SAY SOMETHING IF YOU SEE SOMETHING

WATCH FOR

• UNUSUAL BEHAVIOUR OF PEOPLE TRAVELLING TOGETHER, ESPECIALLY IF THERE ARE ADULTS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE
• YOUNG PEOPLE BEING PICKED UP AND TAKEN TO HOTELS, PARTICULARLY AT ODD TIMES OF THE DAY AND NIGHT
• ADULTS PUTTING A YOUNG PERSON, WHO MAY BE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL, INTO YOUR CAR

THIS IS ABUSE. DON’T MASK THE PROBLEM.

Report it.
Call 101, quote Operation Makesafe.
www.met.police.uk

20 Electric dreams
Why electric is the way to tackle air quality in the Capital

24 Plastic fantastic
Card readers in taxis are soon to become compulsory

CONTENTS
London Taxi and Private Hire
230 Blackfriars Road, London
SE1 8PJ

For general enquiries email:
tph.enquiries@tfl.gov.uk

Visit the TFL website:
tfl.gov.uk/tph

0343 222 4444
(lines open from
08:00 to 18:00, Monday to Friday)

0343 222 5555
for vehicle licensing
appointments and enquiries.

TPH news on Twitter:
@TfL TPH

For constant updates on diversions,
congestion and accidents:
@TfL TrafficNews
(roads)

TfL produces a weekly email with
information on current and forthcoming
road closures and diversions. If you
would like to receive this, please contact
tph.enquiries@tfl.gov.uk

The views expressed in OnRoute
are not necessarily those of
TfL.
Clean and clear

London Mayor Sadiq Khan has announced a five-fold increase in the money City Hall will spend on tackling air quality hot spots.

A previous £2m budget to fund two low emissions neighbourhoods has been boosted to £11m by the Mayor, including £5m from TfL. He also confirmed there will be three further locations.

The proposed schemes include:
- Better management of taxi ranks and an electric vehicle delivery scheme in Westminster
- Parking spaces for the use of the cleanest vehicles in Hackney, Islington and Tower Hamlets
- No-idling zones and green taxi ranks for Zero Emission Capable cars in the City of London
- Car-free days in the centre of Greenwich
- A green barrier between the road and pavement to reduce pedestrians’ exposure to fumes in Redbridge

Stand up against hate crime

Have you or someone you know been the victim of hate crime?

A new initiative by TfL and its police colleagues, called #WeStandTogether, aims to raise awareness of hate crime and gives practical information about what to do.

How to report hate crime

- Text 61016 from a mobile phone or call 101. In an emergency call 999
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The pair has since run advertising campaigns with JC Decaux on 54 telephone kiosks around Soho and with Verifone on their taxi-top digital signs. They have also led social media drives during the Wimbledon tennis finals and at London Pride.

Gary adds: ‘The more people we can reach the more interest we can generate in supporting London cabs. How much better for us as a trade if we start promoting ourselves.’

Count to card readers in cabs

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For more information see p24. For approved suppliers, please visit tfl.gov.uk/cards-in-taxis

Temporary closure of Tower Bridge

From 1 October, the City of London will close Tower Bridge to vehicles for three months while structural repair and maintenance work takes place.

The bridge was last refurbished in the 1970s and its timber decking is in need of attention.

While a crossing for pedestrians will be maintained at all times (with a free ferry service provided on the three weekends the bridge cannot be used), vehicles cannot park in or drop off customers and private hire vehicles can and cannot park in London.

It also covers picking up and dropping off customers in bus lanes and on red routes.

For more information, go to tfl.gov.uk/tower-bridge-closure

TPH licensing in numbers

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News

Ambitious plans for the Old Kent Road

The Borough of Southwark, together with the Greater London Authority, is preparing a new plan for the Old Kent Road area.

Drivers are now using @TfLTPH Twitter feed to report illegal activity, which helps the OnRoute team, proved to be the most popular yet – and OnRoute even got a mention.

One driver asked if we would run an article on the Knowledge – we have included it in this issue (see p10).

Other major topics included card readers in cabs, hire and reward insurance for private hire drivers, more compliance officers and the announcement that Cycle Superhighway 11 will be going ahead.

Lots of drivers are now using @TfLTPH to report illegal activity, which helps to shape deployments for the police and the compliance team.

@TfLTPH Twitter feed has 10,015 followers.

A boost for ranks

To help customers make the final leg of their journey home after using the Night Tube, nine new taxi ranks have been introduced. These are at Farringdon, Wanstead, Hainault, South Woodford, Woodford, West Acton, North Acton, East Acton and White City. In total, 27 Night Tube stations across the Central and Victoria lines are served by taxi ranks.

Joining forces

Daimler’s mytaxi has merged with British rival Halo in creating Europe’s largest smartphone-based cab business.

In June, private hire company Addison Lee launched the Tristar, which runs the largest executive car fleet in the UK. It makes the company Europe’s largest car service operator with more than 6,000 cars and drivers.

In October, a new taxi app run by drivers is launching. They pay £20 a month membership but keep the whole fare on each trip booked via the app. Any profit will be used for admin and PR. For more information, go to www.taxispark.com.

A revitalised high street with shopping and town centre facilities

Improvements for pedestrians and cyclists, including new links and making existing routes safer

Public transport improvements including an extension to the Bakerloo Line and two new underground stations

Locations for 20,000 new homes, including new council homes

A strategy for growth in jobs and businesses

The consultation closes on 4 November 2016.

Driving for a good cause

On 13 July, a convoy of 100 cabs drove 300 children to Southend for a day of entertainment including ice cream, face-painting and a disco.

The event was planned by the London Taxi Drivers Fund for Underprivileged Children (LTFUC). It has been running outings for young people since 1928.

Joining the London drivers was Caterina Bellandi, 81 (known as Zia Caterina), who drove her cab all the way from Florence to make the wishes of an eight-year-old bone cancer sufferer come true by bringing her to England.

The LTFUC is grateful for all parties involved in making the annual day a success. It would also like to say well done to Michael Son, a London cabbie since 1965 and a committee member of the fund since 1990, who has been awarded a British Empire Medal (BEM) by Her Majesty the Queen for his services to charity.

For more information, go to www.londontaxiaid.org.uk or more information, go to www.taxispark.com.

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All of a Twitter

A Tweet the Manager session hosted by David Hall, who heads up the Knowledge team, proved to be the most popular yet – and OnRoute even got a mention.

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Charity round-up

Disney delights

This year’s Children’s Magical Taxi Tour took place from 16 to 30 September. One hundred London taxis took 100 children with life-threatening illnesses to Disneyland Paris. The drivers give up their time (and taxis) for free to make this trip of a lifetime come true. TPH also did its bit raising funds for the tour with Helen Chapman, Peter Blake, Graham Robinson and Siéka Kennedy-Todd all doing sponsored stints on the counter service at 230 Blackfriars Road. At the time of going to press £1,375.59 had been raised by TPH staff.

For more information, go to www.magicaltaxitour.com.

Honouring our veterans

On Remembrance Sunday (31 November) Poppy Cabs will once again be operating their free taxi service for veterans. They will run between all mainline railway terminals, Victoria Coach Station and the Union Jack and Victory Services clubs. Many of the veterans are wheelchair users who would not be able to attend without the facilities provided by London’s taxis.

The Poppy Cabs will also be bringing a group of Gurkhas from Plumstead and taking a group of Chelsea Pensioners from the Royal Hospital to Westminster Bridge.

Started in 2009 the Poppy Cab service is provided by taxi drivers, often with family members to assist. Marshalling on the day is under the main direction of the United Cabbies Group, although drivers come from all representative organisations.

Everyone’s a winner

On Friday 26 August the Taxi Charity celebrated winning a £3,000 National Lottery Volunteer Award by having a good old knees-up at the Royal Hospital Chelsea. Taxi drivers, veterans and special guest and Strictly Come Dancing finalist Katie Derham all took to the dance floor and enjoyed vintage tunes provided by the D-Day Darlings.

For more information, go to www.taxicharity.org.uk.
Improving our service: Helen Chapman

It’s been a year since we launched OnRoute as part of our work to improve how we communicate with taxi and private hire drivers and I’ve been asked to guest edit this special issue.

A lot has happened in that time, including changes to private hire regulations which came into effect on 27 June following an extensive consultation process. This took on board the views of more than 20,000 people, including many private hire licensees and customers that use private hire services.

These changes will significantly improve passenger convenience and safety and are the result of an extensive consultation with the trade and public.

An important day for the taxi trade is 31 October, with the introduction of the card mandate. Customers will be able to take any taxi in London knowing that they will always have the option to pay by card or contactless if they wish to. We expect this to be very popular with the public and a boost to income for taxi drivers. We are planning a public information campaign to coincide with this change so customers know how quick and easy it will be to pay by card. When card acceptance was mandated in New York, taxi drivers there saw a significant increase in their takings.

New action plan

We’ve just launched our new action plan, (p18) and in the past 12 months improved your experience of dealing with us. Now it’s easier for you to get in contact to renew your licence. We’ve added more taxi and private hire information to our website, launched a new customer comments hotline, increased the number of compliance officers and got more active on Twitter. We’ve also introduced this magazine and the weekly news email.

Outside of work, my team has also been busy raising funds towards the annual Children’s Magical Taxi Tour, when up to 200 taxis take children with life-limiting illness to Disneyland Paris.

Last but by no means least, how fitting in this year of the Transported by Design campaign, that the black London cab should be crowned as the Capital’s top transport design icon.

If you have any ideas on what we should focus on next, please get in touch at OnRoute@tfl.gov.uk

Helen Chapman, general manager, TPH

Taking a new direction

The private hire topographical assessment is changing from October

To help raise standards, an enhanced test will be carried out by TfL’s own team of 20 assessors in a network of approved centres. Drivers will face the tougher exam from this Autumn.

Jackie Smith, head of driver assessment at TfL, explains: ‘There are currently five modules: map reading ability; local, intermediate and long-distance route selection; and the driver’s general sense of direction such as where Gatwick is in relation to central London. We are now adding questions about points of interest, like historic buildings and tourist attractions, and asking them to identify some common road features, for instance a red route or one way street.’

Extra modules will be added on areas such as driver responsibilities, customer service and disability equality.

A formal English language requirement for all drivers – of a similar standard to that achieved in the early years of secondary school – will also be introduced.

‘The aim is to provide high quality customer service for all those who use private hire – so these changes are good news for customers and the industry as a whole,’ says Jackie.

Centre stage

Stricter guidelines are also being applied to the test centres. Jackie continues: ‘We’ve invited companies to apply to become approved centres. Our assessors will carry out the tests at their premises – from checking a candidate’s ID at the start, to invigilating and marking.’

There are more than 80 centres throughout London under the current system, but this is likely to change when the new requirements are introduced. They include more rigorous health and safety specifications.

The scheme will be reviewed regularly to make sure the number of centres meets the demand from candidates for assessments.

For more information, contact tphtopo@tfl.gov.uk

Questions about points of interest will be added to the test...
Becoming one of the best

It’s recognised as being one of the toughest exam processes around, but the Knowledge is also why London’s taxi drivers are the best in the world.

S

pending hours scooting around the city learning 330 runs (routes) and 20,000 points (landmarks) across 28,000 streets is only the start. It can consume up to four or more years of your life and has been known to make grown men and women weep – either with joy when they pass or frustration when they fail one of its six stages. David Hall and his team of 13 examiners are all licensed taxi drivers so know just how hard it is. The drop-out rate is about 70 per cent, so David says would-be candidates should think carefully before they even start. ‘A lot will depend on whether you are currently working while trying to do the Knowledge and how much time you can devote to it,’ he explains. ‘The main error most people make is a lack of bike work (getting on a bike to drive and learn all the runs).’

Pairing up

David also recommends attending one of the large Knowledge schools to find a good ‘call-over’ partner to go through the points and runs with you. ‘You want someone who is also out there because they can push you, so it is definitely best to have a partner who is learning at the same time as you. You can discover the runs together and share information, give each other updates and support each other. So why do people put themselves through so much to become a London taxi driver? ‘You are self-employed and have no boss,’ David explains. ‘You can take holidays whenever you wish to. You’ve got freedom and flexibility. People just have to remember there are no shortcuts to doing the Knowledge.’

For more about the Knowledge, go to www.gov.uk/tp and click on Licensing.

Know-how

The Knowledge of London test was introduced in 1865. Drivers are expected to know:

- All 320 standard routes on 28,000 roads in central London
- All points of interest within a six-mile radius of Charing Cross (King Charles I Island). This area is approximately 113 sq miles and contains the 320 routes that you must learn. You must also know the 25 suburban routes from central London to the suburbs, and to and from Heathrow and London City airports.
- The fastest route to any destination
- It typically takes 34 months for candidates to successfully complete the Knowledge.

Both the All London and Suburban versions of the ‘Guide to Learning the Knowledge of London’ are known as the ‘Blue Book’.

Green Badge

(All London)

The number of routes you must learn for your particular sector depends on its size.

Yellow Badge

(The nine suburban sectors)

All suburban drivers must also have knowledge of central London.

TPH is now discussing options for having the Knowledge accredited as a formal qualification.

Did you know...

- Both the ‘Guide to Learning the Knowledge of London’ are known as the ‘Blue Book’.
- Each correct answer is worth 10 marks so a total of 50 marks is available.
- There is a £400 fee for all appearances.
- Normal, 4 runs are called during an appearance.
- You need to score 12 points to progress from stage to stage 4 and 12 points to progress from stage 4 to stage 5.
- As you move from one stage to another, the intervals between appearances will become shorter.
- Stage 3 is every 56 days, stage 4 is every 28 days and stage 5 is every 21 days.
- There is a £400 fee for all appearances.
- All London applicants must learn the 25 suburban runs and suburban applicants must have knowledge of runs from their sector into central London.

A driver’s view

Forty-year-old Roshan Varma has been a taxi driver for two years. Before doing the Knowledge he drove lorries around Europe but wanted a job that was both flexible and financially rewarding. He took four years to complete the Knowledge.

‘I was on appearances for two years. I can’t really explain it but I went through every emotion on my journey. It brings grown men to their knees in tears, but before we are released into the big city in our taxis, the examiners have to be satisfied that we are ready. ‘Doing the Knowledge is not for the faint-hearted. It is the most difficult thing I’ve ever done in my life. I often hear the arguments about Sat Navs versus the Knowledge - the Knowledge wins hands down every time. Our customers appreciate our in-depth knowledge of London and its complicated layout. It is the best topographical test in the world.’

A student’s view

Gavin Masters is 53 and worked as a money broker for 25 years before deciding to become a taxi driver.

‘I wanted something that would make me 100 per cent independent. I started in February 2014, but I kind of played around with it for a bit – dipping in and out – but then I really began in earnest in January 2016. I got my head down and realised I needed to concentrate and it became all-consuming with the scooter work and going to school. ‘I’ve had six appearances at stage 3 now and if I don’t score on my next appearance I’ll have to go back to the beginning. The examiners are very good at knowing if you are ready to progress or not. If I fail I’ll be okay because if I’m not ready, I’m not ready. But I am definitely going to carry on. I will persevere. It’s completely out of my comfort zone but now it’s personal because I want to prove to myself I can do it.’

“Sometimes drivers will come up with things that are really good and you think ‘well done’, then you can reflect that in the marking”

David Hall

Mark Gunning, Knowledge examiner, mapping it out

Stage 1

- Voluntary self-assessment on the first five ‘lists’ of runs
- Each correct answer is worth 10 marks so a total of 50 marks is available
- Once you have achieved this you can go on to stage 3

Stages 2, 3, 4, 5

- Written examination – should be taken when all 320 runs have been learnt
- Again, 50 marks are available. If you fail you will have to retake the exam
- The pass mark for stage 1 and 2 is 60 out of 100.
- Stage 2 costs £200
- Stage 3 is every 56 days, stage 4 is every 28 days and stage 5 is every 21 days.
- You need to score 12 points to progress from stage 3 to stage 4 and 12 points to progress from stage 4 to stage 5.
- As you move from one stage to another, the intervals between appearances will become shorter.
- There is a £400 fee for all appearances.
- All London applicants must learn the 25 suburban runs and suburban applicants must have knowledge of runs from their sector into central London.

The Knowledge – how it works

Stage 4

- Normally, 4 runs are called during an appearance
- You need to score 12 points to progress from stage 3 to stage 4 and 12 points to progress from stage 4 to stage 5.
- As you move from one stage to another, the intervals between appearances will become shorter.
- Stage 3 is every 56 days, stage 4 is every 28 days and stage 5 is every 21 days.
- There is a £400 fee for all appearances.
- All London applicants must learn the 25 suburban runs and suburban applicants must have knowledge of runs from their sector into central London.

The Knowledge

- Held around 6 weeks after your final stage 5 appearance
- All London applicants must learn the 25 suburban runs and suburban applicants must have knowledge of runs from their sector into central London.

© Peter Sutcliffe 2017

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(The nine suburban sectors)

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TPH is now discussing options for having the Knowledge accredited as a formal qualification.
Sitting behind the wheel for hours on end can really affect your health and wellbeing. But it’s never too late to take action.

According to a recent Health Survey for England, shift workers (anyone with a working pattern outside the normal eight-hour day) are more likely to report general ill health, have a higher body mass index (BMI) and suffer from chronic diseases such as diabetes. Not getting enough exercise can play havoc with your cardio-vascular system, eating at odd hours can lead to digestive problems, disrupted sleep patterns can make you feel permanently tired, while traffic congestion and demanding passengers can send stress levels soaring. But it’s not all bad news. There’s plenty you can do to keep yourself healthy and fit – even from behind the wheel.

Judith Batson is an equality officer for the GMB Union and knows first-hand what an unhealthy lifestyle can do to you. She was a full-time chauffeur but long shifts and a bad diet started to take its toll. ‘I took the path of least resistance,’ she admits, ‘then a dear colleague at work died unexpectedly and that was my wake-up call.’ She took up yoga and improved her diet. She now feels so passionately about drivers’ health that she runs wellbeing workshops for them.

“We need to encourage all drivers to look after themselves because it’s very easy to get into bad habits,” she says.

Get moving

Just 30 minutes of physical activity a day can improve your health, fitness and sleep quality. Doing the gardening or housework, walking the dog, playing football, going for a bike ride or a swim all count. You can break it down into shorter bursts throughout the day and you should find an activity you enjoy so you’re more likely to stick with it.

There are plenty of fitness apps around too, such as the 7-minute workout (free daily exercise routines) and My fitness pal (calorie counter and nutrition and exercise information).

Judith explains: ‘A lot of drivers do sports or go to the gym before they start driving, then give it up because they say they don’t have the time or can’t fit it in with their shifts. But you have to make the time to do it.’

‘It doesn’t matter how far out of shape you may feel, there is always a way to improve your health.’

Research shows that shift workers are also less likely to eat healthily as they try to fit in with family meals as well as their own work pattern and breaks. They may also have more caffeinated drinks to help stay awake, but this can interfere with sleep.

‘It’s easy for drivers to eat fast food, but rather than a burger and fries it’s just as simple to pop into the supermarket and get fruit and veg snacks,’ says Judith.

She recommends that drivers plan their food to help stay alert and awake, and suggests that regular, lighter meals are best.

For more information on nutrition and exercise go to www.nhs.uk/livewell

“ Just 30 minutes of physical activity a day can improve your health, fitness and sleep quality”

Vida Bediako, taxi driver

“I’ve been a driver since 2002 and my husband is a cabbie too. I go out for my first shift at 08:00 in the morning and come back at 13:00, then have a sleep in the afternoon before going out again at 17:00 and finishing at 22:00.

I exercise before leaving for work in the morning, whereas my husband goes to the gym and regularly plays golf.

To care for my health I maintain a balanced diet as well as getting the most out of my morning exercise sessions. My advice for other drivers to stay healthy would be to find time in their schedule to fit in exercise.”

Simon Virgo, private hire driver

“Keeping healthy is really important to me so I belong to a gym where they do the Les Mills workout classes. I do Combat, and the Grit high intensity interval training. On Sunday I do four different sessions of half an hour each so that’s a two-hour workout and I’ll do about an hour and a half on Saturday. During the week I’ll do another two hours or so over different days where I just get on the cross-trainer or rowing machine.

I try to eat before I start work at about five so I don’t get hungry when I’m out, but I keep pistachio nuts in the car as a healthy snack. It’s far too easy to just sit in your car, so keep a pair of trainers in the boot and get out and walk around between jobs.”

Judith’s top sleep tips

- Don’t go to bed hungry
- Keep your bedroom dark and at a comfortable temperature
- Avoid coffee, chocolate and cola before bed
- Create a bedtime routine that helps you wind down

For more information on nutrition and exercise go to www.nhs.uk/livewell
Changes to Private Hire Regulations - update

It relates to certain aspects of three of the 19 changes that have been introduced:
- the provision of contact facilities
- the English language requirement
- the requirement to notify TfL of operating model changes

Provision of contact facilities
Regulation 9(11) of the Private Hire Vehicles (London) (Operators’ Licences) Regulations 2000 states:
‘At all times during the operator’s hours of business and at all times during a journey, the operator shall ensure that the passenger for whom the booking was made is able to speak to someone at the operating centre if they want to make a complaint or discuss any other matter about the carrying out of the booking.’

In Notice 10/16, issued in June, TfL indicated that existing licensees would be required to comply with this condition by 1 October 2016. In the light of the ongoing legal proceedings, licensees are not required to comply with this condition before either:
- the conclusion of the proceedings or
- further relevant developments in the proceedings

TfL will provide a further update, should the situation change.

English language requirement
In Notice 10/16 TfL stated that the English language requirement will not apply to people who are from a majority

English speaking country.

TfL intends to publish further details concerning what steps operators should take in order to comply with this requirement in the near future.

If you need further guidance having looked at the information on our website, please email us at tph.enquiries@tfl.gov.uk, or call our licensing team on 0343 222 4444 (Monday to Friday, 08:00 – 18:00).

In the light of ongoing legal proceedings, which have been brought in relation to recent changes made to private hire regulation by TfL, Notice 14/16 has now been published

Exercising with your vehicle
If you sit behind a wheel for long hours your body stiffens up and your blood circulation is impeded, while your neck, shoulders and lower back can become tense. These exercises fend off fatigue and increase joint and muscle flexibility.

Inside the vehicle

1. Roll your shoulders back in a circular motion to release tension and increase blood circulation. Repeat several times. Raising your shoulders towards your ears and holding for three seconds before releasing has the same effect.

2. To loosen up neck muscles, put your chin forward then pull your chin in. Repeat several times. Turn your head gently to the left and to the right as far as you can. Also repeat several times.

3. Lean your ear down towards your shoulder and feel the tension in your neck muscles. Change sides. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds on each side.

4. Clench your buttock muscles so that you rise up from the seat. Hold for five seconds, then relax and drop down. Repeat. Bend and arch your lower back pushing your shoulders into the seat. Hold for five seconds, relax and repeat.

Outside the vehicle

1. Open the vehicle door and place the palm of one hand against the inside of it. Turn your body away from your arm, so you feel the stretch across the front of the shoulder. Change sides. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds on each side.

2. Place your heel on the front or rear bumper with your knee slightly bent. Put your hands behind your back and bend forward, stretching the back of your leg. Change legs. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds on each side.

3. Place your hands against the vehicle and bend forward while moving one foot back. Push your back heel down and feel the stretch in your calf muscle. Change legs. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds on each side.

4. Support yourself with one hand on your vehicle. Grab your ankle, keeping your knees together and pushing your hip forward. Change legs. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds on each side.

Top exercise tips
- Make activity a part of your life
- Build-up gently
- It doesn’t have to hurt
- Make it fun
Talking to the trade

TPH has regular meetings with the taxi and private hire trades and the police to talk about licensing, compliance and enforcement. We list the big discussion points from the most recent meetings.

Taxi, August meeting
- A meeting will be set up with TfL Road Safety to listen to concerns raised by the trade about an increase in collisions.
- A fault (now fixed) with PayPal’s payment system meant some taxi drivers were being unfairly financially penalised by the company.
- TFL has published a link to its refund procedures on the credit card mandate section of its website.
- TFL will also publish information on Vehicle Identification Numbers, the vehicle licensing process and what powers enforcement officers have on its website.
- Some passengers have complained that when they book a taxi via a radio circuit or app they are not clearly informed about the minimum fare admin charge.
- There were worries TFL’s customer complaints team was logging the complaints against the individual drivers so TFL will ensure they are recorded correctly.

Private hire, July meeting
- Some drivers are not wearing their badges so TFL is looking at ways to raise awareness.
- Another issue that concerned the trade was the high number of plying for hire offences by taxi drivers. TFL will supply the trade with examples to help explain what the issues are.
- TFL is looking into concerns regarding private hire vehicles using timed taxi ranks when they are being used for parking, and whether it could be misleading to the public.
- TFL will clarify the requirements for private hire vehicles to be exempt from the Congestion Charge following concerns about drivers entering the zone in anticipation of a booking.
- Information on surrendering vehicle licences will be made available to licensees.
- TFL will also examine costs of surrendering a vehicle licence and then reapplying.
- TFL will review its private hire operator application process.
- TFL will look at the possibility of introducing first aid training for both taxi and private hire driver applicants.
- TFL will continue its efforts to make sure driver applicants are clearly informed about the operator application process.
- TFL will review its private hire licence and then reapplying.
- TFL will look at the possibility of introducing first aid training for both taxi and private hire driver applicants.

More feet on the street

A beefed-up compliance team means more officers to tackle illegal activity.

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has committed to expand TfL’s team of compliance officers by an extra 250 people over the next year. Responsible for tackling touting and other offences, the team provides a highly visible, uniformed presence in the West End, City and other areas across London.

Graham Daly, head of operations for TfL’s Enforcement and On-street directorate, says: “We will be able to put officers in certain problem rooms, which will be in constant contact to improve information to and from the officers on the street.”

The number of back-office people will also rise because it helps shape our deployments and with reports from the trade. This information is vital to TFL. You can report it by tweeting their reports using @TfL TPH or alternatively, many drivers are now using the web form at tfl.gov.uk/tph-report.

Operation Neon: This is just one of the activities carried out by the compliance team, the Metropolitan Police Service and Westminster City Council. Since May 2015, there have been 135 operations.
- 10,248 private hire drivers advised and moved on to keep roads clear for taxis and booked private hire cabs
- 456 private hire drivers reported for not having a badge and stopped from working for the remainder of the evening
- 65 private hire drivers reported for plying for hire offences
- 1,330 private hire drivers reported for parking on taxi ranks
- 3,260 parking tickets issued

For more information, go to the Meetings section at tfl.gov.uk/tph.

“TfL is going to investigate whether it is possible to split the enforcement statistics on parking, insurance and illegal parking. We will also examine costs of surrendering a vehicle licence and then reapplying.”

Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan

“I want Londoners to feel safe when they take a taxi or minicab and that is why I have approved a major increase to the size of our team that targets touts and illegal activities.”
Taking Action

On 13 September, the Mayor Sadiq Khan announced his Taxi and Private Hire Action Plan to drive up standards and improve safety in the trade.

As the world’s greatest city, London deserves the best taxi and private hire services available,’ said the Mayor. ‘I am determined to create a vibrant taxi and private hire market, with space for all providers to flourish. Making this happen means reinforcing the two-tier system between taxis and private hire services and taking account of the phenomenal change seen in the industry in recent years, in particular the role of new technology in enabling journeys.’

The plan contains 27 measures under five themes: enhancing public safety; new initiatives for the taxi trade; delivering the greenest taxi fleet in the world; lobbying for additional powers; and improving engagement with TfL.

Committed to change

Following the Private Hire Regulations Review, some measures have already been announced such as quadrupling the number of on-street compliance officers by the summer of 2017 (see p.27) and introducing a more robust topographical test for private hire drivers (p.6).

New initiatives to be introduced include:

- Opening up an extra 20 bus lanes for use by taxis this year and asking London boroughs to consider access for taxis to a further 40 bus lanes on roads they control
- Improving the standards of driving across the industry by requiring that private hire drivers pass an advanced driving test before they can be licensed or relicensed
- Developing options for the use of technology to provide customers with information to help connect them with taxis more quickly and easily, including adding taxi information to TfL’s Journey Planner
- Raising the profile of the Knowledge by establishing accreditation as a formal qualification, potentially enabling applicants to apply for study loans
- Working with the Department for Transport to produce national guidance on ride sharing to ensure driver and passenger safety
- Rewarding taxi drivers who pioneer green technology by offering exclusive access to certain facilities, such as zero emission ranks, and working with boroughs to explore areas where taxis and other vehicles must operate in zero emission mode
- Lobbying Government for: - Control over cross-border hiring for both taxi and PHVs licensed outside of London - Approval from the Secretary of State for TfL to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs), which would act as an instant deterrent for more minor offences - The introduction of legislation to control and regulate pedicabs in London

Work on bringing these measures into force has already started and regular updates will be provided at meetings with the taxi and private hire trades.

‘This plan is an important step,’ said the Mayor. ‘However, it is also a first step, and as the industry changes and develops, this plan will be kept under review to ensure this rapidly changing industry, and the customers it serves, are fully supported now and in the future.’

To read the complete plan, go to tfl.gov.uk/tph-policy

Taxi and Private Hire Action Plan

The plan contains 27 measures under five themes:

- Enhancing public safety
- New initiatives for the taxi trade
- Delivering the greenest taxi fleet in the world
- Lobbying for additional powers
- Improving engagement with TfL
The switch to electric vehicles is quietly gaining ground – a bit like the vehicles themselves.

The first Zero Emission Capable (ZEC) cabs are already being trialled on the streets of London and around 20 per cent of the private hire fleet is hybrid/electric. Some of these are older hybrids but most major car manufacturers now offer cleaner plug-in hybrid/electric models. Just as important, keeping them running is becoming steadily easier. More than 1,400 electric charge points are now in place across the Capital, and private networks are looking at further expansion, with Source London expecting a total of 6,000 to be installed by 2018. Chargemaster’s Polar network is planning another 1,000 points and is already rolling out 40 of its 50KW Ultrachargers, which can power up an electric vehicle in less than 30 minutes. TfL is also developing a network of rapid charge points, with 150 due by 2018, 90 of which will be on-street ‘taxi dedicated’ rapid chargers.

Cleaning the air

The electric revolution is, it seems, quietly taking place. No one can dispute the need to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels or, more specifically, cut pollution in London. But issues around upfront costs, restricted vehicle range and limited availability of charge points have all been seen as deterrents. So, two years ago the Government got together with the car makers to launch a campaign, Go Ultra Low, to provide comprehensive information about the options and benefits, and in the words of its head, Poppy Welch, ‘reduce the misconceptions and bust the myths’.

Last year, she says, there were 28,000 electric and hybrid vehicles on Britain’s roads. Today there are 70,000, and the UK is now Europe’s leading market with fleet operators the biggest users.

More than 1,400 electric charge points are now in place across the Capital. A survey for the London Taxi Company shows 80% of taxi drivers are interested in buying a ZEC taxi.

Electric and hybrid vehicles on Britain’s roads

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Last year</th>
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<td>28,000</td>
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Plug-in car sales

In the first three months of 2016 a plug-in car was sold every 13 minutes.

Government grants

These are available for 35% of the cost of a plug-in or plug-in hybrid car.

Savings

Fuel savings for a year on average mileage can be £750.

Support for Electric

A survey for the London Taxi Company shows 80% of taxi drivers are interested in buying a ZEC taxi.

There are currently three electric models either being developed or tested before the new rules come in from January 2018.

Karsan Concept V1

Turkish car manufacturer Karsan is working with the Royal College of Art and Hexagon Studio on a new taxi with a state-of-the-art electric power pack, as well as a range extender version to achieve zero emissions for town-based journeys. It has a claimed range between recharges of 80 to 100 miles.

Frazer Nash Metrocab

The Metrocab is driven by two electric motors with a one-litre petrol engine, coupled with a generator, which only recharges the battery pack when necessary. Already on trial in London with five licensed cabs, the hybrid model has a claimed battery range of more than 50 miles. It can be charged through the mains.

TX5

The London Taxi Company’s new model has six seats, a panoramic glass roof, space for a forward-facing wheelchair and a Wi-Fi hotspot. There is a small, back-up petrol generator to recharge the battery if vehicle charge points aren’t immediately available, which also allows for motorway speeds over long distances.

The buzz on electric taxis

ELECTRIC VEHICLES AND CHARGERS FEATURE

The buzz on electric taxis

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Electric vehicles are an indispensable part of my vision for a greener London. That is why I have pledged in my manifesto to deliver the infrastructure, in partnership with the private sector, required for a major expansion in the use of electric vehicles.

Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan

**Action on air quality**

With around 8,600 Londoners dying owing to long-term exposure to air pollution every year, Mayor Sadiq Khan recently consulted on plans to crack down on high-polluting vehicles in the capital. Proposals include:

- Introducing an emissions surcharge (dubbed the ‘T-charge’) on the most polluting vehicles entering central London from 2017. It would apply to all vehicles with pre-Euro 4 emission standards (mainly those registered before 2000) and would be on top of the existing Congestion Charge.

- Introducing the Ultra Low Emission Zone* (ULEZ) one year earlier in 2019.

- From 2020, extending the ULEZ beyond central London to the North and South Circular for motorcycles, cars and vans; and for lorries, buses and coaches London-wide.

- Developing a detailed proposal for a national diesel scrappage scheme for the Government to implement.

**The long and the short of it**

The average length of a taxi journey in London is three miles. But as Ian Beetlestone explains, not all trips are average.

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*The ULEZ will cover the same area as the current Congestion Charging zone and operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

*The distance by road from central London to Leicester is about 90 miles.
Your flexible friend

By 31 October all London taxi drivers must demonstrate they have the ability to accept card and contactless payments

Helen Chapman, general manager at Taxi and Private Hire says: ‘Our city has the best, most qualified taxi drivers in the world and it is our aim to make taking a taxi even more convenient, so providing a modern, world-class service for years to come. ‘Accepting credit, debit and contactless payment is an important step in protecting the status of our taxis, making travelling by taxi and paying the metered fare much easier and a more attractive option for passengers.’

In response to concerns raised by the trade that more time is needed to install systems, TfL has made some changes to the dates by which vehicle owners and drivers must be compliant:

By 31 October, drivers must demonstrate:

- They have the ability to accept card and contactless payments
- The taxi must be displaying TfL's card and contactless payment signage stickers in the correct position
- The driver can provide written evidence from a card payment system provider that the taxi is booked in to have a device (or cradle for a handheld device) fitted in the passenger compartment of the taxi

By 1 January 2017, all taxis must have an approved card payment device fitted within the passenger compartment. Any taxi found not meeting the requirement by this date will be issued with an unfit notice, which will remain in place until it is met and the vehicle is persevered for inspection.

By 31 October all London taxi drivers must demonstrate they have the ability to accept card and contactless payments.

TfL has 12 card payment systems suppliers to ensure they have their contract with TfL has been approved, and they have the ability to accept card and contactless payments. By 1 January 2017, all taxis must have an approved card payment device fitted within the passenger compartment. Any taxi found not meeting the requirement by this date will be issued with an unfit notice, which will remain in place until it is met and the vehicle is persevered for inspection.

TfL has 12 card payment systems, which include Visa, Mastercard, American Express, and the various contactless systems.

TfL has worked with the card payment system suppliers to ensure they are prepared for the changes.

Receipt printers

Taxis must have the facility to offer printed receipts on demand. Because of the scheme rules of card providers such as Visa and Mastercard, and the fact that 69 per cent of all taxi passengers said they ask for a receipt for at least some of their journeys, this requirement will remain in accordance with TfL’s Electronic Payment Guidance.

Exemptions

TfL has received some requests for exemptions from various aspects of the card mandate. After careful consideration these will not be granted.

Signage

Taxis will be required to display TfL card and contactless acceptance signage stickers by 31 October. The stickers will be sent out to taxi vehicle licence holders in the coming weeks, along with instructions on where they need to be positioned in order to be compliant.

Contact TfL as it may be possible for your provider to contact TfL to arrange for a cradle solution to be fitted in the passenger compartment before 1 January 2017. The cradle system will allow you to remove the device when you are not working.

TfL has 12 card payment systems suppliers to ensure they have their contract with TfL has been approved, and they have the ability to accept card and contactless payments. By 1 January 2017, all taxis must have an approved card payment device fitted within the passenger compartment. Any taxi found not meeting the requirement by this date will be issued with an unfit notice, which will remain in place until it is met and the vehicle is persevered for inspection.

Further information on this important change is available at tfl.gov.uk/cards-in-taxis

If you need further guidance, please email us at tph.enquiries@tfl.gov.uk or call our licensing team on 0203 222 4444 (Monday to Friday, 09:00 to 18:00).
Eyes and ears of the roads

With major construction schemes taking place across the Capital, TfL has a challenge to keep London’s roads moving. We look at the technology that cuts congestion and keeps traffic flowing.

The first thing you spot when you step through the security doors at TfL’s Surface Transport Traffic Operations Centre (STTOC) is a giant video wall like something out of a sci-fi film. However, this isn’t tracking some imaginary high-tech future; it’s showing London’s roads in real time.

The operators use these live pictures (along with those on the screens at their desks) to keep London’s roads moving. They have eyes across the Capital, with access to more than 5,000 closed circuit television cameras to help ease congestion.

There are more than 6,300 traffic signals across London and a large percentage can be remotely controlled, as Michael Bloomfield from TfL explains. ‘Many of these are SCOOT (split cycle offset optimisation technique) signals which allow us to make live changes second by second. During the recent works at Elephant and Castle we trialled new controllable temporary traffic signals to ease congestion and these will now be used on other major schemes.’

Information on the city’s traffic also comes from bus drivers. When anything happens on the street it’s likely a bus will be nearby. Other sources include the police, who have officers in the room, and members of the public, including taxi and private hire drivers who often tweet tip-offs to the centre’s Twitter team. The police presence allows for good communication so all parties can act quickly and effectively on any information.

While the operators never know when incidents will occur, it is possible to predict when certain roads will be more congested by looking at past patterns. Most weekdays, the afternoon surge starts at around 16:00. But on Friday, the busiest day of the week, it begins an hour earlier as a large number of Londoners will drive out of the city for the weekend.

Where possible, the operators deal with any disruption or congestion before it becomes serious. Making sure roadworks don’t unnecessarily block lanes or close roads is the work of TfL’s Mufu Durowoju and his team. He says: ‘I know all the construction and roadworks taking place across London are affecting drivers. Our aim is to smooth the process to deliver all these works with less pain to everyone.’

The London Permit Scheme

Introduction in 2010, it allows TfL to monitor and regulate the number of roadworks taking place on its roads at any one time, and ensures they don’t exceed the agreed limit. Traffic Police Community Support Officers are also used to clamp down on roadworks taking place outside of their permits.

This year, BT has already been ordered to pay more than £13,000 following two separate prosecutions brought by TfL for breaching the terms of permits at Brixton Road, Clapham Road and Victoria Street.

In June, Vodafone pleaded guilty to not serving a required statutory works notice and failing to pay a Fixed Penalty Notice. It was fined £1,250 and ordered to pay £1,386.50 in prosecution costs.

*TfL has access to approximately 300 of the police cameras
Scoot – traffic signals

6,300 traffic signals

more than 4,000 are currently SCOOT computer controlled

1,000 sets of signals are reviewed annually to ensure they are performing as they should

SCOOT has been proven to reduce delays by 13%

Keep in the picture

Operators in the STTOC share real-time information through social media channels and feed it to the media, satellite navigation companies and third parties including web and app developers.

For more information, visit tfl.gov.uk/roads

For constant updates on traffic conditions, go to @TFLTrafficNews

You can report disruptive or badly-managed roadworks and road defects at reporttfl.gov.uk

Letters

Why ‘OnRoute’ and not ‘EnRoute’?

There’s no such expression or phrase as ‘on route’ but the phrase ‘en route’ does exist and would therefore make a most appropriate title.

Regards Tony Paknadel

We wanted an English title so decided to anglicise the French phrase, while retaining its meaning. What do you think? Let us know at Onroute@tfl.gov.uk

My Good Samaritan

I’d like to try and track down a taxi driver to say thank you. I was 33 weeks pregnant on Friday 24 June when I tripped on an uneven kerb on Buckingham Palace Road and landed on my stomach. I was in shock, crying and quite distraught. I went with a colleague to take a taxi to the hospital from the back of Victoria station. We were picked up by a lovely man wearing a checked flat cap and glasses at around 6.15pm. He took us to Chelsea & Westminster (my maternity hospital) – scooting round the back roads to avoid the traffic. At the hospital, despite me trying to pay, he wouldn’t hear of it, saying that I should get the baby checked out. The baby, thank goodness, is fine. The driver could see the distress I was in and was wonderful, calm and got us to the hospital as quickly as possible using his area knowledge. I want to extend a heartfelt thank you but don’t know how to find him.

Is this you? If so, email Onroute@tfl.gov.uk

From our Twitter feed

We say…

To report to us call 0343 222 4000 or make a complaint using our online form tfl.gov.uk/forms/12396.aspx

For information on accepting credit cards go to tfl.gov.uk/cards-in-taxis

If you are renewing your licence online, please ensure you complete a renewal application, not a new app, as many are making this error

You say…

TfL TPH Retweeted

@noigroup

Another wonderful post from @fiorilass...Another wonderful post from @fiorilass...

We wanted an English title so decided to anglicise the French phrase, while retaining its meaning. What do you think? Let us know at Onroute@tfl.gov.uk

The Knowledge’, Hippocampi and waterclocks

You can read the full article ‘In praise of the London cabbie’, at www.noigroup.com

Do you know?

OnRoute@tfl.gov.uk

Email us at OnRoute@tfl.gov.uk. We will print a selection of emails every issue – and there’s a £20 Amazon voucher on offer for the best.

**Letters**

**Star letter**

Roadwork woes

When are you going to get the roads sorted – roadworks everywhere and you can’t even coordinate when and where they’re going to take place? It’s carnage out here!

Andrew James Walker

We do appreciate your frustration – there’s a lot of construction under way across London with projects such as Crossrail, Nine Elms/Vauxhall, and Victoria and London Bridge stations. We are also investing £4bn to modernise and adapt the road network for the benefit of all Londoners. We do recognise that, because of this, there is disruption to everyday journeys. However, please be assured all works are coordinated and we have a range of initiatives to minimise disruption, such as mobile variable messaging signs that can be deployed around London, our Lane Rental Scheme and regular traffic tweets. You can read all about these in our article on p20.

We are also learning lessons from the construction carried out over the last two years, which can help ensure future works are less disruptive for all road users.

Road Space Management (RSM) TFL
October

1 October
Bear Grylls Endeavour, Wembley Arena (until 9 October)

11 October
Justin Bieber concert, O2 Arena (until 12 October)

14 October
Diwali, Trafalgar Square (and 17 October)

18 October
The Chocolate Show London 2016, Olympia (until 16 October)

19 October
MIPIM UK, Olympia (until 21 October)

23 October
London Expo, Excel Arena (until 30 October)

26 October
Classic Car Show, Alexandra Palace

31 October
Diwali celebrations, Neasden Temple

November

4 November
Harlem Globetrotters, O2 Arena

9 November
Bear’s Den concert, Brixton Academy

11 November
The Spanish Riding School of Vienna, Wembley Arena

12 November
Lord Mayor’s Show, City of London

13 November
Remembrance Day, Whitehall

17 November
Abraham Lincoln’s birthday, Wembley Stadium

20 November
ATP World Tour Finals, Excel (until 20 November)