

April 2013



Call Sign

From the home of Dial-a-Cab International



Dial-a-Cab's John Ward receives a commendation as a hero...



Taxi's get 'nicked' for over-ranking at Selfridges... yet pedicabs can stop on the zig-zags



NASH'S NUMBERS

From Alan Nash (A95)

April's increase is an average of 1.7 percent... more than enough to cover escalating fuel costs, an extra 2 x MOTs at £40 each, plus at least a day just to take the cab in and another fiver for a mug shot (and a trip to the local library twice 'cos the photo machine is usually broken the first time) for the new identifiers! And not to mention a 6% gas and electricity hike. But January's inflation rate was officially 1.59% so that's OK then!

Here are the new mileage table, run-in and waiting times. You definitely need to "be lucky!" If your passengers want to go on a long night-time journey and ask about the fare increase, then the maximum increase after 10pm will be no more than £8 (or £3.60 between 8 - 10pm) above the day rate no matter how far they go - and if no congestion, probably less...

Miles	T1	T2	T3		Miles	T1	T2	T3
1	£4.60	£5.20	£6.00		31	£107.40	£111.00	£115.40
2	£7.20	£8.40	£9.80		32	£111.00	£114.60	£119.00
3	£9.60	£11.40	£13.60		33	£114.60	£118.20	£122.60
4	£12.20	£14.60	£17.60		34	£118.20	£121.80	£126.20
5	£14.80	£17.60	£21.40		35	£121.80	£125.40	£129.80
6	£17.20	£20.80	£25.20		40	£139.80	£143.40	£147.80
7	£20.80	£24.40	£28.80		45	£158.00	£161.40	£166.00
8	£24.40	£28.00	£32.40		50	£176.00	£179.40	£184.00
9	£28.00	£31.60	£36.00		55	£194.00	£197.40	£202.00
10	£31.60	£35.20	£39.60		60	£212.00	£215.60	£220.00
11	£35.20	£38.80	£43.20		65	£230.00	£233.60	£238.00
12	£39.00	£42.40	£47.00		70	£248.00	£251.60	£256.00
13	£42.60	£46.00	£50.60		75	£266.20	£269.60	£274.20
14	£46.20	£49.60	£54.20		80	£284.20	£287.60	£292.20
15	£49.80	£53.20	£57.80		85	£302.20	£305.60	£310.20
16	£53.40	£56.80	£61.40		90	£320.20	£323.80	£328.20
17	£57.00	£60.40	£65.00		95	£338.20	£341.80	£346.20
18	£60.60	£64.00	£68.60		100	£356.20	£359.80	£364.20
19	£64.20	£67.60	£72.20		110	£392.40	£395.80	£400.40
20	£67.80	£71.20	£75.80		120	£428.40	£432.00	£436.40
21	£71.40	£74.80	£79.40		130	£464.40	£468.00	£472.40
22	£75.00	£78.40	£83.00		140	£500.60	£504.00	£508.60
23	£78.60	£82.00	£86.60		150	£536.60	£540.20	£544.60
24	£82.20	£85.60	£90.20		160	£572.60	£576.20	£580.60
25	£85.80	£89.20	£93.80	Additional Miles at all rates				
26	£89.40	£92.80	£97.40	1	£3.60	6	£21.60	
27	£93.00	£96.40	£101.00	2	£7.20	7	£25.20	
28	£96.60	£100.00	£104.60	3	£10.80	8	£28.80	
29	£100.20	£103.80	£108.20	4	£14.40	9	£32.40	
30	£103.80	£107.40	£111.80	5	£18.00	10	£36.00	

It is important not to exceed the 'Run In' on account work. Below are the times or distance to a £4.20 'Run-In'. Very handy for 'Pre-Booked' account Work.

Run-in £4.20 Time

T1 4:07m to 4:34m

T2 3:20m to 3:42m

T3 2:41m to 2:59m

Run-in £4.2 Distance

T1 0.8 miles

T2 0.7 miles

T3 0.5 miles

Waiting time is:

T1 £ 26.27/hr (for 35:00m)

T2 £ 32.43/hr (for 35:00m)

T3 £ 40.22/hr (for 35:00m)

Then at the "Higher Rate" at **£37.50/hour**.

First Hour of Waiting

T1 = £ 32.80*

T2 = £ 36.20*

T3 = £ 40.80*

Subsequent hours on all three rates = £ 37.50

* includes £2.00 flag fall
i.e. £2.40= £2.00 plus 2 units at 20p each

Who needs a table to 160 miles? Well that's only to Stoke-on-Trent! Manchester is 196 miles which is £702.60 without waiting time!!!

Attributes

A	ASSISTED	J	JOINT ACCOUNT	Q	TAXICARD	X	NO MIN NO RUN IN
B	BICYCLES/PRAMS	L	LAYOUTS	R	CREDIT CARD	Z	ANIMALS
C	CHEQUES	M	METROCAB	S	SMOKING CAB	5	5 SEATER/SEAT BELTS
D	DELIVERY	N	CAB PHONE	T	COLLAR & TIE		
F	FIXED PRICE	O	Door Logos or Large Co. all A/D	V	Mercedes Vito		
I	TX 1, TX 2 & TX 4	P	PUBS/WINE BARS	W	WHEELCHAIR		

Useful telephone numbers:

D-a-C Driver services

020 7251 0581 ext 7201

D-a-C Drivers Line

020 7426 3411

Vehicles Towed away- check with TRACE

0845 206 8 602

Eurostar Control Room if no staff in Coach Road

020 7843 4261

from the editor's desk

DaC election procedure...

News that **Allen Togwell** lost his seat at the 2012 **Dial-a-Cab** AGM to **Garry White** by a single vote is now dated. What apparently isn't amongst the many drivers that have spoken to me on the topic, is the way Allen had to give up his seat straightaway and just leave the platform after so many years on the Board and indeed having been on DaC since 1979. That certainly wasn't the fault of anyone, it's just the traditional way of how we do it.

Allen T would not claim to win any popularity contest, so I have been somewhat surprised at the number of drivers who said they felt Allen's departure was disrespectful to someone who had given so much time to the Society. But **Garry White** was entitled to his moment as well where he was announced as the winner and rightfully took his place at the top table.

As I said, **Brian Rice** didn't really have the choice and just followed the traditional way of replacing any BM who loses their seat at an AGM, so I can't help wondering whether we should change things slightly.

My suggestion would be to take a leaf from the US elections, so if a DaC Board member loses his seat at an AGM, the transfer of the new BM for the old should take place at a later date – not months like the President but perhaps two weeks after the AGM itself. I know that the Chairman actually gave Allen as long as he needed to sort himself out – after all, he must have been inundated with paperwork in his office and on his PC. But he did that out of respect for Allen. Perhaps a compulsory two-week changeover might take some of the sting out of losing a seat. Just a suggestion. If anyone wants to comment, please feel free...

And speaking of Allen T

I heard on the grapevine that after Allen Togwell left DaC, he decided to apply to join the **London Taxi Driver's Forum (LTDF)**, which proudly proclaims itself as *the voice of the taxi trade*. Although I have seen some of the posts on the site, I have never been on it and have no intention of joining a site that is so anti-**Dial-a-Cab** – not because of any failings this Society may or may not have, but purely because some of its members don't like us. That's probably after having been expelled and trying to pretend that anyone who speaks out against DaC will be expelled. You only have to read some of *Call Sign's* *Mailshot* pages to realise what rubbish that is. One LTDF subscriber was even expelled and refused to return his terminal, belatedly offering to do so several years later only after the announcement that we were to refit the fleet with new equipment. Yes, the terminal had little value by the time of his expulsion, but I don't consider that as being a valid reason. If it isn't yours and you are asked to return it after leaving, isn't that what you do? The manner of your leaving is irrelevant.

Anyway, Mr Togwell applied to join so that "the voice of the taxi trade" could help to keep him updated with what was going on in a trade that had been such a big part of his life for so many years. The LTDF prides itself on democracy – so long as you agree with what their idea of democracy means ie you can slag off DaC but not defend it without feeling the wrath of their handful of antis who would apparently rather cut off their hands than allow something nice to be said about this Society.

The response to Allen Togwell's request to join? "Our staff has opted not to approve your account and therefore it has been removed." The email also made it clear that the response was automated and



that he shouldn't waste his time responding because he wouldn't get any reply. No doubt they do not want anyone who might speak up for DaC!

As I said earlier, I do not go onto the site because having had so many drivers sending me examples, I got to the point where several months ago I had to ask in the mag for drivers to not bother as I got the drift! I now remember why I don't bother. It isn't a forum so much as a private execution chamber where sensible drivers go to have their arguments blown away. Truth doesn't come into it.

My advice to Allen Togwell is not to bother as you can read equally sensible advice in any Enid Blyton novel – especially her *Famous Five* books featuring four children and a dog! Otherwise just make up a name that their staff won't recognise. Personally speaking, I wouldn't bother...

MOTs

And while we're on the subject! *Call Sign* received a call a few weeks back from (he claimed) a non-Dial-a-Cab driver who criticised my piece in the February Editorial on the new era of MOTs. I had queried about whether the cost of passing the cab would reduce as we were going to now spend money on two MOTs in addition to a visit to NSL. Why whoever phoned felt he had to be abusive and to hide his number, I'm not sure, but nevertheless his point was that I was wrong when I inferred that we would be able to get MOTs at much less than the £54 advertised price depending on where you went. According to my new "friend" we would pay the top rate no matter where we went and my misinformation was the reason I wasn't allowed onto an internet list!

So two things: I am on an American internet list that I have been a member of since around 1988 but I am not on any UK list – neither have I ever been rejected. I just don't want to join and if this driver is representative of the quality, then I'm probably right not to! As for his "point" about MOTs and us always having to pay £54, I've had notifications from several garages about doing taxi MOTs at cut prices. The latest was from Holocene at 387 Camden Road who quoted £29.95 for taxis. So whoever you are, I listened to your point and although you were wrong, I haven't been abusive. So why did you feel it necessary to do an impersonation of a pig???

DaC Hero

The December *Call Sign* ran a story about Dial-a-Cab driver **John Ward (R88)** who was commended in court for his actions that the Judge said prob-

ably saved lives following a terrible crash on the A13. It was caused in no uncertain terms by a young driver in a sports car who was apparently showing off to his girlfriend – something which saw him flying along at an estimated 155mph and causing the death of an innocent motorist, a 30-year old father of three young children with a wife expecting their fourth child. He was jailed for seven years and banned from driving for eight years.

Following the story, John was contacted by the High Sheriff of London and in February attended an awards ceremony at the UK Supreme Court in Parliament Square where a crowd of dignitaries applauded his efforts that took place on that fateful day.

The story is inside this issue and we offer our congratulations to John, whilst at the same time, mourn the tragedy of a young family who have lost their loving husband and father. If we had our way, 25-year old **Shehzad Munir** should never be allowed to get behind the wheel of a car again...

Speeding

For those of you that live east and haven't yet heard, the police switched on the average speed cameras along the A13 between Rainham and Canning Town a few weeks ago and are sending out speeding tickets to anyone caught. How do I know? Because I have one – and it arrived on the same day as a PCN! Someone must think we're taking huge fortunes, although I have been offered a speed awareness course instead of the three points.

Addison Lee and GetTaxi

It was hard to miss reading about Addison Lee's profits and turnover increasing on their last accounting year. So I have to make two points about the policies of **GetTaxi**, who claim to be taking all their work from private hire and Addison Lee in particular.

First, if they are taking that much work, how is it that AL are still showing a profit and second, why do so many DaC account clients say they have been approached by **GetTaxi** to open an account. Can someone explain please?

Namby pamby State?

We are being treated more and more like little children who need our hands held in order to leave home, while at the same time cyclists are treated as though they are the ones that pay an inordinate amount of fuel duty and a ridiculous road tax price for vehicles whose job it is to take passengers wherever they want to go. This issue contains a piece on cyclists being able to use more and more one-way streets in a contra-flow manner, probably resulting in more people being hit by them. But that's ok because those hit will only be badly injured.

As for motor vehicles, more and more councils are bringing in 20mph speed limits because, according to TV ads, there is more chance of you surviving being run over at 20 than there is at 30mph. Nothing about being careful as you cross or to only cross where you are supposed to. Losing someone to an RTA is the most appalling tragedy, but shouldn't people have to take some responsibility for their actions? We will end up having to drive in first gear only soon because of this Namby pamby State...

Alan Fisher
Callsignmag@aol.com

reflections of the chairman

Reduced subscriptions...

Since November 1996, members who have been with the Society for 30 years or more continuously have enjoyed subscriptions of just £1 per month. It was introduced by the BoM in recognition of these drivers service to the Society.

For the following 12 years, the Society enjoyed unabated growth and was happy to grant the heavily subsidised subscription. However, in 2008 the economy began to change and go into recession, but the BoM continued with the £1 per month subscription. However, it has now got to the stage where the Board have had to review the subsidised subscription due to the effect it has on income to the Society. Consequently, as from 10 May this year, members who have completed 30 years or more continuous service to the Society will pay half subscriptions, which amounts to £15 per week plus VAT.

I know this is going to prove extremely unpopular with long serving members, many of whom I know personally due to their length of service, but it is something the BoM must do. I have written in the past how the reduced subscriptions were costing the Society in excess of £180k per annum and with another 34 members falling into the above category in the immediate future, it is a concession the Society can just no longer afford.

Increasing the subscription for 30 years continuous membership was a decision we took with some reluctance, but due to the present economic situation, we felt it better to charge half subscriptions to 30 year members rather than increase subscriptions to the remainder of the fleet.

The Editor showed me a letter, which I assume will be in this issue's *Mailsbot* page where the writer was understandably critical of the Board and if I remember correctly, myself in particular. The letter was written by **Bill Russell (E65)**.

He obviously realised that an increased subscription was imminent and what stuck in my mind was that he stated previous Board Members and Chairmen would 'turn in their graves' if they knew the current Board were going to increase subscriptions to 30 year members.

The past Board Members that were referred to, I knew personally and have the utmost respect for, but Mr Russell should remember they and past Board's never recognised 30 year members as the current Board have done. In the future they will still be recognised in the form of half subscriptions.

As I stated earlier, I know this will be tremendously unpopular with long serving members, but it is a step that needed to be taken. Should the economy improve then the subject will be reviewed in the future.

House of Commons/Lords

Most of you will be aware that a minicab company named Fairway and Kenwood won the tender for the 'House' as from 1 October 2012. We were then contacted to ask if we could continue to service the 'House' until 31 October because the new vendor could not give the service the 'House' required. Consequently, we are still servicing the contract and that new vendor's contract was terminated in December 2012.

Three representatives from the 'House' came to see me at Dial-a-Cab House recently regarding



them going to tender again and they wanted to know from me what should be included in the Tender so that they might receive a good service.

It would appear the contract will not be going to tender until after the Summer recess and my guess is that any new vendor (if there is one) will not commence service until the end of this year or the beginning of next year. In the meantime, we can only continue to give the excellent service they crave and hope they realise that service and cost should be viewed together and not just cost on its own. Anyone can offer a cheap price, but that in turn will affect service so let's hope lessons have been learned.

System Down

I am writing this piece the day after our system went down, consequently, at this moment in time I am unsure of the exact details. However, I thought you might be interested in the little we do know.

At around 9.30am, Dial-a-Cab House experienced a tremendous surge of electricity to the building; in fact quite a significant area was affect-

ed with alarms being triggered off all over the place.

Although we thought we had significant and expensive back-up systems, they proved to be unreliable. Our generator kicked in immediately to feed the critical side of the business, but during the interim few seconds before the generator starts automatically, our Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) should maintain everything until the generator takes over. It would appear at this stage that the electrical 'spike' was so large that it damaged the UPS; consequently our despatching system lost power for a few seconds and went down.

Unfortunately, we could not bring the system up immediately and we were out of business for a few hours.

The above should never happen as we have spent considerable sums on safeguarding our systems, but on this occasion something failed to function correctly. At this stage we believe it was the UPS which was damaged by the 'spike' and that it became unable to supply power for the few seconds needed, however it should not happen because that is why we have them installed. Our protective and back-up systems should be able to absorb any eventuality, but on this occasion they didn't.

It now remains for us to investigate the situation in an attempt to stop anything like it happening in the future. Looking back over our records, it would appear that the last time we had a similar problem was five years ago back in May 2008. When our primary systems experience problems, our back-up systems should maintain our business, but on this occasion something failed...!

Brian Rice
Chairman
Dial-a-Cab

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Drivers can be caught speeding more than once in a three year period and still avoid having points added to their licence due to incomplete sharing of speed awareness course attendance data, according to a report by members of the underwriting group of the **Chartered Insurance Institute's New Generation** programme. **David Williams**, Chairman of the CII underwriting faculty board, argues this is undermining efforts to improve road safety.

An increasing number of drivers in the UK are choosing to attend a speed awareness course – offered by police authorities in the place of traditional penalties as an educational alternative for drivers caught speeding within a specified range, instead of a fixed penalty notice, conviction or endorsement.

The report by CII members found that the National Speed Awareness Scheme is currently offered in most of England and Wales with the exception of the police authorities in Hampshire, Dorset and the City of London, which deliver their own courses independently of the national scheme. Drivers can choose to attend a speed awareness course only once every three years and if caught speeding again during this time, will have to accept a speeding conviction. For this reason their details are recorded on the *National Driver Offender Retraining Scheme* database maintained by the Association of Chief Police Officers.

However, course attendance data for the three police authorities outside of the national scheme is not entered into the NDORS database and there is no data-sharing between the local authorities running independent courses

Can unsafe drivers avoiding conviction due to incomplete sharing of...

SPEED AWARENESS COURSE DATA?



es and the database. It is therefore possible for a driver to attend a speed awareness course and avoid a conviction more than once every three years if caught by a police authority not part of the national scheme. Interestingly, while speeding fines go to the Treasury, fees for speed awareness courses are retained by

police forces and safety partnerships.

David Williams said: "The CII's New Generation underwriting group set about investigating the impact that speed awareness courses have on insurance, but in the process discovered this startling fact. Due to incomplete sharing of speed awareness course attendance data, it is possible for an individual to be caught speeding more than once within a three year period and slip through the net without having points added to their licence. This begs the question of how many drivers considered 'unsafe' by the majority of the public are still on the road, barely admonished and potentially putting lives in danger? Are police forces in Hampshire, Dorset and the City of London in danger of undermining efforts to improve road safety by not sharing data and offering speed awareness courses not in the National Driver Offender Retraining Scheme?"

The report by the underwriting New Generation group sought to examine speed awareness courses and the implications for insurance.

NSL INSPECTION CENTRES LAUNCHED!

LTPH Director, **John Mason**, has written to the trade press regarding the changeover of vehicle inspections from **SGS UK Ltd** to **NSL Ltd** that took place from the beginning of March but although it just missed the last issue of **Call Sign**, the majority of drivers won't have yet come up against the new era of two MOTs and a visit to NSL.

Taxis have now changed over to two standard (class 4) MOTs per annum that can be undertaken at any VOSA approved MOT testing station. Only taxis licensed under the new regime will require an MOT and they must be no more than 14 days old on the date of testing. For continuity of service and ease of use, NSL have taken over the previous phone number used by SGS for bookings - 0845 378 2345.

LTPH are currently working to deliver a comprehensive online vehicle booking facility which will be available in the longer term. However, in the meantime they have created a temporary web page in order to allow drivers to request a single vehicle to be inspected online. Go to www.tfl.gov.uk/tph or if a fleet owner, please call **0845 378 2345** where they can help you book in multiple vehicles.

It is not possible for NSL to accept cash or cheque payments at any of the inspection centres. All payments must be made by debit or credit card at the time you are making your booking in order to secure the inspection slot.

All inspection centres have comfortable waiting areas with vending machines for hot and cold drinks and snacks. At most of the centres you will also be able to view the inspections taking place from the waiting area. Full details of the centres are in the *February* issue of **Call Sign**. As a reminder, they are at **Heston** (20a Airlinks Industrial Estate, Spitfire Way, TW5 9NR), **Enfield** (Unit 2 Watermill Centre, Edison Road, EN3 7XF), **Crayford** (Unit Q1, Acorn Industrial Park, Kent DA1 4AL), **Coulsdon** (Unit B5 Redlands, Ulswater Crescent, CR5 2HT), **Canning Town** (1 North Crescent, E16 4TL and **Staples Corner** (Unit 2 Aquarius, Staples Corner, Priestly Way, NW2 7AN).

The buildings will be signposted, with additional signage hopefully placed outside the test centres. LTPH told us they appreciated driver's patience and understanding and recommend you register to receive regular email updates via their distribution list by contacting TPH.Enquiries@tfl.gov.uk.

Mr Mason also thanked SGS UK Ltd and their staff for the excellent service they had provided to TfL and to the taxi and private hire trades since 2004, while at the same time welcoming the new service provider, NSL Ltd.

Fouling on Selfridge's rank

There have been reports of taxis over-ranking, parking on the pavement and parking in the bus stop behind the taxi rank outside Selfridges, Oxford Street. The taxi rank outside Selfridges is for two taxis only and when this is full, drivers must not park on the pavement or in the bus stop. Another taxi rank for Selfridges is available in Duke Street, plus there are other taxi ranks along and near Oxford Street. Taxis parking on the pavement and in the bus stop has a serious impact on other road users and pedestrian safety and causes the following problems:

- **Preventing buses from pulling into the bus stop – this means that bus passengers have to board and alight in the road and wheelchair users are unable to use the bus stop and the wheelchair ramp on the bus.**
- **Blocking the pedestrian crossing – this forces pedestrians to walk around the taxis and in the road and puts them at risk.**
- **Obstructing other taxis and buses travelling eastbound along Oxford Street.**

If the problems at this location persists, then the police have informed LTPH that they will commence enforcement action and ultimately the taxi rank could be reviewed and revoked...



Jery's World



"I'm gonna treat myself with my increase – perhaps a new pair of socks!"

Interested in having London as a financial centre built around you and your taxi in a documentary film? Now's your chance with Dutch filmmaker Thomas Vroege...

Looking for a future film star

Hello Dial-a-Cab taxi drivers,

I'm **Thomas Vroege**, a young documentary filmmaker from Holland. For some time I have been interested in the financial centres of London. There are a lot of films already being made about London as a financial centre, but I want to do something different.

I'd like to make a documentary film from the perspective of taxi drivers, so, I'm looking for taxi drivers who tend to work in either **Canary Wharf** or the **City** itself and are willing to share their stories with me. What is your experience as a cabbie working in those areas? Do you have funny, emotional or intriguing stories? Perhaps you've had some really weird people in your taxi? And how do you deal with the working pressure?

In my work, I try to make unconventional stories but with total respect for the people I work with and I have always believed that London taxi drivers have a very special role in society, moving so many people every day and being acknowledged as the world's best.

Call Sign Editor Alan Fisher has spoken very highly of the drivers on Dial-a-Cab, so if any of you are willing to cooperate with me on this documentary and share your story I will be very grateful. Although we work on a small budget, there is room for a little payment if you want to cooperate. I think this can be an opportunity for taxi drivers to tell the world what it is like working in a difficult arena!

I really hope for your reaction. You can either mail me or Alan Fisher if you are interested...

Thomas Vroege
mail@thomasvroege.nl



Thomas is a film maker who could be looking for you!

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Call Sign has mentioned the drawing ability of **Claire Ottley** in the past. Claire has been with **Dial-a-Cab** since 2000 and having begun in Brunswick House Call Centre, is now the DaC Account Manager for a large City bank. No stranger to this mag, Claire used to write a regular column featuring fine wines and unusual recipes.

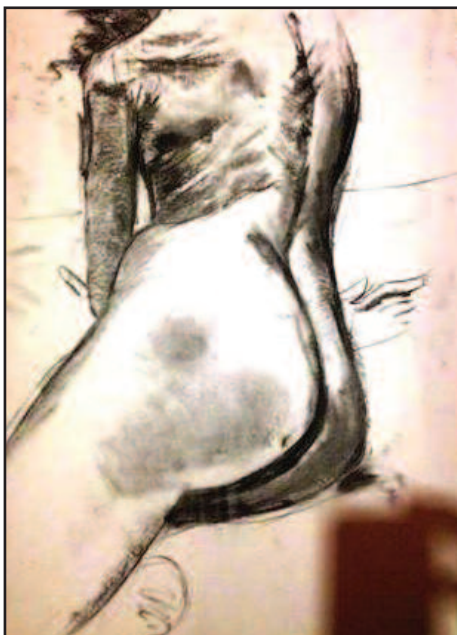
Now we hear that Claire has been taking **Life Drawing** classes. Sometimes referred to as *figure drawing*, this involves the drawing of the human form in any of its various shapes and postures using any of the available drawing media. Put plainly, that means drawing live and naked models of either sex.

Claire told us that she had been drawing all her life, in fact ever since she could remember. Later on she studied *Fine Art* at **Camberwell School of Art** and **Goldsmiths University**. She also goes to Life Drawing classes once a week at the **Zabludowicz Collection** on Prince of Wales Road NW5 and describes the art as the study of the human form, arguably the most difficult subject an artist can commonly encounter - hence the reason entire courses are dedicated to the subject.

We asked Claire if there was any embarrassment at drawing a naked man or woman who is just standing there in the buff.

"None whatsoever," she said, "usually, Life Drawing models are registered with RAM (Register of Artist Models) and will be required to meet the professional standards required by RAM. They are often employed by film production companies, medical schools and Life Drawing classes etc. They are required to audition and provide references, while the students

Life Drawing reaches DaC's accounts department!



One of Claire's life drawings

doing the drawing are more concerned with concentrating on improving their drawing skills."

Being something of an investigative journal

that doesn't like to keep things hidden, we felt it to be our duty to enquire whether the models kept any delicate bits and pieces hidden! Claire refused to be drawn (*sic*) and explained that Life Drawing is to study the human form in all its various shapes and poses, so there were no hidden areas. However the DaC Account Manager did admit that props are used occasionally - such as a piece of material.












We also couldn't help but wonder whether should a model fail to arrive, would one of the students actually volunteer to be the model, but Claire refused to bite (*sic again*) and pointed out that the students were artists and not models!

So would Claire consider taking her undoubted talent up to the next level? She didn't dismiss the idea but just told **Call Sign** that she would see how things went.

Incidentally, the founder of the **Zabludowicz Collection** is **Anita Zabludowicz**, who is recognised as one of Europe's top art patrons. She has been championing emerging artists since the 1990s and founded the Zabludowicz Collection in 1994. It contains over 2000 works by over 500 artists covering a period over the past 40 years and more of art production. Anita is also the woman behind **Anish Kapoor's Arcelor Mittal Orbit** tower which dominated the London Olympic skyline.

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The December 2012 issue of *Call Sign* contained an article on **Dial-a-Cab** driver **John Ward (R88)** and told how he probably helped to save many lives following a bad accident on the A13 in Essex in September 2010.

Last November at *Snaresbrook Crown Court*, **Judge Patricia Lees**, praised John's actions and said that despite his own inevitable shock, he parked his cab across the A13 following a bad accident that left debris strewn across the carriageway in order to get oncoming traffic to slow down. He also ran to try to help the victim of the accident, desperately trying to free him until he realised there was nothing he could do to save him. At the same time he dialled 999 to get the emergency services out.

John also persuaded the driver of an articulated lorry to block the road to help alert oncoming traffic and to try to minimise the chances of any further serious injuries or even loss of life.

The Judge commended John for his actions and awarded him £500 from the Sheriff's Fund "as a small token of the appreciation of the public." She called it as an act of selfless bravery.

John had been travelling home after work along the A13 eastbound towards the M25 at around 1.15 in the morning and was in the middle lane of the three-lane carriageway. Aware of speed cameras he kept to a steady 40mph. Suddenly a *BMW 640 coupe* with the distinctive registration of **P1MP R** undertook his cab at an estimated 80 mph. It then turned left into a BP fuel station just after the A406 junction and John forgot about it and carried on his way home. Then as he approached Rainham Marshes, still sitting in the middle lane and keeping to the new speed limit of 70 mph, the BMW came out of nowhere and overtook John on his offside at an ultra-high speed. In fact John described it as being unbelievable with the court calling it around 155mph!

John soon forgot about it and continued on towards the M25 junction where the road sweeps left on a long bend and over the brow of a hill. As he reached the bottom of the hill, he saw the same BMW badly damaged having been in collision with another car and the wreckage covering the carriageway. John described the scene as one resembling the scene from a disaster movie.

He pulled his cab across the lanes at ninety degrees to the hard shoulder and put his hazard lights on. The BMW driver seemed unhurt, but the other car was laying stationary at a 45 degree angle to the road, facing up the banking some distance ahead. The impact was so severe that it had been damaged beyond recognition. He tried frantically to pull the driver's door open in case there was any explosion, but the accident wedged it too tight. John could also see that the driver was almost certainly dead. He even tried smashing the windscreen with a piece of concrete, but it was no use.

He stopped another taxi to help block the road as traffic was still speeding past at 70mph. One car skidded as it hit some flotsam and collided with the central reservation barrier, coming to a stop in the middle

Now it's a visit to Parliament Square and to be one of just eight in two years...

DAC HERO NOW GETS COMMENDATION!



John with his award presented at the UK Supreme Court

of the one lane that remained open! Then the truck came along and John asked the driver if could park sideways across the entire three lanes of the carriageway to block the road completely - something the trucker speedily did.

John told *Call Sign* at the time how amazed he had been at the lack of any apparent care the BMW driver, 25-year old

Shehzad Munir and his girlfriend showed as the other car driver, **Sukhpreet Singh Chimber** - a 30-year old father of three young children with a wife expecting their fourth child - laying immobile in the wreckage. Munir was later found guilty by jury of dangerous driving and jailed for seven years. He was also banned from driving for eight years.

On February 15 this year, John was awarded a certificate of bravery from the High Sheriff of London at the United Kingdom Supreme Court in Parliament Square. The formal ceremony was witnessed by many dignitaries including the Chief of Police, several MPs and High Court Judges. John's award was one of just eight presented over the past two years and his was the only one where his bravery had also involved saving lives.

John told *Call Sign* after the prestigious ceremony: "I feel very humble and whilst there is a sense of pride in receiving the award, there is the sadness in thinking of Mr Chimber and his young family whose lives were wrecked by a young man in a sports car showing off to his girlfriend..."

John's humility should not disguise the fact that whilst he could do nothing to save the life of Mr Chimber, there are probably people alive today who might have died had it not been for him.

Cover pic: John at the presentation with Under Sheriff of London John Hargrove and the Assistant Commissioner of the Met Police Chris Allison.

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Two drivers inside this issue have written about their taxis 'passing' experiences. According to **Ken Aisthorpe (ex-T49)**, not one of his several cabs had failed under the SGS administration and he refers to the outgoing testers as *one of the best things to happen to the cab trade in recent years*. He says that the new system of two MOTs and a visit to NSL will end up costing this trade far more than it ever did under SGS.

On the other hand, **Jonathan Raymond (S39)**, claims that the experience of his MOT and visit to NSL at Staples Corner was extremely positive and that *if it is a sign of things to come, then this partnership could be excellent news for the taxi business*. **Stephen Berndes (R14)** in his regular *Call Sign* column agrees with Jonathan's assessment.

So Call Sign posed two pertinent questions each to both LTPH Director John Mason and NSL Chief Executive Mark Underwood...

To John Mason

Why was the SGS partnership ended? Was it a case of getting the cheapest quote? And why do taxis need two MOTs and a visit to NSL? Couldn't there have been just one of each?

John Mason replies:

Well firstly, I am pleased to hear that Ken felt that the regime provided under SGS was one of the best things to happen to the cab trade in recent years. I am sure Ken will be pleased to hear that all of the testers that worked with SGS have transferred to NSL under the new contract. I can assure him and all your readers that TfL and NSL are fully committed to improving the service even further.

It's great to hear that Jonathan's experience was positive and I thank him for his comments. We acknowledge that there have been some teething problems in the first weeks and particularly in the first few days, but overall the feedback from the trade has been positive and most taxi vehicle inspections are now taking between 20 and 30 minutes to complete. As with the introduction of any new service, there will always be challenges to overcome as staff gain the practical experience of using the new systems and processes but we have noticed a real improvement in end to end inspection times in the past few days.

Under European law, public bodies like TfL cannot just have endless contracts that have no expiry date. It is entirely appropriate that there are times when the entire service is reviewed and retendered to ensure the opportunity to review what is being offered in an effort to improve it further through new innovation and technology. The SGS contract was expiring in early 2013 and could not be extended further. Through the retendering process we sought to achieve the right balance of quality of service and cost and NSL were judged through the tender evaluation to be the best bid at the end of this process and were subsequently awarded the contract.

The introduction of two MOTs for taxis plus the simple taxi specific check by NSL was one of the outcomes from the Mayor's Air Quality Strategy announced back in 2012. Readers may recall the original proposal was to introduce a 15 year age limit for taxis in 2012 moving to a 12 year age

QUESTIONS TO LTPH AND NSL



limit in 2015. Through TfL and the Mayor's extensive dialogue and discussions with trade representatives (which included Dial-a-Cab Chairman Brian Rice), it was made very clear by the trade that a 12 year age limit would be totally unacceptable. Through those discussions and the consultation, it was felt that a 15 year limit coupled with two MOTs in order that taxi emissions are checked twice, rather than once a year, was the most appropriate way to proceed.

I know that some taxi drivers feel that this change is unfair and expensive, but I do think they should put it into context with other large UK cities. For example, in Manchester the annual taxi inspection costs £398 for taxis under 7 years old, in addition to two MOTs that can only be undertaken at the Council's MOT test station at £55 each. If a taxi is over 7 years old, it costs £460 as well as 3 MOTs per annum. I think our fee of £102 from 2 April 2013 to have a test at one of six centres and the ability to get MOTs done at any VOSA approved centre (which in many cases garages offer for free as part of a service) is pretty good value by comparison.

While your readers may not fully agree with the changes we have made, I am confident that in years to come they will have fully embraced the new service and new testing regime, as was the case when the service was initially outsourced from Penton Street to SGS.

To Mark Underwood

NSL have now seen a number of taxis, so in that short period what have been your views of the London licensed taxi business, the general condition of the vehicles we drive and do you have any advice that would make the passing experience as easy as possible?

Secondly, in March last year *Call Sign's* PCN guru, **Barrie Segal**, reported in this magazine the story of NSL parking attendant **Hakim Berkani** who claimed in court that he had lost his job because he refused to follow instructions from NSL to issue a daily quota of at least ten PCNs per day. Mr Berkani won and received £20,000 (Wardens operate PCN quota system - March 2012 issue).

Whilst we understand that the departments are not connected other than being part of the same organisation, the news wasn't a particularly encouraging introduction. What can you offer us regarding the future relationship between NSL and the taxi trade to make us believe the Berkani case to be an exception?

Mark Underwood replies:

Comparing the inspection results from our first few days of operation against historical inspection results and taking into account the changes to the inspection regime, it is apparent that the trade has taken significant steps in ensuring their vehicles are both safe to be in and pleasant to use. We are also grateful for the patience shown by those drivers who have attended for a test as we worked our way through some minor teething problems and, in general, we have been delighted by the friendliness of those drivers who have attended our inspection centres.

Top tips for passing first time are:

- * Double check you have all required documents and that they are valid – the majority of fails are document related

- * Arrive slightly earlier than your appointment time, but not too early as you will probably end up waiting until your original appointment time.

- * Make sure your vehicle is roadworthy!

With respect to the second part of your question, we were extremely disappointed with the Tribunal's finding on this particular instance as I think it casts things in rather a different light when you consider that NSL used to be NCP, which was the only parking management company that lobbied the government to take PCN targets out of the business. We were successful in doing this and targets have been illegal for some time now.

I should also say that we don't gain any profit or any other commercial benefit from the numbers of PCNs issued, in fact if we issue an incorrect ticket then we can be penalised for doing so.

Our civil enforcement officers though do work hard, and they are fair in the consistency with which they enforce a council's parking regulations, which are in place not just to improve traffic flow but safety too. I am sure *Call Sign's* readers would not want lots of illegally parked cars blocking vital kerb space and busy traffic routes.

We are working hard to engage with cabbies (and private hire drivers) and are always responsive to what they have to tell us. It's the only way any firm gets to grow in all directions. We also recognise that here in London we are incredibly fortunate to have the world's best taxi drivers, and we're glad to be helping them stay that way through the vehicle checks we have in place.

Our thanks to John Mason and Mark Underwood...



Son Charlie is on Gordon's right shoulder

"Tattoos are always items of personal taste and relevance," Dial-a-Cab driver **Gordon Thompson (K48)** explained to *Call Sign*. "They're also like *Marmite*, you either love 'em or hate 'em!"

Someone who obviously falls into the former, Gordon continued:

"I was a bit of a rebellious 16 year old when I had my first two arm tats done over thirty years ago. They cost me £5 each and my mother wasn't happy at all! Nowadays you can pay upwards of £70 to £80 an hour for a tattoo, depending on the complexity of the work and the skill of the tattoo artist who needs to exercise the greatest care and hygiene."

"I remember going to a place in Kings Cross with my brother and while we were waiting, a man came in to complain about his arm, which had begun festering rather badly after lax hygiene care from the artist. Seeing that green and inflamed puss oozing from his arm gave us both quite a scare, and we were up and out of there before you could blink!" Gordon smiled

TfL and LTC

TfL has been in discussions with the new management of the **London Taxi Company**. They are now back in operation from their Brewery Road site and actively taking orders for new and used taxis and say they have good levels of stock available to drivers.

During the administration period, TfL took steps to assist drivers and garages that included allowing Euro 4 taxis to be licensed for up to 5 years, whereas the minimum emissions standard for taxis new to licence is Euro 5, and also to issue some temporary licences to taxis impacted by the 15 year age limit that expired on 14 March 2013.

Given the positive trading situation with London Taxi Company and the ongoing availability of new and used Mercedes via KPM, with immediate effect TfL will not be issuing any further temporary licences or extensions to existing licences for taxis over 15 years old and will no longer accept any taxis new to licensing unless they meet Euro 5 standard.

What did Gordon Thompson's wife tell him about his forthcoming dragon tattoo?

"Tatt's Enough!"



Gordon displays his tattoo

at the memory.

"The needles and inks need to be sterile and cleaned constantly. Anyway, the needles can only be used twice maximum because they go blunt after that, which can lead to all sorts of problems."

"As I said, tattoos are very personal and individual to *you*. Mine remind me of people, events and stages in my life. The portrait of my son Charlie is on my right shoulder, my wife Jackie is on my right arm, while my left shoulder hosts a fish to remind me of my late brother Ted, who was always 'out fishing' and mentored me in my younger, wilder days. It was Ted who kept me on a straight and narrow path in life," Gordon explained as he enthusiastically exhibited each one to *Call Sign*.

"Actually, Jackie hates tattoos and she has already named the dragon I plan to have done later this year as **Tatt's Enough** in recognition of the fact it will have to be my last!" Gordon

acknowledged the fact, even though he admitted that they do become addictive "...money permitting of course!"

"If I were to offer any advice to budding tattoo addicts out there, it would be to never have a name emblazoned on yourself, only a token representation of a person or event in your life and always go to a reputable, proper tattoo artist."

"The tattoo can be relatively painful while being done and healing can take up to several weeks, so you need to be scrupulously careful on the hygiene front and look after your artwork diligently. They can go darker in sunlight and you should use sun cream with an SPF of 30 during the summer months!"

And then he was off in a puff of smoke – perhaps a bit like his soon to appear dragon, *Tatt's Enough*!

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CONTACT CENTRE CHAT

Goodbye to Toggers...

This is my first report since the AGM and I'd like to thank all those members that voted for me for a further term. In my address to the members present, I said that the responsibility of a Board Member is to obtain work for the drivers. That will be high priority for the future and with the support of you the members, we will move forward. But I would like to say how disappointed I was to see **Allen Togwell** lose his place on the Board, especially as it was by just one vote. But that's democracy and losing Allen endorses my feelings that you are here only as long as the members want you and nothing should ever be taken for granted. **Garry White (165)** is now the new Board Member and I am looking forward to working with him and give him all the help I can during his learning curve.

Out of all the Board, I suppose I knew Allen better than most having worked closely alongside him for many years. I first met him in Gresham Street outside the Piccolo. Having introduced myself, he asked what experience I could bring to the Board and what my working background was? I said I was from a sales environment and that I had also managerial and customer service experience. That got his back-up because Allen had previously been the Sales Executive for the Society and he could see competition, something he was always uneasy about. We spoke for a short time and it was clear we both had the same passion for the Society and both wanted to work towards doing the best we could to obtain work for the drivers.

That year there were some 20 odd candidates standing for eight positions and both Allen and I were fortunate to be elected. That AGM also saw a new Chairman and Treasurer elected and they instructed the new BoM to keep out of the office for a week so that they could get a good picture of the financial state of the Society. During that week, Toggers wasn't having any of it and soon put himself into his old office. He even ordered his business cards with Sales Executive as his title. In those days if you wanted a job on the Board, you had to find a proposer and seconder from amongst the other Board Members to get nominated for the post. Not Toggers! I always felt that he thought I was going to want his position and it took me a lot of persuasion to make Allen realise that two heads were better than one. And that is what happened with both Allen and I given the sales roles and in those early years we had to work hard to increase business. But we made a good team, even if I do say so myself.

Having originally been employed as a dispatcher in the control room, I had more knowledge of the operation than Allen and we soon agreed that I should concentrate on learning what the dispatched system and accounting system could offer a client while Toggers would concentrate on getting his feet in the door and handling the charges. I keep saying it, but we did work well as a team and when we were in front of clients we were a formidable double act! We never spoke over one another and were always bouncing off what each other had to say to the prospective client. It was also a time when overhead screen projectors with transparency slides were used to give sales demonstrations. We thought we had cracked it when we started using **Power Point** to give presentations to clients.

Another memory I have of Toggers being Toggers was on the very first day I walked into the office at **Brunswick House**. I was wearing a sports jacket, trousers and a collar and tie and the first words out of his mouth was "...ain't you got a suit!" Well fortunately for me I had my best suit hanging in my wardrobe. It was common then, I think, that everyone had a best suit - albeit it was only worn for weddings, christenings and funerals! Needless to say, the next day I was wearing it! Toggers, as you all know, was a stickler for looking the part and presenting an image. Being a tailor by trade gave him an eye for being stylish and he shared that experience with me often and called me a schlock on many an occasion. At one time I even started to emulate him by wearing the pocket handkerchief, but as soon as **Brian Rice** joined the Board I felt the competition of pocket hanky wearing was too fierce.

But the point of what I initially wanted to say was this: You had to work with Allen to understand him. You had to give Allen exactly what he gave you and as soon as you did, you would be friends for life. Don't get me wrong; early on Allen and I had some real shouting matches in the BH Boardroom but as soon as we left the room, having both said our piece, we never held a grudge against each other and just carried on. Allen has blown his own trumpet many times in **Call Sign**, telling everyone how he worked for nothing for many hours on behalf of the Society and how he stood outside venues marshalling clients Christmas events for nothing. I can confirm that to be true - because he had me doing it with him!

That's one of the differences between us; I rarely speak of it but Toggers



has a flare for design and from our hand-out cards to the manual receipt pads to the seat adds in the back of your cabs to the financial reports and the present logo, they were all Toggers' own work and I hope he will continue to offer his experience and design for us.

I see Allen often as a golf playing partner and encourage him to get out there and hit a few balls. I won't go into the amount of coaching he has given me and many others on the game of golf, but I will say he knows his stuff. I'll miss Allen around the office and wish him well for the future. I thank him for all the advice and support he has given me over the years. I'm so glad I only listened to some of it!

System failure

On Friday 15 March we had a system failure. The cause of this, as far as we can ascertain, was a power surge. We experienced similar problems back in 2008 when the building opposite was being built. At that time we spent many thousands of pounds upgrading our generator and UPS systems to prevent anything happening in the future. All morning there were small power spikes and to be truthful, from inside the office you would never know anything was wrong. Then there was a power surge that not only got through our backup systems, it took out many buildings around us including the underground station. An investigation is being carried out to determine what the cause was and why our power systems didn't respond as they should have done. All I would say at this time is that the surge of power which hit the building was of a magnitude we have never experienced before and one we thought could never happen. There has been relatively no damage at all to our systems, but the front end protection we have is where the investigation is looking at...

Keith Cain

**Contact Centre Manager
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THE highly anticipated rematch between **Danny 'Cassius' Connor** and **Chris 'The Flash' Evangelou** lived up to expectation on March 9 as Connor retained his **Southern Area** title in convincing fashion in an entertaining battle on **Matchroom Sport's 'London's Finest'** show at **Wembley Arena**, with the fight shown live on **Sky Sports 1**.

Carshalton's **Danny Connor**, trained by **Dial-a-Cab's Alec Wilkey (W83)**, was close to stopping his opponent in the 7th round of the scheduled 10 when he knocked Evangelou down twice with some sickening body punches that the Enfield man only just got up from. It was Connor who dominated the action from the early rounds, using his jab to set up attacks, throwing punches in clusters to keep his opponent on the back foot. Referee **Terry O'Connor** scored the bout 97-93 in Connor's favour and now he has closure on this particular battle, the Champion can look at some big fights in the domestic Light-Welterweight division.

Another member of **Team Wilkey** had been in action two weeks earlier as Rotherhithe's **Eren Arif** notched yet another win on **Miranda Carter's 'Sunday Punch'** 11-fight show at London's **York Hall** as he continued his journey in the pro ranks, taking his record to 3-0. The 26 year-old faced Czech fighter **Jan Balog** in an entertaining battle in the light welterweight division on a lively afternoon at the home of boxing.

Arif remains undefeated after he took control of the 4 round bout by forcing his opponent onto the ropes on a number of occasions, where he was able to get his shots off, notably with upper cuts and hooks to the body. It was Arif who produced the better work and took the fight by 39-37 and he could be one to look out for in the future with his aggressive and exciting style.

One week after **Danny Connor** retained his title, the youngest member of **Team Wilkey**, **Tommy Martin**, kept his unbeaten run going after taking on **Andy Harris** in a tough 4 round encounter at **York Hall**. The 18 year-old came

DaC's Alec celebrates as Cassius keeps title!



back from a controversial knockdown to take the bout 38-37 after pressuring Harris and using an established jab to force him to take backward steps. Although Harris caught Martin with some big straight right hands, the younger **TKO Gym** fighter from St. Neots showed heart and commitment to the cause to outwork his rival. The future looks bright for Martin as he showcased the skills needed to take him to the next level with his record now standing at 3-0.

If you want to catch the latest info from **Alec Wilkey's "Team Wilkey" gym** or perhaps if you or anyone in your family feels they may have it as a boxer, then take a look at **Alec Wilkey's website**. Alec is a licensed **British Boxing Board of Control** trainer and lead coach under **Johnny Eames** at the world famous **TRAD TKO Boxing Gym** in

Canning Town. According to **Eames**, "...**Alec Wilkey** knows the boxing game inside and out!"

As well as training professionals, **Alec** is available for personal one-2-one fitness training sessions for all levels. They last for an hour and cost £30 (discount rate for 10 pre-paid sessions of £250).

Go to www.teamwilkey.co.uk for all the updated info...

The photo shows **DaC's Alec Wilkey** with **Southern area champ Danny Connor**, **Tommy Martin** and **Eren Arif**.

David Wilkey
Call Sign Online

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ANNUAL UNITED GUILDS SERVICE

On 15th March, many of London's Livery companies, the oldest of which trace their history back to medieval trade guilds, joined together at **St Paul's Cathedral** for the annual **United Guilds Service**. The first United Guilds Service was held 71 years ago in 1943. Then much of London was a bomb site and the service was introduced to raise morale. The area around St Paul's nowadays shows little evidence of the devastation of February 1943; back then it was a different scene as the Master and Prime Wardens of the *Twelve Great Companies* held a meeting at the Goldsmiths' Hall and decided to hold a service in St Paul's Cathedral for the Livery Companies and Guilds of the City of London. The thought was that the service would help lift the spirits of the city following the Blitz. The first service took place on 25th March 1943, Lady Day, selected because it was the first day of the year according to the Julian Calendar. The Lord Mayor of London at the time, **Sir Samuel Joseph**, attended along with the Sheriff, Court Aldermen and Lord Bishop of London, **Dr G.F. Fisher**.

Now 71 years later and led by Master **Brenda Bartlett**, the WCHCD were amongst the Companies present at the service. The sermon was preached by The Right Reverend **Stephen Cottrell**, Bishop of Chelmsford. St Pauls welcomes people of all Christian traditions, as well as those of other faiths and this service is still an uplifting occasion for all those who pack into the beautiful cathedral. The procession following the fanfare by The Band of the Blues and Royals is spectacular as the Lord Mayor arrives to be met by the chairman of the Trustees of the United Guilds Service and the Masters of the Mercers' and Grocers Companies.

The procession down the main aisle of the cathedral was led by a Virger and the Choir, the Beadles and Masters of many of the Companies present, The City Marshall, The Chief Commoner, High Officers, The Sheriffs and Court of Aldermen, Clergy and The Bishop, The Lord Mayor's Chaplains, The Serjeant at Arms, The Sword Bearer and The Lord Mayor all in their ceremonial robes and regalia. It is an impressive sight and shows how the Livery still flourishes in the City today. As the procession left the cathedral, tourists and bystanders watched the dignitaries as the bells pealed.

The WCHCD were then delighted to be able to join with other Livery companies at a lunch hosted by the Butchers' company in their Hall.



Master **Brenda Bartlett** leads the WCHCD at the **United Guilds service**

HOSPITAL DAC ART!

Our thanks to the **Dial-a-Cab** driver that sent in this painting to **Call Sign** that both he and his wife spotted outside the scanning department of the **Queens Hospital** in Romford, Essex.

Unfortunately the driver didn't send in his name, but the accompanying text said that he thought it looked like the **Piccadilly Circus** end of **Shaftesbury Avenue** before traffic was forced left towards **Haymarket**, with only buses allowed to go straight ahead.

He also thought – and he has a point – that the painting could well have been done by one of the artists that have their easels lodged opposite hoping to offer their caricature abilities to tourists. Either way, the traffic must have been bad to get the bus and DaC taxi to stand still that long!



Over ranking at Selfridges...

HAVE WE FORGOTTEN SOMETHING???

Never in the history of **Call Sign** have so many **Dial-a-Cab** drivers responded to an article that had not even yet been published! The reason is because a press release / notice from **London Taxis and Private Hire** missed our last issue and is going out in this one. However, the notice has already gone out in several other trade mags, hence the sudden influx of messages to us – mainly in photo form.

The notice concerns taxis over-ranking, parking with two wheels on the pavement and parking in the bus stop behind the **Selfridges** taxi rank, together with a photo showing cabs blocking the bus stop.

This resulted in **Call Sign** receiving numerous photos, many taken by phones with low resolution cameras that were unsuitable for publication. But we picked out two that were clear and which made a point – one picked on by most of the writers asking if we have forgotten something, because all the time that taxis are being persecuted, pedicabs seem to be doing whatever they want!

The photo on the cover - apparently taken by the point cab on the **Selfridges** rank - is of two pedicabs not just parked in front of the taxi rank, but on clearly marked zigzag lines while the photo on this page shows four pedicabs parked across the emergency exit to **Covent Garden** and on top of the 'Keep Clear' sign. Many drivers sent photos of **Long Acre** blocked by Pedicabs.



Did they all get PCNs or as our drivers asked in unison: Have we forgotten something...???

CHARTERHOUSE SQUARE AND THE BLACK DEATH!

Human remains have been discovered beneath the streets of **Charterhouse Square** by archaeologists working on **Crossrail**. At least thirteen skeletons had been found at the time of publication – all believed to have been struck down by the **Black Death** plague in 1349. The archaeologists, who are involved with **Crossrail**, think they may have discovered an ancient burial site where up to 50,000 victims of the plague were buried. Tests on the skeletons will take place over the coming months to establish the exact causes of death; however evidence uncovered so far points towards **Charterhouse Square** as being part of a 14th Century emergency burial ground.

Call Sign has been assured that the plague couldn't have survived below ground and **Dial-a-Cab** drivers can still get through to **Goswell Road** – albeit stuffed full of traffic!

The find was discovered just weeks after remains of **King Richard III** were discovered beneath a **Leicester** car park.



This chap probably died in 1349 from the Black Death!



London tourist guide and taxi driver, Bob Woodford, on everything you always wanted to know about London...

BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK!

Have you ever seen a GHOST?

Even if you think you've never seen a Ghost, then I'll challenge you! Driving around London, covering the ground that you have to during your working life as a taxi driver, then you must see Ghosts all of the time – even if you don't realise it!

Just look at derelict stations! Let me guide you around some of London's disused tube and main line railway structures – a sample of some forgotten and fascinating remains.

Our guided tour might as well start at the home of LTPH, the **Palestra Building** - well it has to start somewhere! Right next door in **Blackfriars Road**, under the railway bridge, you will find the old **Blackfriars Road** station. This was opened way back in 1864 by **South Eastern Railway Company**, but was very short-lived, closing just 4 years later thanks to the opening of nearby **Waterloo Junction** station, later renamed **Waterloo East**.

Heading north, just a few hundred yards up the road at the junction with **Southwark Street**, the narrow **Invicta Plaza** (which looks to be about to disappear under yet another pile of concrete any day) where you can see scant remains of **Blackfriars Bridge** station. Opened by **London, Chatham & Dover Railway** (also in 1864), it served as the terminus of their line from south London until it was extended over the Thames later that year. This one bit the dust in 1885.

Let's cross the river and head up **New Bridge Street** to the junction with **Ludgate Circus**. Yes, the entrance to the new **City Thameslink** station might sit just inside Ludgate Hill now, but when it opened in 1865 **Ludgate Hill** station was another stop on the **LC&DR** until closing in 1929. Its platforms were located above street level and many of us oldies still remember with some degree of fondness the demolished viaduct crossing, where Santander Bank is now and pulled down in 1990.

Carry on a little further north beneath **Holborn Viaduct**, and a glance to the right inside **Snow Hill** will reveal a dirty and derelict looking building, which is the location of the former **Snow Hill** station – another built by the **LC&DR** in 1874. The name later changed to the not-so-catchy **Holborn Viaduct Low Level Station**, but by 1916 that station had also closed its doors for good.



Ok, head out of Smithfield in the direction of **Dial-a-Cab** and Old Street and take a left up Central Street. When you reach the junction of **City Road**, on the corner to your left you will find what remains of **City Road** underground station. Opened by **City & South London Railway** (today's Northern Line) in 1901, it was perhaps doomed from the start and its low usage saw permanent closure in 1922. The old station was partially demolished in the 1960s, but it's not hard to imagine how this station may have looked back in the day. Other parts of it can be seen in **Moreland Street**.

We continue our tour by turning right onto the **Ring Road**, following through to the junction of **Old Street** and **Kingsland Road**. Just before you reach the end of Old Street, under the railway bridge you can see on your left the bricked up former entrance to **Shoreditch** sta-

tion; the station entrance is on the corner - now home to the appropriately named **Old Shoreditch Station Pub**. This station opened in 1865 as part of the **North London Railway** and was going strong until the Luftwaffe damaged it beyond repair in 1940. The line terminated at the long-lost mighty **Broad Street** station (which was adjacent to **Liverpool Street** station), swept away in 1986 to make way for the **Broadgate** complex.



Head now towards **Spitalfields**; from **Commercial Street** turn left into **Whitechapel Road** and just past the Mosque is a **Citroen** car dealership upon which once stood **St Mary's** station. That opened in 1884 on the **Metropolitan District Railway** (today's **District Line**). The station closed in 1938 - higher passenger use at **Aldgate East** making **St Mary's** redundant. However, it was brought back to life during WW2 as an air raid shelter and perhaps ironically, it became a victim of enemy bombing, which led to it being demolished. All that now remains is an emergency exit door that can be seen at the far right of the car showroom's forecourt, close to where it meets the wall at the Mosque.

Turn around and head back towards the City. Just past **Tower Hill** on **Byward Street** where it meets **Seething Lane** is **Mark Lane** station, disguised today as an **All Bar One** pub. It was also opened by the **MDR** (**District Line**) in 1884, but suffered closure in 1967 and replaced by **Tower Hill** station. Next time you're passing, check out the station clock which still occupies space in what is now a bar, where drinkers are blissfully unaware of its previous purpose.

Work your way around to **Monument Street** next and a few paces from the plinth of the Monument itself is a Blue Plaque, which tells us that **King William Street** station once stood where **Regis House** now dominates. Opened by **C&SLR** in 1890, it had a very short life, closing in 1900. The platforms below still exist over 100 years on and were last used as another air raid shelter in World War Two.

Finally, cross back over the river and wiggle through to **Borough Road** and where **Long Lane Cab Repairs** are. I wonder just how many of the grease monkeys who work under those arches realise that the office doorway was once the entrance to **Borough Road** station. Opened in 1864 by the **LC&DR**, closure came in 1907 as a result of competition from nearby tube stations along the Northern Line. Next time you have your cab serviced there, check out various dilapidated parts of the station building down a dingy alley choked with broken up Fairways!

So we've come full circle on a tour around a central London patch to the east of **Blackfriars Bridge** – and it has not been an exhaustive search by any means. Some of you no doubt will have in mind more 'ghost' stations - of which there are far too many to list here.

Next month I shall head up west for another spot of Ghostbusters!

Bob Woodford
Call Sign Online

LOOKING AT (TAXI) LIFE

Where is South London?

It's always been an urban myth that taxi drivers don't go south - apart from their waistline! Even when you have someone in the back of the cab as you cross over the Thames, it's not unusual for the passenger to tell you that they can never get a taxi to take them - totally oblivious to the fact that you are taking them!

Furthermore, as you head across the river, they never seem to notice the hundreds of cabs coming towards you heading north! In fact I would prefer to stand on any one of the bridges and collect a pound from every driver heading north as they return back from the place they allegedly never go to, than actually work. I suspect I would be a lot richer.

But this myth got me thinking about where actually was South London? Some people believe it is south of the Thames, but Westminster, Victoria, Fulham, Chelsea, Knightsbridge etc all carry a South London postcode and if we never went there, where *would* we go?

In London there are postcodes for North 1, West 1 and East 1, but none for South 1 because as we know, they are SE1 and SW1. This strange phenomenon dates back to 1866 when the postal districts were rearranged. There was an NE and a S postcode, which were changed to N and E. Then two years later in 1868, the S sector was split into SE and SW. The S1 postcode is actually for Sheffield.

So maybe that's where the myth started, because if the post office didn't want to deliver a letter to South London, it's hardly surprising that you can't get a Taxi to a place that is no longer there...!

Dropping your 'H'

A few years ago I thought I would learn a different language and after spending many holidays there, I opted to learn Spanish. I enrolled in a

With Tom Quigley (Y33)



class at the local college, persevered and was quite proud when I achieved an 'O' level Certificate. Unfortunately, I found going for the 'A' level much tougher, which was just as well as I promised the family if I got an 'A' level, I would then take a 'Gap Year'!

Generally, the Spanish 'H' is silent, but for some strange reason I kept pronouncing it; I say strange because like a lot of Eastenders I never pronounce the 'H' when I am speaking English and this used to drive my teacher crazy as well as driving my wife mad for years. So much so that she has given up trying to correct me!

I have often wondered why this occurs; it's not as if I never got the opportunity to practice, having been born in 'ackney 'ospital in 'omerton. Growing up, I never had two 'alf pennies to rub together and thought I'd won the pools if you got 'alf a crown from an uncle for a birthday or other special occasion.

As I got older, we were often told not to 'ang about around 'ere whilst I spent many an hour - I can say that one as it's silent - at 'aringey dogs with my brother 'arry - who ironically was always known as 'H'! I used to catch the 253 bus along the 'olloway Road, passing through 'ornsey!

Then I used to be a milkman in 'oxton and 'aggerston and later carried an 'od on many a building site. And God forbid if someone caught you smiling there; the general retort would be to ask what you were so 'appy about, while if you expressed an opinion, it was often nothing to write 'ome about!

It does seem a very strange thing to drop an 'H' in one language and not another, but I had better stop now as one of my favourite TV programmes is about to start... 'eir 'unters!

Tom Quigley,
Call Sign Online

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Yet another short story about a trip I did some while ago that remains locked in my memory....

There I was on Victoria Station rank sitting in an FX4 one cold and wintery afternoon. Eventually I reached the 'point' when two ladies approached; one was probably in her seventies while the other was much younger - maybe thirty something.

I was asked if I would take them to Paddington Station. Nothing out of the ordinary, however - yes there always seems to be a 'however' in the most mundane trips, at least when I do them!

As we left the Vic, I could hear the two ladies muttering in a very noticeable Welsh accent, the words I could make out were "ask the driver" and then "taxi to Cardiff!"

Ears pricked, antenna out, I asked if they had called me and this is how the conversation went...

The younger of the two women, **Bronwyn**, asked if I would be prepared to take them to Cardiff. I pulled over to the side of the road for a more 'in-depth' discussion! I said that although it was a long trip, I would be prepared to take them but I would have to ask our call centre for a mileage and the cost of the journey. The quote was £400 and I told them it would take about two and half hours.

Megan (the mother) said that would be fine but she also said if they paid me £450, would I be prepared to drive to Brixton first to pick up a box? At that point Bronwyn said to her Mother she wasn't sure if the box could fit in the cab.

Mike Son looks back at some of his taxi trips that were a bit out of the ordinary...

I ain't got nobody!



I said I didn't have a problem going to Brixton but just how large was the item and was it heavy? Bronwyn said "it's my Da." I asked what her 'da' was and she replied it was her father who was in the box!

Apparently Megan and her late husband had visited Bronwyn, who lived in Brixton, but unfortunately during the visit the father became ill and was admitted to hospital where sadly he passed away. Their plan was to send the body back to Wales for a family burial. When Megan and Bronwyn visited a local funeral director and were given a cost for sending the body home to Wales, the cost

turned out to be prohibitive. And apparently there was no insurance to cover funeral expenses.

No doubt when I gave the cost of the trip to Cardiff, not knowing there was a body involved, the mother and daughter thought their financial problems had been resolved. Nonetheless, when I explained it was not possible for a London taxi to transport a body via the various counties to Cardiff, not to mention the administration and documentation that would have to be dealt with and notwithstanding the looks of other motorists and pedestrians, it would have created quite a lot of attention, therefore the trip was not possible and I dropped them at Paddington.

So what would you have done? Would you have taken a chance and done the journey with two live and one dead passenger logistically distributed around the taxi? And where would the coffin be placed? Maybe open the two passenger windows and slide the coffin across with both ends sticking out, or take the corpse out of the box and seat him next to the family members. It was of course a sad situation for the family, however there is always an element of comedy even within tragedy.

Mike Son
DaC BoM Member

Another true story from Geoff Levene

Why do people use taxis???

Why do people use taxis? Well there are various reasons...

We know all of those difficult to find places like the *gentlemen's clubs* around St James' and the West End that have no names outside and on which we spent ages doing the **Knowledge** trying to identify - establishments such as **Boodles** or **Bucks** or the **East India and Sports**.

Then there are the *livery clubs* such as the **Armourers and Brasiers**, **Actuaries**, **Turners** and of course the **Scriveners**. Where are they... no, what are they! But we can find them because we are taxi drivers.

And what about the hotels. Who else could have immediately found their way to **Whites**, the **Mount Royal** and the **Clifton-Ford** (no, not *Clinton Ford*, he used to sing about *Fanlight Fanny*)! But we know our way around. Not just how to get from A to B, but all the back doubles, the short-cuts and the rat runs that get our passengers to their destinations as quickly as possible.

But hang on a minute. Apart from the **RAC**, how often does anybody actually ask for one of those clubs? The **Army and Navy**? Maybe. The **Reform**? Perhaps. But the **Athenaeum**? I don't think so. In fact the members there are so old, they have probably forgotten that they are actually members. In fact legend has it that the catering is done by *Meals on Wheels*!

And the hotels? If it's not a *Thistle*, it's a *Radisson* or *Hilton* or *Premier Inn* or a *Travelodge*. I can't keep up. **Nash's Numbers** needs to come out on a weekly basis rather than monthly!

And so to the back doubles. I think the rot set in when they started messing about with the Liverpool Road area. The options for crossing Islington were severely limited. Then came the Oxford Street bus lane. Suddenly, instead of shooting along Wigmore Street, it became best to use the bus lane until Oxford Street was narrowed and we were back using Wigmore Street again.

But at least there are a few places left that we can still use. So if you're going up Tottenham Court Road and you want to dodge the traffic turning left into Euston Road, you turn into Warren Street, go past a nice sandwich shop and the unusual blue-tiled frontage of the old **Evans Dairy**, where my grandmother bought the milk to sell in her shop in Cleveland Street - they watered it down by the way! Then turn right at the top where **Benny Green** used to live, slip into Euston Road and away you go. Right? Er...no!



The dreaded bollards have appeared there now so we can forget that one and consign it to the dustbin of history. Just sit in the fume-filled traffic, wind up the windows and watch the passengers sweat as the chances of catching the train disappears...

Geoff Levene (W32)

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Danny Fresco has been with **Call Sign** ever since current Editor **Alan Fisher's** first day in the hot seat in June 1997 and while Danny may not be as well-known as his *Taxi* columnist dad **Al**, his layout designs have helped **Call Sign** reach tremendous heights for an in-house magazine.

On Sunday 9 August 2009, Danny's mum, Al's wife and Ed's wife Linda's closest friend, **Carole Fresco** passed away in Barts Hospital, just six weeks after being diagnosed with breast cancer.

After Carole's death, Danny's family were greatly helped by **Chai Cancer Care** and in return Danny ran the **London British 10k** charity run and raised around £700 for the Hendon and Redbridge-based organisation that provides so much care for Jewish cancer patients and their families.

Now Danny is going to do the 10K run again in memory of his mum, but is adding Editor's son **Reed Fisher**. Reed died this

Call Sign's Danny runs for Chai



Reed with wife Lara



Carole with Ed's wife Linda

January, three years after being diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumour.

Danny told **Call Sign**: "This year I've decided in memory of my mum, Carole, and the recent passing of Reed Fisher to run the British 10k to try and raise awareness and money for Chai Cancer Care. They are a small charity but do such a fantastic job looking after families and patients who are, or have been, affected by cancer.

"Without them I would have struggled to come to terms with the sudden loss of my fantastic mum who I miss so much. And in Reed's case, not only did they help his family but I know how much Chai helped Reed during his illness and gave him the support and comfort he needed. I will always be indebted to Chai for helping me and if I can raise anything in return, I will be happy and honoured."

Chai currently supports around 1600 clients at any one time at its 8 UK sites or in their own homes. This number is added to at the rate of around 80 new clients each month. Over the past 12 months, Chai provided over 12,000 individual therapy and counseling sessions.

You can find Danny's charity page at: <http://tinyurl.com/avatjvp>

Jamie Corum
Call Sign Online

Islington and Hackney Boroughs...

DO THEY KNOW WHAT THEY ARE DOING?

Anyone driving their taxis in the boroughs of Islington and Hackney cannot fail to have noticed the increasing emergence of 20 mph signs painted on the carriageways and also attached to lamp posts and other street furniture.

These slower speed limits, together with the ubiquitous speed humps of varying height and size are designed to improve road safety, with claims of halving road accident rates in these neighbouring boroughs where such measures have been introduced.

It would appear the two council's hope that drivers will voluntarily respond to the speed restrictions and drive with greater caution. Islington Council led the way by steadily increasing the number of roads under its control into 20 mph zones with a view to improving road safety near schools, public venues and residential areas, meeting with the approval of those affected. It wasn't too long before neighbouring Hackney Council decided to follow suit.

However, it would appear that there is confusion between these boroughs and TfL, who are responsible for several of the major roads that pass through these areas and which are subject to 30 mph limits. Equally, the local police seem reluctant to enforce these council wide speed restrictions except when particular streets are highlighted as *black spots*, while the schemes also seem to have attracted their detractors as motorists continue to ignore the 20 mph restrictions.

In their quest to extort ever more money from motorists, it can only be a matter of time before these councils decide to install speed cameras on their roads and no doubt, when other councils realise the fund-raising possibilities, roll out their own speed limits under the guise of road safety.

But the question is this: Where a road is under dual responsibility - local council and TfL - whose speed limit should you comply with? Our photo of Old Street highlights just such a situation with the council's 20mph on the road and TfL's 30mph on the lamp post...



Note the 20 mph road sign and the 30 mph on the lamp post!

Alan Green
Call Sign Online

Call Sign

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Editor: Alan Fisher

Address: 39 - 47 East Rd, London N1 6AH

Tel: 0207 251 0581 Fax: 0207 553 7293

Email: callsignmag@aol.com

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Email: dfdannyfresco@gmail.com

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Watch out for cyclists coming towards you!

Over the past few years the City of London has made changes to 31 one-way streets and allowed cyclists to go contra-flow along them. Now the City Corporation have said they con-

Beware of Cyclists

As the city goes contra-flow!

sider the majority to have been successful and have added a further 33 streets to that number. They have also cancelled four of the originals and restored them to two-way working, which still leaves 60 streets where a cyclist may unexpectedly – and legally – come towards you in what you believed to be a one-way street.

However, the Corporation have added that where the proposals look to be too problematic, they may consider reverting some one-way streets back to two-way working. The Corporation believes these measures will help insure the safety of cyclists in areas

where some of the main roads are very busy.

The first 19 streets are below with the rest following in a few months. They are:

Basinghall Street, Bride Lane, Carey Lane, College Hill, Finch Lane, Foster Lane, Great St Thomas Apostle, Great Winchester St, Gutter Lane, Ironmonger Lane, Moor Lane, Nicholas Lane, Noble St, Old Jewry and St Mary Axe.

The four streets that are now two-way working again are Bridewell Place, Carmelite St, Foster Lane and Tallis St. At the time of writing, we were not too sure why Foster Lane appeared in both lists...

LVTA in London Cabalcade...



FX4 ready for its big day out!

The **London Vintage Taxi Association (LVTA)** is holding an event in central London on **7th April** to celebrate the **FX4** and **Fairway** taxis. Some of the names of guest speakers at the event will bring back memories to those who have a long standing involvement in the London taxi trade and include **Lord Jamie Borwick**, who was Chairman of **Manganese Bronze Holdings** at the time that the FX4 changed over to the Fairway.

The family event promises to be a real celebration of these iconic taxis. Plans have been finalised for a celebration convoy that will begin at Chelsea Harbour before touring various sites of historic relevance to the FX4 or the taxi trade in general, with some very interesting and highly informative guest speakers.

The final gathering point for the convoy will be at Marble Arch. Keep an eye on the LVTA website at www.lvta.co.uk for up to date information and timings.

LVTA members are bringing their cabs from as far afield as Switzerland, Germany, France and many parts of the UK and it may not be too late to register to come and join in. If any **Dial-a-Cab** driver has an FX4, FX4R, FX4S, FX4S Plus, Fairway or Fairway Driver, FL2, FX4 hearse (!!!) or maybe a very rare newspaper van, then you will be more than welcome to join them. Membership of the LVTA is just £28 per annum.

The LVTA is grateful to **Gold** sponsors The **WCHCD** and **Dial-a-Cab**, **Silver** sponsors **Hailo**, **LTDA** and **Knowledgemaster** and **Bronze** sponsors the **London Cab Company** and **Richmond Road Cab Centre**. The event would not have been possible without all their support.

If you are thinking of going along with your vehicle(s), you

must first contact the Event Secretary, gary@thelondoncabcompany.com.

The Winchester section of the LVTA will also be joining the celebration as they enjoy their Golden Jubilee.





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Whether you realise it or not, the Internet is ubiquitous; it is everywhere, easily accessible to all from any computer. When I started out in IT, a computer was simply that; a great big heavy thing that only geeky people like me used at home. Now of course, *everything* is a computer; your phone, your tablet, your TV etc. With the prolific rise of mobile computing, almost everyone has become connected to the Internet wherever they are, *whatever their age*. Herein lays the reason behind my article. To quote the Ed recently *"the genie has been let out of the bottle and getting it back in is near impossible."*

So this month I'll show you how to protect your children from unsavoury websites on an iPad/iPhone. Next month I'll do the same for Android tablets/phones.

This is my 10-step recipe for protection on the iPad/iPhone and I find it works well...

1. Buy an App called **"Sandbox Browser"** on the App Store for £1.99. This is a web browser that *only allows access to white listed websites*. That is, websites you add to a list are allowed and everything else is blocked. Install this App on your child's iPad and configure it with websites you are happy for them to access. A tip: Don't allow search engines otherwise this exercise is futile! Find out which websites they want to visit like Wikipedia for example, and add them. When prompted to save and set a password, be sure to do this to prevent changes being made without the password. Here is the link to the App: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/sandbox-web-browser/id562054411>.

2. (Optional): Download an App called **"Jasmine"** on the App Store (it is free, but parental controls require a one-time £1.49 in-app purchase). Install this App on your child's iPad and log in with your YouTube credentials (perhaps you can set up a family account?) then switch on *Parental Controls*

The internet has a myriad of information – however not all of it is suitable for the young

Protecting Your Children Online (Part 1)

By DaC Network Administrator, Jon Winterburn



(again, this is password protected) and limit the access to playlists, subscriptions and favourites. This way, your child cannot browse or search and therefore cannot access inappropriate content, but rather videos you deem as fit for their consumption (which you can to their favourites or subscriptions). Here is the link to the App: <https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/jasmine-youtube-client/id554937050>.

3. Delete all other YouTube and Web browser apps from the iPad.

4. On the iPad, open Settings app. Tap General > Restrictions. Tap **Enable Restrictions** and enter a password (perhaps the same one you use for Sandbox and Jasmine, so it's easy to remember).

5. Now you need to switch the "Allow" option to **"Off"** for Safari. At this point you can also prevent installing and deleting apps if you so choose (this will stop them installing other Web browsers).

6. Next, scroll down to **"Allowed Content"** and set **"Ratings For: UK"**. Set **"Music & Podcasts > Explicit: Off"**. Set **"Films, TV, Books"** to an **age appropriate** to your child (but not Apps, as this will prevent too many Apps from working).

7. Switch **"In-App Purchases"** off and set **"Require Password"** to **"Immediately"**. If you wish, you can also switch off Twitter and Facebook on this screen.

8. Next, on the iPad, open Settings. Tap Wi-Fi, tap the **blue arrow** next to your Wi-Fi connection. Change the DNS to: 208.67.222.222, 208.67.220.220. This will set the iPad's DNS (the method used to look up website addresses) to OpenDNS – the provider of safe, secure web browsing. See step 10 for more information.

9. **Back-up** the iPad/iPhone so that all these settings are saved. This allows you to restore all these settings back to the iPad should something go wrong with it.

10. Finally, create a **free account** at: www.opendns.com. Once you have done this, you can add the IP address of your home Internet connection (you can find this out at:

www.whatismyip.org) to your profile and then you have the ability to further control Internet access to any device on your network using the aforementioned DNS addresses (see step 5). You can also view reports of all Internet access on this website. I would recommend you use the DNS addresses listed in step 5 on **all** devices in your home, as this will provide all your family with this layer of protection.

Disclaimer: Make no mistake, no system is fool proof. Any system will need to be vigorously enforced and monitored.

One final note: There are a number of other solutions available, but most of them require a paid subscription. I have tried a few of these out, but have quite quickly been able to find holes in their systems. This is because most subscription-based services operate an *"allow-all, then block known bad websites."* The problem with this is that new websites are available every day, so their databases will always be out of date. But operating a *"whitelist"* method which functions as: *"block-all, then allow known good websites,"* **you have total control and peace of mind.**

I hope this helps and I'll continue next month with Android tablets/phones...

Jon Winterburn



New terminal and PED for chip and pin transactions

NEW TERMINALS CLOSE!

At a recent meeting between **Dial-a-Cab's** IT Director **John Bankes**, Business Analyst **Theresa Whitfield**, DaC programmer **Evaldas Jocys**, DaC Training Manager **Daren Morley**, several members of the BoM including newest member, **Garry White** and the five DaC drivers testing out the new in-cab driver's terminals at the time – **Graham Ellis (S95)**, **Mickey Tarbuck (L41)**, **Alan Green (E52)**, **Colin Salmon (N81)** and **Alan Fisher (F07)** - it was announced that we were probably within weeks of releasing the first batch of 100 new terminals.

The purpose of the meeting was for the five driver-testers to report any problems, while the IT department told the group of current and future software updates to correct previously reported bugs in the system, together with problems the five drivers had previously reported.

The drivers reported on around 20 prob-

lems between them, which included several apparent bugs – none described by Theresa Whitfield as sounding too problematic so far as future updates were concerned. She also spoke of modifications that were being placed into future updates – known as *fixes* – and by the time the first terminals go out, these would all have been done.

None of the five drivers complained about any real difficulties in using their terminal, although all said that it took a day or so to get used to it. Many of the buttons were the same as before and it was really the mapping and satnav facilities that were different in addition to realising that they were using phone signals.

Generally speaking, the drivers were happy with the way updates were going ahead and that any problems were fairly small, even if occasionally irritating when you are the one testing it...

NEW TAXI LICENCE FEES APPROVED

TfL has now approved changes to the taxi (and private hire) licence fees for 2013/14 and which come in from 2 April 2013. The review ensures that the fees must be calculated to fully recover the cost of providing the licensing services.

The changes to licence fees include:

- A reduction in the licence fee for taxi (and private hire) vehicles respectively. This is as a result of the introduction of the new inspection service (NSL). This reduction includes the capital costs for the introduction of the new service, expanding the number of inspection centres available with improved facilities available at each of these sites;
- A reduction in the private hire driver licence fee to reflect the continuing high volume of applications for these licences and to reduce the surplus income in this area, it was considered that this reduction should take effect in April 2013;
- An increase in Knowledge of London written examination and appearance fees to further reduce the subsidy from licensed taxi drivers; and
- An increase in private hire operator and variation fees to better reflect the compliance activity that takes place in this area.

New Licence Fees:

Taxi vehicle

Application fee reduced from £101 to £66.

Licence fee reduced from £53 to £36.

Taxi driver

The application (currently £50) remains unchanged

The licence fee (currently £199) remains unchanged

Taxi Fares

The 1.7% fare increase from Saturday April 6 (as written about in the March **Call Sign**) has also been approved by the TfL Board and includes a 40p additional charge which will be implemented only if London retail diesel prices (as measured by the Arval index) reach 180.3 pence/litre.

There is also an 80p increase to the Heathrow Airport extra that covers taxi journeys starting from Heathrow Airport, which takes this charge from £2.40 to £3.20.

The 1000 mile electric car!

According to online motoring magazine **Motortrades Insight**, next year sees the possibility of an electric car with a capability of travelling 1000 miles on a single charge. **Ian Hobday**, CEO of **Liberty Electric Cars**, told the magazine that 2013 should see a vehicle that will go from Land's End to John O'Groats on a single charge. He said the car would be capable of a range between 837 to 1,000 miles – around four times the furthest range of electric cars currently available on the market.

Mr Hobday said that the price had yet to be determined and made no comment about a long range taxi, but he did say that while the 1000 mile vehicle is just for test purposes, it demonstrates where the electric car technology is going. He said that whilst we are at 200 to 250 miles today, within two years up to 500 will be the norm.

"Battery-based energy storage for electric vehicles will be capable of delivering everything that a tank of petrol or diesel can deliver within two or three years."

The battery technology has been developed by **Metaelectric Ltd**, a research and development business based in Tavistock, Devon.

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A conversation with Call Sign Editor Alan Fisher recently got me wondering about something Mayor Boris Johnson often infers - that London's transport network covers all needs. There are lots (and lots and lots and lots) of often empty buses, there is also an excellent - if often crowded - tube network. And to back that up, for people who don't like crawling along in a bus or being treated like a sardine underground, there is the world's best taxi system. Put together they supposedly make Transport for London. There is certainly no reason for anyone in the capital to say they couldn't get home! But are taxis really a part of Transport for London?

Chatting with the Editor, he told me about a **Penalty Charge Notice** that he received from the *London Borough of Tower Hamlets*. This is the borough that has CCTV cameras outside the bagel shops in Brick Lane and issues PCNs 24 hours a day for any taxi driver daring to pick up a quick takeaway snack after providing a service to Londoners. Park just inches over the line marked out where stopping is permitted and your snack will cost you £130 (sale price of £65 if paid in 28 days)! It also has 24x7 cameras watching the loading bays along Hackney Road. Alan's PCN was just after 9pm on a deserted loading bay for just a few minutes.

It reminded me of emails we have received over the years referring to **Dial-a-Cab** taxis being penalised for putting on "foul" at the **Hammersmith Broadway taxi rank**. But how often have you seen one or more of London's ridiculously over-supplied buses struggling to pull onto a bus stop because there are already several there loading and unloading passengers? The result is that the last bus or buses - usually empty - have to stop on zigzag lines or a loading bay. Needless to say, if a taxi did that because there was no room anywhere else to stop (Lambeth Council and Waterloo Road being a good example) a ticket would arrive on their doormat *postea haste*.

So I decided to look into the matter and used the **Freedom of Information Act 2000** to get some answers from *Tower Hamlets*.

Firstly I wrote to Tower Hamlets quoting the *Act* and asked how many buses had received PCNs over the past 12 months for stopping on zigzag lines, yellow boxes or in loading bays? A response under the *Act* came from **Dilwar Hussain**, the borough's *Information Governance Administrative Officer* who somewhat surprised us by saying that buses weren't their responsibility. He wrote:

"Sorry, but we don't issue PCNs to London Buses - if they were any issued to buses then it would be by Transport for London as they operate the red routes."

So if that was the case, why did they issue a PCN to Alan's taxi, which is also part of TfL? We had our doubts as to the viability of the answer

ARE TAXIS REALLY PART OF TFL???



PCNs given to buses? None!

so we asked TfL if that was indeed the case. They denied it other than for their own area - Euston and Marylebone Roads being the main PCN providers.

Mr Hussain wrote once again, having obviously heard from TfL. This time he said:

"Unfortunately there seems to have been some misunderstanding. We are responsible for issuing all PCNs on our highways, therefore would issue PCNs to buses contravening our restrictions in the same way we would issue PCNs to taxis. I can confirm however that we have not recorded any contraventions committed by London buses on our roads, so have not issued any PCNs to them."

Hmmm. So it WAS Tower Hamlets that issue PCNs to buses, it's just that they haven't actually done anything wrong! So we asked about taxis. How many PCNs have they been issued with; after all they too are part of Transport for London? The answer? Well this time it came from **Richard Carter**, whose title is *Tower*

Hamlets Complaints and Information Officer. He wrote:

"The information that you have requested is not held. Parking Services issue Penalty Charge Notices to vehicle registration numbers and not the class of vehicle."

Ok, fine. So buses and taxis are both part of TfL, both are subject to PCNs from Tower Hamlets yet that borough knows that no buses have been ticketed even though there are no records, because we know that at least 50 **Dial-a-Cab** drivers have received PCNs from TH because we asked them! So how many more out of the 25,000 licensed taxi drivers in London have received them over the past 12 months? If we said hundreds, it would probably be a gross underestimate.

So our question again is this: Are taxis really part of TfL??? We await a response from Mayor Boris who is on our mailing list.

Baghwat Singh
Call Sign Online

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COMPLIANCE OFFICER'S REPORT



Hello Ladies & Gents,

Logos

Over the past month it has become increasingly apparent that there are a number of member's taxis that are not displaying the company logo. As I have mentioned previously, it not only helps our clients locate their taxis - especially when there is more than one outside of an address - but is still in my opinion one of the best ways to promote our Society. It is, as you know, a Society *Procedure Rule* that all taxis must display them at all times and it is surprising how

many taxis are spotted with one or both missing, especially by our own members. Please adhere to the rules.

Apps

As you know, there is already a **Dial-a-Cab** App for Credit Card bookings and in addition to this there is now an App for Account bookings, both readily available to be downloaded and I must say the IT department have done an excellent job. It is particularly user friendly and offers both pre-bookings as well as ASAPs. Very soon there will be rear tip-up seat ads available at **Roman Way** for all taxi models and it would help tremendously if you could fit the ads and advertise the service to passengers in the back of your cabs. The credit card work is steadily rising, so let's all help to further generate this type of work because believe it or not, the average fare of twenty eight pounds on these trips is significantly higher than other suppliers, with a discretionary run-in and you do not even have to pay for the privilege.

Booking-in

The Contact Centre has been closely monitoring all zones and there are still a small minority of members booking in from far

away areas to gain queue positions in certain zones that have regular daily trips in. This is unfair to the vast majority who are following correct procedures and offenders have already been asked to attend the most recent complaints hearing, with results appearing in next month's *Call Sign*. We all have our normal patterns of working, but booking in to zones miles away from where we are is not acceptable. Please play the game.

Fixed price trips

Lastly, please do not clear a fixed price trip (FP) until you have reached your final destination. Clearing the trip as soon as you start the journey is a rule violation, especially if you then book in to a zone whilst in transit on the self-same trip. It will not only be deemed as booking-in contrary to the Society's procedure, but will also give you an unfair advantage, which I am sure the complaints committee and fellow members will take a dim view of. I am sure you all know where I'm coming from.

Be lucky and drive very safely

Allan Evans

DaC Compliance Officer

London Taxi Company launches TX4 enhancement programme



Customers looking to buy a new TX4 from The London Taxi Company can do so now with some added reassurance and with no change to the list prices.

As well as the comprehensive 3 year, 100,000 mile vehicle warranty and 3 year unlimited mileage core engine warranty, the company has now confirmed that all new TX4s have had steering boxes, radiators, interior trim, check-straps and turbo hoses replaced with components of improved design and superior quality.

Commenting on the improvements, UK Retail Director, **Rob Laidler** said: "This is the first demonstration of our commitment to improve product quality. We are well aware that it is easy to pay lip service and talk about our aspirations to improve the durability of our product. We wanted to be able to show the trade tangible improvements as soon as possible after we re-launched as a company."

All new TX4s purchased from the recently reopened London Taxi Company dealerships across the UK have received the refinements. Customers are being invited to visit their closest branch to see the improvements for themselves.

TX4 Elegance (Automatic) is still available from £35,995 or from just £135 per week - for more information, please call 0207 700 0888 or visit www.london-taxis.co.uk.

Potholes should be fixed far better!



Research into potholes undertaken by Nottingham University, shows that patch repairs could be much more durable if a few simple techniques were consistently adopted. They

found that the application of a coat of bitumen emulsion between two layers of asphalt in a clean, dry repair, greatly improved its resistance to further cracks. It was also confirmed that a hot mix repair - in which asphalt is heated to 140°C or more - was the best option for repairing potholes with a depth of more than 2.5 centimetres.

Dr Mujib Rahman, a senior lecturer in civil engineering at Trent University's School of Architecture, Design and the Built Environment, told *Call Sign*:

"The public purse carries a huge burden with the cost of pothole repairs as so many of them have to be repaired again and again. It is essential, therefore, that we understand more about how they are created and how they can be repaired in a more efficient and a better way. As an initial study, we have found that if a few simple and cost-effective measures are applied with each repair, then there may be less need for so many repeat repairs. If more research was carried out in this area, there could be a great potential for £millions to be saved every year, as not only could the amount of pothole repairs be reduced, but damage caused to motor vehicles could also be avoided."

During the study it was also found that the presence of water accelerated pothole cracks and significantly increased a pothole's permeability.

You may have seen the poster in the DaC Driver's Reception for a self-defence course run by **Ricky Manetta (N16)**, the founder and Head Instructor of **MMA Krav Maga**, a style of martial art developed by the Israeli Special Forces. Ricky has over 30 years' experience in Martial Arts and is an undoubted expert in the art of self-defence or unarmed combat.

You may even know Ricky. He has been a DaC Marshal on Bank Street E14, the rider sitting on the back of the police motorbike to protect the front runner at the **London Marathon**, or if you're a UFC (Ultimate Fighting Championship) fan, you could have seen him with another DaC marshal, **Stefan Fitt (P88)**, walking the fighters into the Octagon and co-coordinating the event!

With **Dial-a-Cab** sponsoring a basic course of eight weeks duration, courtesy of Chairman **Brian Rice** and the BoM, many DaC drivers took up the opportunity to learn some essential defensive techniques while getting fitter into the bargain! **Allan Evans** accompanied Brian at the presentation.

Ricky's classes are limited to a maximum of ten students per class in order to give personal, virtually one to one tuition and cover skills from the very beginner up to more advanced techniques that will boost your confidence, allowing you to deal confidently with potentially dangerous or aggressive situations, both in and out of your taxi.

As cab drivers, we come into contact with all sorts of members of the public and knowing that you can deal effectively with a situation through your body language or demeanour, can often defuse an otherwise sticky situation!

Jackie Kott (Y88) was the only female on the particular course that **Call Sign** visited and she was eager for more women to get involved.

"I feel far more confident now that I've learned techniques to defend myself should the need arise, and I'm able to compete effectively, even against some of the bigger and heavier chaps here! So I feel more comfortable and relaxed when I'm out there working on the cab."

Peter Arnold (F40) recalled having an extremely un-nerving experience a few years ago and welcomed the chance to learn unarmed defensive techniques against potentially dangerous or confrontational situations. Peter told **Call Sign**:

"This course has boosted my self-confidence enormously and I think everybody should have at least some self-defensive knowledge."

For more information on future classes and courses go to www.mmakravmaga.com or call **Ricky Manetta** on: 07950 267574. One day you could be very grateful that you did...

Alan Green
Call Sign Online

The Dial-a-Cab sponsored self-defence course of Krav Maga ended recently with a presentation by Brian Rice. Call Sign was there to watch our drivers in action...

The Krav Maga Self Defence Course



Jackie Kott, the only female there, with Steve Clarke (W09)



Ricky Manetta about to demonstrate a wrist lock



Mickey Tarbuck (L12) looks on as Ivyn Harvey (E87) and Alan Gregory (O17) go at it!



John Farmer (H69) puts his dreaded throat grip onto Len Jacobs (M59)!

DaC driver Sean Farrell (B39) looks at trade history from a different angle

The Brethren of the Whip

Another rank, another ruck...

When a cab driver tried to resume his position on the Piccadilly rank after the passenger that hailed him said his was the wrong sort of cab, (they did not want a two-wheeled *Hansom* but a four-wheeler) the subsequent argument allowed the **court reporter** to exercise both his literary and translational skills, no doubt to the delight of the readers of *The Morning Post*.

The wronged cab driver was **W. Johnson** and after being knocked back, he would have been within his rights to charge the prospective passenger 6d for calling him off the rank, instead, he went to resume his position on the rank but now another cab had moved up and was not prepared to move back. An argument between the two drivers developed into a scuffle and ended with the other driver, named as **R. Sinnock**, driving round Johnson's cab and backing into it with the result that both cabs were damaged.

It is June 1837, Victoria had succeeded to the Crown just days before the case came to court and drivers were still unlicensed; the first badges would make their appearance the following year. Sinnock, *a genuine specimen of the London Jarvey* informed the magistrate that it was not Johnson who was driving the cab, but his *buck*, who was "**werry cheeky, and werry hogstoppolus**" and as a buck was driving the cab, he believed he had precedence. The magistrate asked him to explain what a buck was.

"A buck, yur vership, is vot ve calls the reglar driver's cad. That is, while the reglar driver's a hingering his master's property and sitting in public houses playing at shove-happenny for lush as this ere complainant (Johnson) vos at the time of the haccident, the buck looks out for jobs."

This much was true and common practice among the cabmen. The bucks would take the fares and return after a couple of hours, giving the regular driver half or even two-thirds of what they had taken. The better payers were more regularly employed than those who tried to keep hold of their earnings.

Not to be outdone, Sinnock called on the waterman of the rank, **Big Joe**, to back his version of events. Unlike the drivers, the watermen were registered and had badges, but they were not the officious superannuated policemen of future years. In 1837 they were usually washed up wrecks. Big Joe was not disappointing.

"Into the court room walked a huge, grotesque-looking personage with an air of vast importance...his face shone like a new warming-pan and was about the size and colour of that useful article," wrote the court reporter.

Big Joe recognised the magistrates from when he was subpoenaed six years previously when a nosebag was stolen, but despite the singular description from the court reporter, they somehow failed to recognise him.

"Ven this here happened," related Big Joe, **"I vos planted afore a lovely piece of bacon and a summer cabbage jist out of the pot, so it warn't in nature as I could look arter anything but my grub."**

So Big Joe did not see the fracas. **"But, though I seed nuffin about nobody, I heered sum-mint about somebody."** The magistrate stated that he therefore had no evidence to give but asked him about the rules of the rank. **"Vy, there aren't no pint but vot I knows, from the day ven I druv a hackney-coach myself to the time ven I got the happintment of head vorterman....Ven a fare plies a vehicle, if two starts the von as don't get the job comes back into his old place, according to the laws of human natur."**

As for blame, Big Joe went onto to explain that in his *candid mind*, **"...von, vos as bad as tother."** He then offered his opinion on how the magistrate should settle the case!

"...If I vas von of your brother magistrate, I'd make the proprietor of the vehicle pay one half, I'd make the cabman pay another half and I'd make the hackney coachman pay tother half, blow me."

Notwithstanding this erstwhile advice, the magistrates settled on fining Sinnock costs and damages amounting to 30 shillings...



Sean Farrell
Call Sign Online

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

Kupkake's Korner



Not so 'appy now!

Old Tom was once a happy chap,
He worked his cab each day,
Then he got a taxi App
and his life went all astray...

"You'll make more dough," the salesman said,
"Just sign on the dotted line,
Then seal the deal with freshly drawn blood
and from then on you're mine!"

So Tom began to service,
The punters who would call,
Without intent or malice
he'd run for each and all.

He lost out with his diesel,
Wasting precious miles,
For fares below the meter
that went just a couple of miles.

He complained they said be patient,
"We're working on a plan,
Just give us our 10 percent –
we hope you understand."

Then one day he got a flyer,
True it was a discounted fare,
On the way he blew a tyre
out of pocket there!

He tried to work more hours,
Just to make it pay,
Whilst in their Ivory Tower
the bosses spent their day.

Old Tom wanted to retire,
But they said he'd made a deal,
"You're ours till you expire
with a contract that is real!"

So beware of what you're signing,
And with whom you cast your net,
Don't think about resigning...
they ain't finished with you yet!

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NEW DESIGN LICENCES ..and area identifiers

LTPH have told **Call Sign** that in order to re-issue taxi driver licences, it is imperative those drivers who were requested to provide passport sized photographs do so without delay. Thanking drivers who responded, LTPH also said there were still a significant number of drivers who had not provided their photographs and that they are required to do so without delay. Photographs can be emailed to: **TPHphotos@tfl.gov.uk** or posted to: **Taxi Driver Photographs, 4th Floor, Green Zone, Palestra,**

197 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8NJ.

LTPH is now rescheduling the issue of the replacement taxi driver licences and area identifiers and will restart as soon as possible. A further announcement will be made in due course.

Stephen Berndes (R14) with a another collection of...

Berndes Bargains!



Advertising on taxis...

I find it odd that umbrella organisation, the **United Trade Group**, which comprises the **LTDA**, **LCDC** and **Unite** came to a decision to rightly run the campaign **Backing Black**, yet are in favour of allowing super-side advertisements because they say they still demonstrate the overall original

colour of the cab. This, to my mind, is total nonsense.

Dirty taxis flogging dodgy financial products with the caveat that prices can go up as well as down, makes us look irresponsible. Remember all those ads plastered on taxis claiming that the Heathrow Express was the quickest and most cost effective way to get to Heathrow? We were taken for ignorant chumps.

The suppliers use cabs as cash cows and are only concerned with their back pockets, offering lamentable paltry sums whilst we do all the work afterwards having to go to drive-thru depots with the promise that the paintwork will be returned to PCO standards. So why do we get less residual value when it comes to selling?

The umbrella group feels it is sensible to outlaw complete liveries to have uniformity in colour, but super-sides look just as tacky, lack class and alter the appearance to a similar level whilst at the same time confusing our prospective customers. Furthermore, the soon-to-be-introduced roof advertising monstrosity beggars belief!

I think there is a conflict of interest here, with garages' only concern being their increasing revenue and not the aesthetics of taxis. If they had their way the *Knowledge* would be diluted and a monopolised choice of a single make of Taxi be reinstated. And I have heard the garages would like to get the single overhaul back!

So have you noticed the lack of judgmental criticism from most trade papers regarding the awful adverts? The advertisement spend silences their voices. We have **Hailo** and **GetTaxi** with bright yellow liveries

blighting our streets. Is this a good example or just an example of trying to gain market share at the expense of the Taxi trade. There may be fundamental change to our trade when the **Law Commission** consultation paper (which supports public hire) and **Deloitte** report (which will support private hire) has been fully analysed by **Transport for London**.

Let's try to influence the change by killing off the leeches that disfigure our brand.

My Taxi MOT

On 5th March I took my cab to my local taxi garage for the first of the twice yearly standard (class 4) MOTs. I assumed they would take a cursory glance like an ordinary car MOT and pass it on the spot given that it is a well maintained cab. After a protracted wait, I was told it had passed but there were a few minor problems that needed to be sorted out. I arranged to pick up my cab the next day with ball joints, disc brakes, pads and brake shoes all changed.

I have noticed that some garage package deals are offering one price fits all packages that include replacing components as a matter of course. So is it possible to pass an MOT without these same changes, I wonder?

On the 7th March at 11am I presented my taxi to the NSC inspection centre in Enfield and reported to the desk with all the usual paraphernalia. The staff were courteous and polite. I helped myself to a free coffee from a vending machine and retired to a comfortable waiting area awaiting the verdict.

Eventually an examiner came striding into the waiting area and announced my registration number in a loud voice. The helpful chap said that my cab had passed but the rear nearside tyre needed some air pressure and that there was borderline wear. He suggested that it would be best to replace it. Would that have happened in yesteryear from an officious overhaul PCO examiner?

I returned to the car park to find that the plates had already been fixed with new screws. A nice touch with the whole process taking just twenty-eight minutes precisely.

Excellent service...

Stephen Berndes
Call Sign Online

As hooligans cause him a huge shock, Peter talks of...

THE WINDSHIELD WOES OF A DAC DRIVER!

"Yes, the noise alone made me almost jump out of my seat," **Peter Burness (C31)** told *Call Sign* as he related his tale. "I really thought I'd been hit by a bomb!"

Peter, who has been with **Dial-a-Cab** for eight years, told this magazine that he had been driving an account client up to Winchmore Hill and approaching Station Place at Finsbury Park station with the Arsenal football shop on his left hand side, when he heard what he described as "this almighty bang!"

Continuing the tale, Peter told us: "I knew right away it was my cab and I quickly looked in both door mirrors but saw nothing, but when I looked up to the rear-view mirror my first thought was that it was snow – and then I realised the rear windshield had shattered into tiny fragments. I had to assume that yobs had thrown a missile at my cab."

Peter moved speedily into Stroud Green Road and thought to stop and assess the damage, but somewhere at the back of his mind he recalled reading a warning that you should not stop, get out or leave the vehicle unattended after possible vandalism, so he decided to continue to the destination. Even driving carefully, the glass was disintegrating with every road bump and dropping onto the rear parcel shelf, possibly jeopardising the safety of his passenger. Peter suggested that he moved to a tip-up seat and his passenger – no doubt every bit as shocked as Peter – readily agreed.

"Thankfully there was no personal injury to either of us, and in fact the passenger was good as gold given the situation. I called my service garage, **E1 Taxis** at Stephenson Street, Canning Town and the boss, **Fiake Saffa**, suggested I took the cab in right away. Motoring cautiously along the A406 on my way to E16, I realised how lucky we both had been to not have got hurt. Fiake gave me an unplated Fairway courtesy cab to get me home as the rear window would have to wait until the following day for the repair. Apparently front windshields are a relatively common occurrence, but there is less call for rear windshields and so stocks are limited. Living in Kent I was truly grateful for the loan cab to get me home and to return to E16 the following day, because I had to drive to the **National Windscreen's** depot at **Fairlop Waters** to effect the replacement glassware on my cab as advised by my insurers, **Quotax**."

Peter's fitter did the job in about an hour, but it took a further 2 hours for the sealant to 'cure' and it cost him the insurance excess of £75, so he lost a considerable amount of work time "...and a wedge of money into the bargain," Peter told us with a sigh!

"I had to keep protective tape around the rubber sealing insert for a day or so to ensure it all bedded down properly and yes, I'm still shaking a few days on. And there's no way I'm going back to the Arsenal area in a hurry," Peter confided, "and besides, I'm a Millwall fan!"

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Peter with the tape around his rear window

As March rolled its way towards the beginnings of Spring, many DaC staff were heading full tilt into the second fundraising **cake bake-off** organised by DaC's **Training** and **HR** departments on the second floor of **Dial-a-Cab House** in aid of **Comic Relief** and hoping to add to the amazing £75million already raised by the charity. Those entering their mouth-watering masterpieces were hoping to take over the crown from last year's winner, **Antoinette Gardner** in DaC's Accounts Dept. She had decided not to enter this year's competition.

The idea was for staff members to bake an item of their choice – biscuits, cakes or even individual choccies - which would then be sold to other members of staff, helping to fill empty tums while raising vital funds for the charity at the same time.

Unlike last year where the judges consisted of three DaC Board members – with **Keith Cain** complaining that the remains of a sticky toffee muffin had lodged in his ear with no one brave enough to query as to how it got there - this year the results were decided by staff members who had spent money in buying the various goodies.

Everyone agreed that just as last year the standard of entries was extremely high, which made for some tough decisions so far as picking a winner was concerned. But someone had to win!

First prize went to camera shy **Leanne White** from the **Contact Centre** with her mouth-watering **cherry cheesecake**. She picked up an extra day's annual leave, a bottle of *Laurent Perrier* Champagne, several other goodies and the most important part of all - the 'Dial-a-Cab Best Baker 2013' apron!

Second prize went to **Jenny McEwan** with her vanilla fairy cakes, while **Stacey Blake's** vanilla cupcakes came a close third. Jenny and

In aid of Comic Relief, it's...

THE GREAT DAC CAKE BAKE!



Keith Cain presents Jenny with her runners-up prize



Inset: Tracey with her third place prize

Stacey both received goody bags – although the second prize weighed slightly more than the third no doubt thanks to the included half bottle of Champsers!

DaC's HR Director, **John Rogers**, told *Call Sign*:

"This year's DaC bake-off raised £325 for Comic Relief and I would like to express my thanks not only to everyone who helped us to raise this amount by buying bakes or making donations of money on the day, but especially to those who gave up their precious time and money to actually make (or, in some cases, buy!) the bakes for us to sell.

"An extra-special thank you is undoubtedly due to publicity-shy Leanne White who will hate me for saying

this, but who very generously made and donated no fewer than five different bakes – more than any other employee. In addition to her winning cherry cheesecake, Leanne also made more than one batch of lemon doughnut muffins, a chocolate cake, rum and coconut cupcakes as well as her legendary coconut ice! In fact, demand for the latter was so high that Leanne felt obliged to make a further batch a week after the bake sale, raising another £30 for Comic Relief in the process!"

Call Sign was told unofficially by our baking snitch that during the competition time, several waistlines increased in size! Naturally, we would never reveal any names but suffice to say that Training Manager **Daren Morley**, who enjoys running marathons, has backed out of one for this year blaming a new arrival in the family, but not mentioning anything about several missing doughnuts and large Pecan Pie!!!

Well done to Leanne and everyone involved...

She's Done it!



Just as a Call Sign reporter happened to enter the Dial-a-Cab Driver's Reception area for a quick pit-stop, Akin, our security chief's mobile phone rang loudly as if to convey urgent news. Akin answered with a concerned look on his face before

bursting into joyous laughter.

"You did what? You did w-h-a-a-t," he roared down the phone! Then, almost falling off his seat with excitement, Akin turned to our news purveyor to tell him that his wife Seyi (pronounced Sheyi) had finally passed her driving test.

"She has been trying for a very long time - a very, very long time," he repeated before going into more detail. "It has taken her about 8 or 9 attempts to pass the test, and now she has finally done it."

"She has had to extend her Theory exam in order to keep her Practical test alive and I think it has cost around £2,500 or so to get there, but now she's done it! She can drive herself around now - shopping, socialising, everything and all by herself," he said, almost speechless with joy as he opened a bottle of mineral water by way of celebration! Well done indeed!



Keith Reading
Professional Toastmaster
Master of Ceremonies

Tele: 01279 465 938
Mobile: 07774 860 374
Email: kgr.2@virgin.net

10% discount for DaC drivers and staff

Fellow of the Guild of
Professional Toastmasters

Mailshot

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

EOBD light

Hi all at Call Sign

In response to Alasdair Kay's (C47) letter in the January *Call Sign* regarding his EOBD light constantly coming on. I had the problem with lights coming on for several years and like Alasdair changed many parts. Then one day I changed my air intake meter, which is the round coke can shaped unit behind the air filter. It's not cheap so try and change it with a mate first. If the light stops coming on then it's job done! It's easy to change over, just couple of jubilee clips. I hope this helps anyone who has the same problem.

Rodney Green (G49)

Thanks for that Rodney. Alasdair's EOBD light kept coming on and then went off after around 2 hours if he stopped, took a break and then restarted. He had a valve and a vacuum pipe replaced and still the light came on the following day! We have passed Rodney's details over to Alasdair and hope for the best ...Ed

Long time for Ivor

Hello Alan

There was a mistake regarding drivers from our Pentonville Road days in the **Bill Tyzack (C06)** article (*March Call Sign*). I joined the Society in December 1960 as A96 and remember when we had to go downstairs to get our credits. That was also when I first did dispatching and I still remember dispatching my first job - Piccadilly to Heathrow (or London Airport as it was still called).

Sorry to have to correct you, but the article was incorrect in claiming that **Alan Lewis (A44)** and Bill have been at ODRTS longer than me. I even remember going to the cafe across the road which another driver, **Alan Boca**, owned and where **Bonnie Martyn** and the then Board would often hold their meetings!

Ivor Belkin (C97)

So as I was saying about drivers never forgetting! Ivor did indeed arrive in 1960 but a short break in 1970 means that the records show his arrival as the latter of the two dates. Founder Chairman **Bonnie Martyn** once told Call Sign that without the Boca brothers - **Alan (ex-B99, real name Aldo)** and **John (ex-A64, real name Adolfo Giovanni Bruno Boca)** - half of the early ODRTS Board meetings could never have taken place! The Society operated from tiny premises on the corner of Pentonville Road and Affleck Street. Never mind today's Italian eateries, in the late 1950s John

and Alan together with their Italian parents ran the cafe on the opposite side to the ODRTS building where a single dispatcher sitting in the window with tongue hanging out, would watch as drivers popped in for their cuppas with no worries about traffic wardens! The cramped Boardroom meant it was easier to meet in the café! In those days it was called the Welcome Café and the Boca family sold it to the council in 1963 when it became a block of flats. Alan died in 2003 and John in 2011 ...Ed

Guess who?

Hi Al

In the *March Call Sign*, there was an article about a cheap overhaul for **Tom Burns (R98)**. At the end of it, Tom asks if anyone can remember the identity of a dispatcher who, if he couldn't cover a trip, would entice drivers with the promise of a **Blue Peter badge**! I believe that was **Warner Harris**, sometimes known as the bomber commander! Not sure if he actually had any real Blue Peter badges though!

David Marks (R22)

Hi Al

I'm sure I'm not the only one who remembers that **Warner Harris** was the despatcher who promised "Blue Peter" badges...

Geoff Levene (W32)

Blimey, I'd hate owing anyone money on this circuit with their memories! ...Ed

SGS and overhauls...

Hi Al

I read the article about **Tom Burns (R98)** delight at paying only £530 for his overhaul with a certain amount of surprise (*March Call Sign*). Ever since SGS were awarded the contract to test cabs, I have not had one single overhaul and none of my cabs - including two six year olds - have ever been failed. Overhauls today are a complete waste of time and money. As long as the vehicle is serviced properly at the correct intervals and kept in good order, why hand over your hard earned money for a needless overhaul? I think giving the testing to SGS was one of the best things to happen to the cab trade in recent years. It is also a shame that it's coming to an end because this ridiculous new system of two MOTs and a visit to NSL will end up costing the owner driver even more money. And no, I do not have shares in SGS, just a lot of faith in their ability.

Ken Aisthorpe (ex-T49)

NSL and overhauls...

Hi Al

Following on from **Tom Burns (R98)** article in the *March Call Sign*, I was one of the first drivers to have my cab passed by NSL

who have now taken over from SGS. I have to say that the experience was extremely positive and that if it is a sign of things to come, then this partnership could be excellent news for the taxi business.

I had taken my Vito in for the now compulsory MOT visit prior to its booked trip to NSL at Staples Corner - one of six passing stations now available. As this system has only just begun, there was just the one MOT prior to the passing station visit. It will normally be two per year with the second one no more than 14 days before your appointment. Fewer than 14 days is fine - more could pose problems!

The MOT cost me £40 and my Vito passed with no problems. However I had some reservations about my trip to NSL the following week, after all, they were the new kids on the block and might have been looking to make their mark. Well they certainly did that, but not in the way I had feared because they could not have been nicer. My only preparation for the visit was to get an engine wash (£20).

I got there at 8.15 am and after handing in the cab's plates, I was told to get myself a tea or coffee and relax in the waiting area with its television and reading material. I took a quick peep around and the place was just huge - almost comparable to an aircraft hangar! Some 35 minutes later, I was called and told that my cab was ready to drive away having been passed!

The driver behind me had a problem in that he had left a piece of paperwork at home. Unlike the experience that some apparently had with SGS, NSL tried to be helpful and told him that if the cab passed, then he could bring in the missing paperwork later that day. They said they couldn't accept emailed versions but compared to SGS where you would have had to make another appointment, I'd say that's pretty good! I was also told that if a cab failed on something small, then there would usually be no charge for it to be re-presented, however if there was a third visit then a charge would be made.

Tom Burns overhaul cost him £530 and I assume he had to pay licensing charges on top. So if he was pleased, I have to say that I am thrilled that my cab passed with a £20 engine wash, £40 MOT and the £152 passing charge. Of course, you have to make sure your cab is in good order and mine always is.

Jonathan Raymond (S39)

Well, there are two opposite views. Call Sign columnist **Stephen Berndes (R14)** also gives his view inside this issue. In the meantime, Call Sign was offered the opportunity to ask any questions to LTPH Director **John Mason** and NSL CEO



Mailshot

Continued from page 28

Mark Underwood and we have done so inside this issue ...Ed

Thirty year drivers

Alan

I would like to comment on the Chairman's article in the *March* issue of *Call Sign*. He states that drivers on £1 per month subs are not covering enough work to make up the loss of income to the Society. I start work at 3am to try to make the job less stressful and if the work was there I would do as much as possible. But the only area which has life at that time is E14 and starting from NW London that is not on so far as I am concerned. I know that like the other circuits we have lost a lot of account work, but I do try to cover as much as is offered to me. However, at 3am there isn't much around.

Ray Sorene (A53)

Brian Rice replies: Hi Ray, nice to hear from you and hope you are well. Have you thought about changing your hours...?

...and another

Dear Alan

I was saddened to read Reflections of the Chairman in the *March Call Sign*. That sadness came in reading the Chairman resort to insults regarding memory loss when he can just look up past AGM records to see what was actually said. The Chairman's memory seems to forget that there was a time when this Society almost went out of business and it was only because of a great Board, great members and a good bank that we survived.

The Chairman has looked at the work covered by the 116 drivers who are on £1 subs and said they only cover around 1000 trips a month between them. But if we still had the Westminster account, this figure would be much higher. Every member's monthly number of covered trips has decreased and led to a loss of earnings, that in turn leading to a number of member's leaving feeling that the charge was not worth the amount of work they were getting.

Those of us who have been members for over 30 years do fewer hours because we no longer have a mortgage and our children have left home. I will be 70 this year and will probably do even less than I do now after that birthday having been on DaC since 1976. The Chairman says that charging 30-year drivers just £1 actually costs the society £180,000 per annum, but when the Board increase our subs and it becomes no longer worth staying on DaC, how much better per annum will the Society be? If we were all paying full subs, many would have

left long ago, so where does Brian's £180K come from.

I have been privileged to have seen some terrific past Chairmen. Who can ever forget Kenny Burns performance at the Parkway cinema EGM at Camden when the vote was to cease using voice and to move over to data dispatch. Aubrey Siteman was another great Chairman and of course there was Mr Dial-a-Cab Jack Taylor. He would be turning in his grave at what our current Chairman intends doing. Perhaps we should do away with our postal balloting system and return to the way AGMs used to be. I think that some on the current BoM might have had to look over their shoulders if it that came about.

Bill Russell (E65)

Thanks for your letter Bill and for the few private words which were much appreciated.

Although I showed Brian your letter, there is no point in me asking him to answer it as it won't change the view of the BoM (and it is a Board decision, not just Brian's) that those on £1 should pay half subs from May. As I am now officially an old dodderer, that decision includes me and I can't say I am particularly chuffed about it. But it is a sign of the times, just as it was when Aubrey Siteman announced that three weeks of our credit work would be held back and subscriptions increased by £20 per month in order to save our Society that was on the verge of going under – so much so that some even claimed we were trading illegally by actually continuing and were actually bankrupt. Like Brian, Aubrey spoke for his Board and didn't take the three weeks credit work decision on his own. You do what you have to do in business and even though DaC has amassed a small fortune at the bank in addition to owning a much desired office block and paying for its new terminals, times are tough out there and it's important not just that we survive these never-ending recessions and come out the other end, but that we come out in a healthy position. And, although we will never know, I suspect that your assumption about 'curly' Jack turning in his grave at the thought of ending £1 subs is wrong. ODRTS was everything to Jack and I believe that he too would have done whatever was needed to make sure that this Society prospered. But he never offered £1 subs, the current Board did it and it has survived for almost 17 years.

I agree with you about postal balloting and have often said that it was a shame that most drivers don't want to attend AGMs, but it was the drivers who voted for it and not the Board Personally I could never understand driver's views that spoke of "their" Society but who would rather pay a £50 fine than attend



the AGM. And of course, postal balloting doesn't mean that you have to vote by post, every member is free to attend our AGMs but on average we get around 3% of drivers bothering to turn up. That suggests that they are happy with the way things are being run because otherwise you would have to assume they would come to the AGM. Well that's my view.

Brian has often said to me when I've moaned about something: "You only have to worry about yourself; I have to worry about the whole Society!" He does have a point Bill... Ed

...and more

Dear Alan

I would like to enter the debate regarding the 30 year rule. I write as a disinterested observer despite my 28 years' service to the Society, since I do not expect to work long enough to benefit from the 'rule'. The Chairman's statement that the 116 members cost the Society £180K per annum is disingenuous and could only be true if the 116 were blocking other full paying members. Since we are not at maximum membership, it is patently untrue. Further, whilst we appoint the BoM to run the Society as efficiently as possible, we should not lose sight of exactly why ODRTS was formed. I believe the basic tenet was self-help, not a balance sheet.

Many drivers have a growing opinion that the Society now exists solely for the clients and not the driver's welfare or wellbeing. Even if the 30 year long service promise was a pledge and not a copper-bottomed rule, then the pledge to the membership should still be overriding.

Finally, since we like to call ourselves the Gentlemen's Circuit and as a reminder, in British society a gentleman's word is his bond, let's settle this like gentlemen - ie call a ballot; if necessary to save money, via our terminals, the technology must be available. Otherwise use mobile phones.

Jon Tremlett (Y32)

Jon, I don't speak for anyone other than this mag, but I have to make a few points – bearing in mind that it does actually affect me. Firstly, it wasn't a pledge any more than it was a rule. It was just given as a thank you at the time. And I don't think a vote that would undoubtedly and overwhelmingly go against we 116 driver's would look particularly good. Or do you really believe that the rest of the drivers will vote to have a subs increase so that the 30 year drivers can continue to pay nothing? I

Mailshot

Continued from page 29

don't think so – unless we hear that turkeys are suddenly about to vote for Xmas.

However, I tend to agree with you about the reasons ODRTS was formed. But in the current financial situation and with all the competition from within the trade let alone minicabs, can you see any other way? I can't ...Ed

LTFUC Children's party

Dear Call Sign Magazine

On behalf of the *London Taxidriver's Fund for Underprivileged Children*, I would like to thank you for your generous gift; your commitment to helping our charity is sincerely appreciated. Each year the LTFUC continues to advance its mission in helping underprivileged children. Through our outings to Southend, Windsor Safari Park, Chessington Zoo, the Mad Hatter's Ball at the Grosvenor House Hotel and many other events, we have seen many happy children's lives enhanced.

The goal of the LTFUC is to continue to make a difference for underprivileged children and with the help of donations from supporters such as *Call Sign*, we hopefully will continue to do this. Thanks again for your generous support of our efforts.

Lilian Julier

LTFUC Hon Treasurer

Ideas...

Dear Alan,

As I see it, this Society needs to deal with three basic issues; keeping good drivers on the circuit, increasing customer usage and raising additional revenue. May I make a suggestion to deal with each of these factors?

There are some drivers whose taxi has reached the 15 year age limit and rather than buy a new or second hand cab, have chosen to rent a taxi from a garage. This has meant that they have been forced to leave the circuit. I propose a simple rule change to say that any driver with 10 years continuous membership and without any serious complaints against him or her, shall be entitled to remain a member of the Society as long as he or she pays the regular subscription. This will mean that loyal and conscientious drivers who for any reason choose to rent a cab, can continue to work for the circuit. Feedback from other drivers and from Board members on this proposal will be welcome. This needs to be implemented soon to avoid more drivers leaving us. Instead of waiting till the next AGM to put forward this rule change, a postal ballot should be held within the next 4 months.

As far as getting more passengers, a simple idea would be to enclose 20 Dial-a-Cab

cards with every copy of *Call Sign* each month for drivers to hand out to passengers and put through letter boxes. It is not realistic to expect drivers to call into the office or Roman Way to collect cards. If a batch of cards arrive each month, it would be a regular reminder to drivers that we need to be active in promoting ourselves.

About 6 years ago, the Board succeeded in getting a great deal for our old premises and we moved to our lovely new offices which at the time were a hive of activity. Now with a shortage of work and staff being laid off, much of the building is underused. Given that the area round Old Street station is now known as Silicon Roundabout and there is demand from small IT companies for office space, we should consider renting out a floor or part of a floor of our building on a temporary basis till work picks up again.

Laurence Kelvin (W88)

Brian Rice responds: I wouldn't disagree with anything you've said, Laurence, and you are spot on regarding your three basic issues. Regarding your first proposal, we can accommodate that, already provided the taxi is not liveried and carries our logo. However, it has only been four weeks since our AGM so perhaps you should have instigated a rule change then. You would have received my support and probably the remainder of the BoM.

If Members want 'hand out' cards, they can be collected 24 hours per day at the office and I am sure at some time during a working month, most Members will be close enough to stop at the office to pick some up. After all, many do stop to use our luo.

Finally, regarding the building; perhaps there could be others accommodated but the internal re-structuring would be enormous. Perhaps a better solution would be to take calls for other businesses (no, I don't mean minicab companies). Incidentally, I've had two offers to purchase this building purely because, as you correctly point out, it is in vicinity of the Silicon Roundabout. The offers to buy our building came out of the blue.

Laurence, I have known you for a long time and I know you will take this as it's meant, but it sometimes appears that Members want the BoM to do everything for them such as sending them hand out cards. Perhaps Members should occasionally take the initiative and do things for themselves in an attempt to help the BoM help them and to help their Society.

PCN warning...

I must make other cab drivers aware of the "thieves" who call themselves the City of London Authority. My son Jon, who has

only had his bill since October, received a PCN via cctv for allegedly setting down a passenger in Eldon St on the zigzag lines. The fact that he was in Blomfield St setting down after the crossing, in fact well after the crossing where he thought there were no zigzags. Unfortunately they were faded and barely visible but apparently these zigzags seem to go on for about 100 yards! I must digress here. The zigzags after a crossing are for the safety of pedestrians using the crossing, so they need to be a certain length - in the case of Blomfield St 100 yards! So why are the zigzags after crossings in Wardour St and Old Brompton Rd just a few yards long? Is it because the pedestrians in these roads don't matter or is it that local businesses have given brown envelopes stuffed with cash to the councillors to keep the zigzags short because otherwise they would affect their trade? So if a pedestrian gets splattered across the road in Wardour St or Old Brompton Rd because of short zigzags, then that's OK and the police will still keep enforcing the so-called law.

Anyway, back to my son Jon. He sent an Appeal to the City of London re the PCN giving 2 reasons: 1. He was in Blomfield St and not Eldon St and 2: The zigzags are barely visible and if the Appeal was rejected he would go to Angel Square to appeal to the Arbitrator. Now here at last is the point I am making. Jon received a letter claiming he had not paid the PCN and that he now owes £195. So they are saying they did not receive his first Appeal. It's funny, I have had it when a big organisation writes to you saying that you must always get their mail. You must have got it because they sent it! Yet when you write to them, they don't always get your mail. Funny isn't it and how convenient! So what I am saying is that when replying to a PCN or any other important mail, always send it *Recorded Delivery*. That way when they say they did not receive it, even though you know you sent it, you can prove that they did receive it.

Brian Marcantonio (R73)

Yep, I had the exact same thing with a PCN for parking in Brick Lane some months ago. I Appealed and the next thing I heard was that because I hadn't responded within 28 days, I owed them £195 instead of £65. I ended up paying it because the camera showed I was illegally parked and they offered to drop the fine back to £65 if I paid it!

So you're right Brian, I could have suffered on the say-so that they wrote to me, even though I never received it. But had they not received one of my responses they would have said that too



Mailshot

Continued from page 30

was my fault. Winning against councils or boroughs is always difficult, but you have to try ...Ed

Wrong job!

Hi Alan

Did you know that a second year apprentice working on the London Underground earns £18,000 per annum? Whatever people think about Bob Crow, he gets results for his members. Right! Tools down... all out!

David Heath (Ex-W27)

Well RMT membership is available to anyone in the cab trade. Bob Crow is undeniably successful as was shown by his photo being tweeted around the world last year at the Veuve Clicquot section of the champagne bar at Lords cricket ground during the second test against South Africa ...Ed

Taxi insurance

Last month's *Call Sign* had a letter from Martin Powell (G40) asking if any driver knew of a good value taxi insurance company that didn't particularly advertise in the trade press. Well I can't answer that, but I

have recently been phoning around regarding the renewal of my car insurance and tried Direct Line as they are always advertising as to how cheap their insurance is. As most modern insurance companies now do, they asked me a set of questions over the phone to determine the "cheap" premium they would offer me. Judging by the call taker's response to my answers of "good," I had to assume that I would get a really competitive premium. Then we got to the question of what I did for a living and my answer of licensed London taxi driver. The phone went quiet for a moment before the call taker suddenly apologised and said that they couldn't help me. I asked why and was told that there was a risk that I might stop and pick up a passenger in the car. I explained about me driving a 'black cab' and not a minicab and our being acknowledged as the best taxi drivers in the world, but it made no difference. So my recommendation to Dial-a-Cab drivers' family members (they won't accept the actual drivers) is to avoid Direct Line Insurance for your cars, even if they offer you a bargain. After all, how can you feel safe being insured with a company who don't know the difference between a car and a London taxi?

Malcolm Levan (F24)



Thanks Malcolm, I believe Churchill has the same policy and I wouldn't use either one out of principle. If the two companies are prepared to change their policy re taxi drivers, I'll give them three months free advertising! However I don't see that happening any time soon ...Ed

Nissan Engines?

Hi Alan

I have heard a rumour that Nissan are prepared to put new engines into 15 year-old TX1s meaning that drivers can continue using them. Apparently they have spoken to LTPH on the subject. Have you heard anything about this?

Bernie Silver (G08)

I asked LTPH and was told that many meetings have been held with Nissan over the years, but this topic has never been raised ...Ed

FIRST TX4 HANDED OVER!

The first TX4 of the newly re-launched London Taxi Company has been handed over to driver-owner of 3 years, David Scragg.

David, who spent 27 years in the printing industry working on papers like the Guardian, Express and Star, took ownership of his Aero Blue 13 plate TX4 Elegance Auto at Brewery Road on Thursday 21 March. Commenting on his purchase David said:

"I can't believe I got the first one and I can't wait to get it out onto the ranks. The first thing that the other drivers will look at is the 13 plate!"

David was handed his keys by UK Customer Relationship Manager Lorenzo Bugliari, who added:

"We've spent the last three weeks working hard, taking orders and meeting new and old customers, which has been great. But I'm over the moon that we have now started to hand vehicles over; David's TX4 will be the first of many."

Customers are being advised that there is 2-3 week waiting period for new vehicles as all existing stock now has to go through a stringent vehicle preparation inspection, which also includes the fitment of components of improved quality.

New vehicles can also still be bought through the £135 per week PCP deal, which includes a four year extended warranty with the option to buy the vehicle for a guaranteed residual value, trade up or simply walk away at the end of the term.

For more info or to make an appointment, contact the Customer Relationship Team on 0207 700 0888 or email london@london-taxis.co.uk; alternatively, information and updates are also available at www.london-taxis.co.uk



David Scragg (right), Lorenzo Bugliari and David's new TX4

BREWERY ROAD IS NOW OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Looking for your next new or used cab?

Buy **NEW** TX4 (Euro 5) from just
£135 per week with an extended
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Call Lorenzo Bugliari & his new
team on 0207 700 0888 or email
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