

July 2006



# Call Sign

From the home of Dial-a-Cab International

**Inside the Editor's  
100th issue...**

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introduce their new drummer!***



***A DaC driver with Kermit the  
Frog on the cover of Call Sign?  
Gimme a break....!!!***





# NASH'S NUMBERS

By Alan Nash (A95)

Continuing with pubs and wine bars - this month in WC2. Also, times and distance for increased £4.20 run-ins and the usual What's On at the exhibition centres.

Pubs & Bars in WC2	Pubs & Bars in WC2	Pubs & Bars in WC2
12 Bar Club, 26, Denmark St	George, 8, Great Queen St	O'Neill's Irish Bar, 166-170, Shaftesbury Av
All Bar One, 58, Kingsway	Globe, 37, Bow St	O'Neill's Irish Bar, 14, New Row
All Bar One, 84, Cambridge Circus	Grape Street Wine Bar, 222, Shaftesbury Av	Opera Tavern, 23, Catherine St
All Bar One, 19, Henrietta St	Green Man & French Horn, 54, St. Martins Ln	Parker Place, 51, Parker St
Angel, 61, St. Giles High St	Ha Ha Bar & Canteen, 6, Villiers St	Pitcher & Piano, 42, Kingsway
Angel & Crown, 58, St. Martins Ln	Halfway to Heaven, 7, Duncannon St	Porcupine, 48, Charing Cross Rd
Bar Aquda, 13-14, Maiden Ln	Hamptons Wine Bar, 15, Whitcomb St	Porterhouse, 21-22, Maiden Ln
Belushi's Bar Cafe, 9, Russell St	Hand & Racquet, 48, Whitcomb St	Prince Of Wales, 150-151, Drury Ln
Bloomsbury Tavern, 236, Shaftesbury Av	Harp, 47, Chandos Place	Punch & Judy, 40 Market, Piazza
Box, 32-34, Monmouth St	Henry's Bar & Cafe, 63-66, St. Martins Ln	Rampage, 32, Great Queen St
Brewmaster, 37, Cranbourn St	Hercules Pillars, 18, Gt Queen St	Retro Bar, 2, George Court
Bunker Bar, 41, Earlham St	Hodgsons, 115, Chancery Lane	Round Table, 26, St. Martins Ct
Cambridge Hotel, 93, Charing Cross Rd	Hogshead 5, Lisle St	Royal George, Goslett Yard
Champagne Charlies, 1 Arches, Villiers St	Hops Bar, , Burleigh St	Salisbury, 90, St. Martins Ln
Chandos, 29, St. Martins Lane	Imperial, 5, Leicester St	Seven Stars, 53-54, Carey St
Cinnamon Bar, 1, Aldwych	Jamies Bars, 64-78, Kingsway	Shakespeare's Head, 64, Kingsway
Coach & Horses, 42, Wellington St	Ku Bar, 75, Charing Cross Rd	Sherlock Holmes, 10-11, Northumberland St
Coal Hole, 91-92, Strand	Kudos Cafe Bar, 10, Adelaide St	Ship & Shovell, 1-3, Craven Pass
Conservatory Cafe Bar, 15, St. Giles High St	Lamb & Flag, 33, Rose St	Ship Tavern, 12, Gate St
Corner Store, 33-35, Wellington St	Le Beaujolais, 25, Litchfield St	Sun Public House, 21, Drury Ln
Cross Keys, 31, Endell St	Lemon Tree, 4, Bedfordbury	Sun Tavern, 66, Long Acre
Crown, 43, Monmouth St	Lyceum Tavern, 354, Strand	Tappit Hen, 5, William IV St
Crusting Pipe, 27 Market, Piazza	Marquess of Anglesey, 39, Bow St	Two Brewers, 40, Monmouth St
Daly's Wine Bar, 210, Strand	Marquis of Granby, 51-52, Chandos Pl	Vespa Ladies Lounge, 15, St. Giles High St
Devereux, 20, Devereux Court	Marquis of Granby, 142, Shaftesbury Av	Walkabout (Temple), Temple Place
Edgar Wallace, 40, Essex St	Montague Pyke Lloyd's 105, Charing X Rd	Walkabout Inn, 11, Henrietta St
Edinburgh Tavern, 1, Milford Lane	Moon under Water, 28, Leicester Sq	Wellington, 351, Strand
Freemason Arms, 81-82, Long Acre	Nags Head, 10, James St	West Central, 29-30, Lisle St
Freud's, 198, Shaftesbury Avenue	Nell of Old Drury, 29, Catherine St	White Hart, 191, Drury Lane
Fuel Bar, 21Market, Piazza	Newton Arms, 33, Newton St	White Lion, 24, James St
Garrick Arms, 8-10, Charing Cross Rd	Old Monk, 418-422, Strand	Yates's, 30, Leicester Sq
George, 213, Strand	O'Neill's Irish Bar, 40, Great Queen St	Ye Old White Horse, 2, St. Clements Ln

## New £4.20p Run-in times for prebooked account work

It is important not to exceed the run in on account jobs. Below is the time or distance to a £4.20 or £3.40 run in. It is better to aim for the lower time so as to not go over the run-in.

### Run-in £4.20

	T1	T2	T3
Max.Time.	6:19m to 6:54m	5:08m to 5:36m	4:08m to 4:31m
Max Dist	1.1miles	0.9 miles	0.8 miles

### Run-in £3.40

	T1	T2	T3
Max.Time	4:01m to 4:36m	3:16m to 3:44m	2:38m to 3:00m
Max Dist.	0.75 miles	0.65 miles	0.5m

Waiting time is: £20.87/hour £25.71/hour £31.85/hour Higher 6m = £29.75/hour.

## What's On at ExCel, Earls Court and Olympia

Event	Type	Date
House & Garden Fair 06	Olympia	29-06-06 to 02-07-06
London Film and Comic Convention	Earls Court 2	01-07-06 to 02-07-06
London Interiors	Earls Court 1	02-07-06 to 04-07-06
UCAS HIGHER EDUCATION CONVENTION	Olympia Nat.	07-07-06 to 07-07-06
Vintage Fashion Fair	Earls Court 1, Level 1	09-07-06 to 09-07-06
Asian Lifestyle Show 2006	Olympia Grand	14-07-06 to 16-07-06
Red Hot Chili Peppers	Earls Court 1	14-07-06 to 18-07-06
The Cura-Heat Back Show	Olympia National	15-07-06 to 16-07-06
MISSION TO LONDON 2006	Earls Court 2	17-07-06 to 22-07-06
Dock Rock (The British International Motor Show)	ExCel public	19-07-06 to 30-07-06
British International Motor Show	ExCel public	20-07-06 to 30-07-06
Turkish Textile Summer	Olympia 2	25-07-06 to 26-07-06
Intimate London Body & Beach	Earls Court 2	30-07-06 to 01-07-06

I am producing a free document taken from a number of Nash's Numbers into one useful document you can print out and keep in your cab. It will only be available by email and whilst not yet ready, to obtain it email me now with your name, call sign and badge number to [nashsnumbers@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:nashsnumbers@tiscali.co.uk)



# from the editor's desk

## Back again!

Well, that month off seemed to fly by even quicker than last years! But for those interested, it certainly wasn't wasted. For three of the four weeks, Linda and I just took it easy in a lovely cottage in a small village near St Austell in Cornwall visiting attractions such as the Eden Project, the lost gardens of Heligan and lots of small, sandy beaches etc. Yep, it wasn't Spain, Italy, Cyprus or Turkey, but we loved it. Whilst there, in addition to celebrating our wedding anniversary, it was also my 35<sup>th</sup> year as a licensed taxi driver.

So what have I come back to in a similar vein? Well how about this being my one hundredth issue as Editor! I find it hard to believe, but it's true. So on this rather special issue (at least to me), I'd like to thank a few people who have helped me along the way. There is the former Editor and proprietor of Taxi Globe, Rodney Lewis who sat down with me following my first issue and pointed out where I could learn and where I could just improve. There was also my good friend Al Fresco, who as Editor of both London Taxi Times and Mountview News at the time, also gave me both verbal and practical advice which helped put me on (I hope) the right road.

Of course there are the never-ending list of people who write for **Call Sign** with just the merest hint of me nagging. Without them, I'd have a much thinner mag! There's also former Editor Jerry Craig's brilliant cartoons, Alan Green's camerawork and his reliability in covering stuff for me that I can't get to.

I must also thank the BoM without whose freedom, **Call Sign** would be a totally different magazine and, I believe, nowhere near as good. I sincerely hope that the future is as good as the past...

## Seeing isn't believing...

DaC driver **Bernie Silver (G08)** called me some time ago and asked an extremely pertinent question: "Aren't there a lot of empty private hire vehicles floating around?" The reason it was pertinent was because it was very busy out there. "Do you think," asked Bernie, "that some licensed minicab drivers might have an ulterior motive for having the roundel on the front and back of their vehicle?"

I knew what he meant, but wasn't expecting the answer to get into my taxi from one of our largest accounts! The passenger was extremely nice. I'd picked him up once before to take him to northwest London and again set him down at the same place. Close by was a nice car with the now-recognisable roundel licence at both ends. "Minicab driver moved in," I enquired, "he must be doing better than me to move in around here," I laughed! I was shocked when he told me that the car was his and that he had not the time or desire to become a minicab



driver, but that he had been told it would be easy for him to get the licence because his father actually drove a minicab for a company in Camden – and apparently it was.

"But if you don't use it as a minicab," I asked naively, "why do you want the licence?"

"Well," he replied without the slightest hint of embarrassment, "although I use cabs quite often to go there and back to the office, the licence means that whenever I use the car to go either to work or to a meeting, I don't have to pay any congestion charge!"

I don't blame this guy for taking advantage of a system that is in place, but I can't help wondering about Bernie's question and its obvious inference: How many private hire vehicles are really not private hire vehicles, but just using it as an excuse to save up to £40 a week? In exchange, it costs them £100 and two compulsory MOTs a year. That leaves them well in pocket.

I'm not going to say who he is or what account he comes out of because I don't think he is actually doing anything wrong – if he thought he was he wouldn't have been so open. However, I wonder if the PCO realise what is happening with regard to those who use their licence purely to avoid paying the congestion charge?

## Yellow boxes

Many years ago when life was far simpler, a folk singer called *Pete Seeger* recorded a song called *Little Boxes*. He sang: "There's a blue one and a yellow one and they're all made out of ticky tacky." Perhaps he was right after all...?

There was an interesting article in *The Times* (9 June) that claimed cameras at yellow box junctions which catch motorists on film who are stuck in them with no exit and then fine them £100, are in fact increasing congestion rather than speeding it up. And naturally, we believe them that speeding the traffic flow is their aim rather than just gathering in as much income as they can!

Over the past two years, over 100,000 motorists have been caught within the yellow peril and have had to cough up the dough. While TfL claimed that they were doing it purely for the sake of keeping London's traffic flowing, we couldn't say too

much. After all, gridlock is nothing to write home about!

But TfL has now looked at the results because they obviously wanted to hold them up to show their detractors how successful they had been and have had to admit that they show around 150 fewer cars each hour are getting across the box junctions and that has slowed down – rather than speeded up – the flow.

So why hasn't it worked? The obvious reason is TfL's *Big Brother* purge where cameras originally designed to help prevent terrorism, are now also being used to bolster their funds and as a consequence drivers are holding back, rather than take a chance of being caught in the box.

Of course, we could have told them the above without their wasting many man-hours on the survey. But have you ever tried telling Transport for London anything? Inside this issue, DaC driver **David Baker (D22)** gives his view and asks: Do we need TfL?

## Roy Ellis

Roy Ellis, Head of the PCO, has announced his retirement from that position at the end of the year. I doubt whether any holder of that position could ever drown in a sea of popularity, but I have to say that whenever **Call Sign** has asked him a question for the magazine, an answer always appears. In addition, he always has a ready smile and can never be accused of hiding himself away.

Certainly, under his administration, more changes have taken place than in the previous 350 years, but I suspect that the more unpopular ones will have TfL stamped on them! I wish him a very happy retirement...

## Bob's Right!

In the latest issue of Taxi Newspaper, LTDA Gen Sec Bob Oddy wrote that even the latest SatNavs could not compete with the Knowledge. Not only is Bob right, but on page 19 you can see how right he is!

## TXII or TXIII?

Also in the latest Taxi Newspaper is an "exclusive" photo of what they claim to be the latest "TXIII engine" – an Italian VM. Call Sign thinks they are wrong and that it will be an updated Euro 4 Ford model still called the TXII. Well, it makes life interesting...!

## Last word

Several drivers have asked me about the performance of DAB digital radios in cabs, so I promised to ask the people who know – you! If you've had problems, let me know what they were and then we'll all know...

**Alan Fisher**  
callsignmag@aol.com

# Reflections Of The Chairman

## Dial-a-Cab on the move

I wrote in the last issue of **Call Sign** (May) that our efforts to find new larger premises had been thwarted due to the property agents attempting to get DaC involved into a bidding situation – something that we refused to do. I'm now pleased to inform you that the position we took has borne fruit and the agents have now returned to us and accepted our original offer, something I suspected would happen!

Contracts have now been exchanged and we will be free to move to our new building as from 1 October this year - although realistically I cannot see us fully occupying the new building until the new year.

Our new headquarters is Marten House, which is situated in East Road approximately 100 metres from our current position. On a personal note, I am delighted that we have acquired the new premises, which will enable us to make this business even more successful. I am even more delighted that we stood by our original decision of not being cajoled into paying more than our first offer for the building!

## Arbitration election

You will see elsewhere in the magazine, results regarding the election of the four new Arbitrators. I would like to thank everyone that put their names forward for consideration, but I am very disappointed with many of you for not participating in the vote.

1,917 ballot papers were distributed, yet only a miserly 1,024 bothered to return their ballot form. Whilst I understand that our Arbitrators are rarely used, that is not the point. Those of you that didn't vote, obviously could not be bothered to take just the few minutes needed to complete a ballot form in order to participate in the Society's affairs. It does appear that apathy reigns - even within Dial-a-Cab.

## Hundredth issue of Call Sign

I have just realised that this issue of the magazine is the 100th under the Editorship of Alan Fisher. I am not sure if anyone else has realised or whether there is any other reference to this fact elsewhere in the magazine.

I believe that we have the best publication within the taxi industry and the only one that is totally uncensored, as well as being one of the very few that does not include those 'made up' letters which seem to appear in other magazines/papers.

The magazine is still as fresh today as it was a hundred issues ago and without doubt the most informative, which makes our members the best-informed drivers within our industry. It is no coincidence that other publications read **Call Sign** in order to obtain stories that will be of interest. Just this week I read an article in The Badge by one of our



subscribers who was relating the situation regarding Kingston and its minicab 'ranks'. I wrote of that situation in the Chairman's report more than two months ago and they have just caught up with the story! Still, better late than never and I suppose copying is the best form of flattery!

I find it particularly pleasing when I see someone who takes a pride in what they do and **Call Sign** reflects the pride the Editor has in his position. After all, as I have told him many times: Alan, you are the only man I know who can read a letter upside down on my desk from 100 metres away – not that you are nosey or anything – just investigative journalism I assume! Anyway, keep up the excellent work Mr Fisher - ably assisted by your proof reader Linda - and well done!

## Winning and retaining accounts

As you are all aware, we are currently very successful and I am extremely pleased to inform you that we have retained the Rothschild account, together that of Morgan Stanley after they both went out to tender. In addition, as from 1 July we will be servicing the Citigroup account in preference to ComCab. We won this account due to service issues and it is now up to you, the DaC members, to decide whether or not you wish to retain this account.

There is not one other company that can compete with us at the moment regarding invoicing and the Management Information Statistics (MIS) that we can supply to your clients. That is one of the reasons that we are so successful. However, at the end of the day we can have the edge over our competitors regarding technology, but if you do not cover the work then we will lose the accounts – it is as simple as that and entirely your decision. I personally feel that the BoM have given you every advantage over your competitors – whether you wish to take that advantage or not is your decision.

You will see elsewhere in this issue of Call Sign that the Complaints Committee has expelled many members due to their not completing the minimum 40 trips per month. It is obvious to me that the majority of members take a very dim view of others who do

not 'pull their weight' in order that this Society can progress even further. I am totally confident that the BoM have done everything we can in order to give you the tools so that we may progress – the ball is now in your court!

## Taxi Newspaper

I recently read in Taxi Newspaper an article by Barry Hooper in which he seems to have his sights set on Geof Kaley. I have never had a problem with individuals having differing views, but what I find particularly distasteful is when these attacks become personal, as was the case with Barry's article.

I've known Barry for many years and I am somewhat surprised that he has resorted to this type of attack, I always considered him a man of ideals and principals. Then, as I continued reading his article, there was also an unjustified attack on Dial-a-Cab and for me that was the final straw. There is not any need for me to defend Geof Kaley as he is quite capable of doing that himself, but when I read the nonsense Barry wrote about DaC, it makes you wonder whether everything else he had written was also just the same utter rubbish?

In my view, Geof Kaley has done more for the radio circuits in London than any other person. He was the man that endeavoured to give us that Polished, Professional, Corporate image - something that Dial-a-Cab has emulated. However, since Geof departed from ComCab, the pupil has overtaken the teacher and now to have these derogatory remarks made about him must be particularly hurtful.

Barry goes on to write that DaC won Citigroup from ComCab because we were prepared to offer more cars – utter drivel! Barry knows me well enough in that all he has to do is pick up the phone and I would be happy to give him the facts, then he would not be in the position of going into print and making himself look a complete idiot by those who are in the know. Citigroup previously had two suppliers - a car company and ComCab. As from 1 July they will still have two suppliers - the same car company and Dial-a-Cab with both doing the same volumes as in the past. I can understand Barry feeling somewhat miffed that we have taken one of ComCab's largest accounts, after all, Barry's LTDA own a 20% stake of ComCab so there will be less money going into the coffers of the LTDA – yes, that I can understand. But to then come out with that utter garbage in order to placate the situation does him no credit at all. It would appear that he actually believed the letters that were sent out to ComCab drivers. As I said before, Barry, please just pick up the telephone in future.

**Brian Rice, Chairman  
Dial-a-Cab**



# Roy Ellis to Retire

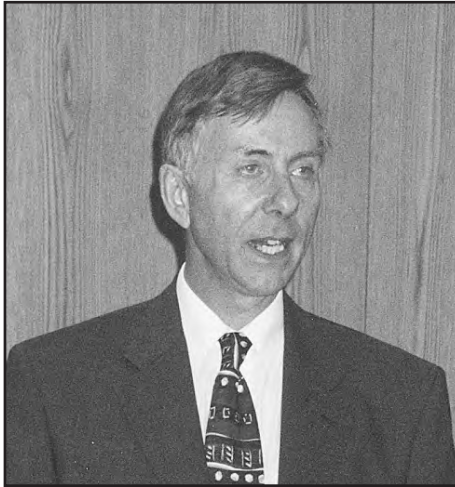
## Ed Thompson outlines future PCO Plans

The Taxi and Private Hire Director at the PCO, Ed Thompson, has told *Call Sign* of the future changes that will come about now that Roy Ellis, Head of the Public Carriage Office, has confirmed his intention to retire at the end of 2006 on completion of 40 years service.

Mr Thompson said:

"To manage his departure effectively after more than 11 years in the demanding and unique role of Head of the PCO will require an orderly transition. Major growth in both functions and service provision in recent years has made it increasingly difficult to channel so many areas of the business through one position. Accordingly, the PCO is now taking the opportunity to establish a much clearer separation of its core activities of:-

- \*Setting standards and regulations
- \*Service delivery



Roy Ellis: Retiring at the end of the year

Therefore, over the coming months the PCO will restructure its activities in order to:-

**\*Achieve a clear organisational distinction between the standard-setting and service delivery functions**

**\*Continue to improve both the delivery of day to day services and implementation projects that will raise service quality in the future**

**\*Further develop the transport authority role in respect of taxis and private hire**

**\*Ensure effective monitoring and compliance procedures apply throughout all areas of the business.**

The following top line structure differentiating standards and service delivery will provide the model to be cascaded through the business progressively up to April 2007. The aim is to move to the revised structure as part of a seamless process.

The new role of Head of Regulation and Standards is being advertised with a view to there being an overlap of several weeks

up to the end of the year of that postholder and the retiring Head of the PCO."

## DISPATCHER LOU HAS DOUBLE CATARACT OPERATION

### Then has to quit Dial-a-Cab...

Dial-a-Cab's long-time Saturday night dispatcher, Lou Gitlin, recently went to Moorfields in City Road on two consecutive weeks to have a cataract on each eye removed. Lou is diabetic and eye problems are something that diabetics keep on the look-out for.

He told *Call Sign*:

**"Before the ops, I could hardly see anything without my glasses, but now my distance sight is 20/20 which means that I qualify for admission to the army! My close vision is ok, but in between those two isn't that good. Hopefully, my new glasses will improve that situation. I must say that while the op was being done, you are wide awake and hardly notice they are doing anything."**

Sadly, whilst the double-op showed a reasonable amount of success, on his return to the Saturday evening hot seat he found the glare of the monitors too uncomfortable and decided that he would have to give up the job that he had made his own over the past 48 years!



Lou during his time in the DaC dispatching box

To mark his retirement, Lou was taken out for lunch by his immediate boss, Call Centre Manager Keith Cain, together with DaC Chairman Brian Rice and also presented with some Champagne.

Lou Gitlin began dispatching on a part-time basis in 1958 - two years after getting his badge - and went full-time in 1961. He had been the resident Saturday night dispatcher ever since and together with DaC's other Saturday dispatcher, Ivor Belkin, provided a double team that have been together most Saturdays since 1961.

Ivor told *Call Sign*: **"Saturdays just won't be the same without Lou on the box. It is the end of an era and I wish him well for the future."**

And Ivor? **"I'm not going anywhere!"**

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# Jery's



# World



In 1955, Bonnie Martyn said that if ODRTS reached for the stars, we would at least reach the clouds. Looks like we made it!

## Penalty Charge Notices

The issue of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) is now becoming commonplace. It is extremely difficult to avoid them. PCN's are now being issued to unsuspecting cab drivers for a variety of reasons - mostly for parking offences and for making 'illegal' or what we consider to be perfectly legal U-turns.

In an effort to keep a record of exactly where PCNs are being handed out and for what offences they are being issued, the LCDC would be interested in receiving copies.

There is nothing that we can do in the way of representation for non-members, but essentially the object of the exercise is to compile a database of the circumstances, date, time and type of offence.

We are only interested if you genuinely receive a Parking Ticket while waiting for or loading / unloading a disabled passenger or in the execution of your duties as a cab driver. Also, we would like copies of your PCNs (preferably with photographic evidence) that have been issued for executing a U-turn when it is unexpected.

You can retain anonymity if you so wish by deleting your personal details, but a brief explanation of your side of the story would be appreciated.

**Please send your photocopied PCNs to:**  
London Cab Drivers Club Ltd, 1 Hampton Street, London, SE17 3AL.

**Dave Cohen (E94)**  
LCDC Treasurer

*Views on life as seen through the eyes of David Kupker (Y74) at...*

## Kupkake's Korner



*The story below is true!*

### Camden and the PCN

Back in December,  
of the year 2004,  
I got a PCN dated October -  
two full months before!

A photo of me in my cab,  
in a junction turning right,  
exit blocked by a small white van -  
my leastest favourite sight!

Camden DEMANDED fifty pounds,  
or else they'd prosecute,  
I told them where to stick it -  
or I would file a suit....

A stand off then began,  
with threats of increased fines,  
each time they wrote I replied -  
"This time THIS case is MINE...!"

I cited from the Highway Code,  
but STILL they wouldn't budge,  
Camden don't own the road -  
so why should they bear a grudge?

My mates said I had no chance,  
but I knew that they weren't right,  
one of them's an ex-copper -  
who marshals weekday nights...

For six long months I stood my ground,  
prepared to go to court,  
you know I won't be pushed around -  
when I am NOT at fault!

Then just one week before my "trial,"  
Camden turned away,  
this really did make me smile -  
And I live to fight another day...

So if you get a ticket,  
and you feel there is no blame,  
tell them to where stick it -  
or go to Hell in flames!!!

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# Transport for London: Do We Need it?

## DaC driver David Baker asks some pertinent questions...

I now firmly believe that a spectre is haunting London and its famous 'Black Cab' drivers.

The threat I speak of is *Transport For London* and its minions, the City of London and various other London Boroughs which currently enforce traffic regulations and are about to take over many of the traffic enforcement duties through use of surveillance and ex-terrorist surveillance cameras. These were previously the responsibility of the *Metropolitan Police Traffic Divisions*.

As many of our colleagues are becoming increasingly aware, cab drivers have become the chief recipients of what one can only describe as increasingly punitive and arbitrary traffic enforcement measures. These relate to picking up, setting down, u-turns and box junction infringements - the list is endless (*see this issue: DaC driver beats Camden Council - Ed*).

I am now firmly convinced that the parliamentary Acts that have given TfL and the London Boroughs these powers, need to be firmly reassessed due to the undoubted abuse by the current traffic enforcement bodies.

One could argue about so much authority being concentrated into the hands of inexperienced civil servants whose only *raison d'être* seems to be the constant replenishment of TfL



and London councils depleted coffers. Further to this argument, many have commented that through this type of mismanagement civil liberties are being eroded away and that responsibilities of this type should now be handed back to others with far more experience - for example, the *Metropolitan Police Traffic Divisions*!

## In Conclusion...

I, for one, believe that when the original legislation for the formation of TfL was discussed before Parliament and the enactment Bill was pushed through, very little consultation

appears to have been made with our trade. In fact, I have attempted to establish if a proper consultative document was ever put forward at the time outlining these major changes that would affect our standing and position?

**Was there was any serious discussion about the outline proposals in the White Paper?**

**Why were cab drivers not consulted before any of these dramatic changes were made?**

As many of you will appreciate, there has been a large increase in our running costs, eg Taxi licensing and renewal of Bills etc, so one could only describe these further increases as usury on a grand scale. If this situation is not to continue, then I would urge drivers and proprietors to lobby their MP urgently with their justifiable grievances before this bureaucratic juggernaut gets completely out of control.

As far as I am concerned, the small passage below from a Sunday Observer article written by Henry Porter sums up our dilemma:

*"The rule of law is defined as that which allows the rights of individuals to be defined by law and not the arbitrary actions of authority..."*

**David Baker (D22)**

## EDRIVERSTATEMENT - JOIN THE BANDWAGON

Several hundred Dial-a-Cab drivers have now registered for edriverstatement and no longer need to rely on the postman for their job statement to arrive, because with edriverstatement, the minute it is sent, is the minute it arrives on your PC!

To download your statements via e-mail, you just need to sign on and push a button. You can then either print off the statement, save it as a file or do both!

**If you weren't sure about edriverstatement but would now like to try it, just send an email to [driverservices@dialacab.co.uk](mailto:driverservices@dialacab.co.uk) and put your badge number in the subject field. Please do not send any other information, just your badge number in the subject line.**

Once registered, you will be sent an email saying that your statement is ready to download and you can then either check your trips on-line or print it off and read it as you used to.

One downside? Well yes, you do need an email facility to enjoy the free benefits of DaC's edriverstatements...!

**A SPECIAL OFFER FOR DIAL-A-CAB DRIVERS AND MEMBERS OF STAFF**

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**10% discount on hire or purchase of Men's Formal Wear and 10% discount on purchase of Bridal Gowns or Bridesmaids Dresses**



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**Dial-a-Cab ID will be required to claim discount**

*Pronuptia* **95 Hatton Garden, London EC1**



In his regular **Call Sign** column (April), Complaints Officer **Tom Whitbread** explained how he had felt breathless whilst taking his dog for its early morning walk around Christmas time. He put it down to the exceptionally cold morning, but when the problem continued, his wife Anne forced him to see a doctor who immediately sent him to Homerton Hospital where he underwent and failed a stress test. He was then given an appointment for Barts where he underwent an angiogram, involving dye being put into his veins and some rather personal poking about!

In his article, Tom gave the impression that his chief concern was who would shave his private parts for the procedure, but he confided to **Call Sign** that when they told him that he had two badly blocked arteries – one with a 90% blockage, the other almost 80% – and would need an Angioplasty that would place two stents into the affected arteries, he was quite concerned even though you wouldn't have

known it to talk to him.

A stent is a rigid tube inside a balloon – later retracted – that is inserted into a diseased or narrowed artery and which helps keep that canal open. Two months after writing the article, Tom returned to Barts for the operation. He admitted that he freaked out when prior to the op, the doctor explained the procedure and what could go wrong.

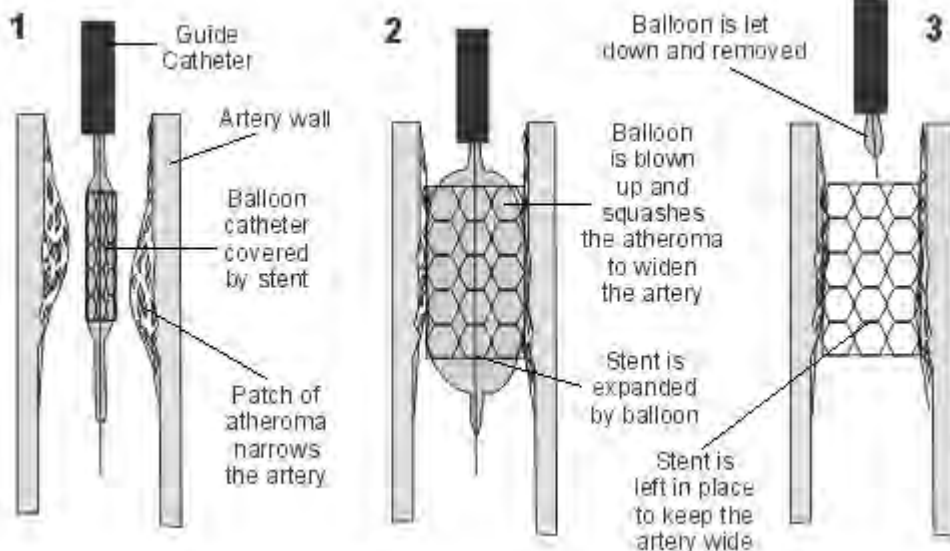
"Just do it," said Tom, "I don't want to know what can go wrong!" In reality, the operation is very common and rarely has problems, but doctors now have a duty to inform their patients of

possible side effects regardless of how remote the probability.

Tom was given a local anaesthetic and spoke to the surgeon throughout the procedure. Both stents were inserted with no problems, he spent 15 minutes in the recovery room, went back to the ward and was then released the next day. The following week, he was back at his Brunswick House desk feeling great.

Tom asked **Call Sign** to tell any DaC member facing the possibility of an Angioplasty not to worry. "It's a doddle," he said, "and the end result is amazing!"

# Tom Whitbread Undergoes Successful Heart Op



← Now even Tom can see how the stent was placed into his artery. The photographer wishes to remain anonymous!

## SOUTH LONDON TAXIS 10% DISCOUNT FOR DAC DRIVERS!

If you live to the south of London and are looking for a garage offering quality work for a discounted price, try South London Taxis Limited because if you pull in with a Dial-a-Cab logo on your taxi, you will get a 10% discount on ALL work you have carried out there. And YES – that includes overhauls! South London Taxis Limited are already well known in Croydon, but with the savings on offer for Dial-a-Cab drivers, they must be worth those few extra miles even if you don't live there!



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*This 10% discount offer is available to all new and existing customers who have the Dial-a-Cab logo on their cab doors.*

## THE CHILDREN'S MAGICAL TAXI TOUR

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v  
CAB TRADE ALL-STARS**

CHARITY FOOTBALL MATCH

SUNDAY 13 AUGUST 2006  
AT THE REDBRIDGE FC  
OAKSIDE STADIUM, STATION ROAD,  
BARKINGSIDE  
KICK-OFF 3PM  
ENTRY BY PROGRAM ONLY  
AVAILABLE FROM KNOWLEDGE POINT  
OR ON THE DAY  
LICENSED BAR AND REFRESHMENTS  
PROCEEDS TOWARDS SENDING  
SICK CHILDREN TO THE  
DISNEYLAND RESORT, PARIS



## Dial-a-Cab Credit Union AGM 2006

April 26 saw the 2006 **Dial-a-Cab Credit Union's** 2006 AGM and for the first time in anyone's recollection, it was a sell-out with not an empty seat to be had! It might have been the sandwiches and drinks because the meeting itself went through with few questions or anything even remotely considered controversial - why more cheese than salmon sandwiches?

Last year's minutes were accepted with no questions followed by President **Terry Dodd's (W15)** report. He said that membership and savings were both on the up and explained why **DACCU** left **ABCUL** rather than as rumour had claimed, they had got rid of us! The bottom line was their unreasonable charges to us and we were now saving several thousand pounds a year with the new insurance company.

Treasurer, **Brian Flanagan (T79)**, then gave his report. In addition to revealing the interest **DACCU** had accumulated, he added that we were doing very well and had no bad debts throughout the financial year.

The **DACCU** accountant - **Terry MacPherson** of Appleby and Wood - added that his company dealt with 30 credit unions and **Dac's** was the only one making a profit!

A dividend of 1.25% was then announced. The Board had originally recommended a dividend of 1.75% with the extra 0.5% coming from the **DACCU's** Reserve account. A proposition was put to the members and they decided against the extra half percent with the majority claiming that it would be more prudent to keep the Reserve fund. **Terry MacPherson** added that it was easy to see why we were so successful!

That was followed by the information that 357 loans were authorised last year with a total of over £781,000. The **DACCU** also had in excess of £1million in savings out of which the loans are taken.

**Roger Kensit (W31)** asked about emergency loans for those with expense due to the new emission regulations. The reply was that any members needing money should apply and provided they had the savings, no problems were expected.

All the directors were re-elected and it was announced that the CU had gained another 47 new members last year, but there was room for many more!

The meeting closed at 8.10pm...

## THE NEAREST LOO IN WESTMINSTER!

The Public Carriage Office has received a significant number of complaints that licensed taxi drivers are causing a nuisance by urinating in the street, particularly in the Marylebone and Bayswater areas. In the past year, there have been 13 complaints of such behaviour in these areas alone. Local residents are justifiably incensed at this anti-social and unhygienic behaviour, which is bringing the taxi trade into disrepute.

This behaviour is not only unpleasant and offensive but a criminal offence. Within the City of Westminster, it is also contrary to section 5 of the Good Rule and Government (No 2) byelaw.

*Below is a list of the public toilets in Westminster and their opening times. Further information can found on the City of Westminster website [www.westminster.gov.uk...](http://www.westminster.gov.uk...)*

Wellington Place (Junc Wellington Rd): 10.00 - 18.00  
 Salisbury Street (Junc Church St): 07.30 - 18.00  
 Marylebone Road (Opp. Planetarium): 07.30 - 23.00  
 Great Portland Street (By U/G Stn): 10.00 - 18.00  
 Paddington Street (Junc Ashland Place): 10.00 - 20.00 (Between 1 April and 31 Oct only)  
 Waltham Road (Junc Elgin Avenue / Harrow Road): 10.00 - 18.00  
 Queensway (Junc Westbourne Grove): 07.30 - 00.30  
 Bayswater Road (Opp Queensway): 10.00 - 00.00  
 Marble Arch (Subway under Marble Arch fountains): 10.00 - 23.00  
 Barrett Street (Junc James Street): 07.30 - 23.00 Mon - Sat, 10.00 - 18.00 Sun  
 Oxford Circus (North side of junction on island in middle of Regent Street): 07.30 - 00.00  
 Great Marlborough Street (Junc Carnaby Street): 07.30 - 02.00 Mon - Sat / 10.00 - 02.00 Sun  
 Broadwick Street (Close to market): 10.00 - 02.00  
 Piccadilly Circus (In U/G station): 07.30 - 00.00 Mon - Sat / 10.00 - 23.00 Sun  
 Leicester Square (North side): 24 hours  
 Covent Garden (By St Paul's Church in Piazza): 24 hours  
 Jubilee Hall (Junc with Tavistock Street): 07.30 - 23.00  
 Strand (Opp Royal Courts Justice): 10.00 - 18.00  
 Green Park (In U/G station): 07.30 - 23.00  
 Hyde Park Corner (Knightsbridge, junction Hyde Park Corner by bus stops): 10.00 - 23.00  
 Kensington Road (Opposite Palace Gate, Kensington Gardens): 10.00 - 18.00  
 Bressenden Place (In subway, junction Victoria Street): 10.00 - 18.00  
 Embankment (By U/G Station): 07.30 - 23.00  
 Regency Place (Men only - Junction Horseferry Road and Regency Street) - 24 hours  
 Tachbrook Street (Junc Churton Street) - 07.30 - 23.00 Mon - Sat, 10.00 - 18.00 Sun

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**Contact Andy (P32) on 07904 091278 or 07932 960350**

# Dial-a-Cab Driver Beats Camden Council!

Camden Council – of late becoming better known as ‘**Scamden**’ Council – seem to have been at their money-raising schemes again by issuing vague PCN’s in the hope of duping drivers into believing an offence has been committed and so parting with their money unnecessarily.

However, they obviously hadn’t reckoned on the tenacity of DaC driver **Leslie Cohen (S98)**. So convinced was he that he hadn’t broken any rules of the road, that he became determined to take the Council on. Leslie told *Call Sign* about his battle...

**“Back in November of last**

**year, I received a PCN in the post stating I had committed a traffic violation (blocking a yellow box junction) and could I possibly send them £50 a bit sharpish, because they needed the loot and if I didn’t pay up within 14 days, it would double and could even rise to £150.”**

Leslie continued: **“I told them I was going to appeal and requested a photo of the offence, because in my own mind I was sure I hadn’t blocked any yellow box junction as they had claimed.”**

He went on to add: **“A single photo duly arrived showing my cab slap in the middle of the box junction of Shaftesbury Avenue and Charing Cross Road, so I requested all the photo frames they had of my cab and these, when studied, showed myself and other vehicles moving through the junction and not stuck in it! Clearly, Camden’s Processing Unit had chosen to send me their most damning picture! Naturally, I appealed in writing, but that was rejected and they again set out what would happen if I didn’t pay up!”**

Leslie told Camden that he would be writing to the *Parking and Traffic Appeals Service*, which is an independent body where an Adjudicator makes a binding judgement.

**“The Council continued their bully boy tactics,”** he said, **“but by now I was getting really wild and was determined to see this through.”** For the first time during the interview, Leslie allowed a small smile to escape his lips.

**“A date for the first hearing was postponed,”** he said, **“because would you believe that Camden Council had submitted evidence for a bus-lane violation and had to change their documents to one of a moving traffic violation! It would have made an excellent comedy - if it had not been so serious!”** He laughed again...

**“I was given a date for the second hearing, but a few days before the case was due to come before the Adjudicator I had a letter from the Appeals Service. It informed me that the Council would not be contesting my appeal against the PCN and that neither would I be liable for any charges.”** Leslie’s smile had now turned into a wide grin!

**“People are fed up with this Big Brother attitude and are beginning to fight back. My case proves it can be done, so long as you are sure of your facts and present a robust defence,”** he concluded.

Leslie is certainly not the only DaC driver to have challenged Camden Council successfully as **Sid Nathan (K88)**, **David Kupler**



**Leslie Cohen last year after competing in a charity run in aid of breast cancer**

**(Y74)** and no doubt others have also recently proved. But you must be prepared to spend the necessary time and not rely on others to do it for you. Leslie has proved that Camden’s chase for funds may know no boundaries, but can still be defeated.

*Call Sign* has seen the series of photos and they clearly show Leslie’s cab passing *through* the yellow box as proven by a camera clock. Camden, however, sent Leslie the most contentious frame to support their PCN. The question must be how many drivers have actually paid up believing themselves to have been guilty?

A copy of this magazine has been sent to the new Camden Council and naturally, should they wish to comment, *Call Sign* would be happy to publish it.

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## **THE SALIERI RESTAURANT**

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And as a thank-you for helping our clients come and go over the years, we are happy to be able to offer you a genuine 25% discount on your bill

***We are certain that you will be delighted***



Please bring along your badge or Bill as ID  
We are also happy to be able to offer you £5 for every passenger you bring to us.  
See Ivan outside the restaurant.

**Salieri Restaurant**

**376 Strand, WC2**

**Reservations: 020 7836 1318**



# Have you ever found it strange how you can tell what things are?..



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TBF Thompson Ltd - Belfast tel: 028 9084 8371

John Paton Ltd - Edinburgh tel: 0131 558 8005  
Mann & Overton - Birmingham & West tel: 0121 322 0700  
Smith & Humphrey - East Sussex tel: 01424 210 746

John Paton & Son Ltd - Glasgow tel: 0141 553 4000  
Mann & Overton - London tel: 020 7700 0888  
Taxifix Ltd - Liverpool tel: 0151 482 5101

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# Allen Togwell's Marketing Place

## *Sitting in at a complaints meeting...*

In all the years I've been on the BoM and submitted articles in **Call Sign**, I cannot recollect ever having encroached upon the domain of my colleague and DaC Complaints Officer, Tom Whitbread - until now. Neither have I ever in a capacity as Chairman of numerous complaints meetings, had the unenviable and exceptionally unusual task of expelling so many drivers at one meeting as I did last month. Hence the reason for this article...

Those of you that have never sat on the panel of a DaC complaints meeting and sat in judgement of your peers will have little idea of how daunting an experience it can be. Particularly for those drivers who are experiencing the occasion for the first time and especially after being made aware of their actual responsibilities - which is not just to hear the case and cross examine, but to arrive at a judgement and set a penalty. Many might assume that part to be the responsibility of the complaints Chairman, but that is not the case.

The Chairman's role is to simply see the hearing is conducted in a proper and fair manner in accordance with Society rules and procedures, offer guidance if requested and finally to inform the complainant of the decision of the panel.

Experience has shown over the years that those who have never sat on a complaints meeting before have a tendency to be extremely lenient towards the first two or three cases, although by the afternoon session they usually adopt a tougher stance. But even then there is still a reluctance to be too harsh, so a one or two weeks suspension is usually the norm unless the complainant has a history of misdemeanours which might then prompt a lengthier suspension. However, an expulsion is something of a rarity and even more rare is to have more than one expulsion at any one complaints meeting.

So it was a truly unique and daunting experience last month when finding myself having to explain to no fewer than 9 drivers that they have been expelled (subject to an appeal) and to inform several more that they were on a probationary period - at the end of which time they too could find themselves automatically expelled without further discussion.

So what caused this high number of expulsions and why is it likely that more could suffer the same fate? Well the answer is simply the unwillingness to play a part in meeting the Society's obligation to give our clients an adequate service. In other words, not undertaking the required number of trips per month - currently standing at 40.

There are of course genuine reasons

why some drivers cannot achieve the required number of trips, such as ill health preventing them from working etc. But in the majority of instances, drivers are just not doing the minimum 40 trips per month. They are working - but prefer to take cash work off the street rather than our account work. This is totally unacceptable.

We have a Sales team working flat out to capture new business and their endeavours are showing remarkable results. We also have account managers working continually throughout the year trying to generate increased business from our existing clients - also successfully - so together with the new business, we are now busier than at any time in our existence.

Generating new business is never easy,

**So it was a truly unique and daunting experience last month when finding myself having to explain to no fewer than 9 drivers that they have been expelled (subject to an appeal) and to inform several more that they were on a probationary period - at the end of which time they too could find themselves automatically expelled without further discussion.**

but it is far more difficult retaining it - particularly in the service industry because when a client gives you their total business, they expect a service when it suits them 100% of the time and NOT just when it suits our drivers. When the MD of one of our largest clients who is giving our drivers a living 365 days of the year, wants a taxi to go home after having done 12 hours in his office, he doesn't expect excuses why a taxi cannot be supplied at the time he needs it. He's not concerned about Arsenal playing Spurs or that the time he's booked his cab is considered an unsociable hour or that drivers have gone home to sit with their wives and kids to watch Eastenders. Or even worse - that drivers are too busy working off the street! He wants and expects a service there and then...period!

He expects the service we assured him he would get when we tendered for his company's business. If we don't, then we cannot complain if he decides to give his work to the other mob, the mob we all despise and who would never have existed if the cab trade had given the public a service that suited them and not just which suited us. We've allowed it to happen once, please don't allow it to happen again. We've got the work ...lets keep it.

It has taken DaC over 50 years to reach where we are today. We have a fleet size unimagined by the small group of cabmen who formed this Society from the back of Bonnie Martyn's taxi in 1953 - an impressive fleet numbering over 2200 vehicles. The regrettable downside is that we do not have all 2200 members pulling their full



weight. In fact we have far too many pulling no weight at all. If this society is to be truly successful to the point where each and every member and their families can

be assured of a comfortable future, then we cannot afford to carry unwanted baggage in the form of drivers who are not prepared to contribute towards that success.

We have to bite the bullet. We have to say sorry, but if you are not prepared to use the expensive DaC equipment fitted in your cab to cover the account work our clients demand - which in turn assures the drivers that are prepared to cover the work a reasonable living, then we have no choice but to remove it and fit it into cabs of new drivers who will.

Consequently, the Chairman, Board and Tom Whitbread in particular are doing just that. We are reluctantly biting the bullet and starting to eradicate unwanted baggage and replacing it with conscientious drivers, many of whom have responded to the advertisement that you may have seen in most of the trade papers. The response to the ad has been excellent. So much so that we are confident of replacing any number of drivers that we ask to leave. I just hope those of you that are reading this who presently fall into the category of not doing the required number of trips, take heed and decide where your future is. If it's truly with this Society, then prove it by raising your coverage to the required figure and beyond so that should you be on the long list that Mr Whitbread has yet to contact, he or the Complaints Committee may decide that as you are now making a concerted effort to cover the work, to give you a second chance. Then hopefully with luck, I won't find myself having to chair another traumatic and distressing complaints meeting such as that last one...

## Contacting me

*In the past, whenever I've received a message from a member either by phone, email or letter, I have always endeavoured to reply immediately. However, in future*

*continued on page 13*



**A second TV-in-Taxis company, Cabtivate, will soon be taking to the roads of the capital after the installation of their system was approved by the PCO. The Cabtivate system - which will provide drivers with additional income by showing content such as adverts, music videos and film trailers is already used by cabbies in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Manchester, Birmingham and Bristol - has now has been given the thumbs up by Penton Street inspectors to begin fitting in Licensed London Taxis.**

The London launch is scheduled for later this year after proving a huge hit with drivers, passengers and advertisers in those other cities around the country. Cabtivate claim that their system is unique because the content is controlled remotely via the company's servers and updated at the

# CABTIVATE TAXI TV GETS PCO APPROVAL

touch of a button using satellite technology and because the content is updated in that way, it makes the system completely tamperproof and won't distract the driver - unlike DVD or disk-based systems.

Mark Greenhalgh, Cabtivate MD, told *Call Sign* that he was delighted to be able to bring the unique system to London taxis for the first time and predicted it would very quickly prove a hit with the city's licensed cabbies.

He added: "We are delighted to have received this approval from the PCO, it marks a very important step in our rollout across the country and I'm confident the system will prove just as popular with drivers in London as it has everywhere else we have rolled it out. The system is so far ahead of anything else out there and the fact that it has already proved such a success in places like Glasgow, Edinburgh and Manchester also stands us in great stead, because drivers and advertisers recognise that we are not a flash in the pan and that we are here for the long haul. London is the next big phase of this growth."

The Cabtivate system, which runs content on timed loops depending on the length of the average taxi journey in a city, involves installing a flat screen mounted onto the partition behind the driver's seat, with con-

tent being remotely updated as many times a day as required. It can also be updated when a taxi is passing a specific location - for instance it could run film trailers when passing a cinema, or shopping ads while passing a department store.

Dozens of big-name advertisers currently use the system across the country, with many more queuing up to buy space - particularly since the system received that PCO approval.

Cabtivate has also revealed a tie-up that allows a leasing company to buy the equipment and rent it to taxi drivers who are interested in having the system fitted. The deal means that rather than having to shell out to buy the system up front, drivers can sign up for a rental deal. That way, Cabtivate make the monthly payments for the system and drivers simply receive monthly commission from advertising revenue.

Cabtivate also insures the system against third party, fire and theft and it comes with a four year parts and labour warranty - so there are never any costs to the driver.

**Drivers who would like to enquire about having the system installed or are interested in becoming an agent should call Cabtivate on 0131 550 3777...**

## Marketing place continued

*continued from page 12*

*should any member experience a slight delay in receiving a reply, then I apologise in advance as the cause might well be attributed to the reduced time of 3 days a week I now work at the office. The reason for the reduction is due to a readjustment to my role, which apart from Board member duties is now primarily marketing and is such that 3 days in the office is sufficient.*

Lastly and on a lighter note; whilst it has nothing to do with our Society, I must comment on the lengths Americans go to when it comes to anything being bigger, better or more outrageous. A limousine company in Chicago has just had built a bright red Limo designed like a Lear jet on wheels, complete with the original rear engine covers and tail from a 1974 model of the aircraft. It is street legal, can carry 18 passengers, will house a 42-inch plasma TV, four flat-screen TVs, black and red leather upholstery, a DVD player, strobe lights, a disco ball and a 4,500-watt stereo with a CD player!

It uses a 400-horsepower engine from a 2006 Chevrolet truck and reaches a speed of 180 mph. The car is designed to sound like a jet engine when it starts and there will be a chauffeur and waitresses on board dressed like a pilot and flight attendants to give it that jet-set feel - making the likes of Paris Hilton feel at home. The cost? \$450 an hour. I'm sure Brian McBride, the American Chief of Radio Taxis, is suitably impressed although I don't envisage him adding one to their London private hire fleet just yet.

**Allen Togwell**  
**allent@diacab.co.uk**

## CONDO FOR RENT

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**Contact John (M13) on 07921 920743...**

From their rehearsal studio in Corsham Street behind DaCs HQ at Brunswick House, four gorgeous, feisty young ladies transform themselves into a mind-blowing all-girl hard rock group whose latest single, *Worthy*, is about to storm up the charts. These are The Suffrajets.

Group drummer, Gemma Clarke, told *Call Sign*: "Although we wouldn't say no to the money the Spice Girls used to make, the music is what's important to us!" Worthy has been playing on MTV and VH1 before even hitting the stores and is already a hot favourite! It could well make number one!

The Suffrajets started out as an idea in the minds of two thirteen year old teenagers - Gemma and Alex. They had long fantasised about being in a band instead of doing school-work! But fantasies sometimes come true and at the age of 19 had signed up with Sony Records and recorded in Los Angeles with Mark Stein, Tim Bogert, Vince Martell and the man described by many as the world's greatest drummer, Carmine Appice - together better known as *Vanilla Fudge*.

After becoming The Suffrajets, their two singles - *Hold These Eyes* and *Distinction* - received glowing reviews from the music press. Then the new formation took to the road and an ultra-hectic live schedule. The group's *Distinction* video became a *Scuzz* TV favourite, being voted most requested video. In addition, the girls were voted 'top totty' by *Scuzz* viewers - and if you don't know what that means, look at the photo and guess!

A *Channel Four* documentary - *We Are The Suffrajets* - followed them on the road and captured the passion and enthusiasm the band had for their music whilst exposing them to a whole new audience. Even legendary *Iron Maiden* front man Bruce Dickinson became a fan of the band, booking them in for several sessions on his northern radio show.

Then, just as things looked to be taking off, the band suffered a major tour bus accident on the M25 that saw them nursing several broken bones. Soon after, Gemma left to join *Pete Doherty's Babysambles*, playing to huge crowds and attracting media interest. But she missed The Suffrajets and as soon as they were back in one piece, she returned!

Gemma said: "People sometimes look at us strangely, perhaps expecting a real girlie - girlie band. But when they've seen us, they'll usually come back up to us and tell us we're pretty cool! But hey, we just do what we do and we are what we are!"

*Call Sign* spoke to the group's manager, Graham Clarke who told us that he had not seen such a hard-working girl band before.

"In addition," he said, "they are great kids - no drugs or anything like that. Ok, the occasional drink perhaps," he said with a smile! Gemma confirmed their no-drugs policy. "They make you look funny," she told us.

Speaking to the girls, their friendliness and willingness to pose for a *Call Sign* photo

# The Suffrajets (and Brian Rice?) about to blow away the charts!



The Suffrajets - minus Brian!

shoot or just talk to a magazine that they knew hardly had a huge circulation, impressed us. Perhaps it was the honour of being photographed with Chairman **Brian Rice** (see cover shot)! We think they'll go far.

Brian told *Call Sign*: "They are really nice girls who look as though they have the ambition and talent to go a long way. If ever they want a taxi, they know where to

come...!"

The group's line-up in the cover photo (L - R):

Alex Gillings (rhythm guitar / vocals), Vicky Kingston (bass guitar), Gemma Clarke (drums - helped by Brian Rice who held her stick) and Claire Wakeman (lead guitar / Vocals). *Worthy* is released on August 7.

## Hot Stuff at London Wall!

Whilst *Call Sign* was away on its summer break, a large fire broke out at London Wall closing not just that major through-route, but also Moorgate and St Martins Le Grand.

The driver that took the photos for *Call Sign* told us that he was there before the fire brigade had arrived and that as his passenger was in a hurry (!!!), he drove through the thick black clouds.

"You couldn't see ahead of you," the driver said. "It was like driving into the abyss, even though we were through it fairly quickly. But do you know that when the passenger got out, he complained that I should have had air-con fitted in the rear compartment because the smoke smelled awful! That's what you call gratitude!"



"Like driving into the abyss..."



**Thinking about a compensation claim but confused by TV ads promising the earth followed by requests for you to take out expensive insurance policies? Call Sign's legal expert, Hope Liebersohn, is on the Law Society Personal Injuries Panel and could help...**

# CALL SIGN LEGAL MATTERS

## Claiming losses and expenses after an accident...

Cab garage bills and lost earnings aren't the only expenses after an accident, as you will know if you've suffered one. Make sure you include your broken glasses, the dry-cleaning bill for your trousers and the electric toothbrush you bought because your shoulder gave you grief with your usual one. I know from speaking to hundreds of clients that virtually no man under the age of 40 owns pyjamas, so their families buy them a pair for the hospital. Add in as well your payments for telephone cards, the food people brought in for you and your relatives' travel expenses to visit you.

You are entitled to payment for the time of anyone who drives you around or provides nursing care, does your garden, decorating and even your paperwork while you convalesce. There is a 25% discount from commercial rates for services "gratuitously rendered," that is ones you don't pay for. That's still over £6 per hour for your wife changing your bandages or painting the kitchen.

All private healthcare will be reimbursed as you are not required by law to use the NHS – so long as the treatment is properly a result of the accident, of course. If you are hurt, then begin straightaway keeping a diary. Note down everything, and keep receipts. Save your bills to show any increased telephone and heating costs if you are stuck at home all winter.

In addition to your extra travel expenses,

you can claim £50 a week or more for loss of use of your vehicle; that is for the inconvenience of having to rely on other transport until you are able to drive again. For children, list all the DVDs and games you buy to pass the time while they are laid up and for women, the added hairdressing costs if your injury means you can't manage your own hair.

Insurers may argue about every item and claim discounts, eg if your £150 trainers were old when they got ripped and ruined. They'll reject the cost of your holiday to Spain, but if your doctor said it would ease your back pain, I would put it in, deducting from its cost only the amounts you would have spent at home for the same period for food, drink, clubbing and sun lotion! Lawyers are paid to argue these things on your behalf.

The insurers have deep pockets, however, and consider it money well spent if they can get covert surveillance tapes of you doing something you have said you can't do, particularly during a long period off work. If they catch you raising your garage door with the bad arm you couldn't lift above the shoulder, or dazzling your friends on the dance floor despite the painful knee, or hopping into a white van with ladders at 8am in an overall, you're in trouble.

Since the *Human Rights Act*, the agents no

longer aim their long lenses into your bedroom or pretend to be salesmen to get into your house with the camera in their tie, but golf courses, your children's school gates or your local gym are not off-limits. At worst, the covert filming could sink your case completely by damaging your credibility so that even your account of the accident becomes suspicious. In some circumstances, you can end up with a bill for all of the legal costs of the other side. That really would be painful, so level with your solicitor and let us do the rest.

**Next month: The no-win, no-fee deal...**

**Hope Liebersohn**  
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## THINKING OF HOLIDAYING IN FLORIDA?

**15% discount on our luxury villa for Dial-a-Cab drivers!**



If you are thinking of going to Florida for a holiday, why not take up the opportunity of this luxury 4 bedroom, 3 bathroom villa available for rent. The Villa was built 2 years ago and has its own swimming pool. It is spacious and luxuriously equipped for your perfect holiday.

**For further details and a virtual tour,  
please visit [www.cubberleyvilla.com](http://www.cubberleyvilla.com)**

*Please note that for all bookings made through Call Sign, quote that as a reference when making your booking and you can deduct 15% from the advertised price!*

*The villa is situated just 20 minutes from all major parks and shopping areas. The villa sleeps a maximum of 10 people and the cost advertised is per week and not per person*

## Derek Harris Stone Setting



**Derek with grandson Richard**

The stone setting for former Dial-a-Cab driver **Derek Harris (ex-B13)** will be consecrated at Bushey Cemetery on 9 July at 11am.

Derek was with the Society during its early days at Pentonville Road renting a cab from David Papier, who had been elected onto the ODRTS Board at the 1954 AGM – the Society's first one – becoming one of the first changes from Bonnie Martyn's original Committee of Management.

When David Papier left the Board in 1957 and returned to driving, Derek bought his own cab and went mushing.

Derek, who was 74, was the brother of another former Dial-a-Cab driver and occasional Call Sign contributor, Sam Harris (ex-S95J).

## COMPLAINTS RESULTS – JUNE



*Due to the excessive number of complaints re not completing 40 trips in a month, this month's results will not be following the established formula. Those complaints involve rules 20 and 28 and for the first time, the complaints committee have added probationary periods onto some of the expulsions. This means that should the expelled person complete at least 40 trips per month for however many months the probationary period is, the expulsion will become nullified. Several others left DaC voluntarily and their names will not appear...*

*The complaints were heard on 1 June and 15 June with an Appeals meeting on 26 June...*

Wayne McCarthy (D38)	<i>Expelled</i>	Jamie Castell (F16)	<i>Expelled</i>
Kenneth Mills (A14)	<i>Expelled</i>	Anthony Bradford (P01)	<i>Expelled</i>
Martin Hartman (H24)	<i>Expelled</i>	Anthony Connell (Y73)	<i>Expelled</i>
Colin Renshaw (H96)	<i>Expelled</i>	Glenn Jones (S87J)	<i>Expelled</i>
David Trotter (H12)	<i>Expelled – 1 month probation period to clear expulsion</i>		
David Lane (K10)	<i>Expelled – 1 month probation period to clear expulsion</i>		
Terry Brosnan (T19)	<i>Expelled – 3 months probation period to clear expulsion</i>		
Danny Gellman (T19)	<i>Expelled – 4 months probation period to clear expulsion</i>		
Karl Ashworth (C10)	<i>Expelled – 6 months probation period to clear expulsion</i>		
William Cassidy (E47)	<i>Expelled – 6 months probation period to clear expulsion</i>		

**All the above were for the 40 job rule**

Mitchell Freeman (V33)	Using mobile phone / not complying with call centre (1, 2, 3) <i>1 week suspension</i>
Matthew Thompson (N82)	Booking into physical zone when not within boundary (5, 14) <i>Warning / severe rep</i>
Justin Mendoza (N53)	Taking a street job after accepting a credit trip (2, 5) <i>2 x warnings</i>

### Appeals meeting (26 June)

Lee Stockwell (N23)	Not completing 40 jobs - <i>Stripped out prior to appeal hearing</i>
Lee Simmons (G99)	Not completing 40 jobs - <i>Expelled after failing to appear</i>
James Crow (B18J)	Not completing 40 jobs - <i>Expelled – indefinite probation</i>

## Emissions D-Day Here!

*Following the emission regulations brought in by PCO / TfL under guidance from the Mayor's office, the following are the dates that you should remember:*

### Phase 1

All pre-Euro or Euro 1 taxis (except for Metrocabs) will be required to meet the **Euro 3** emission standard when presented for passing from **1 July 2006**. That applies to all LTI taxis first registered prior to **16 September 1998**...

### Phase 2

All Euro 2 taxis (except for Metrocabs) will be required to meet the Euro 3 emission standard when presented for passing from **1 July 2007**. That applies to all LTI taxis first registered between **16 September 1998** and **1 February 2002**...

### Metrocabs

You will have read in the **March Call Sign** that there had not yet been any solutions for Metrocabs that had been adequately tested or approved in time for the commencement of Phase 1 of the strategy. A revised timetable for the **Metrocab only** has been agreed. This means that as of **1 July 2007**, any Metrocab that is of pre-Euro, Euro 1 or Euro 2 standard will, when presented for its annual licensing inspection, be required to have either PCO / EST approved emissions reduction equipment fitted or an approved conversion to run on alternative fuels as a requirement of licensing. It is expected that a choice of new technology will be available to Metrocab owners by that time.

**No taxi of any type will be licensed after 30 June 2008 unless it is Euro 3 emission level or better.**





As a major cost ingredient of cabbage, cut-price fuel is a tempting prospect. However, the implications of saving a few pence per litre can be extremely costly as at least two Dial-a-Cab drivers have discovered. Both declined to be named and in this case we can understand why, with the possibility of warrantee claims being involved.

Both drivers were regular – if unsuspecting – users of the Royal Oak's fuel. Of course, at the time of their problems, neither driver could have suspected that the cause was the fuel itself. Over a long period, quite a few drivers using the Oak for their diesel have complained about performance, but this was often put down as possible rainwater getting into the fuel supply and just as often, treated by the repair garages as such.

Now we know that the Royal Oak has been closed by Customs and Excise for selling red diesel, perhaps the explanations are somewhat clearer.

The first DaC driver found his engine running erratically and after having the cab checked, eventually had to have the entire fuel system flushed out and the tank contents discarded. He was lucky enough to require only a new fuel filter to replace the old one.

Our second driver was less fortunate. He too had an erratically running engine and barely got home. He required a new injector pump along with the inevitable system flush-out. That set him back £1250 and happened just 2 weeks before his annual overhaul!

To make matters worse for those who were unwittingly using the Oak's pumps in the Paddington Basin, the mere fact that red diesel

# The Royal Oak and Red Diesel

*The cost to Dial-a-Cab drivers...*



2 DaC taxis at the Royal Oak pumps. Note the roof sign proclaiming British Clean Fuels!

– so called because of the red dye that is added to differentiate it from normal diesel – is used in a taxi can invalidate the warrantee even though there are ways of removing the dye so that users would not notice any difference.












Both DaC drivers agreed it had been conveyed

to fill up at the Oak, but had not a clue that they were using an illegal – and poorer quality – fuel that is usually used by tractors and the like. Both are now wiser, but alas, poorer..!

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**Hi there, I do hope I find you in good health and enjoying your life...**

Since penning my last **Call Sign** article in May, it feels as though I've just blinked and here I am writing for the July issue already! The main reason is that I have simply not stopped since we last met.

Earlier this year, I did intimate that the Sales Department had some big announcements to make, but I could not tell you any more at that time. But now you are starting to understand why I have been racing around like a headless chicken.

I'm delighted to report that the **McKinsey** account is running smoothly and it really is just great to have rekindled this account.

Then, from the first coffee I had with **Citigroup** three years ago, here we are suddenly going live with that account! I have known about our being awarded this prestigious account for some time, so just imagine how hard it has been to keep schtum! I have been bursting at the seams to tell you, for no other reason than I am so pleased and I believe it is reflective of all our efforts. Not only have we delivered a very strong tender response and presentation, but also our service offering is second to none.

I know that many of you realise the importance of this account. It is hard to understand what was hoped to be gained by our colleagues in Singapore being difficult, but instead the start date has actually been moved forward from 1 September to going live on 1 July. Perhaps it was to put us under pressure? The one thing I have learnt about the team here is that we come into our own when we 'crisis manage' and we have really just been given the opportunity to shine. But Dial-a-Cab works particularly well under pressure. I know we will learn many lessons from this experience and deliver a better solution and service – and that is my only real interest. I say let the others fight amongst themselves, we are simply too busy for tittle tattle...

With the Project Plan in place and all our targets set, we are so ready to go live. All I would ask is for your wholehearted support to ensure that we have a strong start. Our key focus will be service. Remember, for all the systems in the world, the emphasis will be on our service.

I would personally like to ask you to support all our corporate accounts at this particularly busy time. I do appreciate how hard it is to ignore street work; however, we have VIPs to get to VIMs (very important meetings) that will in turn deliver more work for us here in London. Let's be mindful of our future and secure it by being the best of the best

I would also like to thank my work colleague Natalie for all her support. I'm sure she reads my mind, she simply allows me to get on with the important things I need to deal with and she is a pleasure to work alongside. I am also delighted to inform you that she is making headway with some other projects I started, but ssshhhhh - I couldn't possibly tell you about those yet. But suffice to say it is very reassuring to know I am undoubtedly on the right team.

# Selling DaC with Lydia



## ComCab Misinformation

It was a Friday night and I was all dolled up for a ball at the HAC. I'd left Brunswick House and walked over toward the HAC, but en route disaster struck and my shoe broke! So I commandeered the first available taxi, which happened to be from ComCab. The driver was such a lovely man. He brought me back to the office and would not let me pay for the trip. So as everyone seems to read **Call Sign**, I'd like to thank him for his kindness.

During the short trip, we naturally spoke about Citigroup and he showed me a letter he and the other drivers had been sent. I had to correct the content because I can confirm that all three members of the existing Citigroup/ComCab staff will be staying at Citigroup, but now as employees of DaC. Under TUPE (*Transfer of Undertakings*;

*Protection of Employment*), they have the right to choose who they want to work for - which they have clearly done. Therefore, this will mean as little change surrounding the account as possible and we are delighted to welcome, Shakhil, Fatmeh and Harry on board.

As for the ComCab driver; if he is reading this, you are a true gentleman and should you ever wish to join DaC, please just contact myself or Shelagh at HQ. We would be very happy to have you on our team.

## Drivers leaving...

I see there are a number of chaps leaving the circuit this month, but to be frank I was never really too sure why they were here? After all, we just ask our drivers to support the minimum number of credit rides - it is not a big ask - however, it highlights a weak spot in our business and one the Board of Management have once again dealt with proactively.

## Who said size isn't important!

Someone once said that in a bigger space you have bigger ideas? Well it has been confirmed that we have now exchanged contracts on our new building - a space twice the size! It just begs the question what we will be capable of with all this extra room!

So please don't forget; our key focus is service and ladies and gentleman, thank you for your continued efforts. We deserve our success...

**Until next time...**

**Lydia Foulkes**  
**Sales Manager**

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By now, many of you will be fed up hearing the dates from when your taxi will need to meet the **Euro 3** emission regulations as decided by the Mayor. Those affected are looking at costs of up to £3000, depending on which system you go for.

Assuming that you haven't been putting away all those extra 20p pieces from the 15,000 trips you would need to make the £3000, **Call Sign** has a suggestion. Call the **Dial-a-Cab Credit Union** and they will be delighted to help.

If you ask most DACCU members, they'll express astonishment that every single DaC member isn't already in it. In addition to low cost loans obtained easily, you get interest on your savings and you can get those back at any time you are not repaying a loan.

**We asked the Credit Union for details of repayments on a £3000 loan and below are the answers. They are based on monthly or weekly repayments and are taken directly from your credits – so no bank Direct Debits etc. However, you must continue saving money in order to borrow. Contact details are at the end of this article.**

**To borrow £3000 over 36 months:**

**£100 per month + £40 savings**

**To borrow £3000 over 24**

**months: £142 p.m. + £40 savings**

**To borrow £3000 over 18**

**months: £183 p.m. + £40 savings**

**To borrow £3000 over 12**

**months: £267 p.m. + £40 savings**

**To borrow £3000 over 156**

**weeks: £23 per week + £10 savings**

**To borrow £3000 over 104**

**weeks: £33 p.w. + £10 savings**

**To borrow £3000 over 72**

# Emissions - How You Can Pay With No Hardship!



**The DaC Credit Union Team (L-R) Brian Flanagan, Val Gomez, John Riley and Jan Dodd with Terry Dodd in front...**

**weeks: £46 p.w. + £10 savings**

**To borrow £3000 over 52**

**weeks: £62 p.w. + £10 savings**

Joining the DACCU is completely free provided you are on DaC. Your family can also become members should they want to save or borrow for anything.

Either call in or phone the DaC Credit Union for more details. You'll be amazed at how easy it all is.

**They are at Suite 209, Channel Sea House, Canning Rd. Stratford, E15.**

**Or phone them on 0208 522 4502 or 0208 522 4503.**

## Editor's Comment

## SATNAVS – COULD THEY DESTROY THE TRADE?

A strange occurrence overtook both Linda and I on a recent trip out. It was my wife's birthday and I had managed to get two tickets for the absolutely brilliant Billy Elliot at the Victoria Theatre on a very buzzy / busy Saturday evening. Even the theatre's ludicrous policy of squeezing in as many rows as possible, giving most normal-sized patrons blunt kneecaps as well as the horrendous charge of £57 per ticket, could not detract from a show that takes its place up there with the likes of Phantom of the Opera, Chicago and The Producers. But publicising Billy Elliot isn't the real purpose of this comment...

We had ordered a DaC taxi to pick us up on a Chargecard following the show. When we exited the theatre to see our cab waiting, a smart driver holding up a name board with Alan Fisher on it while all around us theatregoers were searching for a taxi, we realised how well worthwhile the extra £4 booking fee was.

The driver didn't know me and other than thanking him for waiting (the show overran by 8 minutes due to numerous standing ovations), there was no other contact. Linda and I sat back and relived the show in what was a nice, clean taxi complete with Cabvision.

I use taxis occasionally and would never object or complain about any cab driver who recommends which way we should go due to a

set of extenuating circumstances ie roadworks, demos etc. Our drivers have always been the best and most trustworthy anywhere. However, this cab trip back to Brunswick House was slightly different.

In the back of my head, I'd expected him make a right where the theatre is, going back to Bressenden Place and towards the City along Victoria Street and embankment, but half-noticed him heading towards Grosvenor Gardens and up Grosvenor Place towards Hyde Park Corner. Perhaps he knew of some roadworks or bad traffic – even though it was close to 11pm. After all, this is London and he would obviously know which way was best. Linda and I continued our conversation.

I looked up again and we were heading north along Park Lane and I was just about to ask if he had our destination on the terminal when he turned right into Upper Brook Street, so I assumed he would run alongside Oxford Street and head towards Clerkenwell Road and onto Old Street. But no! He then turned left into Park Street, crossed Oxford Street into Gloucester Place before turning right into Blandford Street.

It was at this point that I noticed the SatNav system proudly placed in the middle of his dashboard and realised that he was following the directions being signified on it. We worked our way through to Portland Place before turn-

ing left and right and ending up in the Saturday night Euston Road traffic – which he incidentally negotiated very well!

We headed back down towards the Angel and City Road as I watched the SatNav mileage indicator go down towards the zero mark. Finally we made an illegal left turn into Provost Street and missed the sharp right turn into East Road, taking a far sharper right around the next traffic island.

I should have asked him why he needed a SatNav and didn't; but my question is why anyone who has been through the Knowledge would need a SatNav unit to take him from Victoria to Old Street? Surely if we started to rely on them, we'd be no better than private hire drivers? There is one voice out there that says with the SatNav so many private hire drivers now use, they are raising their standards and soon the Knowledge will become unnecessary? But by following the way a SatNav tells us, are we Licensed taxi drivers not just lowering our standards? There is a big difference between following a SatNav and using our Knowledge. Do we want to throw that advantage away? I now realise how life would be if we all just used SatNavs... and it isn't a nice thought. Your views, as always, are welcome...

**Alan Fisher**  
Editor

As a prominent member of the *Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers*, Dial-a-Cab driver Jim Rainbird (T25) has met more than his share of celebrities – especially during the period when London was bidding for the 2012 Olympic Games and his services were used to publicise the London Taxi and the event.

However, none were quite as strange as his latest passenger/celeb. He was short and green and seemed to have a fear of pigs – especially the female one who was running behind the cab shouting: “Come back darling, I love you! Come back to Miss Piggy!” “I don’t know why she was calling me darling,” said Jim, “I’d never met her before!”

The frog said nothing and just stayed schtum!

So how come young Jim had Kermit as a passenger? We asked him to give Call Sign readers the exclusive rebbit, rebbit – er story?

“Before you think I’m being harsh to our European neighbours across the channel,” said Jim, “I had this frog in the back of my cab the other day! What’s the connection between the two of us in the

# What is Kermit Doing in a DaC Taxi?

photo? I know, you can't tell them apart, but I'm the one on the right! And the connection is that Kermit and myself both celebrate our 50th birthdays in 2006.” Jim, now in full flow, asked Kermit if he had any folding green - he said that he did have some folding - but not to call him green... “My name is Kermit,” he replied with indignation! Actually,” said Jim, “we were doing a photo shoot as part of Kermit's World Tour - he is visiting 50 places on the planet to celebrate his half-century. He was also helping to promote the charity Childline, whose runners were taking part in this year's London Marathon.” Then Jim had to rush off. “We’re looking for a nice cool pond...!”



We believe that Jim is the one on the right! Photo courtesy The Muppets Holding Company LCC

## DaC’s footballers finish third

In first full season back since the riot...!

**DaC 2 v DMV 1**  
**Dial-a-Cab** went into their last game of the season knowing that a win would secure third place in the league – an excellent result considering this was our first real season back since that infamous September day in 2001 when then-captain Lee Morland was shown the red card for unbecoming conduct after disputing an incorrectly given penalty. Lee was followed off by Paul Richards, who had jumped in to speak up for his captain and who was then also shown the red card. DaC’s last three players on the pitch - Joe Brazil (K16), Warren Barbieri (K19) and Paul Roma (G70) – then walked off in disgust at the referee’s decision! That was the last match DaC played other than the occasional friendly and a part of last season. Now, with a new (and younger!) team, DaC did the business!

After defeating eventual champions ‘the B team’ 5-4 the previous week, DaC had to defeat DMV to finish third. On the other hand, if DMV won, they could still win the league title.

The game kicked off at a slow pace with DaC’s 5-man team knocking the ball about and controlling the tempo. But chances were few and far between with both teams realising what was at stake. **Steve Carruthers** tried his luck from distance a few times but to no avail. The breakthrough finally came when goalkeeper **Chad Gomez** threw the ball out to **Jermaine Ambrose**, who knocked the ball against the boards and turned the defender before bulldozing forward to the edge of the area and blasting the ball past the approaching keeper. That goal separated the teams at half time.

Early in the second half, the DMV strike force tore the DaC defence down with a brilliantly weighted pass diagonally across the field. Striker Steve John placed the ball perfectly into Chad Gomez’s bottom right corner.

Then just when a draw seemed likely, **Wayne Gruby** received the ball from Gomez, held a DMV defender at bay and knocked the ball to his right where man of the match **Jimmy Quigley** charged forward to latch onto the ball – which then flew into the top right corner of the oppositions net!

DaC played keep-ball for the remainder of the game to secure a well-deserved win and to take that third place.



DaC’s Football Team: Back Row (L-R): Jermaine Ambrose, Steve Carruthers, Wayne Gruby and James Quigley  
Kneeling: Chad Gomez and substitute Tony Luna

SOUTHWARK EARLY EVENING LEAGUE – Final positions						
Team	P	W	D	L	F	A Pts
The B-Team	12	8	1	3	58	29 25
Dynamo DNV	12	7	1	4	42	35 22
Dial-a-Cab	12	7	0	5	39	37 21
Bullshead	12	6	1	5	40	26 19
Deloitte FC	12	5	1	6	38	30 16
Higham Juniors	12	4	1	7	29	56 13
Higham Spartacus	12	1	3	8	23	56 6



If you were Mediterranean government ministers looking to start up and operate a radio taxi service in all 22,000 of your capital city's cabs, where in the world would you start to look for advice on how to do it correctly?

Such was the dilemma for the CEO of Gantek Holding, Dr Ejder Varol and Adnad Sahin, the General Manager and Executive Board Member of 'Belbin' - the Istanbul Municipalities Data Processing Company - when faced with the task of installing radios in Istanbul's taxi fleet in a Turkish government-funded initiative to modernise their capital's cabs - yes, all 22,000!

**"We telephoned the Commercial Attaché at the British Embassy in Istanbul," said Dr Varol, "and he told us to contact Dial-a-Cab in London. Then we phoned the Turkish Embassy here in London and they too said that we should go to Dial-a-Cab. So here we are!"**

Mr Sahin continued and went on to explain to *Call Sign*: "Istanbul is a city of 14 million people all busily going about their daily routine in addition to it being a popular tourist location, so we need taxis that can meet the demands of our citizens and visitors through professionalism and speedy, efficient communication. We see radio as being a major factor in our strategy and what we have seen here today is very impressive."

DaC Chairman, Brian Rice, played host to the two during their whirlwind 24hour fact-

# Turkish Visitors Come to DaC For Advice

*"We Want to start a radio circuit!"*



Brian shows our Turkish visitors how Dial-a-Cab operates

finding mission to our Brunswick House offices.

**"I showed them around and explained in great detail how we do things,"** Brian told our reporter, **"I was certainly very**

**proud that both embassies recommended Dial-a-Cab as an example of how a radio taxi company should operate and it proves to me how highly regarded DaC is overseas."**

N18	S&H CABS
SS7	JUST TAXIS
EN3	ENFIELD TAXIS
SE17	COACHLINE TAXIS
N7	MAANN & OVERTON
SW6	PUTNEY BRIDGE TAXIS
E2	FRAMERIGHT ENGINEERS
TW8	CAMBERFIELD TAXIS
W9	COMPUTER CAB COMPANY
HA8	EDGWARE CAB COMPANY
E1	KPM UK TAXIS

## Don't Play Around...

Bank on... **Cygnus Taximeters**

The Name That London Cab Drivers Trust

**City Dealers:**

N7 - Mann & Overton 020 7700 9828	SS7 - Just Taxis 012 6879 5895
SW6 - Putney Bridge Taxis 020 7736 8818	W9 - Computer Cab 020 7908 0255
SE17 - Coachline Taxis 020 7277 2200	N18 - S&H Cabs 020 8803 1437
E2 - Framerright Engineers 020 7739 5617	HA8 - Edgware Cab Company 020 8951 4590
EN3 - Enfield Taxis 020 8804 5241	E1 - KPM UK Taxis 020 7375 2086
TW8 - Camberfield Taxis 020 8568 9643	

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**Call Sign** recently sent another nine DaC drivers to the LTI factory at Coventry – our fifth trip. Our man-in-charge on this occasion, Stewart Lewis (D20), took with him questions / suggestions that DaC drivers who couldn't get on the trip had sent in to **Call Sign**. The answers are below, but first we asked two of the drivers that went what they thought of the trip...

"It was a great day out and I would like to thank **Call Sign** and **LTI** who made it all possible," DaC's **Laury Bartlett (L84)** told this magazine. "It was also my first experience of a tilt and ride train, which I have to say I wasn't too enamoured with whilst travelling backwards! No doubt you get used to it!"

Laury went on: "We were met at Coventry Station by Nigel Walters and Matthew Cheyne from LTI and after a short journey found ourselves having coffee in their oval office (never did get to see George Bush!) and having a discussion on the TXII. The guys from Coventry were very keen on our feedback and made copious notes. It was clear that some of the improvements, such as being able to lock the back of the TX11 from the drivers door switch, yet still being able to exit the cab ourselves, had come from a previous **Call Sign** driver's forum. They listened to all our questions and as far as they could, answered them satisfactorily."

He added: "LTI were excellent hosts and I think we were all very impressed. They took the time to explain all the various processes and it certainly made me look at my cab differently. How many people can say they drive a vehicle that is hand built? Morgan owners and us!"

Laury ended by saying: "I drive a 6-month old TXII and I was able to tell them of the positive feedback I am getting from passengers on the comfortable ride the new suspension gives. I recommend that everyone go on a trip to LTI if **Call Sign** runs another one; it was a really good day. On getting back and sitting behind the wheel again, I suddenly realised how proud I was to be driving a truly British icon, I had never realised it before. Thanks once again for a great day out."

Another DaC driver, **Adam McGann (J09)**, echoed Laury's views and added that it was incredible to watch the transformation of a sheet of metal into the TXII.

"I was also very impressed with LTI's Quality Control process. It makes me wonder how any drivers get a cab with faults. They even spotted bodywork marks that I couldn't see! And I loved the Virgin Trains tilt and ride experience!"

We asked **Stewart Lewis (D20)** to put driver's questions they had sent in to **Call Sign** to LTI's Paul Woolley. The answers

# Call Sign's Trip To LTI Coventry

## *And your suggestions put...*



LTI and DaC drivers around the board table

are below. They may be short, he said, but from previous experience we know that getting LTI to look into something is worthwhile because we know that they do take notice. Not included are the questions put by the drivers present on the day.

### From Gary Leaver (J54)

**Q:** Any plans for a digital speedo for more accurate readings in today's camera environment?

**A:** Not at present, but we will look at it.

### From John Howard (H85)

**Q:** What is happening with the TXII timing chain problem and why is it taking so long to have the warranty modification carried out?

**A:** The latest level 3 tensioner is now available and our warranty agents are doing their best to get everybody sorted. You just have to wait your turn as everyone wants to be first and the job does take time to carry out.

### From Martin Freeborn (C67)

**Q:** Have LTI made provision for wiring from the roof to the front of cab for radio circuits?

**A:** Not at present due to various types of installations across the country.

### From Alan Nash (A95)

**Q:** Why can't LTI fit a brake pedal rubber that doesn't come off when clipped by a shoe?

**A:** LTI will look into making a stiffer flange edge.

**Stewart's suggestion:** LTI should use a narrow zip tie through the left hand vertical groove of the rubber with the buckle at the back.

### From Ian C Lingham (K64)

**Q:** Could a heated front windscreen be fitted as an option or standard on the gold?

**A:** LTI will look into it.

**Q:** The rear side windows mist up very easily, what can be done about this?

**A:** They will also look into this.

**Q:** On carrying wheelchair bound passengers in the latest model cab where you cannot open the partition, you have difficulty hearing due to the positioning of the intercom microphone.

**A:** This problem was noted and will be investigated.

**Q:** The disc pad wear indicator is only on one side and the opposite side seems to wear quicker. Could LTI put a sensor on each side? (Note to Ian: Your question claimed that the pads were Ford Transit. The front brakes are from a Land Rover Discovery).

**A:** This was noted and will also be looked into.

And finally **Call Sign** believes that the updated TXII as of 1 January 2007 must have 5 rear headrests, ABS brakes and a euro 4 engine - and that it will be the **Ford** common rail turbo diesel.

**Call Sign would once again like to thank Virgin Trains for their sponsorship of the trip and LTI for their hospitality...**



# Drivers Operations

***Hello Ladies and Gents... As I'm writing this article, the Chelsea Flower show has been and gone, we are in the middle of the World Cup, Wimbledon is just around the corner and even the British weather is finally proving to be what most of us were hoping for – hot and sunny!***

## Marshalling

I am sure you will have noticed that over the past month there have been many Marshalled events, including some very high profile locations. Your assistance is always much appreciated by the Marshalling team because I have to say that in all the years that I have been involved with this side of the operation, it is without doubt the busiest period I can ever recall. On some recent evenings, we have seen up to four events running consecutively! But with your invaluable assistance, the coverage has still been first class – thank you...



## E3 TAXIS NOW AGENTS FOR TAXICAT EMISSION SYSTEM

E3 would like to thank all those DaC drivers who now use E3 for their repairs. We would also like to inform you that we are now Approved Agents for the TaxiCat emission system - the all stainless steel exhaust system that fits all models of Taxi and is totally maintenance free. The total price inclusive of VAT and fitting is £2000. You can book now on 0207 474 6592. Cabs due for plating in July and August will be issued with a 'confirmation of booking' letter to present to the PCO when booking your test date.

## Dressing for work...

I can understand that during these above average temperatures, there is a need to wear clothing that helps to keep you cool. But we must show a true professional and businesslike image at all times. We have recently received a request from a very senior account that has strongly suggested they don't want drivers entering their premises wearing shorts, vests or tracksuit bottoms.

Competition for lucrative work is stronger than ever and if we hope to maintain and increase our share in an ever-demanding market, we must now raise the bar! I would like to quote fellow Board Member Allen Togwell, whom I have often heard say: "If you look good, you feel good, if you feel good, you act good and others around you will respond accordingly." I'm sure you all understand where we are coming from - *please make that little extra effort, our future success is still in our own hands.*

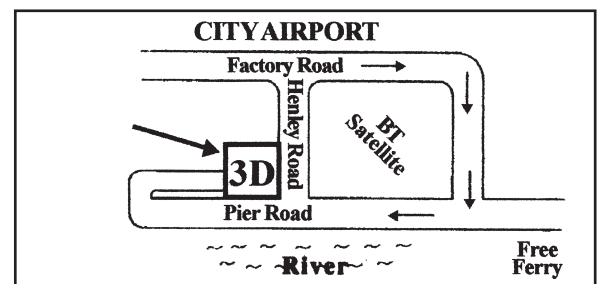
## Meters

Just a final reminder that if you change the make or model of your taximeter, it is almost certain that the interface cable will also need changing. Without a compatible interface connection, the printer will not print the amount on the actual receipt. This is very important when your vehicle is presented at the Public Carriage Office. If you are in doubt, please contact Roman Way on 0207 700 4443.

**Allan Evans**

**Allane@Dialacab.co.uk**

# E3 TAXIS



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**DRIVERS, we have decided to continue the offer throughout the summer**

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**We are also fitting the new PCO Approved Tyres MAXXIS at £42.55 plus VAT and that includes balancing**

***We can service your TXII from new without affecting your warrantee  
And we will advise on any warrantee work needed***

**To book: Ring Chris on 0207 474 6592 and mention that you are on DaC**

***E3 Taxis Unit 3D Standard Industrial Estate, Henley Road, E16 2ES  
Open Monday – Friday 8.30am – 5.30pm***

In the May issue of *Call Sign*, we published a letter from someone living in Spain who had somehow obtained an FX4R, but who badly needed the manual that would have originally accompanied it.

José M. Basadre Montesinos lives in Puerto Real, Cadiz and one of his main problems, besides trying to find that elusive FX4R manual, is that he doesn't speak English and anyone likely to have one was likely to be English! José does use a Spanish - English dictionary, but they are not quite as reliable as one would think. Hence his initial letter to *Call Sign*:

*"Although I have Espana, I buy Austin Taxi FX4R. I not have spare parts, neither photos, neither manual of functioning. Hence I resort to you that be kind, can send me some manual and please tell me where I can spare parts for this model get. FX4R and of him I do not know absolutely nothing. He would need some manual, books, photos and some market where acquire of spare parts when he need them. If you may help oneself, he would thank it for life because I find myself in Cadiz, very far from England in order to be able to obtain information. If you or his wife collect something, or they desire some Hispanic object, not doubt in asking me for it, that with pleasure he would send it."*

To say we were temporarily lost for words would be something of an understatement. Several drivers contacted us to ask if the letter was meant as a late April Fool joke, but when assured that José really existed and his request was serious, none could actually help. One driver (**Mark White B86**) even made the

# LTI Come to the Rescue!

*As Call Sign's José gets his FX4R manual!*

point that the writer was easier to understand than regular Mailshot contributor, Stanley



LTI's Nigel Walters

Frankel!

We also contacted a friend of *Call Sign* in

Holland, **Hans Dooren** of the Dutch section of the **London Vintage Taxi Association**. But contact between the two proved difficult.

Then José had a turn of good luck. Representatives of LTI always read *Call Sign* and they spotted the José letter. We then received a letter from **Nigel Walters**, LTI's Head of Overseas Operations, who offered to help José get his manual and asked us for contact details.

Some time afterwards, Nigel contacted *Call Sign* again and told us that LTI had solved José's problem and as Nigel told us: **"José's manuals have been sent and judging by his response, his problem has been solved...we think!"**

José wrote back to LTI (we also think) in gratitude. He told them:

*"Estimated N. Walters:*

*Completion to receive his he sent FX4R of the Austin's manuals, that I have seemed to very interesting and that I thank him enormously. Any piece of advice, suggestion or information that I wish to do, he will be very good received and thanked.*

*I am in debt with you. If some Spain wishes to, please, not doubt in asking me for it.*

*Attentively*

*José M. Basadre Montesinos"*

We agree with Nigel Walters and as Monty Python might have said – José's problem is now an ex-problem!

Our sincere thanks go to LTI on behalf of José and we assume that they will be brushing up on their Spanish for the "one or two" questions that José and his dictionary will no doubt now be coming up with!

## Power Pill DaC Driver Test Results...



As you will have read in the May *Call Sign*, Power Pill UK Ltd gave Dial-a-Cab drivers an exclusive offer to try out their product, the Power Pill, for free in return for data and feedback. Over 140 drivers took up the offer and many of these have now completed the first few stages of their research. The feedback, according to Power Pill, in their words was "...very interesting and quite remarkable."

Leon Warner, CEO of Power Pill UK Ltd told *Call Sign*:

"We asked drivers to complete five tanks of fuel without the Power Pill and to give us their own thoughts on how their cabs were running re engine noise, black smoke, acceleration and fuel economy. Obviously comments varied, but the general picture seemed to be one of "a noisy engine, black smoke and poor acceleration - but this is what my cab has always done, so I guess that's how it will always be."

We then sent drivers their first free pack of Power Pill and asked the same questions again. Here are just two comments from Dial-a-Cab drivers...

Improved emissions and much better fuel economy – **John Bailey (D47)**

Engine smoother, power up and feels a lot tighter like a new engine – **Daren Stratford (P08)**

Now we at Power Pill know that we are never going to please every cab driver, but these comments show just how happy the majority of drivers are - almost all drivers who finished their two free packs have now become permanent customers. We hope these comments will encourage others to start using the Power Pill and experience the benefits first hand."

The Power Pill can be purchased from JVBright at Southbank Service Station, Southwark, or from Power Pill direct on 0845 1 30 80 77.

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In what he described to **Call Sign** as a "careless accident", Dial-a-Cab driver **Ibrahim Mehmet (J45)** virtually sliced off both the thumb and index finger of his left hand – the hand most needed in the cab. Both were badly mangled whilst Ibrahim was attempting to build a bedroom unit for his sister.

A former builder, Ibrahim explained to **Call Sign** that he had been using an electric table saw and lost concentration for a split second – long enough for the saw to slip off the wood and slice through the two fingers that were then literally left hanging by a thread. Blood went everywhere – even onto his sister's ceiling – as it squirted out of the almost-dismembered fingers.

His sister rushed him to St Georges Hospital in Tooting for whom he was full of praise. "Within 36 hours," he told us, "I had been operated on and was back home. This was no minor op," he added, "I went down to the theatre at 10.30pm and didn't come back up until 7am!"

Now he has to face the reality of what that moment of carelessness caused.

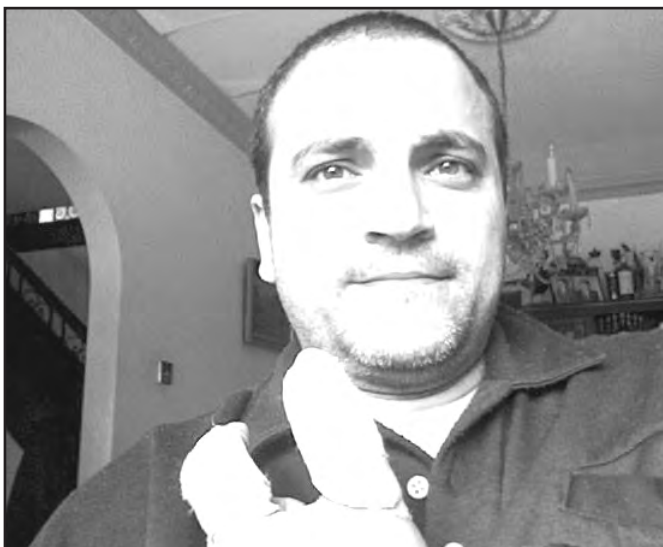
"I could kick myself!" he said. "As a former builder, the bedroom unit should have been a doddle for me, but I just relaxed my mind for that one second. Now my taxi insurance company will no longer cover me as they say I am unable to control the cab and stupidly, I never thought to make plans for anything going wrong in the future. As a consequence, I never took out health or sickness insurance, so money is obviously going to be tight. One thing it has given me is a real insight into how some of our disabled clients feel. I have always covered Westminster trips if not too inconvenient, but now – if I get back to work – I would try to cover them as a priority. But at this moment, I can't use the gear lever, the DaC terminal or even grip the steering wheel because even using my other three fingers causes terrible pain in the two damaged ones."

Ibrahim's hand was put into a splint and left in what he described as a really awkward and uncomfortable position. It was scheduled to come off at around 6 to 8 weeks, when the rest of the healing process would hopefully begin. However, in addition to cutting his fingers and tendons, Ibrahim also fractured some bones in his fingers and had a pin put through his thumb.

Ibrahim continued: "Almost like a scene from a black comedy, I also received a complaints form from Tom Whitbread for not doing 40 trips in that month! I felt rather upset about it and my wife phoned the office on my behalf to explain why I wasn't working. But DaC's reaction to my wife's call really amazed me and I'd like to thank Tom Whitbread and members of the DaC Board for their reaction to my unfortunate accident and the flowers that were sent to me immediately after the call. I don't know why, but I just didn't expect such a swift reaction to my accident from either Tom or Val Gomez in Driver Services, who had spoke to my wife."

He went on: "Nobody likes to be told off, but I now realise that we are all equal on DaC. If you break the rules you should

## DaC Driver Slices off Two Fingers in DIY Accident!



**Ibrahim shows Call Sign where the two fingers used to be**

feel like that on DaC until my accident. But their reaction has made me feel like someone who is appreciated. I can only thank them..."

Ibrahim ended by offering a warning to DaC drivers: "Please be careful when doing any DIY around the house. I was an expert, yet look what has happened to me! Due to the accident, I cannot even go to the toilet alone and have to

expect to be punished, but if there is a good reason, then they are not unbending. When I hopefully return to work, I will give that much more effort in support of the Society in my job as a cab driver. I am still shocked at the severity of my accident, but almost as shocked to receive such support from total strangers. Thank you all very much – no longer strangers, but more like family. I had been on Radio Taxis for 7 years and felt like a number and to be honest, part of me had begun to

rely on my wife. If this can happen to me, it can happen to anyone. Hopefully I'll never be that careless again!"

Ibrahim had been told that doctors would be happy for him to drive a cab again from July 3. Unfortunately an infection has now delayed his recovery for a further month. DVLA regulations had already required 8 – 12 weeks recuperation from hand surgery before they will allow you to drive again.

Hopefully early August will see Ibrahim finally return to driving his taxi.

***You may not need us now, but cut us out for when you do!***



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The PCO have announced that the emission systems shown below have, as of 18 May, been approved following independent testing by the Energy Saving Trust (EST) and 6 months of in-service durability testing to Euro 3 level on a number of licensed London taxis operated by prominent fleet proprietors. Once any of the systems below are installed onto the specified model of taxi, it will become Euro 3 compliant and fully meet the requirements of the strategy.

Following the testing period, the EST and PCO have also said that each installation should be accompanied by very specific servicing requirements. As a minimum, it is recommended that basic service operations of renewing all relevant filters (air, fuel and oil), reconditioning or renewal of fuel injectors and the correct adjustment of the fuel pump is carried out prior to - or during - the fitment of any of the approved technologies. These basic measures will ensure that maximum efficiency is achieved from the various systems when fitted and will support any potential warranty issues should they arise at any point in the future.

The following is a composite list of the PCO approved emission reduction systems, the taxis they are applicable to and where the individual systems can be fitted...

**TaxiCat SYSTEM: (For pre-Euro LTI Fairway, Euro 1 LTI Fairway / Fairway Driver and the Euro 1 LTI TX1).**

Contact details:

Camberfield Taxis (Brentford)  
2085689643

A1 Taxis (Hackney)

020 85250050

Richmond Rd Cab Centre (Hackney)

020 72757589

Frankum & Kaye (Wood Green)

020 88895537

Coachline Taxis (Kennington)

020 72772200

**Cost: £2000**

**STT Emtec CleanCab system: (For pre-Euro LTI Fairway, Euro 1 LTI Fairway / Fairway Driver, Euro 1 LTI TX1 and the Euro 2 LTI TX1).**

Contact details:

KPM – UK Taxis Ltd (Bethnal Green)

020 73772182

London Central Cab Company (Herne Hill) 020 75019998

**Cost: £1,975 + VAT**

**Van Aaken vADDERS system: (For pre-Euro LTI Fairway, Euro 1 LTI Fairway / Fairway Driver and the Euro 1 LTI TX1).**

# Emission Systems:

## A PCO Update



Contact details:

A1 Taxis (Hackney)

020 85250050

Richmond Rd Cab Centre (Hackney)

020 72757589

Frankum & Kaye (Wood Green)

020 88895537

S&H Cabs (Edmonton)

020 88031437

South London Taxis (Croydon)

020 86651435

**Cost: £1500 + VAT and fitting**

**DiNOx system: (For Pre-Euro LTI Fairway and Euro 1 LTI Fairway / Fairway Driver.)**

Contact details:

Dinex Emission Technology (Denmark)

+45 63412600

**Cost: £3,300 + VAT**

**PEAK system: (Pre-Euro LTI Fairway and Euro 1 LTI Fairway / Fairway Driver).**

Contact details:

A1 Taxis (Hackney)

020 85250050

Richmond Rd Cab Centre (Hackney)

020 72757589

Beesley Engineering (Peckham)

020 73581272

Cricklewood Carriers Cab Co.

(Cricklewood) 020 84525461

Kingston & Wimbledon Taxi Centre

(Kingston) 020 85411777

**Cost: £1,375 + VAT + fitting**

## Licensing appointments and log books

In order to assist the owners of LTI taxis to identify whether their vehicles fall into the requirements of phase one of the emissions strategy, the PCO is requesting that when owners make their licensing appointment, they should have available their vehicle's DVLA log book (V5). This will assist PCO staff to identify by means of the chassis number and date of first registration, if their taxi falls into phase one of the strategy. Failure to have the log book available at the time of making a licensing appointment could result in a delay to the process.

The PCO had made available a number of additional Saturday licensing appoint-

ments to accommodate owners of taxis affected by phase one of the strategy who wished to bring forward the re-licensing of their vehicle. **All of those appointments have now been filled.** It is not currently expected to be possible to provide any further appointments for this purpose.

## July/August Pre-Euro or Euro 1 taxis – Covering letter needed if not converted

As stated above, the Mayor's taxi emissions strategy requires that as of 1 July 2006, all vehicles of a Pre-Euro or Euro 1 standard will, when presented for their annual licensing inspection, be required to have fitted either PCO/ EST approved emissions reduction equipment or an approved conversion to run on an alternative fuel so that the vehicle meets Euro 3 emission standards for NOx and PM10.

However, the PCO have explained to **Call Sign** that the supply and fitting infrastructure is not yet fully in place and appointments for conversions may not be available as early as some proprietors may require in order to comply with the strategy.

**In recognition of this, the following arrangements will apply for cabs that have plates which expire in July or August 2006.**

For these vehicles only, proprietors may book a vehicle licence appointment in July or August 2006 as long as they have a covering letter from one of the approved installers of emission reduction systems, which states that the vehicle has an appointment date for the conversion. **The appointment date must not exceed thirty days from the date of issue of the licence plate.**

Once the conversion has been completed, the approved installers will complete and date the reverse side of the blue type approval certificate which will then state that the conversion has been completed. The vehicle must be presented at the PCO with the blue type approval certificate to be checked and endorsed by the PCO (no appointment will be required). This must be completed within the thirty day period.



# LTFUC meet Princess Anne at the Ahoy Centre

The May issue of **Call Sign** wrote of the specially equipped boat for disabled young people that the London Taxidriver's Fund for Underprivileged Children had donated to the **Adventure Help and Opportunities for Youth** (Ahoy) centre on the Thames at Deptford. The cost of the boat was in excess of £11,000.

On Thursday 1 June 2006, Her Royal Highness, Princess Anne attended the centre to officially open the slipway. The Hon President, Hon Chairman and committee of the LTFUC were invited along to attend the ceremony.

The committee were introduced to the Princess and explained about the work the LTFUC does on behalf of the London licensed taxi trade.



The Princess meets Mike and Maxine Son. Bill Tyzack (C06) is to the left of the photo partially hidden behind the Princess



Princess Anne meets Gerry Dunn (S84) and Ray Levy, the fund's Press Officer

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# DIAL-A-CAB COMPLAINTS DEPARTMENT

## E14C

We still have some confusion with drivers saying they do not know how to book into the E14C, E14S and E140 **ranks** - or do they mean if they use that excuse, then they can cheat on other subscribers? It really is quite easy to understand. All of the above are sub-zones of E14...

**E14C** is an active **PHYSICAL RANK** between the hours of **0600** and **2100...**

**E14S** is an active **PHYSICAL RANK** between the hours of **0600** and **2100...**

The ranks on the island become **NON-PHYSICAL** between the hours of **2100** and **0600** when **E140** comes into play. To be booked into that rank, you have to be within the security cordon of the island and not just in the **E14** zone.

At **0200**, **E140** becomes **E14C**, but for these four hours it is **still NON-PHYSICAL**, but again, you must be between the two security cordons.

The reason for reverting to E14C for those four hours is because that zone has 8 back-up zones attached, whereas E140 just has one.

Then at **0600** in the morning, you can put onto the rank of your choice and rebook in. By doing this, every subscriber on the rank will be in the correct position.

## Heathrow

Once again I will try and clarify the rules when booking into zone WW00. If you are within the airport perimeter roads (these are the ones named North Perimeter Road etc), or in the taxi feeder park, you may book into WW00. These rules were brought in to enable us to get a taxi to the client much quicker than when we just let you book in the feeder park with a group number. If a short ride to Hatton Cross was fired out, it would not suit someone who had done 3 hours in the feeder park, but it would suit a driver who had just dropped at one of the terminals and was heading back to town. Since these rules were implemented, clients have got their taxis much quicker and costs are kept down.

When we used the feeder park as a booking in point, we lost more clients due to late pickups due mainly to drivers who carried on talking or finishing their food before pulling out of the park. They then expected the client to pay for the time they had been waiting in the cab park!

Now if a driver gets a cancellation on a credit ride at Heathrow, he is given



the amount shown on the meter. So if you have spent 3 hours in the feeder park, you must think before you accept a credit ride, if it is scrubbed you cannot claim for time you have spent eating, drinking tea or reading the newspaper. The fare to and from the airport is very good; an act of being greedy can drive clients to get an alternative supplier.

Please let's not act as the taxi trade did over Welbeck minicabs back in the sixties, believing that we were the only ones the public would want and then just bury our heads in the sand. Remember, when you bury your head in the sand your backside is left sticking up in the air and you know what happens then...!

## 40 Jobs

Last month we still had many drivers who had not completed the minimum amount of credit rides as stated in the official rulebook. There could be many reasons for this lack of participation - illness, holidays, overhauls or just plain: "I couldn't care less - I'll pick up off the street"

If street work should ever dry up, the first place these idiots who fall into my last category will look, is for account work - the work that the hard-working, honest subscribers of this Society are doing their hardest to retain.

Over the weeks and months, I think I've heard every excuse in the book for not completing the minimum amount of rides. A week in overhaul, a two-week holiday, a week off with a cold or just bad signals are some of the reasons. But then subscribers who really want the Society to succeed have had one of the above reasons for not working, but in the following 10 days they have completed the 40 jobs! Some drivers are completing 10 to 12 credit rides in a day; they are not greedy - just hard working.

As you will see on page 16 in this magazine, at the last 2 complaints meetings the Committees have taken a seri-

ous view of this threat to our existing clients. If subscribers over the past 18 months have not completed 40 jobs in the majority of these months, they have been expelled.

Nearly every one of those subscribers said that because they pay their subs, they are supporting the Society. But that's not the case. They have over £2000 worth of Dial-a-Cab equipment sitting in their taxi collecting dust, while other drivers are waiting to get onto our circuit and cover work that they know is more lucrative than street work.

**None of the rules explained above are new; I have once again tried to explain the correct procedure. This is because drivers are trying to use ignorance to get off answering complaints.**

When drivers sit on a Complaints committee, they are supplied with a folder containing all the procedure rules, official rulebook as registered with the Friendly Society and photocopies of past *Call Sign* articles explaining the rules and how you have to abide by them. If a driver fails to read *Call Sign* magazine, that is down to them but we as a Board of Management send it to their home to save them having to go and collect it. One subscriber actually said to me that as soon as the envelope arrives containing the magazine, he throws it straight into the rubbish bin. Does this show you an insight into this subscriber's commitment to the Society?

## Theatre Tickets

Once again over the past 2 months, I have been lucky to have been able to acquire free tickets to many of the new and some of the long-running shows in London's west end. I get many drivers call me up and ask after the offer has finished, if I can get them tickets? Usually the answer is no. Once a show gets a foothold, then tickets are hard to come by. Most of the tickets we get are promotional, which means they are nearly always at the beginning of a run. So when you see the offers, get your tickets straight away - do not put it off until a later date.

## And a bit of controversy!

The Editor always likes me to include something controversial because it generates letters for his mailbag! Well this

*continued on page 29*



## Rubbish for brains...?

They are on the road 24/7. Some arrive daily, others weekly, while sometimes you wait for them and along come three at once. They block the streets and think they own the road seeming to pick and chose what it is they want to pick up. Yet they always seeming to enjoy causing those tailbacks. They park in the middle of the road and wait until the vehicle is loaded, then move at their own pace to the next destination.

Even zigzag lines at crossings hold no fear for them! Hoot them and they proceed even slower. The vehicles - although new - always have a pungent smell about them and the drivers are not much better! No, this is not the much-maligned London taxi driver, but the good old-fashioned dustbin men! Perhaps what they pick up has mingled with their brains - if they ever had any to start with.

## Women drivers

That's enough controversy for one issue. Let's now look at a much safer topic - women drivers, because I now know why women are not as good at driving as men.

Last November, a female set sail, solo around the world from east to west - the wrong way, apparently. Why anyone should want to do this is beyond me. I just hope she's not on the M25 when I, or anyone else is on it!

## From the front seat of his TXII these are...



## The Views of a Grumpy Old Man

### What price free speech?

Originally we went to war in Iraq because we believed there were weapons of mass destruction hidden there. This has now changed to imposing democracy and rule change, along with freedom of speech.

We in the west have always had this, at least until Tony came to power. Brian Hawe, along with his placards, has been

protesting in Parliament Square since 2001 and in doing so has become a thorn in the side of and an embarrassment, to the present government. Moving out only for the late Queen Mother's funeral, he has stayed put - day and night - for five years.

In late May, under the new laws of terrorism, police swooped on him in a dawn raid, removing most of his placards and signs. One of the many reasons given was that terrorists could hide behind his signs and make assassination attempts at Members of Parliament. In all, it took over 50 policemen and women to move the offending objects with a cost upwards of £27,000...

## Musical chairs

After the recent local elections where Labour lost heavily, a reshuffle of the government hierarchy took place. Most just swapped jobs, some up, some down, and some sideways. It is mostly the same faces with different jobs, but have you noticed that Scottish people hold most of our top jobs? I thought they had their own parliament with a brand new building paid for by us? Come back Hadrian - but this time build a bigger wall.

## Think of a number...

We know exactly where any untaxed car is located among the millions of cars in Britain. But we haven't got a clue as to where thousands of illegal immigrants and terrorists are located. Maybe we should put the DVLA in charge of immigration...

**Chas Kissin (P99J)**

# DIAL-A-CAB COMPLAINTS DEPARTMENT

*continued from page 28*

month it's Camden Borough Council, the council run by do-gooders - women who run around in Dilly Dream glasses, hair designed by using a pudding basin, hairy tweedy skirts and open leather sandals with unkempt toe nails! And that's just the good looking ones! The men have mangy old beards incorporating a few field mice, tweedy jacket, corduroy trousers and brogue shoes.

These gentle folk have installed new traffic cameras to catch you doing over 20mph - cameras that even produce a photo of the driver. They say this will do away with speed humps - if you want to believe that. I wonder which of Tony Blair's friends companies installed the speed humps; you will most probably find them in the House of Lords with a Knighthood. We all know that these cameras are not to keep down the speed, they are just to generate money for the council to waste on people who should not be in the borough.

Do you think these cameras are going to stop toe rags that have stolen your pride and joy and are doing handbrake turns up Fleet Road and Downshire Hill with no insurance or tax? If you believe

that, come in and join the real world.

The best way to stop these people is put the Metropolitan Police Traffic Division back on the road in force. Get them to work alongside the council, using their tow-away trucks and holding compounds for a fee. If the traffic division stop a person with no tax, MOT or insurance, then tow them away to a compound until all the documents are correct. If this is not done within 14 days, then scrap the car or bike.

It could also be used for drivers using a mobile phone, something that seems to be on the increase. Another one of Blair's keep-the-people-happy laws that just do not work. If the police catch someone using a mobile phone while driving, then get the police to issue a £100 fixed penalty ticket with an added £25 pound for a council wheel clamp.

The car will then be clamped until the full price is paid either by credit card or cash; if this is not done within 24 hours then the car is removed to a car pound and incurs storage charges. You will only stop these criminal acts if you hit the drivers were it hurts - take the car away and make them walk.

They also say by keeping car speeds down, you will stop children getting knocked down.

Sorry, am I missing something? If a child gets knocked down, where is the parental control? Do not put all the blame onto the driver. When I was a child, if I went too near the road, I got a clip around the ear and I did not do it again.

And before anyone says that I advocate parents hitting children, I do not unless it is a harmless deterrent. Before any hairy skirted do-gooder starts shouting, I know which is better - a clip around the ear for the child or as when I was an ambulance driver having to tell the parent that their only child was dead, as I was retrieving their mutilated body out from under a vehicle. It might give you something to ponder over.

To all those drivers who are off with an illness or have been over the past 2 months, I wish you well and hope to see you out working again soon.

**Tom Whitbread**  
**DaC Complaints Officer**

## Dial-a-Cab driver Eddie Lambert covers the PH&T show at Coventry for Call Sign...

Following the disappointing PH&T Show at Wembley last October caused mainly by a clash with half term holidays and religious festivals, the organisers (*Private Hire & Taxi Monthly*) have changed the format from two shows a year over two days each, to just the one show but to hold it over 3 days. They also changed the venue to the Ricoh Stadium, the new home of Coventry City Football Club.

As Coventry is also the home of LTI and

# Private Hire and Taxi Show 2006

Patons (TW200), both companies ran trips to their factories – something that was popular with many drivers.

As usual, the bulk of the space was taken up with a large choice of vehicles. In addition,

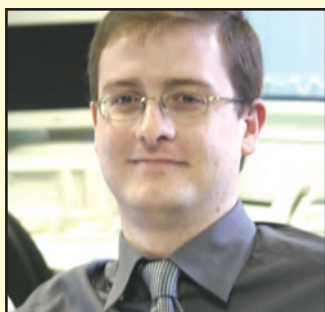
there was everything you could need to start up and run a radio circuit - from radio equipment of various levels, telephone booking equipment, vehicle navigation equipment and office sundries such as tea, coffee soft drinks and even gaming machines! Not forgetting of course, credit card swipe machines, driver sundries such as cleaning agents, greetings boards, receipt pads, licensing plates, roof top lights, alternative fuel systems to reduce emissions, legal advisers, accident cover, driver organisations and even drivers!



**A TXII Chassis on show at the LTI stand but visitors were also interested in the twincabs!**

*In a world where technology moves at an astounding pace, DaC Network Administrator Jonathen Winterburn takes an occasional look at the latest gadgets...*

## Jon Asks: Whats New?



My first tree house consisted of about a dozen pieces of different-sized wood and was only just capable of taking the weight of a 10-year old. It seems things have moved on a little since - especially if you are looking at the new modular tree house from UK design studio **Sybarite** ([www.sybarite-uk.com/009.htm](http://www.sybarite-uk.com/009.htm)). The 'Concept Tree House' is designed to be built in rural areas of England, where planning authorities frown upon bog standard dwellings that could impact on all that greenery. That said, some 'flexibility' of planning regulations would be required to pull this one off! According to the company:

*"The 'belly' of the tree house accommodates undulating kinetic baffles that utilise wind power to generate electricity.*

### How the new treehouse might look

*The plan form also meanders to the extent that modular sections can be pre-fabricated so that the overall size can vary from a single bedroom house up to a five-bedroom model. The prefabricated design can be installed on site within two weeks, is extremely lightweight, uses many recycled products, is part self-sustainable and low on maintenance."*

As a concept, this may never actually happen and as a reality there's little chance of ever affording it. Still, it beats a dozen pieces of dodgy wood any day....!

**Jonathen Winterburn**  
DaC Network Administrator

## Importing drivers from Eastern Europe

Incredibly open, a company going under the name of **Dunross** were advertising that they provide drivers from the Czech Republic already trained and vetted as cabbies! Apparently they run a training school in Prague and train the drivers according to where they are destined for, so a driver going to Plymouth will be trained to know their way around Plymouth whilst one destined for Darlington would be trained for there. Apparently Matrix - a PH operation based in southwest London and part of the **Radio Taxis Group**, already have 30 drivers sourced by Dunross at a cost believed to be £1,000 a head!

The company behind Dunross is no stranger to the trade or controversy - it's Taxifast who control the Taxi-Bank operation that is well known within the trade for trying to takeover everything and doing anything they can to circumvent any obstructions to their desires and who are always quick in trying to push any legal obstructions to their plans out of the way (see Aug 2002 *Call Sign* or online at: <http://www.dacallsign.co.uk/02/Aug02/page28.html>).

One stand I took an interest in was **Limoseen**, who supply an LED name board that really catches the eye. The only drawback I found when talking to them was the cost of around £70 each (+ VAT). I asked how much for 2,000 explaining that I was a DaC member? They said they had already been down to see **Brian Rice** and had a good meeting, but could not say much more at present. So Brian, yes - they would be great as this year's Xmas present or even if DaC sold them at a subsidised price, I for one would be seriously interested.

**Liza Upson**, PH&T Monthly's organiser for the show was delighted with the response to the new venue and format and told *Call Sign* she believes that once the trade realises that there is only going to be one show a year, visitor levels will climb even higher with exhibitors having longer to develop products and show bigger advances in between shows.

**Eddie Lambert (V37)**



**DaC's Sales Manager, Lydia Foulkes, lost her mother to Motor Neurone Disease and now tries to assist that charity whenever possible. The London Marathon proved to be such an opportunity. Lydia takes up the story...**

"After I ran the *Nike Nocturnal 10k* two years ago to raise money for MND, I toyed with the idea of running the *Flora London Marathon* and on two occasions had started to train for the big race. However, both times I found that my knees were so painful that I had to stop. Incidentally, I recently discovered running machines at my local gym – and aren't they sooo much better than running on roads!

So this year I got in touch with the south-east London Branch of MND to offer my hand at fundraising. Aware that the disease which took my Mum, Hazel, requires a huge amount of research and development in order to make it obsolete, means hard cash to fund it.

I have been following the life of **John Bell**, who was diagnosed with MND at the age of 27 and who has agreed for his experiences to be recorded through these dark days on website <http://www.johnsjourney.org>. As time is the only commodity we all truly have, but with no knowing how much of it that we get, it makes it so precious. John is keeping the record to raise awareness of MND and his actions humble me. Our world does have some amazing people in it.

Having committed myself to helping at the London Marathon, I was told that we would be based at the 12-mile mark and to meet at *The Gregorian* on Jamaica Road, where the landlord and lady generously allowed MND to take over the pub for the day. This was a really important flagstone mark during the race and was massively supported by the watching public.

I had woken up early in preparation for some serious bucket shaking and was one of the first to arrive. This strategy paid off as I arrived there before the runners and managed to get in front of those waiting and asked for their support. I was just overwhelmed with their generosity.

During the morning, the weather changed and by the time the elite runners came

# Lydia Helps MND at the London Marathon

**Lydia collecting for MND among the Marathon crowd  
pic Claire Norman (07949 332 365)**

through, everyone was quite soggy. I was amazed to learn that some of the runners were actually pacemakers, who ran virtually the whole race, but who ducked out at around the 25-mile mark after assuring a fast time for the winner. Never having run the race, I would think the wet weather was quite refreshing for all of them!

As we stood there shaking our buckets, the pub DJ tanked up the sounds and the onlookers started on some serious Gregorian drinking. Sharing the day with St George meant the pub was packed and we were really well supported. We had around twenty volunteers and between us raised over £1200. It really felt so worthwhile being involved.

Should you know anyone who has this dreadful disease, log onto [www.mndassociation.org](http://www.mndassociation.org) and help out with some dosh. We are getting there in raising awareness, but it does seem that until a celebrity who is in the public eye is affected, MND will remain something of an unknown and this will limit the funds that are available. Yet as many people are affected by MND in this country as are affected by HIV."

**Ed's Note:** *Motor Neurone Disease is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that attacks the upper and lower motor neurones. Degeneration of the motor neurones leads to*



*weakness and wasting of muscles, causing increasing loss of mobility in the limbs and difficulties with speech, swallowing and breathing.*

*Whenever Call Sign bears of Motor Neurone Disease, we also think of former DaC driver, Paul Bishop, who died from MND on 17 May 1999 at the young age of 44. Paul himself did a lot of running for charity alongside Call Sign writer Bob Woodford...*

*So well done Lydia...*

## Call Sign

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# Edinburgh shock as they relax licensing conditions

**Visitors to Edinburgh will know that getting a cab there – be it from Holyrood Palace, Edinburgh Castle, the Royal Mile or just upmarket shopping in St Andrews Square – always meant the same type of taxis as we have in London. But in a shock decision on 1 June, Edinburgh Council decided to reverse its previous decision of 2002 and relax the licensing conditions to allow the use of alternative vehicles as taxis in the Royal City.**

Understandably, LTI were shocked and told Call Sign that they believed the decision was taken on the basis of a report by consultants Colin Buchanan and Partners that LTI claimed was fundamentally flawed in not recognising that the accident statistics used included those involving private hire vehicles as well as taxis.

The Coventry manufacturers of the TXII added that the decision would mean “a range of converted vans” could now operate as taxis – a direct contradiction to the previous decision taken by Edinburgh Council when they had reconfirmed that only distinctive, purpose built taxis with their 25 feet turning circle could be used – a requirement in Edinburgh taxis for over 50 years.

Matthew Cheyne, Sales & Marketing Director at LTI Vehicles told Call Sign:

“We are deeply disappointed by this decision which we know does not reflect the views of the trade in Edinburgh or the public. It is not only a question of relaxing the Conditions of Fitness, but the safety implications that result from introducing less distinctive vehicles as Hackney Carriages. This decision will make it impossible for the travelling public to easily distinguish between taxis and private hire vehicles and will inevitably lead to confusion between the two forms of service.

“We have always said that we welcome increased competition but that this should not be achieved by lowering standards. If LTI can develop a taxi that meets conditions that have served Edinburgh well for over 50 years, it is

certainly possible for other much larger manufacturers to do the same. This decision is one which we believe is flawed and one which we firmly intend to challenge through the appropriate channels.”

Edinburgh Council will now have to draft new Licensing Conditions to give effect to this decision and it is expected that this relaxation of the CoF will allow identical vehicles to be used as both taxis and private hire vehicles.

The London PCO in a statement following the Edinburgh decision, said that it had reached its own conclusions in relation to the London taxi market and traffic conditions after extensive research and consultation with stakeholders.

They added: “The PCO acknowledge that conditions differ in Edinburgh from those in London, allowing for a different decision. It was found that in London, the Turning Circle Requirement offers tangible significant benefits to the travelling public that outweigh the unsubstantiated benefits in passenger amenity, safety, environmental protection and cost that a more competitive market would allegedly bring. The PCO does not support a monopoly in the supply of taxis and will welcome all vehi-

cles into the London taxi market that meet the Conditions of Fitness.

“Buchanan’s have reviewed the considerable work carried out by and on behalf of the PCO, but have not discussed their analysis or conclusions with the PCO at any stage despite being invited to do so. Such discussions might have aided their understanding of what is inevitably a complex piece of research. The PCO does not agree with certain of Buchanan’s conclusions with regard to the London situation.

“Allied Vehicles claim for its vehicle did not stand up to scrutiny. It is noted that although they allege they had legal advice that the decision was flawed, they did not legally challenge the decision when they had the opportunity to do so.”

Gerry Facenna, who as Chairman of Cab Direct – who produce the E7 and which is part of the Allied Vehicles group – said that he was delighted with the decision and that it meant Edinburgh drivers now had a choice of vehicle. He also said that he would be passing on his concerns regarding the recent PCO report to the Office of Fair Trading, claiming that it could now seen to be flawed following the Edinburgh result.



In addition to the E7, this taxi from Scotcab could now soon be hitting Edinburgh's streets

## LTI Appoint New Government Affairs Manager

LTI Vehicles have welcomed Richard Daniels as their new Government Affairs Manager.

Richard has moved from a leading international public affairs agency where he was an Associate Director with experience of transport issues. He also previously worked at the House of Commons after finishing his postgraduate studies at Sussex University.

At a recent meeting at Brunswick House, he told *Call Sign*: “I am delighted to join LTI at this time. There are clearly a range of complex public policy issues which we need to keep on the political agenda and commercial challenges which I look forward to contributing to.”

He went on to add: “It will be my role to ensure that the unique features of the *black cab*, including its recognisability, accessibility, build quality and 25ft turning circle, remain central to deci-

sion-makers and stakeholders considerations and that these features continue to be retained as licensing conditions for the benefit of both the trade and public.”

Richard, who has already assisted *Call Sign* in its latest driver-visit to the factory in Coventry, replaces Chris Kelsey who left earlier this year following the birth of a baby by wife Laura and the excessive travelling he was doing to get to work.





## Weddings...

"Marriage is a friendship recognised by the police." R.L. Stevenson...

Dress, shoes, cake, ring; is it true love or just the opportunity to spend a year shopping? Almost all of us go in for it and honestly, if you think females spend insane amounts of time and energy on their (and their friends' and childrens') weddings, you're wrong. When else in life can we direct a combination theatrical production, feast and party, with us as producer, director, star (or supporting actress) and hostess? We needn't learn any lines, as only the men have compulsory speaking parts and usually we don't even have to foot the bill. It's dad who still has to open his wallet in a very strong wind, or so it must seem, as the average cost is about £15,000.

We gals don't bother so much now with pretending to be virgins, because though unflattering, white is still the most popular bridal colour. Nowadays, the day itself doesn't usually involve God, mark the start of your sex life, leaving home and becoming an adult as it often was in my day. Now it's more for permission to get pregnant, "officially" joining your beloved's family or ensuring one of you gets papers to stay in this country! In some cases, the big day stretches into a very long season of drink, parties and presents, starting with the engagement, lurching into stag and hen nights which may last up to a week and take place in New York or anywhere and not ending until the blessing in England for the hordes who couldn't make it to the Caribbean for the actual ceremony!

Glen and I have been to two Jewish weddings recently and one lesbian civil partnership. One bride had the full hoops and long-trained dress and needed two bridesmaids to help her to the loo. The couple's three-year-old stole the show and was cited by the rabbi as the delightful proof of the bride and groom's love.

The civil partnership, at the Unitarian Church in Hampstead and afterwards at Kenwood, inspired the minister to preach of a new era of understanding and tolerance, a happy development and antidote to George Bush and the world's problems. The gift list was a request for vouchers at *Trailfinders* to help the 'brides' get to Australia.

Our last wedding was an organic affair in a field in Oxfordshire with a CD of the music sent in advance, haystacks to sit on and Lebanese food donations to charity acceptable as gifts.

My DaCman, Glen, claims to hate weddings and refuses to get into a tie. He often says: "A bachelor is someone who never makes the same mistake once." I despair at the dowdy Victorian hairdos and having to stand for ages for the photographers before anyone gets a drink. But at my age, a party lasting 5 hours or more yet that still gets me home before midnight is fun, fun, fun!

It's too easy to be cynical. They say when a man marries his mistress, it creates a vacancy. I know from experience that a wedding ring doesn't cut off circulation and that people now start calling themselves 'single' as soon as they tire of their partner. I taught my daughter never to trust a man who refuses to give her

**Views on life, love and the laundry basket from the lady behind a DaC driver...**

# Back Seat Driver



are both in couples, but there is no talk yet of any 'big days'. I don't pressure them and once they are married, I can begin not pressuring them to have children.

Perhaps I'm blinkered? Taxi drivers in general make brilliant husbands and dads and I give a better tip to the ones who have photos of their kids or grandkids blue-tacked to their dashboards!

But I know there are also a lot of lonely drivers and it can be a lonely job. If this is you, send me your call sign and a few details. I know a lovely girl who looks much younger than she is really, who would love to meet you!

*Till then...*

*Love Poppy x x x*

his landline number or who can't explain the child seat in his car (don't ask, it happened to me once)!

I adore weddings and I always cry. My kids

**Ed's note: 'Scuse me Glen. I'd watch out because the above sounds like a proposal...!**

## TAXI DRIVERS CHARITY FOOTBALL MATCH

### The Seyhan Ali memorial cup

### Fairway Vets 1 Chelsea Diamond Vets 1

An entertaining game saw Fairways captain Ali Conteh, alongside Dean Bragg and the Powell brothers, having their hands full with Chelsea's Dave 'Cheesey' Cheeseman, Gabriel Yorke, Paul McMann and skipper Wayne Taylor. Chelsea found it increasingly difficult to break down a stubborn Fairway side that gave their visitors no respect. Chelsea took advantage of some sloppy defending on the half-hour, allowing Simon Ashen to put them ahead. The two teams of cabbies were thankful for referee Mickey Jeyes half time whistle so that 'Sven Style' substitutions could be made giving as many players as possible the chance to partake in this prestigious occasion. On the hour, Fairway grabbed their well-deserved equaliser with a break down the right flank from Sam Kennedy that produced a great 30-yarder to totally bemuse the Chelsea keeper.

The game ended in a draw and both teams retired to the **Horn of Plenty** pub where the guvnor, Billy, had laid on a banquet with some ice cold beers!

**Grateful thanks must go to the following for their support and commitment in making this annual charity game possible:**

Sehyhan's mum and dad, Sener and Emin and brothers Murat and Mehmet.

Match day sponsors; Dial-a-Cab's **Call Sign** Magazine, Martin Cordell & Co, M&H Taxis and KBH Transport Media.

Match organiser Stephen Powell, ably assisted by Dean Bragg, Darren Powell and Wayne Taylor, not forgetting Billy at the 'Horns'

Russell Hall for arranging today's sponsors and advertising in the Taxi trade press and on BBC Radio London's Danny Kelly Sports Show.

Referee Mickey Jeyes and photographers Jim Rainbird and Kevin Webb.

Last but not least, the cab drivers and their friends for their participation and generous contribution. The match was a great success raising £1,225 for **Cancer Research UK** and the **Make A Wish Foundation**.

The first annual event to be held for the *Michael Ascott Memorial Shield* took place on Sunday 4 June. The Social Committee of *The Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers* had put the event together and Mickey would have been both pleased and proud of the Treasure Hunt.

The idea for the event came from Jim Pullum (ex-R45)) who also designed the questions. Cabs contained a team of four plus the driver and had to find their way through the clues to various parts of London. Along the way, teams had various items to collect and photographs to take. The only rule was: 1. There are no Rules. As a consequence, participants were warned to be careful when leaving their cab in case an opposing team were able to steal photos or collectable items from them!

The items to be collected included a beer mat, a stranger's phone number, a fuel filter for a TXII and Range Rover. Photos required included the team on an open top bus, the team with a 6-foot bear - or even a photo of the team with a member of the Royal Family!

The Treasure Hunt finished at 2pm at the Prince William Henry pub in Blackfriars Road. Teams not arriving by the appointed time lost points. Once there everyone enjoyed the buffet prepared by the landlord, Kevin Sheey and his staff.

**The winning team's cab (Typical M&O) was driven by Jim Rainbird (T25) with the Ascott's team coming second and Hertfordshire Hawks coming in third. All agreed that it had been great fun.**

Sean Ferry, Chairman of the Social Committee said: "Our thanks go to everyone

# DaC's Jim Rainbird Wins Taxi Treasure Hunt!



**Mickey Ascott's granddaughter, Natalie, presents the Treasure Hunt winners shield to Jim Rainbird**

who has taken part in the event. I would also like to thank the Committee who have all worked hard to organise this event. We have raised approximately £1000 which is for The

Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers' Charitable Fund."

**Call Sign thanks Taxi Globe Editor Sandie Goodwin for the report...**

**Ex-DaC driver Bob Woodford writes a regular column for Call Sign from his new home at Languedoc in France...**

## Call Sign En La Belle France



Dial-a-Cabbies are still making their way to the South of France this summer to enjoy a holiday on the sun-kissed Mediterranean coastline. The temperatures here, as I write these notes, are up in the 80s and with no sign of any let-up.

We have now provided accommodation to yet another taxi-trade publication editor - Taxi Globe editor Sandie Goodwin and her husband Alan who arrived in these parts, following in the steps of Alan and Linda Fisher. **Ed's note: In case anyone thinks Bob is bribing us - we all paid!**

### And Budapest!

On a recent working trip to London, a passenger in my cab pointed out the merits of purchasing properties in Hungary now that Ryanair fly direct to Budapest. These properties actually do look interesting, are very reasonably priced



and there is a booming 'buy to let' market there also. I have actually managed to squeeze in an inspection trip myself during the past few weeks and I really found it quite interesting both from a vacation potential and investment point of view.

Budapest offers breathtaking *old world* grandeur and thriving cultural life where old architecture blends with modern design. Situated on both banks of the Danube River, the city unites the colourful hills of Buda and the wide, businesslike boulevards of Pest. Much of the charm of a visit to Budapest lies in unexpected glimpses into shadowy courtyards and in long vistas down sunlit cobbled streets.



If any readers would like to receive further information on these products, please do not hesitate to drop an email to me at [info@southoffrancelets.com](mailto:info@southoffrancelets.com) and I will forward all the necessary information on a file attached to my reply.

This is also the email address should any DaC subscriber wish to make a late summer booking now that you have earned bundles at the Chelsea Flower Show and Wimbledon Fortnight! If you'd like to see what we have in short breaks or summer vacations, just go to our website at [www.southoffranceaccommodation.com](http://www.southoffranceaccommodation.com).

*Cordialement.*

**Bob Woodford (Ex-P49)  
Saint Genies de Fontedit,  
Languedoc, France**



**Steve Shaller has been a London taxi driver for 35 years and also on DaC for many years. He sold his home in South East London three years ago and with his wife, moved to Spain where they bought a detached villa on the Costa Blanca. Steve gives Call Sign his reasons why he decided to take the plunge and retire to sunny Spain.**

"There are times when I forget that I'm living in Spain. Surrounded by so many expats, a plethora of pubs, bars, Chinese and Indian restaurants, if it wasn't for the good weather, healthy life style and the orange and lemon groves, I could be forgiven for thinking I was still living in the UK!

Moving to Spain was not an impulsive or an irrational decision, but a carefully thought out plan. As you well know, some-

# It's a Sunny Life!



Godsend. A paraffin heater and lino in all rooms were the order of the day. No way could or would I possibly believe that somewhere in the future, I would own a property in Spain and be dipping my feet into the Mediterranean waters. If I saw Margate every year, I was lucky!

For reasons too lengthy to go into, I no longer see my homeland as either good or great. It is not the country that I knew either as a child, or for that matter as a younger man. Having now lived in Spain for almost three years, I foresee my retirement as being considerably more enjoyable and financially better than if I were to spend my time in the UK.

We have British TV here in Spain. The adverts are a good indicator, giving an insight into what life is about in the UK. I do not remember having seen so many adverts for debt agencies, loans, re-mortgages and re-financing in my life. Did you know that you could solve all your debt problems by getting further in to debt? Or how about "equity release?" You can always allow some friendly financial adviser to buy and own a large portion of your estate for thrupence!

The only "equity release" for me was to sell my home in the UK and buy my home in Spain where you can still get a lot of house for your money. Spain is only just over two hours flight time from the UK, so should you be homesick and miss the frost and rain, just jump on a plane for a short break.

Spain is neither Utopia nor Paradise, but it sure has plenty to offer in terms of a relaxing and Financial-saving lifestyle.

I'm off now to dip my feet in the Mediterranean with my BBQ."

**Be lucky  
Steve Shaller (R75)**

## ARBITRATOR'S ELECTION RESULT

The following are the results of the election to replace four previous Arbiters who, following the vote at the AGM, no longer qualify as their membership of DaC has ceased...

**1917 ballot papers were despatched with 1027 being returned (aprox 53.5%) of which 3 were spoiled and not counted. The first four names below were elected...**

<b>Sid Nathan</b>	<b>377</b>
<b>David Lessman</b>	<b>338</b>
<b>Alan Green</b>	<b>296</b>
<b>Grant Davis</b>	<b>257</b>

**Not elected were the following:**

P Keefe	249
M Harris	236
S Benjamin	225
P Graves	209
R Marlow	179
M Green	152
A Watson	151
D Willett	142
L Kelvin	114
J Rothery	110
D Jefferies	110
B Groner	101
G Robertson	100
L Shurlin	69

times the best-laid plans can go wrong and there were times when I questioned myself whether I was doing the right thing. For me it was trepidation with a capital T. Realising that there were also another 240,000 fellow Brits who owned property in Spain gave me the confidence to follow suite. After all, we couldn't have all made a mistake.

Why leave the UK? And why move to Spain...?

I owe a lot to the UK. It has been a good and great country to have been born and lived in. When I was a little boy with a snotty nose, I spent much of my childhood playing on London's bombsites. These were my adventure playgrounds, sliding down air raid shelters with a sheet of corrugated roofing under my arse and participating in the ancient art of stone fighting! They were regular events for me.

My father rented a house that later came under slum clearance. The outside toilet was not for the faint hearted on a winter's morning. The chamber pot was a necessity and despite the fact that the steam rusted the bedsprings, not having to go outside and brave the elements was for me a

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More true football/taxi tales from the pen of DaC's Driver/West Ham fan Russ...

# Russell's Hall of Footie



## The greatest footballer of all time – but not at Canary Wharf!

Just as the world was caught up in the grip of World Cup fever, a small stocky South American man arrived in London a few months ago. Edson Arantes Do Nascimento – better known as Pelé – was the greatest footballer of all time.

He began his career at Santos, forcing his way into the first team by the age of 16 and making his debut for Brazil at 17 – the age he collected his first World Cup winners medal in 1958 in Sweden after scoring a hat-trick in the semi final before going onto scoring two in the final. Pelé had arrived! He became a target for hatchet men and got kicked to pieces in the World Cups of 1962 and 1966, but in 1970, surrounded by his team mates of almost equally high calibre, Pelé was the name on everyone's lips as Brazil produced unforgettable football. Pelé went onto score over 1,200 first class goals including 77 goals in 91 games for Brazil.

Now he was coming to London on his way to Germany for the World Cup. He was promoting his book (*Pelé: The Autobiography*) and on 22 May was due at Canary Wharf. This was my one and only chance to come face to face with a living legend and I wasn't letting the chance slip by. My wife's cousin, **Jane Jacobs (J59)**, said if I wore a replica Pelé shirt, I might be ushered to the front of the queue! Now it just so happens that I have a Brazilian shirt with the famous '10' and name of Pelé and as luck would have it, it still fitted! Jane's better half,

Jakey, had given me a copy of the book plus I was going to purchase another copy to be signed. I was also going to ask Pelé to sign the shirt. I can see it now...a picture of Pelé and me. The picture would have pride of place in my lounge plus the signed shirt would be framed and hung in the dining room. I hadn't told wife Gill yet, but hoped she'd understand!

I'd never had the inclination to attend a book signing in my life, but this seemed like Christmas for a small boy – except that I'm 46 and 6ft 4in! I arrived at Canary Wharf, parked the cab and found the shop where Pelé was supposed to be – but he wasn't there! The book shop staff told me to follow the signs to a separate location.

Up an escalator, through a revolving door, my mouth was beginning to dry and I was starting to feel excited on finally meeting one of my heroes. Beads of sweat were running down the back of my freshly washed and ironed Brazilian shirt. At long last, I found the end of the queue of about 150 similarly thrilled Pelé fans. I stood and waited, talked to a couple of Brazilians in the queue and chatted about the great man. They were students and had come from Oxford to see their greatest ever export.

It was 11.45am and I was 45 minutes early, but things weren't going to plan! The excited buzz of the crowd was turning to whispers of discontent. I told my newly formed mates from Brazil that I was going to investigate and found there was not a cat in hell's chance of meeting Pelé. Canary Wharf security staff said that I could wait in the queue but I *might* not get to meet him! That wasn't good enough for me and I demanded to see the manager of the book

shop. I spoke to a couple of people at the front of the queue who had been there since 10.30am! They also had no chance!

The manager, rather shamefacedly, had finally arrived to tell me and the rest of the ensemble of our fate. He told us that this was Pelé's fourth book signing in 3 days and at the age of 64 he gets really tired! There were already 800 people inside and only 350 of them were going to get their books signed. We had no chance. Then he trotted out the old adage: "You can get your money back if not satisfied!" As you can imagine, I told him what I thought of his rather lame excuse and short of leading the maddening crowd to a riot, I decided to make my way back to the cab. Why let all those people carry on queuing when they had no chance was my main argument? They were still joining the back of the queue when I left! I tried to explain to some of them, but they looked at me as if I was mad. They were right; I was mad – spitting blood in fact.

As I pulled out of the car park, I joined the rank at E14S thinking what might have been. Pelé had given me the slip, just like he did all those years ago to his unsuspecting opponents on the pitch. I smiled at reflecting of what could have been until I heard the words that brought me back to civilisation: "West Ferry Road please!"

## Russell Hall (G44)

Send your footie tales to Russell at [rwball@russthehammer.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:rwball@russthehammer.fsnet.co.uk) or look out for his cab when you are out and about, reg J111 RUS. He loves a footie chat...

## Kibble's Camera!

One of the hobbies of Dial-a-Cab driver **Bill Kibble (K86)** is "now and then" photography. In this series, Bill has taken photos of places and buildings that have an original version somewhere in the public domain...

This month: Looking at Charing Cross Station in 1916 and 2006...



Charing Cross station in 1916



Charing Cross in 2006



# MAILSHOT

**Either write to Call Sign at Brunswick House or email us at - callsignmag@aol.com**

## One hundred up!

My congratulations to Alan Fisher, Editor of *Call Sign*, on completing his first hundred issues over nine years as Editor. With the backing and help of Dial-a-Cab, Alan has developed in my far from humble opinion, the licensed radio taxi trade's best in-house magazine. Alan had a good reputation as a factual, interesting and reliable journalist with many taxi trade publications before he became *Call Sign's* Editor, but being a good writer does not automatically make you a good editor. Alan is proof though, that he can be both. Under his editorship *Call Sign* allows and encourages free press on matters concerning not only Dial-a-Cab, but the cab trade in general. He is not afraid to speak his mind and even more importantly, allows others to do the same.

Well done Alan, keep up the good work, and here's looking forward to the next hundred.

**Rodney Lewis**

**Former proprietor / Editor Taxi Globe**  
Thanks Rodney. As I've told many people over the years, your advice following my early issues was invaluable. In fact, thinking about it, I may still have been Lana Sherif or even worse - begun to enjoy it! ...Ed

## Thank you Call Sign...

I am writing to thank you for *Call Sign's* kind donation to the *Make a Wish Foundation* following your charity football match. At the current time we are experiencing a 37% increase in wish referrals, so your contribution will help towards the increasing demand for wishes.

We recently granted a wish for one very brave little boy. Oliver is 4 years old and lives with clear cell sarcoma of the kidney. His greatest wish was to be a zookeeper for the day, as he loves animals so much.

Oliver's day began when he was picked up by a limousine and whisked off to Marwell Zoo in Hampshire where he received his very own zookeeper's outfit. Then he got down to the serious business of taking care of the animals. He helped feed lunch to the giraffes, camels and monkeys etc before he and his family were taken out to a restaurant for tea. His mum said: "It has been the most unforgettable day - just fantastic!"

Anyone wishing to help us further can visit our website to find out how they can become a regular giver by completing a direct debit form and help us to continue granting children's wishes. Again, thank you for your donation which helped to create some magical memories.

**Neil Jones CEO, Make a Wish Foundation**  
([www.make-a-wish.org.uk](http://www.make-a-wish.org.uk))

Call Sign made a donation on behalf of its readers to help sponsor the match along with Martin Cordell. Call Sign's footie expert, Russell Hall (G44), did the donkeywork of organising the game itself. A report on the match can be found in this issue ...Ed

## And thank you again!

Can I thank *Call Sign* for giving drivers the opportunity of visiting the LTI factory in Coventry. It was a very informative trip and LTI's management answered most of our questions. It was also interesting to see a TXII built from sheet metal into the finished article. My only concern is that they have massive quality control at every stage throughout manufacture of the vehicle, so why do we have so many problems when we collect a new cab?

**Bernie Silver (G08)**

It is a good question Bernie, but one it would be pointless asking LTI to answer because if they knew, then the problems would be solved! However, I think it's worth mentioning that regardless of what you read in the trade press, the proportion of vehicles with major problems is fairly small. That of course is of no satisfaction to those who encounter problems. In any case, I'm pleased that you and the other 9 DaC drivers found the trip to be so worthwhile. There will be another trip later this year ...Ed

## Back-up?

I would like to congratulate DaC on getting us such a high profile account back as the one in St James - as a back-up for a car company to cover their leftovers. I now understand why we had a rise in subs, it was for the Sales team to go out and get another 'T' account. My other point is regarding JPM who dispatch pre-booked trips 'As Directed' when we clearly know that it is going to EC2. This demonstrates to me that DaC treat drivers like a bunch of mugs with the Concierge system. I look forward to the usual 'I'm wrong and you're right' reply.

**Brian Cohen (C81)**

Brian, just because you support Spurs doesn't mean that you are going to get away with writing rubbish like that. What do you think would have happened to DaC had we not been first to develop Concierge? Because the reason we are - as you call us - a backup to this PH company is because they (Burgundy) have now developed their own system. It isn't currently as good as ours, but it won't take long - neither will they be the only ones to have one. Had we not been first to develop Concierge, we'd have

been back-ups to many more accounts - or been frozen out altogether. I looked into the account you refer to (as a back-up?) and the average trip before admin was added on was working out at about £24 - hardly terrible, is it? In addition, on the day I looked, they were our fifth busiest account and that involves a lot of work coming our way.

Just like our system, when the client phones Burgundy, they tell them whether they want a car or taxi - the PH company doesn't just send them their own vehicle. So we are not a back-up. The company use us both, but via the same phone number. Concierge may not have represented the way I saw my future in this business when I started in 1971, but like most drivers, I am a realist. I don't do this job for the principle of it; I do it to earn money and provided no one is trying to extract any urinary substances - and no one is - I truly believe that Concierge has played a big part in helping us (that's the drivers) do so much better financially than any other taxi company drivers. After all, everyone now knows about Concierge, yet it doesn't stop new drivers wanting to join us.

As for the AD part, I'm a driver too and I've picked up lots of work from JPM - not too many going to EC2. But if it does, then AD is how it's dispatched. Why are you making a fuss about it or is it that you're so desperate to kick Concierge? I have no doubt that most drivers now realise how much extra work we have because of it. Look at the new Citigroup account starting on 1 July - won only because of Concierge regardless of what ComCab put out re their losing it.

And by the way Brian, drivers sometimes complain about the answers given in Mailshot and say that some display a sarcastic overtone. Well just look at the content of your letter - hardly encourages a non-sarcastic answer, does it? Oh, and by the way Brian - you're wrong and I'm right! ...Ed

## Exterior signage on private hire

I've just been sitting next to a new-looking VW Sharan (reg LT06 UHR). It had Addison Lee signage on the bonnet, doors and rear hatch. I thought exterior signage had been and still was a no-no? These add-ons looked to be stuck on rather than factory-fitted as they weren't particularly well done. Perhaps *Call Sign* could look into the matter?

**Kevin Went (N19)**

I did look into it Kevin and amazingly, you were sitting next to a car that was



## MAILSHOT

## Mailshot continued from page 37

on its way to Thailand as part of the *Gumball Rally*. It was being used as a support vehicle and the PCO – who gave us the information – were assured that any stickers were removed on its return to the UK. The Event followed a 3-stage, 3000-mile driving route that incorporated Europe, Asia and the USA. What you witnessed was the beginning of stage 1 - London to Belgrade. The cars and participants were then flown to Phuket in Thailand from where they drove to Bangkok. Cars and participants then flew across the pacific to the USA for the drive from Salt Lake City to Los Angeles via Las Vegas. From there it may – or may not – return to Strand in London for a spot of Friday night “how’s your father” – but minus the logos!

## Does Stanley know...?

I have just read the May *Call Sign* and wanted to say that *Spanish Taxi* made more sense than the *Wit and Wisdom of Stanley Frankel*. However, I still support Stan's desire to have his own column in the mag and following his latest letter, the DaC drivers who start work at Heathrow just can't wait for him to do a 'signing' session at the Feeder Park Canteen! By the way, Stanley may be interested to know (though I doubt it!) that ComCab have a £20 cancellation charge on top of the meter fare for trips scrubbed at the airport, that way their drivers are not having to sacrifice 2 hours at the whim of a secretary who forgot to book her bosses car.

On a positive note, could you give Lydia in our Sales department some feedback from Heathrow drivers: On talking to passengers who usually have cars booked for them by their secretaries, the client often seems impressed that they can walk straight out to cabs on the Terminal Radio Ranks without their firm having to pay car park fees - if they know the service exists. Also, if the timing of their arrival, plus a nominal amount of time to clear customs (depending on whether an internal or external flight) and the time of the Taxi booking is accurate, they are surprised at how competitive we are pricewise! Another plus for us is that we have the M4 bus lane and access to the other bus lanes in town, which are unavailable to our Private Hire competitors and particularly useful to us in the morning and evening rush hours.

Maybe if Stanley Frankel can get that old cab of his that far out, he could be educated to understand that the Dial-a-Cab drivers hope to get a radio job from Heathrow to avoid sitting at the airport for 2 hours. Unfortunately, it is becoming all too common that a Secretary/PA forgets to book her

boss's car and then belatedly calls DaC to get herself out of trouble. On occasion, this leads to a driver - having been allocated a job after a substantial period of waiting - finding out after a relatively short time (with £5 on the meter and through no fault on his part), that the job has been scrubbed because the boss has taken another mode of transport or a cab from the Taxi rank when there was no car to meet him.

Perhaps, if even a half-wit like me can understand why a member like Peter Moll (K35) (*Mailshot, March*) might feel slightly aggrieved at earning a small amount for his time, surely someone with Stanley Frankel's enormous 'wit and wisdom' can feel some sympathy? I'm sure that Stanley feels similar frustration when after waiting for a customer on a trip with a long lead time such as Hampstead and then the job is scrubbed a short time after putting his meter on - maybe even before booked time? Why shouldn't the customer be charged? Well, the client didn't cancel the booking within a certain time and the job was actually allocated to a driver who is now unavailable to take another hiring! How would it be, Stan, if I took a hiring that I considered better than the radio job I had been allocated?

Don't take offence Stan, but I'm sure Brian Rice would be interested on your views about Gazumping and sharp practices on property as well!

**Mark White (B86)**

**Thanks for the letter Mark. I have passed your airport comments onto Lydia. I was also reminded that the setting up of the radio ranks were due mainly to DaC's perseverance before others jumped onto the bandwagon. As for Stanley, well he has long forgotten about the airport and is now well and truly into Power Pill and QLink! ...Ed**

## Stan, Stan, not the Power Pill man!

I have just read Mr Ruparella's letter (*May Call Sign*) about the Ubiee Power Pill and I simply had to write to let you know that I too have been using it with miraculous results. I would like to inform you and the rest of DaC that after just a few weeks use, my wife has now discovered that she is expecting twins. As for my old FX4 cab, which seemed to always run on 'hot', I have to tell you that since dropping Aspirin tablets into the fuel tank, it now runs on cold. What a lot of nonsense, because if the miracle pill really worked, wouldn't it be internationally recognised? Anyway, what is so special about a saving of four miles per gallon without taking into account the cost of the pill?

On a different note, congratulations to Ms Pat O'Toole's success after wearing the QLink. She states that her headaches have disappeared and she feels refreshed every day. Doesn't Ms O'Toole realise that she was suffering from a psychosomatic disorder, in other words it was all in her mind – just like me sleeping with Marilyn Monroe! It may well be that she believes the world is flat and that there was life on Mars.

**Stanley Frankel (K46)**

**How nice to read another Frankel view on life. The reason Power Pill won't work for you is the place that you put it – it is supposed to go in the fuel tank! Where you have it, it is likely to slip out every time you bend over! And Stanley, in case you require a serious answer, fuel saving is a bonus to help pay for the pills. Power Pill's true aim is lowering emissions and getting rid of smoke.**

**As for your insulting remarks to Pat O'Toole (T44), there's only one psycho involved here – and it isn't Pat! ...Ed**

## Sickness and flowers (continued)

I recently read in the March issue of *Call Sign* the letter from a woman who said that her husband had been off work for some time due to illness and that he had received no flowers, fruit or even a get-well card. I had a similar experience but with an ironic twist! I too was off sick - for five months from October 2005 until March 2006 - and despite faithfully sending in medical certificates to cover these months, I too received neither flowers, nor fruit, nor even a get well card. The only communication that I did receive from DaC was a letter from Tom Whitbread telling me that I was 'on complaint' for not doing the required 40 jobs during each of these months! I therefore made a personal visit to Brunswick Place for some kind of explanation. All the certificates that I had submitted were duly produced and verified as having been received, so I was at a loss to understand why I had been put on complaint?

The fact that I had received no 'goodies' during my time off sick was incidental, compared to the complaint, and to date I am still awaiting a written explanation regarding this incident.

Whilst I am not concerned about receiving flowers, etc for a prolonged and often painful illness, my question is why some drivers are afforded these morale-boosters to help recovery and others are not?





# MAILSHOT

## Mailshot continued from page 38

From a confused member...

**Russell Bamber (N27)**

I've looked into it Russell, and just like the example you quoted in your letter – how can I put this – you were over-looked! It should be said that DaC would-n't normally send flowers for your type of illness (lower back and knee pain), but you would hopefully have been sent a get-well card. Prior to February, a different department dealt with cards/flowers etc, but now Nuala and Val in Driver Services are dealing with it and these types of instances are getting fewer. Unfortunately, with 2000 members it is never going to be perfect, but Nuala and Val will always try to make sure these occurrences are as few as possible.

As for the complaint form, Tom Whitbread showed me his PC file that usually has sickness details on and only your first two weeks were there, with further details found in a rarely used file. While that won't help your back Russell, I hope it assures you that it was nothing personal! ...Ed

## Krazy for Kupkake?

Ever since my school days, poetry was an art form out of my sphere. However, over the past few years I find myself compelled by the efforts of Kupkake as published in *Call Sign*. I think his poems, with their reference to aspects of our occupation, are brilliant and a wonderful asset to your magazine.

Many thanks to Kupkake and yourself, Alan, for "turning my head."

**Mike Holleyoake (M06)**

Thanks Mike, David appreciates your sentiments ...Ed

## A hero - but no burglars!

On Friday 26 May, when joining my taxi to take me from Kynance Mews SW7, I inadvertently set off the burglar alarm to my home. I wish to convey my very sincere thanks to my Dial-a-Cab driver who reacted with alacrity and supported me enormously throughout this emergency. He could not have been kinder or more helpful and in the end even got me to Euston in time to catch my train. I felt that I should tell you what splendid service we receive from most of our drivers.

With many thanks

**Gwendolyn Barker**

Blawith, Cumbria

Well done Mr Reilly (F64) who is now this lady's hero! ...Ed

## Powerpill

Since using Powerpill, I now have better performance all round. Like most drivers, I didn't believe it would make any difference

but I couldn't have been more wrong. It's like driving a new cab without the TXII problems. The difference with the emissions is incredible, so I am going to continue taking the tablets until the cab is forced off the road - then RIP the cab trade. My cab plate runs out at the end of September 06 – then what? Scrapped?

**John Jones (C75)**

Sadly, 1 July is upon us and as of now all pre-Euro or Euro 1 cabs (except Metrocabs) are required to meet the Euro 3 emission standard when going to the PCO for passing. That applies to LTI vehicles registered before 16 September 1998. I'm sorry that the PCO / TfL couldn't see further than the end of their noses and allow natural wastage + Powerpill to determine the longevity of a taxi's working life, however the licensed taxi trade will not die. On the other hand, it will never forgive this Mayor for his coldness towards us. This is the man who both as leader of the GLC and now as Mayor, is famous for wasting money – but never on us! Politics and truth rarely go together, but last year the former Conservative Mayoral candidate, Steve Norris assured me that he would not have done this to our trade and I certainly believe him. Now it's too late ...Ed

## Thank you DaC subscribers...

Firstly, I would like to thank all the DaC dri-

vers who voted for me to be an Arbitrator. I felt very honoured and delighted to be elected to this position and I promise to be as fair as possible to all concerned.

Changing the subject, has this ever happened to any DaC driver? I was doing an account ride to London City Airport when the computer beeped and displayed a lost property message. Seeing the screen reminded me that I hadn't done a *soon-to-clear*. While doing it, my passenger told me in his American accent to "...stop playing with the computer and concentrate on your driving!" I immediately stopped doing the STC and continued on to LCA where I dropped him off safely. I've never had anyone say that to me before and wondered whether anyone else had?

**Sid Nathan (K88)**

Whilst most drivers can almost operate their terminal without the need to look, to a passenger it could look dangerous and it is much better to wait until you are at a set of lights or traffic hold-up. Who knows, you could have created history and been the first person in DaC history to have appeared before himself on an Arbitration committee! ...Ed

## And from me...

I would just like to say a big Thank You to all the subscribers who voted for me as an Arbitrator. I was delighted to be appointed and will do my best to serve our Society effectively whenever called upon to do so.

**Alan Green (E52)**

# DISCOUNTED HOLIDAYS FOR DIAL-A-CAB DRIVERS!

*Call Sign's* South of France-based London cabbie, **Bob Woodford**, is offering to waive the booking fee to any Licensed Taxi Driver who books a holiday in 2006 with his lettings agency.

'*South of France Lets*' is the product of him being responsible for looking after keys to properties of all descriptions owned by the British and Irish on the Mediterranean coast.

Bob told *Call Sign*: "The work involved in providing property care has now come full circle. I got together with a neighbour, **Graham Peckham**, who has IT skills and between us we have come up with a comprehensive website comprising of anything from **Luxury Villas with pools/tennis courts to simple Bed & Breakfast properties**. The sun-kissed region of **Languedoc** has 100 kilometers of coastline with endless sandy beaches, oceans of vineyards and some stunning mountain scenery just beyond the plain."

You can check out their website on: [www.southoffrancelets.com](http://www.southoffrancelets.com). Ryanair fly direct to four airports in close proximity. If you fancy a break from the Kipper Season and looking for somewhere warm for a short interlude, phone or email Bob now...

**Tel/Fax +33 467 28 1602: Mobile +33 683 301 310**  
**Email [robert.woodford@tiscali.fr](mailto:robert.woodford@tiscali.fr)**



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Don't listen to the rumours on the rank - it really is going to happen on time... If you're the driver of a P\* registered cab or older then your cab must meet the PCO emissions regulations when you present it for plating after the 1st July 2006 - that's only a few months away now.

And right now, when you trade up to a selected used, emissions compliant TXII from as little as **£89.99 a week!** You'll also get **12 months FREE insurance** for yourself and up to two other drivers! There are no catches or hidden costs, just a great deal.

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\*Business users only. Price per week based on financing with our chosen finance company. Illustration based on a Used TXII Bronze Auto = £19,995 with £500.00 deposit, Plus 60 monthly payments of £389.90 (£89.99 per week). Option to purchase fee £70.50. £125 acceptance fee on first payment due one month from delivery. APR 7.9%. Limited offer, subject to availability and not available in conjunction with any other offer. Finance subject to status. London PCO Licenced retail customers only. Taxi shown does not reflect actual taxi in offer. Other insurance terms and conditions may apply. Full details available upon request.