big step forward, yes.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** -- but we are pushing very hard to do this as soon as possible.

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** To answer the original question, it would give the users of private hire vehicles specifically greater trust in the existence of hire-and-reward insurance if they chose to use it.

**Victoria Borwick AM MP:** My final question is really the advantage of the traditional black taxis. Obviously, it has the facilities for taking people in wheelchairs, people with prams and people with any mobility issues, and I still feel that it is very important that we push that as our absolute gold standard. That again, I feel, is a problem with private hire vehicles and other options because we should be saying to people, "We have the gold standard here in London and we have a fully accessible black taxi transport fleet for the disabled".

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** You will hear me, you will hear us and you will hear the Mayor say that at every opportunity.

**Victoria Borwick AM MP:** Thank you very much.

**Murad Qureshi AM:** On the regulation, just one thing: I was not on the Transport Committee last year and, when I was reading through it last night, there was just one area which I felt we needed to cover, which is fare regulation, because the whole sector is very sensitive to that. I just wondered whether you thought there was a case to extend the London Cab Order 1934 to cover possibly private hire vehicles as well.

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** The law explicitly made the distinction that in London licensed black taxi fares were regulated and explicitly said that private hire fares were not. I do not think that it would be possible to make that --

**Murad Qureshi AM:** I say that because one thing people want is certainty of price and that, when you get in a cab, you know the fares. What I see in a lot of disputes in private hire vehicles is what the fare was agreed before and after and subsequently.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** In that regard, there are a lot of questions and a lot of comments in terms of the regulations review around the particulars to be prescribed at the time a booking is taken and what the operator should or should not do. At the moment, the regulations only require an operator to give an estimate or a quote if requested; they do not mandate an operator to provide a quote or a fixed quote or anything like that. There are a number of questions around what could or should be prescribed in regulations that fall short of prescribing the fares, which I do not think there should be any intention to get involved in. We could require more certainty in the future.

**Murad Qureshi AM:** I have a funny feeling that a lot of the complaints will be in that area, agreed prices and whatnot. I know this year it was frozen and we have it based on a cost index and other issues. Do we not need to look at that again?

Here is an example: at the moment, cabbies do not get an additional charge for carrying luggage. They are doing us a favour by taking a lot of luggage off the transport system that the transport system cannot handle. You go to somewhere like Hammersmith, Earls Court or Paddington Station and some of the suitcases are so huge that you often wonder if there is someone inside them, but giving an allowance on that front to just take those things off the system would make life a lot easier. It would be interesting to see how Crossrail affects that because it is not just the movement of people. We have also the movement of a lot of luggage. Is that something that is worth putting in the regulations?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** The way to answer that is to say that the licensed black taxi fares have shifted each year based on a formula that has been established since 1981. That has been with us for some considerable time and it follows a particular inflationary model. It is sort of taxi drivers' inflation and so it is general RPI, but the cost of cabs, cab insurance and fuel and so on. It is often said to us that even though that formula has worked since 1981, the fares have reached a place where they are no longer attractive for users.

Clearly, the right thing for us to do and the thing that we are doing is to engage with the taxi trade and solicit views about the fares. That would mean disengaging from the formula that has worked since 1981, but maybe the cumulative effect of that formula over time has made some of the fares unattractive. It may be that the change in the marketplace with other forms of transport being available, the widespread use of contactless payment and more walking and cycling - who knows - that a recasting of the fares arrangements might be overdue and we are very happy to engage with the trade to talk about that.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** OK, thank you for that. Victoria [Borwick MP AM] raised the issue of the lack of a strong link on private hire between the licensed identity of the driver, the licensed identity of the car and an operator that is licensed. We all went to the 7/7 memorial service yesterday and we have been very security-minded in this Chamber since 9/11. We know that nightclubs can be terrorist targets. We have seen a bombing at Glasgow and so we know that airports are obviously a terrorist target.

It does worry me that we see minicabs hanging around some areas where there are potentially issues when in fact the law, as I understand it at the moment and correct me if I am wrong, Leon, is that you can buy a licensed private hire vehicle with the badges on even if you are not a licensed private hire driver or licensed operator. That minicab does not lose its licence status when it changes hands and so you could potentially buy one of these vehicles and do something pretty dangerous with it because there is not that strength of link between, "I am a licence-checked driver and this is my vehicle". Have you ever looked at the security implications?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** There are two slightly different things here. The law prescribes and requires that the licensing of operators, drivers and vehicles is done separately and so, yes, you can have a licensed vehicle separately. You can licence a vehicle separately to licensing a driver or becoming a licensed driver. However, what you cannot do is take a legitimate booking without having it being through a licensed operator with a licensed driver and a licensed vehicle.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Yes, I know. Garrett, the question was more about security. A determined bomber could buy a licensed minicab and go away and do some damage with it.

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Indeed, and people should not regard --

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** It would look legal to the police officer walking down the street thinking, "Well, they are earning a living. We will leave them be".

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** A determined bomber could buy a fully liveried ambulance with blue lights on eBay for £1,500.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** OK. You have not had notice of this question, but maybe there is an issue to be looked at as to whether or not there are any security implications because it is the case that minicabs are hanging around either to pick up or for other purposes, as we will hear later. It does seem to me to be a bit of a risk area that so many vehicles are allowed to hang around in sensitive security locations when we are not 100% sure about the identity of the drivers. I will put it to you to perhaps think about that and come back to us on it.

**Isabel Deding (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** The short answer is that the regulations review has picked up this point about the connection between these three things.

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** It will be, yes.

**Isabel Deding (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** We are looking to address this through the regulations review and it is definitely something that certainly Garrett and I have discussed. This issue about how you connect these different bits together so that the drivers are attached to operators and the vehicle issue is tackled as well. That is one of the proposals we are looking at.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** I had a very quick question just on the previous discussion about insurance. Are you considering the option that you could require minicab companies to have to have fleet insurance? That would mean that all the vehicles operating under their names would have to be insured and they would have comprehensive fleet insurance. Then we would have the confidence that all their vehicles are insured.

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** It is the case, of course, that many of the fleet operators do have fleet insurance and that is how they have security in the knowledge that all their drivers are insured, but a very high number of private hire drivers are one-man operators and are not members of fleets. Therefore, fleet insurance works as far as it goes for fleets, but a very large number of private hire drivers are not in a fleet.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Could you not require that of all operators, whether they operate from a minicab office or an online portal or whatever, that they have to require that everyone driving is part of their fleet insurance? That would guarantee that every vehicle is fully insured.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** What you are suggesting is an operator would be required to insure another person's vehicle?

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** All the cars. If they are operating through their name, fleet insurance is something you should be considering.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** They are operating as a licensed private hire operator, but they are not operating the vehicle on the road, the driver of the vehicle, the keeper of the vehicle or whatever. In theory, you could consider any model, but that is a pretty fundamental change to the model of private hire car operation that we have.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** You are considering everything at the moment.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** It is not something that would be within our ability to alter in terms of the regulations. We would have to look at them.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** I would like you to look at it. You are not understanding what I am saying. If I run a minicab company online or from an office and I have people and either I own the fleet of cars or they individually do, I should have to, in order to have a licence, have comprehensive insurance for all those vehicles so that every passenger travelling there knows there is full insurance on the vehicle they are in. Is that not something you can consider?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** We are all on the same page. We all want all the vehicles to be licensed and insured and we will definitely take on board your suggestion.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** You will consider that as part of this?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** We will take on board your suggestion. We are all working to the same end, which is to make sure that all licensed vehicles are insured at all times when they are carrying passengers.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** You will consider that?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** We will.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Thank you. Good. Before I start my area of questions, I just want to be very clear that I am not - and I think other Members of this Committee and others perhaps in the



gallery here are not - against technology, against apps or against competition. The key issue is that we want a level playing field and we want people and different companies to be obeying the regulations that you put in place.

I am going to try to say their name only once. I want to come on to the issue of Uber, which has reared its head, and there are many, many issues around that. In May, at Mayor's Question Time, I asked the Mayor a series of questions and he said that he would look at the allegations I have made and see whether they constitute sufficient grounds - he used the words 'for banning Uber' - for revoking their licence.

I would like to know when you expect to conclude your detailed investigation into Uber's business practice as agreed by the Mayor. You must have known we were going to ask questions on this. It cannot come as a surprise. Who is going to answer this one? Leon?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** We have continued to investigate all of the complaints and the operation of Uber and we have to separate out the noise from the facts. We have carried out a number of compliance checks, which have turned out to be satisfactory, and we continue in dialogue with them about their operation, about the information that we are told by others and we continue to find its operation to be legal.

The real question is not whether Uber complies with the regulations; it is whether the regulations are the right regulations for the current arrangements here in London. Uber complies with the regulations because, frankly, the regulations were written quite some time ago and with the way in which people are using these vehicles, the regulations are now not fit for purpose and they should be reviewed. There is a regulations review. Some of the things that were not foreseen when the Act was written in 1998 and when the regulations were written will have to be picked up in the regulations review.

Currently, Uber remains legal, as far as we are concerned. We continue to investigate complaints, we continue to carry out investigations and we continue to review their operation. We have no grounds at the present time to revoke their licence, but were there to be instances of such magnitude or such persistence that it was flouting the regulations and there was a case, then of course we would take action.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** It is interesting, what you are saying. Is there an audit trail of every single complaint you have had and how you have then taken action to investigate it? We are rather sceptical about this. You used the phrase that you 'continue in dialogue' with this company. I do not think you have dialogue with every other private hire operator to the same extent and that also in terms of the level playing field is a huge concern, but is there an audit trail of every complaint you have had and how you have investigated it and the outcome of that?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** To take your first point, the amount of contact we have with operators is entirely proportionate to the amount of noise going on in the market about their activities. There are a number of private hire operators with whom we have hardly any dialogue because, frankly, there is no noise in the marketplace about their activities.

I would imagine the Committee would consider us negligent if we had not been in touch with Uber in respect of things that have been reported to us or things that we had heard because people continue to press us and the Mayor continues to press us for answers to questions that are raised, not unreasonably. If Uber, for example, is in the press because it has been banned in Shanghai, people are asking us questions about what that means for London. In order to answer that question, we have to ask it what the situation was in Shanghai. It just is the way of things. I make no apology for the level of dialogue that we have with the organisation.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Surely you would ask the regulator in Shanghai rather than going to the company itself. It is a funny relationship.

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** There is no funny relationship. It is not unreasonable for the regulator to have dialogue with operators to find out the answers to questions that it may be being asked itself. In respect of the audit trail for complaints, we must again separate out the noise from the substance. If people have made a formal complaint to us about any private hire operator, there will be an audit about the action taken.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** In terms of the noise, if and the Deputy Mayor for Transport and the Mayor are hearing - as many of us on this Committee do all the time - issues raised with us via Twitter or whatever, are you looking at those or are you just thinking, "They are noise. It is not a formal complaint and so we will not deal with it"?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** No, we are.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Are you looking into all of those concerns? There is some very serious concerns that are raised. I appreciate sometimes they may not be applicable and it might be something from the United States, but there is an awful lot of stuff in there that is.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** That is certainly the point: an awful lot of what is raised in terms of noise is not actually in the UK.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** There is a lot that is applicable.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Just to take one specific issue - which is the issue that you maybe want to come on to, I do not know - of the alleged hacking of accounts, we have investigated all of the instances of that we have become aware of either directly by people reporting to us or by being aware of Twitter, of which there is not a great number in the UK, but we have investigated them and we have followed them up as far as we can with the individuals concerned and we have followed them up, obviously, with the company. You talk about us having regular contact with the company. You would surely expect us, would you not, to investigate, as part of our investigation of any complaint, to actually --

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Of course.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** -- talk to the company concerned to get its point of view as to what has gone on? That we routinely do. Yes, the answer is that we do thoroughly investigate. We talk to the company when appropriate. We talk to those individuals who may have been subject to being defrauded in that way when they want to talk to us. Frequently, they do not want to talk to us.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** OK, but if there is an audit trail and if there is a full, comprehensive record of all the complaints and you are maintaining that record, is it something perhaps that as a Committee we could have a look at?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** There is certainly a full record and we could make available any information that you wish. I am not saying that it is all

held in one place and it can just be produced on a spreadsheet tomorrow or something like that because it is in relation to --

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** It is not all held in one place?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** -- different activities, different types of complaint and so on and so forth that we will have investigated. We can certainly produce all of that information.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Isabel, you are the Deputy Mayor for Transport. You are hearing all these issues; you have seen our report. You cannot be happy with the state of affairs that you cannot instantly get a record of what is going on with this particular company and how they might need to take action against them.

**Isabel Deding (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** My own view is that we need to have a single place where all of these complaints are recorded and TfL's action that has been taken and what our position is, which people would not necessarily agree with, but at least we are clear what our position is on that. We have had some discussions around where that bit of paper has been produced, but it is at an aggregate level and there is not - as far as I know - a regular mechanism whereby something like that would be updated and held and maintained. It is a very reasonable question. I would not be best placed to answer it but that is the kind of thing one would reasonably expect to be in place.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Are you frustrated by some of the responses we have had this morning on this particular issue?

**Isabel Deding (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** I have a personal view on the subject, which I would rather not express.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** We would like to hear it. You have an important role here. The Mayor is clearly frustrated in some ways, I think.

**Isabel Deding (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** On Uber specifically, do you mean? The Mayor has been pretty clear on the subject. A lot of us share the same view in this room, which is that you have an organisation that is skating very close to the law. It appears to be sometimes skating over the edge of the law and then claws itself back so quickly that it is elusive and therefore difficult to take regulatory action.

That all goes to this issue about whether this operator is a fit and proper person. The individual infringements might not be sufficient but the collective impact of all of these actions does not feel right. That is the language that the Mayor has used on this subject. What we all need to do somehow to bring to this some kind of satisfactory conclusion is being clear about all of those things that people are alleging, how much of that is true or not and whether that tips the balance if you want to use the 'fit and proper' standard. That is the piece of legislation that tries to reflect this point about how it does not feel right. The case has been very powerfully made by a number of minicab operators who have been working in the London market for many years that if they did one-tenth of these things they would have been shut down years ago.

It is not for me to adjudicate on this. It is for TfL as the regulator. That is the question that we all need to answer. We need to have a better way of answering it. I think Garrett and Leon would agree with that in the sense that we have clearly not satisfactorily answered this question or we would not have all the swirling debate on this that we continue to have.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** I will just make another attempt to come in on this.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Garrett, before you come in, I just want to nail this one down because this is really crucial. In the same way that we asked for a really clear audit trail of people coming to make a complaint and that complaint being dealt with by the Mayor as the Chair of TfL and TfL as the regulator. The senior officers of the regulator are basically telling us that they ring people up and have a chat with them when there is a regulatory issue. We are seeing no minutes of this. We are seeing no diary of what complaints have happened.

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** That is not what we said.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** When you have had a regulatory conversation, Leon, about a border being breached or not breached, do you have a record of your conversation and the outcome? If the picture that Isabel is painting is of an accumulation of pushing the margins, the fact of that picture needs to be captured, does it not?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** As I said before, every formal complaint that has been made by anybody is recorded, can be audited and can be made available. There are, of course, numerous conversations that take place on an ongoing basis between officers and others.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** There are three things that we are talking about here. We are not just talking about formal complaints. As a regulator you act as a regulator without necessarily having a formal complaint, you act on it because of some market knowledge or because of knowledge of your officers dealing in it. Do you not also consider that those interactions between you and this particular operator deserve to be captured properly so, in the public interest, we can all see what those interactions are about? We can see if there is a picture and we can see if TfL is carrying out its function as a regulator in a proper fashion.

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** You would find in any audit of the records that you would be satisfied TfL is discharging its obligations as a regulator. I agree that given the increased public interest in all of this then it is absolutely right that if it appears that over the passage of time whilst no transgressions on their own might be worthy of action but in aggregate many of them might be, then having that audit trail would be extremely valuable.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** That is one of the points we are making.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Does that mean that from now on you are going to be keeping a proper record of your conversations with all of your main regulated --

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** I promise you there are adequate records of all conversations that take place that are material. Frankly, there will be those conversations where somebody from TfL will ring and say, "We have just seen on social media this accusation. Have you seen it?" They will say, "No, we have not. Thank you for telling us. We will go and look", and that sort of stuff.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** A very simple example of that is that we had an accusation at about 5.55pm one evening that Uber was about to launch a

service called Uber Pop, which is unregulated ride-sharing, and it was going to be announced on the 6.30pm news on television. There was a very quick phone call made, "Yes, they are doing that in Sweden, not in the UK". That is the kind of conversation that Leon was referring to.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** The point is that it is in everybody's interests if all of those interactions are logged. Then TfL demonstrates whether it is doing its job properly.

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** We agree.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** You made - in a backhanded way - a good suggestion, Leon, which is that we should suggest to TfL that it has a full management audit of the regulator function as carried out by TfL. You have an internal audit programme or a management audit programme - I do not know who does it for TfL - but this would be an appropriate area for TfL to carry out an internal audit.

**Isabel Deding (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** That is not specific to any individual operator. That is a very good suggestion.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** No, it is the conduct of its regulatory function.

**Isabel Deding (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** Especially given the level of scrutiny on this. Not to take up time, but just looking back historically - others were around and I was not - when private hire regulation came in, what has happened is that it was much more heavy-handed initially to try to get some structure and control in the market. Then all the London operators learnt that this was what was expected from them. Then the whole thing has gone quieter because there was not a need for heavy regulatory intervention because everyone understood what was expected and what the standards were. When you talk to some of the operators that have been in the London market for 10 or 20 years they are complying with a level of strictness that was beaten into them 10 or 15 years ago.

Then you have new entrants coming into the market. The regulator has gotten used to a series of operators who are, broadly speaking, very compliant when you look at the operators. Yes, there are issues about touting but if you just look at the operators themselves you are tending to see operators that are effectively taking on a lot of the regulatory function themselves and do not need to get whipped into shape very often. Some of the new entrants do not have that history. There are lots of interesting historical examples of the kind of behaviours that we are seeing now from some of the new entrants. These operators that have been around for ages say, "We never even considered doing that". Therefore, the regulator has to now potentially ramp up the level of responsiveness and the level of intervention again back to the level that we saw when the regulations were first introduced, which is why this regulation review is useful and why it is very important. It is partly trying to digest that issue.

**Garrett Emerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** I would like to come back to that. This is a point that we are all agreed on and I include members of the audience here. Technology has changed the industry here and effectively brought in what we are seeing as a third-tier type of operation. It is not clearly private hire vehicle operation as we have understood it and was conceived when the regulations were written, and is not taxi provision. It is 'e-hailing', the almost instant provision of vehicles. It is not --

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Garrett, can we just distinguish between new technology and bad behaviour?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** This is exactly the point I am trying to make.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** We understand there are technical issues. What we are talking about now is poor behaviour and pushing against the regulatory framework. You are pulling it back to a different discussion.

**Isabel Deding (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** You are describing an empirical

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** No, what I am trying to say is that a lot of what Leon [Daniels] referred to earlier as the 'noise' around this issue is what is perceived to be bad or illegal behaviour, which is in fact within the terms and conditions of the regulations as they are currently written. It was not envisaged that they would work in that way when they were written, but the fact is that it is possible to work legitimately within the terms of those regulations in this way.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Garrett, if you do not have a proper audit trail, you cannot demonstrate any of that assertion.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** You have heard us say on several occasions that we have a proper audit trail.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** You cannot tell me that this is all about new technology if you do not have an audit trail that gives us details of every interaction you have had with any particular operator. What you are expressing is a theory.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** We can demonstrate that. We can show that. The issue for us is that in many cases the activity is perfectly legitimate and within the terms as they are written. The question is whether the regulations are adequate.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** All right, demonstrate it, then. Show us the working. What we want to see is the working. What we do not want is bald assurances like that because that takes us no further forward. Caroline can finish the questions.

**Isabel Deding (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** Garrett's point has been misunderstood; that is all.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** I have a few questions. I will finish on this point about when you get complaints in or if there is concern out there, a noise on Twitter or something you read that you are concerned about. Who would normally make that contact? What would be the normal level? Would it be you, Garrett? Would it be someone like Helen Chapman [Deputy Director, London Taxi & Private Hire, TfL] or Peter Blake [Director of Service Operations, TfL]? What would be the normal level of officer who would speak to and deal with a company like Uber?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** In terms of information we receive around a potential customer complaint that we want to investigate, it would normally go to our compliance team, which is in Steve Burton's [Director of Community Safety and Policing, TfL] directorate, led by Siwan Hayward [Deputy Director of Enforcement and On-Street Operations, TfL]. It would typically be dealt with by the Compliance Head of Enforcement, who is Matt Bell.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** It is fairly rare that it would come up to your level to be speaking or writing to Uber?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Steve works for me, yes.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** I know he does. I understand that you have a team below you.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** I would look to be kept informed but it is fairly rare that I would investigate it directly.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** It would not be escalated to you?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** No, it would not.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** You do not have that much direct contact yourself, personally, with Uber?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** No.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** You would not expect the Managing Director either to have that much contact?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** It depends. The Managing Director is dealing with a different set of issues to me.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** I would not expect if that is the case, Leon, you would have that much contact directly because it would be within Garrett's team who deal with this?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Yes, but in fact I have had some contact. During the course of all the time there has been discussion by the chief officers. There has been discussion at our different boards. There has been discussions with our legal advisors. There have been discussions on a whole range of issues to do with Uber's behaviours, to do with the plans for the future and to do with what they have told us is a desire to comply through co-operation. There have been some conversations at my level.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Are these all logged and do we have a comprehensive record?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** No. I am afraid the calls are logged but they are for the purpose of progressing the discussion. They are for the purpose of encouraging a response, demanding a response, asking for clarification on the response and discussing about issues that are taking place in other markets to help us more easily understand what it is that they are trying to do.

Conversations of any substance, of course, are recorded. The sort of conversations I have are the sorts of ones that seek clarification or urge responses.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Personally, as someone looking in from outside, would think it is appropriate not to be logging these when you are a regulator? In any other place, if you are in a borough and it was a planning officer, every single thing is logged because you have to cover yourselves. It is regrettable that you do not see yourself in that way.

I am conscious of time and lots of other Members have questions. I know this is an area Members are particularly concerned about. I have three other very specific questions.

One is an issue that comes up time and time again about whether this company has a landline. It is very clear in your guidance that you must have a fixed landline telephone number for the purpose of accepting private hire bookings. You said on the radio on Sunday night that there is and it is available. Can you tell us what the number is and tell us where it is available? It is very simple: can you tell us where the number is and where it is available?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** As I have –

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Can you tell us what the number is and tell us where it is available?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** – said previously and as I said on the radio, Uber has a landline, which it has to specify when it applies for its licence and which we check from time to time to make sure that it is valid and working. It continues to have a landline. It continues – in that particular area specifically – to comply with the regulations.

What is defective in the regulations is that when the regulations were written nobody ever conceived that you would need to mandate that the number be publicised because it was assumed that all bookings would come by telephone and therefore if you have a number you would be bound to it. Of course, Uber is exploiting a situation whereby the law requires you to have a number but there is no obligation to publicise it. That is a defect in the regulations. It is a defect that we will attempt to put right in the regulations review. However, of course, the number was specified to us. We do know what it is. It is 020 3322 8237.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** We have a number.

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** That number – in case anybody did not receive it – was 020 3322 8237. I trust that puts an end to the allegations that have been made over a considerable period of time that Uber does not comply with the regulations by not having a landline.

[Interruption from the public gallery]

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Please, we cannot hear down here what is being said. I am sorry. I probably helped to raise the temperature on this. We have some questions we really need to get into.

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** As I said, the regulations as currently written do not require that number to be publicised. That is defective. We will put it right. There is a landline in place. I would not try it this afternoon. I expect it will be extraordinarily busy with thousands of people calling it. I have to tell you it was tried earlier today and got an answer.



**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** That number you have given us people can ring up and can try and book --

[Interruption from the public gallery]

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Sorry, if I hear any more from the gallery I am going to clear the gallery and you will have to go and watch it on the webcast. I am really sorry but we need to get through this business. Caroline has some good questions that you will want to hear. Please bear with us and be quiet. Thank you.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** We will be very clear. The number is there and people can ring? They should be able to book through it?

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Yes.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** We have the number on record and I am sure you will get some correspondence about that now.

Can I also pick up the issue of compliance checks? I have had it reported to me and requested for me to ask today that you supposedly carried out the biggest-ever compliance check on Uber. It is understood that when you turned up it could not provide all the records and therefore you had a second visit and gave it enough time so that it was able to get all of its drivers to bring in their paperwork. Is this true?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** We have done a number of compliance operations. The one you are referring to was some time ago where we did an initial routine inspection, where we found a number of records that were not correct. It was a routine inspection of a relatively small number, which triggered a process that is the same for all private hire operators that require a re-inspection. Immediately, they are regraded, their category of compliance is lowered and it triggers a much larger inspection within a short time period. I believe it is 14 days but I would have to check exactly what that time period was.

When we went back to do that re-inspection, it was of a very much larger proportion. It was at the time - as we have quoted subsequently - the largest compliance inspection we have undertaken simply because this is the largest private hire operator we have. At that compliance inspection, those records were found to be 100% compliant.

I know the allegation has been made that we just gave them 14 days to get all their records straight and so on. The fact is you have to remember what we are checking here. We are going back and checking the records of the bookings that were taken, the journeys that were made, the drivers and the vehicles that were involved and whether they had the appropriate insurance, for a particular point in time that cannot possibly be known in advance. We will just decide on that on the morning and say, "We are going to go and check the records of a week ago last Thursday from 9 o'clock in the morning to 1 o'clock in the afternoon". You pick a random time period and then you check every single journey that was booked and made. You verify that it was booked correctly through the system, that the destination was taken if there was one given. You verify it was given out to a driver who was licensed driver, it was made in a licensed vehicle and the correct records were taken. It was certainly the case that originally when we did that routine compliance inspection we found its records to be somewhat less than perfect. It very rapidly took steps. This was about 9 to 12 months ago. We have done further compliance inspections since then, some relatively small and some on a very significant scale, when it has again subsequently proved to be very compliant.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Let us be clear on one thing. You fined Uber £10,000 for permitting no insurance on a vehicle and they were issued with a warning from you. Does that mean it is in some sort of status with a warning over it?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Yes, it does. There is a formal letter that sets that out, which would be available to you if you chose.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Yes, we would like to see that and explanations of the next steps if it is found to have breached other things. It would be helpful if you could set that out for us in writing.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Yes. There is also a copy of its reply. I am happy to provide that.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Thank you. That will be helpful. Finally, I want to pick up an issue that comes to us a lot. It is the issue of clustering of drivers for Uber, particularly around Heathrow. My colleague, Valerie [Shawcross CBE AM] did an unannounced site visit recently and saw first-hand the serious problem.

Have you been liaising with the boroughs about this? It is almost like a virtual rank out there. What are you doing to tackle this problem?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Yes, we are doing a lot of work, particularly with Heathrow in terms of enforcement there. We are working with the Metropolitan Police Service and we are being very active in terms of enforcement.

It is another example of working where we are working with a company - Uber in particular - in terms of the ranking of its drivers. It has now implemented a system whereby it is not possible for drivers to receive bookings unless they are in the agreed parking area away from the terminals and away from the opportunity to ply for hire. Even if an Uber driver is parked in an area in plain sight and so on, they will not be receiving bookings through the app. We have reviewed this. We have checked it and we are satisfied that it works effectively. Nevertheless, we are still picking up drivers - from both Uber and others - who occasionally do this. Members may be aware of prosecutions that the police have made and so on for regular plying for hire. Indeed some two weeks ago a driver - not an Uber driver - was picked up for having no insurance there. There is a very active level of enforcement there. Equally, I am also making sure this particular company - and other companies involved - are taking steps to make sure that they do not give their drivers the opportunity to ply for hire.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** The photo we have up shows some of this virtual ranking in the borough streets that is causing a problem.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** The wider problem around the boroughs in terms of parking is an issue. It is an issue about the growing numbers of vehicles parking up and whether they are creating congestion. The congestion may not be in central London. The congestion may be on local residential streets.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Thank you. I will leave my questions there.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** That moves us on to touting and enforcement.

**Darren Johnson AM:** Thank you, Chair. To start off, do you have enough enforcement personnel to do the job effectively?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** We have more than we have ever had. You will be aware that the Mayor announced recently that we are now going to double to 84 the number of compliance officers we employ ourselves directly within the enforcement team. We have, obviously, the 68 dedicated fulltime police officers who work on taxi-related issues and so on. We have quoted to this Committee - and indeed the Commissioner quoted to you before - the many hundreds of police officers whom we have working in support of that either on visible operations or indeed on covert operations around touting enforcement. We have a lot of resource.

As the Inspector said to you when you last had me before your Committee about a year ago, we would always like more. There is always more we can do. We are always continuing to look at how we can make our enforcement more effective. We are talking directly to the trade about that.

You will have seen the publicity around Operation Neon, which was a very different type of exercise. It was a high-visibility exercise, as opposed to the more covert targeted enforcement exercises we have been doing to tackle touting and plying for hire in central London, with the aim of moving private hire drivers on, moving them out of the way of taxi ranks and so on, which has been very much supported by the trade. It is something I am very keen to do. You may have seen that I went out very visibly on one of the operations and answered questions on the radio about it. I remain committed to keeping that type of visible enforcement up as a deterrent and as a disruptive influence on those who seek to ply for hire and operate outside the legislation. I remain equally committed to the more covert enforcement and bearing down on some of the more dangerous aspects of late night plying for hire and so on.

We can always do more. We can always do better. Our track record is good. There will be those in the room who think it should be better. We aim to continue to improve.

**Darren Johnson AM:** The Mayor's announcement was welcome. Have you done specific calculations on how many personnel you need each night to enforce the legislation effectively?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** It is very difficult to come up with a specific number of how many people you need to enforce the legislation effectively. How do you define enforcing the legislation effectively? We are looking to take as much action as we can. We target it with the intelligence we get. Again, many taxi drivers are very helpful - through our Twitter feed - in providing us with intelligence to tell us where people might be touting and so on. We act on that intelligence. We are working to make that service much more proactive in terms of being able to respond directly to the trade and to create that live interaction with them so that we can work together to address issues. We are always looking to work out how we can deploy the resources we have as effectively as we can. Where we can take on more resource we will. I hesitate to use the word 'benefits', but one of the reasons we are able to take on more officers is of course because we are now receiving more licensed income from more licensed drivers, which enables us to pay for more enforcement.

**Darren Johnson AM:** The cap may mean a levelling-off in terms of enforcement?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** If it did, it would certainly be at a high number, I would imagine.

**Darren Johnson AM:** You mentioned Operation Neon, which is a different approach and far more visible and which appears to have been a success. It was set up as a limited-time-period operation. Are there plans to continue that?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** I have said publicly previously that I would expect it to go on as long as we have the need for it in some shape and form. I have likened it to Operation Safeway, which we originally set up on a very limited time period but of course, as you know, it continues to this day. It is not necessarily in the same intensive form that it was originally set up in but it is still continuing to be effective in delivering the outcomes. That is what I would anticipate with this.

**Darren Johnson AM:** When will you be able to spell out what the plans are in terms of the long term?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** We have already extended the terms of the current operation through to August. We will review before the end of August where we go from there. It depends to some extent on where we get to in terms of removing vehicles that are attempting to ply for hire from the streets.

**Darren Johnson AM:** By the end of August, you will be clear about what the future or the next steps will be?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** What the next steps are. It will always be a rolling programme of activity. Clearly, you have to be responsive to what the demands are. If suddenly all private hire vehicles vanished from outside nightclubs and there was nobody attempting to tout, then you would have to review whether you needed to carry on that activity. I do not necessarily envisage that happening. Indeed, if it did happen and we stopped completely, I would envisage some of them coming back. We have to take a view on an ongoing basis of what we need and balancing the resources we have against putting them in the right locations. I am sure the locations will move around with time.

**Darren Johnson AM:** Moving on, we have already touched on the issue of airports. Would you support the proposal from the 2011 South East Airports Taskforce to give airports more enforcement powers over street and forecourt parking at airports?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** I am not familiar with those recommendations or the powers that they currently do not have. I would certainly support any opportunity that airport authorities had to support us in the rigorous enforcement of the legislation that we have.

**Darren Johnson AM:** We had evidence - and Valerie [Shawcross CBE AM] did pay her own site visit - that it clearly is an issue. I do suggest you familiarise yourself with that report and that recommendation to look at what could be done to lobby on this with greater enforcement powers. What other steps could improve enforcement at airports?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** It is difficult to reel off a load of things that if we had thought of them we would probably already be doing or seeking steps to do them. The proactive working between ourselves, the airport authorities and the Metropolitan Police Service - and where necessary local boroughs and so on - is all a key part of improving that enforcement. The operators have a role to play. In this case Uber has operated quite responsibly in terms of seeking to put in place systems on its technology platform that prevent its drivers from taking bookings through the system if they are not in the right place. I am sure we could look to achieve more of that with

other operators and so on. It is something that the industry and all of those involved in its enforcement need to work together to deliver the best result. As I said earlier, in the point of view of providing intelligence and information, the taxi trade itself is a very, very helpful form of intelligence and we look to make as much use of that as we can. If we can make more use of that in the future, so much the better.

**Darren Johnson AM:** OK. Thank you, Chair.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Thank you for that.

**Tony Arbour AM:** Really much less controversial, but this also relates to ranks. I would like to know, please, how many of the 95 stations on the Night Tube network have been identified as needing changes to rank provision and how many of them will have the ranks by September.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Sorry, I am just reading my correct figures. There are 26 stations where there is not currently a rank and where are looking to provide a new rank, of which 14 will be in place before the launch in September and a further 12 where we want to see a rank but we are not going to be able to deliver it before September. Fifty stations already have a rank. Another 16 stations are typically ones in central London where there is plenty of passing trade and we would not see a need to have a rank. Finally, there are a further six stations where there is already a rank but we want to see improvements to that rank.

**Tony Arbour AM:** In relation to ordinary suburban stations, are you sure the changes which have been made provide adequate ranking? For example, I can cite frequent complaints that relate to Twickenham, which is clearly, this year, going to come under very considerable pressure. What measures are you taking to provide adequate ranking for what is going to be required there?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** I can certainly come back to you with specific measures we are taking on Twickenham but I do not have that information in my head.

**Tony Arbour AM:** Is that something you are aware of?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** I am not aware of specific issues at Twickenham.

**Tony Arbour AM:** No. I may confess I am saying this in relation to the Rugby World Cup. I cannot imagine you have not thought about it but have you thought about it?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Yes. By way of the Rugby World Cup and what we are thinking about in terms of taxis, we are, indeed, yes, along with every other mode of transport.

**Leon Daniels (Managing Director, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** There is an overall transport manager planned for the Rugby World Cup in Twickenham and it includes all forms of transport and what road closures it involves.

**Tony Arbour AM:** Yes, of course. The point I make is this is a suburban rank which is inadequate. I understand you have a suburban ranks forum or you think you are going to have a suburban ranks forum. What is the status of this?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Yes. One of the proposals in the suburban review is that we look to set that up.

**Tony Arbour AM:** I understand that as part of that you have a list of priority rank actions. What are your priority rank actions?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Without going down them one by one, they are specified --

**Tony Arbour AM:** No. Just give us a flavour of the top ones.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** They should be specified in the Ranks Action Plan that we published a couple of weeks ago. Whether I have a copy of it in front of me, I am not sure. Yes, there is a list. It is prioritised by the Cab Ranks Committee, which is actually a trade-led committee that we sit on and work together to support. We obviously have to work alongside them and alongside the boroughs to get ranks appointed and provisioned.

There are various other actions in the ranks action planning including increasing the budget to ensure we have enough money resource available to implement these and we are working through as proactively as we can. Indeed, the Commissioner has written to every single chief executive of a London borough setting out the priorities for ranks in those areas and seeking commitment at a high level from the boroughs because the vast majority of these ranks are not on TfL roads; they are on local borough roads. He is seeking a commitment from the boroughs to make them happen and we are working very proactively to ensure that as many of them do as possible. We have a commitment in the Ranks Action Plan to increase the number of ranks by about 20% over the next few years. I cannot remember the date we agreed but that is a further 100 ranks across London.

**Isabel Deding (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** It is probably worth saying there is a lot of good officer level work going on in this, but it is very hard to get any traction with the boroughs. I have said that we need to raise the political pressure on this in terms of within the boroughs because it is usually not in their interest to add ranks, expand ranks. They do not necessarily want to do that or care. We are just trying to ratchet up the political pressure. The Mayor and I write to the borough leader and try and put some heat on.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Sorry, Isabel, can I just interrupt you there? When we received evidence for the actual scrutiny we did, we had quite a number of boroughs that were pressing TfL to get on and put their ranks. The waiting list was not caused by the boroughs. It was actually caused by TfL not enacting.

**Isabel Deding (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** TfL? That is what we were told.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** There was quite a long list of boroughs that were anxious to see ranks in their areas.

**Isabel Deding (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** Yes. That has not been my experience. It might be where which ranks have come to my attention in which boroughs. There are boroughs that want ranks but they are not there.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Perhaps you would like to see the whole list that we have.

**Isabel Dedring (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** Yes, but it is not necessarily where we or the trade would want to see ranks, which is typically in the areas where there is a lot more competition for space.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Thank you very much. We received a job description for a new industry relationship manager. What tasks will they be undertaking in their first few months of activity? What is on their to-do list?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** To ensure that we join together all of the activity we are doing across the business, to have a coherent response to trade inquiries, to develop the relationship with senior trade association representatives, to provide answers to questions, to ensure we follow up on actions and also to work to improve communications more generally with taxi drivers. The example I already quoted is the improvement of the Twitter feed and making that a 24/7 operation and making that capable of being reactive in real time to responding to taxi driver inquiries and information around enforcement, etc.

Also, we have recently launched a weekly bulletin specifically for taxi drivers. It is now being sent out to some 39,000 taxi and private hire drivers for which we have email addresses, giving weekly information updates particularly around the road network operations and things like that. We are just overall trying to improve the flow of information and communication between the two trades and between the businesses.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** It is like a two-way. Will that person be talking to some of the organisations that are not currently covered by your engagement policy? There seem to be smaller organisations that are not in the system.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** Yes. All of the organisations we are aware of are covered by the engagement policy in some sense. They do not all necessarily sit on all of the regular standing committees and so on but, yes, the role will be around engagement with all of those organisations.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Where do they sit in your management hierarchy; at what level?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** At the present, they work for Peter Blake, the Director of Service Operations; the person is formerly my executive assistant, actually. She is very familiar with the workings of the business.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** I see. It is not a very senior role but a functional role?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, and Transport for London):** It is a very senior role, actually.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** You think it is senior?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** I do.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Do you want to give us the grading, then, and we will check?

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** It is a band 4 senior manager role.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** OK, that is helpful.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** For those who do not know, there are only five bands of senior manager in the organisation that I direct.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Yes. Any other questions from colleagues?

**Murad Qureshi AM:** Isabel, I just wanted to come back to the 24-hour Tube service. What impact do you think that is going to have on our black cab trade? I do not know the suburbs but I would like to know what the assumptions are in the Mayoral team about the impact it will have on the black cab trade.

**Isabel Deding (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** We have done some work on that effectively, have we not, from memory? We have done some stuff on this that says that basically the pattern of demand will shift, similar to the bus network. We will see some reduction in the use of night buses in certain parts of the network but then we will see more use of night buses, for example, when people get out of the Tube near their homes for that last mile to get home. As far as I am concerned, it means more people out and about in London.

**Murad Qureshi AM:** Demand is going to move to the suburbs. Is that what you are saying?

**Isabel Deding (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** There will be some shift in demand to the suburbs and there will also be some general more demand for night time activities in London because it is easier to get home. It is very hard to predict. We do not have a very strong view, from my perspective, but it is all to the good. More night-time activity in London is the likely outcome and some shifting in demand but not all in one direction.

**Garrett Emmerson (Chief Operating Officer, Surface Transport, Transport for London):** What is very hard to predict - and it is the same with traffic modelling generally - is that you can predict the impact of a change in provision around trip demand that is existing at the moment but you cannot predict how people might change the way they choose to live their lives as a result of the change in facility. That is the hard bit.

**Isabel Deding (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** Going back to the question of Tony [Arbour AM] earlier, I am sure the majority of people in this room would have an interest in making sure that to the extent there is more demand generated or more demand generated around suburban locations or indeed inner London locations where people get out of the Night Tube but are not able to walk home or it is too far for them to walk home and that that demand is picked up to a fair or reasonable extent by the black cab trade. What we need to make sure is that the ranks are in the right place and that we are doing everything we can to co-ordinate night Tube and black cab services and that, therefore, people are not using other services to get home or getting stuck.

**Victoria Borwick AM MP:** I will follow on from that because I am very concerned that, every time we mention that company, we do not want to mention it. It is rather like Voldemort. It is a follow-on from what you said that we should say we do obviously want to encourage people. Technology is going to take over. There is GetTaxi [Gett] and there are all those other apps. For heaven's sake, just because we have talked about one, it does not mean we are castigating. The same point was made earlier and I just really want to reiterate that when you come out of your late Night Tube, there are lots of apps that are perfectly good that go straight to a black cab and you can be entirely safe.



**Isabel Dedring (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** Yes, and as you know, Victoria, there is a long history of some of those apps between the cab trade and the app providers. Halo is one example where there has been some bad blood because of Halo taking on private hire vehicle operators. It turns out it is like 2% of their business, as far as I know. We need to rectify that.

If you were thinking about a strategy for the taxi and private hire trade, clearly the first paragraph of that would say, "There should be a black cab trade and a private hire trade in this city and they both need to be thriving and successful". What does that actually mean? It also means doing things to continue to promote and support the role of the black cab as the premier service within that constellation. One of those things is about bringing the digital age more effectively to the cab trade where there have been these apps that have come forward but for various reasons, none of them have the name recognition or the rollout that, say, Uber or --

**Victoria Borwick AM MP:** No, but GetTaxi is all about getting a taxi, so to speak.

**Isabel Dedring (Deputy Mayor for Transport):** They exist but they do not have the profile that we would all agree they maybe should have. One of the things that Garrett [Emmerson] and I are doing is trying to see what more we can do to help get a level playing field between the app providers in the industry, with the trade reps as well, to see how we can better get that working a bit more effectively and overcome some of the history that has gone on over the last couple of years.

**Victoria Borwick AM MP:** Thank you. Thank you, Chair.

**Valerie Shawcross CBE AM (Chair):** Thank you very much. Isabel, can I just thank you for those positive words? That takes us back to where we began. We need a vision and a strategy for the industry. Even if you just wrote down what you said and acted on it, it would be a very good first step forward.

I am duty-bound to thank you for your time today, but I have to say that personally I feel really disappointed by a lot of what has gone on today. I am very disappointed that commitments and promises that the Mayor and Sir Peter Hendy [Commissioner, TfL] have made have not been followed up on. I do not think all of our guests have prepared by looking at previous debates and discussions and that was very disappointing. It does suggest that you are not taking this issue seriously enough.

I do feel the point that was made by Isabel about the big challenge in the industry with more technology but, more than that, the issue here is about whether or not TfL as a regulator is behaving in a way that is now cosy and flabby to the point of unprofessionalism. We do understand the regulations do need updating but I personally felt, I did not feel that TfL were doing their regulatory function in a way that is fast and fly and professional and transparent enough to deal with market entrants that have an aggressive approach in their business models and where they do try to push the limits and push the bounds and behave in a way that more traditional operators feel they are not playing by the same rules of understanding, which is basically about trying to fulfil the spirit of the regulation. The spirit of the regulation is about public safety and it is about the convenience of the public and the health of the industry as a whole. Getting people obeying the spirit of the rules is where we need you to be and I do feel we have heard a lot today that suggests there is much to do.

We will write back to you with a list of asks because there were a number of discussions today about things like the strategy, about some clear information on the regulatory activities you have been undertaking so far and some issues about the ranks. We do have some more information we need from you and it is pretty clear now, although some things have started to move and we very much appreciate the fact you are undertaking the

private hire review and we have seen some increased activity on Project Neon and some attention to those issues.

The heat is not going to go off in this area and, until we feel that TfL is meeting the challenge of regulating this industry in the way it now needs to be regulated in the changed world, then we are going to have to keep coming back to it. There is not going to be any breathing space on this. We need to see that strategy. We want to see all of those things delivered and we want to see TfL up its game and become much more professional as a regulator.

It is clear from what we have heard from the Mayor and from Isabel that the Mayor would like to see that too. It is a bit shocking actually that TfL does not seem to be rising to the Mayor's aspirations in this, either. I will leave you with those thoughts.

I thank you, our guests, for your time today.