

July 2013

# Call Sign

From the home of Dial-a-Cab International



***New Terminals:  
4-page pullout  
inside***

***Why is this DaC taxi loaded with Xmas  
goodies on the July cover?  
Jim knows!***





# NASH'S NUMBERS

From Alan Nash (A95)

*This month the new Eurostar Arrivals timetable valid until 14 December. It's in fairly large format as I get told off by the editor if I try and put too much data on one page!*

## Eurostar Arrivals Valid 2 June to 14th December 2013

Arrives	From	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Notes	Train #
07:57	Brussels	✓								9109
08:00	Paris	✓							P8	9005
08:30	Paris	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			9007
08:57	Brussels	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			9113
09:00	Paris	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				9009
09:30	Paris						✓			9011
09:30	Paris							✓	P7	9011
09:57	Brussels	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		9117
10:00	Paris	✓								9013
10:00	Paris		✓	✓	✓				P9	9013
10:00	Paris					✓			P1	9013
10:39	Paris	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		9015
11:39	Paris	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		9019
11:57	Brussels	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			9125
12:30	Paris	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		9023
12:57	Brussels							✓		9129
13:00	Paris					✓	✓	✓	P4	9025
13:00	Paris	✓	✓	✓	✓				P6	9025
13:30	Paris	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		9027
14:00	Paris						✓			9021
14:09	Brussels	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				9133
14:39	Paris	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		9031
15:30	Paris						✓	✓		9035
15:57	Brussels	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			B4	9141
16:00	Paris					✓				9037
16:00	Paris	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	P3	9037
16:03	Brussels						✓	✓		9141
16:10	Brussels	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			B5	9141
16:39	Paris	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		9039
16:57	Brussels							✓		9145
17:03	Brussels	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			B1	9145
17:39	Paris	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		9043
18:00	Paris							✓		9045
18:06	Brussels						✓			9149
18:09	Paris					✓			P3	9045
18:12	Brussels					✓			B4	9149
18:12	Brussels	✓	✓	✓	✓					9149
18:12	Brussels					✓			B5	9149
18:30	Paris	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		9047
19:00	Paris		✓	✓	✓	✓			P2	9049
19:03	Brussels	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				9153
19:06	Brussels							✓		9153
19:39	Paris	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				9051
19:39	Paris							✓	P7	9051
19:57	Brussels	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		9157
20:00	Paris							✓		9053
20:39	Paris						✓	✓		9055
20:41	Paris	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				9055
21:03	Brussels	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		9161
21:06	Brussels						✓			9161
21:39	Paris	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		9059
22:00	Paris							✓		9061
22:00	Paris					✓			P3	9061
22:39	Paris	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		9063

Notes

B1 until 30/8 & 24/10 to 1/11/13	B4 until 30/8/13	B5 from 2/9/13
P1 until 31/7 & on 23/8 then from 2/9/13 on	P2 to 23/9 then from 4/11/13	P3 until 31/8/13
P4 until 15/9/13	P5 until 23/9/13 then from 8/11/13	P6 until 31/7/13
P7 until 6/10/13 & 26/10/2113 on	P8 until 31/7 then 2/9 to 23/9 then 4/11/13 on	
P9 until 31/7/13 & 2/9/13 on		

For much more information go to [www.nashsnumbers.co.uk](http://www.nashsnumbers.co.uk) for all back issues and then click the 'MyFav Taxi Page' icon for an awful lot more information under the 72 taxi related icons.

# from the editor's desk

## Call Sign advertising policy...

Nice to see the UCG mag back out again for the first time in a year. And to think I feel guilty about taking every June off!

Anyway, there was a letter in their latest issue congratulating *UCG News* on being the only mag that doesn't accept what the reader calls "seedy stripper" ads. I could say that *Call Sign* has had a policy about not accepting any ads that might embarrass or upset a driver's family – many of whom read it – since late 2005 when there wasn't even a UCG let alone a mag. I have and will continue to publish information on some of the clubs, but not via ads that show scantily clad females. But I'm just pleased at the UCG editorial decision and who did it first is irrelevant.

At the same time (in 2005) we also said we would not accept any ads for online gaming clubs, either because I came to the conclusion that while adults can make their own choices in life, I was concerned that driver's children reading the mag could get hold of one of their parent's credit cards and use it for gambling – perhaps believing that over a short period, they might win big and that the parents would never find out.

**My decision followed the introduction of the 2005 Gambling Act that changed the UK's gaming industry and regulated everything from online gambling websites to TV ads to taxi sides, while allowing gambling operators to advertise on radio and TV. It pulled the plug on membership requirements for casinos.**

I had a number of drivers castigating me for my decision saying that they played poker online, loved it and that it didn't cost them a fortune. But I never had a problem with drivers gambling online if that's what they wanted to do. In fact I am a member of a casino, although I rarely go and if I do, it's more likely to use the restaurant. Again I wrote back in 2005:

*"If people choose to gamble, that is their prerogative. If on-line gambling organisations want to advertise on taxis, then neither is that my concern. But if they wish to advertise in Call Sign, then I still have a say in that and my say is NO!"*

I confirmed that policy in March of 2006 and added about the dangers I could see with the spread of online gambling, adding:

*"If you want to avail yourself of some entertainment, as millions seem to be doing, then fine. But as Editor, I am not prepared to take the chance of even one young person getting hooked on gambling after reading an ad in Call Sign."*

Within a year, **Mike Weir** – who was and still is the SNP MP for Angus – spoke of the "growing addiction of on-line gambling" and called for a limit of £1000 maximum that on-line gamblers could lose in any one-week! He also said that on-line gamblers should only be allowed to use one credit card, which, according to Mr Weir, followed incidents where on-line gamblers "...bad lost thousands of pounds via other people's credit cards!"

Then **BBC Radio 5Live** expressed concern that kids were getting access to parent's credit card numbers without ever needing the card itself and losing fortunes, with many cases of that nature being exposed by the station.

As a consequence of all the above, my original decision remains unchanged; no on-line gaming organisations will be advertising in *Call Sign* whilst I am the Editor. I do not care if they



offer to pay ten times the going rate, they will not be appearing in these pages.

## New terminals

At the time of writing, most of the irritating bugs that the terminal testers, including myself, have moaned about seem to have been sorted and the first batch of sets may well be out there now. The terminal itself is excellent, but I doubt that DaC's IT department would have fancied sorting out problems from every driver, as just the eight of us – later increased to twenty two – caused them to constantly keep running down from the first floor to sort out our problems! We certainly helped to keep them fit! But I haven't had a problem for some time and if that also applies to the other testers, then I'm hoping it means they can begin the fitting programme.

Cleverly, many of the buttons have been kept the same making it easier to get used to the new terminal. Accepting or rejecting is slightly different in that the second push of the button is in a different place, making it more difficult to accidentally push the wrong button. The terminal also always displays which postal zone you are in.

It took me a few days to work out how to process credit cards, but in those early days there were some problems. It seems to work well now and once you get used to using the PED (Pin Entry Device), which is similar to the machine you put your credit card details into in a restaurant after a meal, it really is quite simple. You can also change from cash to card payment after stopping the meter if the passenger suddenly realises they do not have enough money!

The main item that needs getting used to is the spinning wheel on the top right of the screen. When that shows a tick, you can carry out any of the facilities you need to do such as QP or book-in etc. The wheel represents O2 looking for a signal just as your mobile phone sometimes needs to. Nine times out of ten the tick signal is there, but if it isn't you just need patience. I can book into a zone from underneath the Limehouse Link but sometimes have trouble as I get out going west! But that's just for a few seconds. On the plus side, you can now book in if you are in Scotland, although I have to admit that I haven't actually tested that! However, if you can make a mobile call from there then you can book in or clear a job!

Mapping is predictive and can be irritating until you get used to it guessing what street you want after the first few letters have been put in. But it really is quick and the text is large enough for everyone to read. The satnav is brilliant and

you can now slyly put in a postcode if you need to without having to look as though you can't work without a satnav stuck to your windscreen! It also comes with speed warnings, but naturally, as law-abiding London taxi drivers, you won't need those! My favourite is the POI (Points of Information). There are over 25,000 of them including clubs, restaurants, hotels and apartment blocks and I have found it to be a really useful acquisition.

All in all, the new terminal is excellent. Let's hope the work out there continues picking up to match it...

## ASL and cyclists...

*Advanced Stop Lines* are the boxes that are placed in front of the normal traffic lights stop lines that we mere mortals, who probably only pay for them, have to abide by. Cyclists, who pay nothing, are allowed to use the boxes and as we know to our passenger's costs, often fill them up so that the rest of us get stuck behind them until such time that the faster ones have overtaken the slower ones and if we're lucky, eventually pull back into the cycling lane. By then, we are at the next set of lights and the whole process begins again. There are a few exceptions to that, as some cyclists obviously don't approve of the boxes and just ignore the red stop light in protest!

The last time I wrote about cyclists, I had one brave driver phone up and threaten me, although he wasn't prepared to give his name. But even he didn't deny any of the text I'd written. He just didn't like me saying it, so he won't like the next bit!

We now have many of our roads with cycle lanes along the near side. If Mayor Johnson has his way, we will be fined if we deliberately go into a cycle lane or into an ASL box - TfL having applied to the Department for Transport to decriminalise the enforcement of ASLs and to enable them to issue tickets via CCTV.

**I'm more than happy to face a fine if I go into their lane or an ASL. My only stipulations are twofold; cyclists must be licensed and display a number plate of some kind and that they too are fined when they leave their lane and encroach into our part of the road!**

So what do you say Mr Mayor? Do we have a deal? Thought not! Perhaps you should speak to your Toronto equivalent, **Bob Ford**, who has abolished all cycling benefits in favour of giving motorists more space!

And by the way, seeing families getting off the *Eurostar* looking for Barclay bikes makes me wonder how you know they are all capable of cycling and why they don't need helmets? You no doubt realise that if a cyclist sustains head injuries on a Barclay bike and is shown to have been inexperienced, responsibility could go on your head for not enforcing helmets? Now where's Bob Ford...

## Goodbye old friend!

It looks as though nothing lasts forever! Whatever happened to value! My cab's 'yellow top' battery finally croaked its last remaining vestige of power outside an account customer's premises in Stratton Street recently, two months short of its fifth birthday. Nope, nothing lasts forever...

**Alan Fisher**  
callsignmag@aol.com



# reflections of the chairman

## Apps and payments to Members

You should all now be aware that we have built and operate with an App for Account customers and Credit account customers alike. The initial signs are very encouraging and the use of credit cards has increased quite significantly. We wish to encourage this growth and with the corporate sector remaining fairly stagnant, there is room for some optimism regarding the growth in the credit card market.

You will no doubt have seen that we have liveried some of the fleet to encourage growth of the App regarding booking a taxi with a credit card. However, the BoM realise there is some reluctance by some Members regarding this source of income, due to the fact that it can interfere with Members cash flow situations.

Consequently, because **Dial-a-Cab** are so financially secure, the BoM have decided to pay all drivers weekly instead of fortnightly in the hope it will encourage more Members to cover credit card work.

As most of you are probably aware, when you receive a trip that has been booked via an App or on-line, you receive it exactly the same way as any other trip, so you will notice no difference when it is dispatched to you.

**So, the last fortnightly payment you will receive will be on 30 August, with the following payment coming on 6 September and then at weekly intervals. Any trip you do up until midnight on a Friday will be in your bank account the following Friday. Subscriptions will also be stopped on a weekly basis.**

As you can imagine, this has increased administration for us because we will have to do four payment runs a month instead of two, it will also increase the cost due to postage and cash flow, however, cash flow is not a problem to Dial-a-Cab as we have been very prudent over the years and built up considerable reserves that will see us through and also subsidise subscriptions during this extremely difficult economic downturn.

However, some of you can help the Society by receiving e-statements from us, instead of them being posted to you, so if you currently have your credits posted to you but have an email address, please contact Driver Services so they are aware of the situation.

We have almost 800 Members that receive their statements via email and any increase in this number will assist us.

## New terminals

The fitting of the fleet is well underway and I am sure you will be pleased with the new terminal - especially as you will be able to clear a trip anywhere in the country. Although we owe a certain amount of thanks to the Members that tested the new terminals on the road and helped us to iron out any bugs before the remainder of the fleet were fitted, there will be (although I hope not) some



other minor bugs that come to light.

Please be patient, because as with any brand new system some minor anomalies will come to light, however, with your feedback I am sure we can remedy them extremely swiftly. Please be aware that the software and integration was built by your IT team at Dial-a-Cab who have had, along with me, many sleepless nights during the development period. However, I am extremely proud of the fact that Dial-a-Cab is the only Taxi or Private Hire company in London that is in a position to execute the above. You should be as well, especially as we are the only drivers co-operative in London.

## Accounts

We went 'live' with **Hogan Lovells** on 3 June and it has proven to be a very good account. I first visited them some eighteen months ago and it took that amount of time to capture the account. I know you will give the service I have promised them and so far that is proving to be the case, so please continue that.

Business has not been good over the last five years or so, but it appears our work is a little better at night than during the day, however, as you day men are aware we sometimes experience problems with coverage during the morning rush hour. So can I please ask you to put yourselves out whenever you can to make sure we cover all trips in the mornings; West and South West as normal proving to be the most difficult. It can take us such a long time to acquire an account that can be lost in a heartbeat due to coverage and service.

## Defamation (again)!

A Member has emailed me an article written in *The Badge* by a Mr Walker. He is someone I have never met, but for some reason he is not a big fan of mine! He attempts to denigrate Dial-a-Cab and particularly me at every opportunity; however, it is something I can live with.

But for those interested in his love of writing, some time ago this Mr Walker likened me to a kindly old uncle that was grooming children because he was a paedophile, he then went on to say that he was not suggesting that

I actually was a paedophile, so I suppose he thinks that was ok then?

In his latest outburst of rubbish, he has attempted to compare **Radio Taxis** with us and as usual has got his facts completely wrong.

At this point I would like to stress that we enjoy a very good relationship with Radio Taxis and ComCab and while we are competitors, we are not rivals. But it appears that Mr Walker is endeavouring to drive a wedge between us.

His outburst compares RTG's figures with ours and states they return more per £1 of subscription than we do because their turnover is more. However, that is not the whole story because RTG incorporate the turnover from their distribution engine **One Transport** in their top line figure, we do not do that. The turnover in our figures is only the amount of work we put in our member's cabs.

I am not suggesting for one second there is anything wrong with that, it is just that we choose to show our turnover in a different format. I have checked with RTG and that is indeed the case, as I and anyone with a modicum of sense could decipher - and did - but not the said Mr Walker in his haste to denigrate myself and Dial-a-Cab again.

Mr Walker obviously likes people to believe that he is an accountant, but then goes on to talk about Dial-a-Cab's six Board Members - we actually have seven. So if as an accountant he can't even count up to seven, then I think that says everything about him and his accounting prowess!

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

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Area Covered - Ilmchurch and 8 miles out - others by appointment

Nissan has unveiled, and through executive vice president **Andy Palmer**, signed off its final design for the new van-based London taxi – the **NV200**. Although originally based on the New York version of the cab, the UK **NV200** has been restyled so as to – according to Mr Palmer – retain the hallmarks of the classic black London taxi. Nissan has also taken note of the views of the cab's test drivers and acted on them.

The NV200 taxi will initially be sold with a 1.5-litre diesel engine, but Nissan say that an electric version of the cab will eventually come onto the London market.

Andy Palmer said: "Running costs for an electric vehicle are about a tenth of the diesel, so the business case is there. But charging times have to be reduced. There are some who are concerned about electric vehicles, but the best way to answer those concerns is to get people into them. If you think of the millions who ride in black cabs each day, then you get a feel for what these vehicles could achieve in terms of changing perceptions."

He ended by quoting **Boris Johnson** who said that any new taxi needs to conjure up the image of a bowler hat, with Andy Palmer's

response being: "I think our cab does that."

No one was talking about price but we believe that it will be substantially cheaper than the Vito and probably even below that of

the TX4.

The American version – known as the Taxi of Tomorrow – was shown to the US press recently and was set to hit the streets in October...

# NV200 almost ready to go!



## Saudi doubles TX4 order

The black cab looks set to become the taxi of choice for the Middle East as The London Taxi Company recently secured two more lucrative orders for the global icon. The Ujra Holding Company has ordered a further 200 black TX4s in a deal led by the LTC's international team. Ujra, who initially ordered 200 assorted coloured TX4s, which they will start to receive in mid-July, have also opted for a further fleet of black vehicles, taking their total fleet order in 2013 to 400.

Hot on their heels, the United Arab Emirates have also ordered 200 black TX4s to form the basis of their taxi network. All vehicles are on target for delivery by the end of 2013.

LTC International Sales Director **Matthew Cheyne** told **Call Sign**: "This is fantastic news and a compelling indication of the global attractiveness of our vehicle. The London Taxi is an icon – fact. It represents safety, reliability and a professional service – qualities that our partners are keen to reinforce to their domestic and visiting populous. Our production facility in Shanghai, which is dedicated to supplying international markets, can comfortably meet the current flow of TX4s for delivery this year; however, we anticipate that capacity for 2013 stock may be taken up with these confirmed orders and others where we are currently in the final stages of negotiation."

"This effectively means that it is likely that we will implement a waiting list soon for deliveries, well into 2014. It's an enviable position to be in and we know that it is in down to the fact that we are able to provide our clients with a complete package: the service, the expertise, the professional driver training, after-sales support and of course, the instantly recognisable London Taxi."

The London Taxi Company has also confirmed that they are in continued talks with Azerbaijan, which currently has 1,000 damson-



### Soon to become a common sight in Saudi Arabia

coloured TX4s. The state is keen to continue to build on the success they have experienced since taking delivery of its TX4 fleets, with increased satisfaction ratings from drivers, residents and visiting tourists.

Matthew Cheyne added: "So far this year we have attracted new export orders for more than 800 TX4s, mainly from the Middle East; we are also working closely with a consortium in Australia to take the black cab "down under". Given that other manufacturers are attempting to enter our niche industry, it's extremely satisfying to note that the TX4 is not just the vehicle of choice for professional drivers in the UK – the traditional black cab translates into any language).

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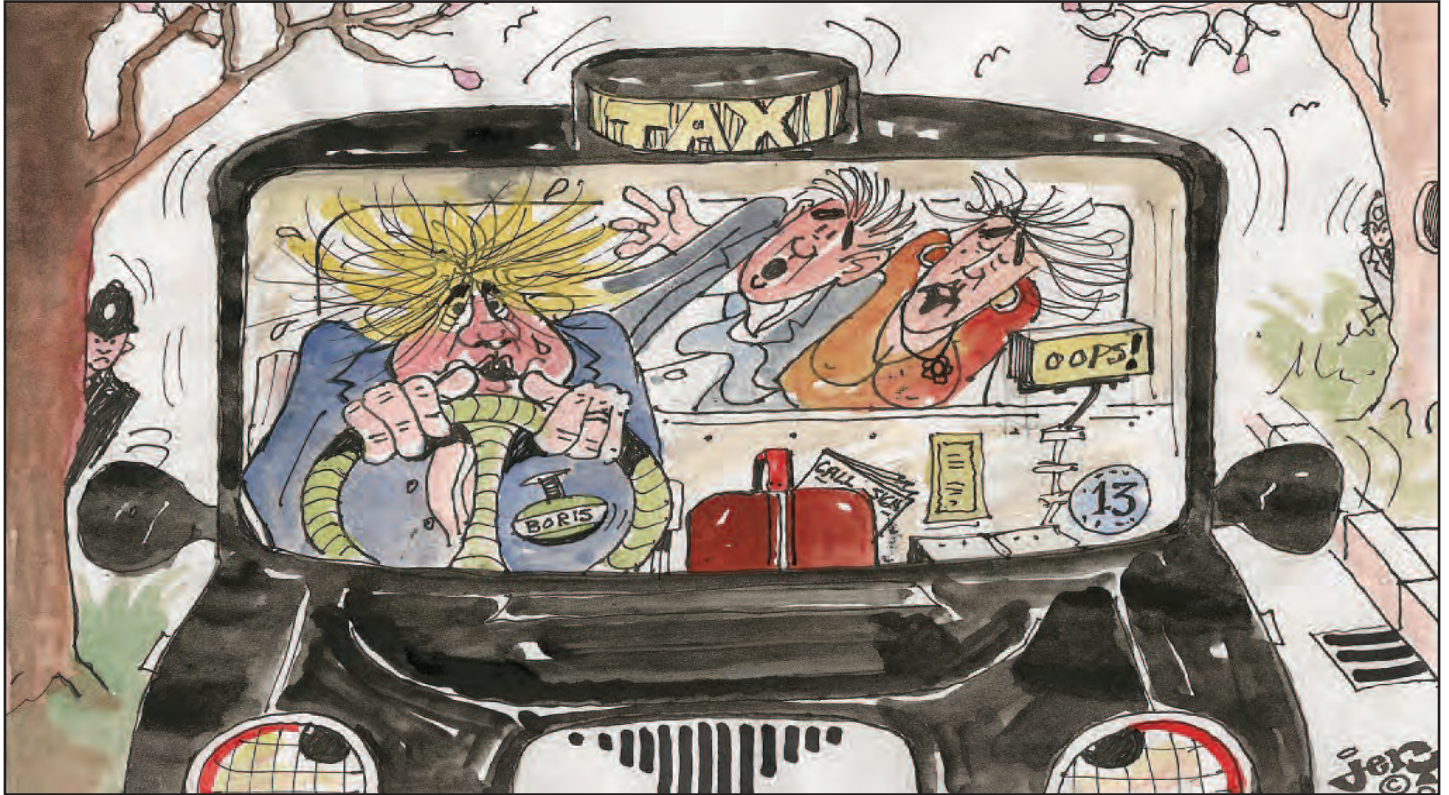
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# Jery's World



"Ok, ok, ok, Mr Mayor, we agree that you're better on a bike...!!!"

## Vito cashes in on Manganese crash

The supplier of the **Vito** taxi, **Eco City Vehicles**, have seen an improvement in their figures thanks largely to last year's administration of **Manganese Bronze** and now claims that 4 out of every 10 taxis sold in London is a Vito. The **Mercedes** cab sales jumped from 331 taxis up to 561 over the period till December 31. Growth was 38 percent at £30.5 million.

In a statement, Chairman **John Swingewood** said: "Demand for the Vito taxi continues to be encouraging this year as the new model gains popularity because of its superior quality, performance and attractive finance packages, which together delivers a low total cost of ownership and makes our offer highly competitive for the London taxi trade."

Eco City's losses were cut from £2.2 million to £187,000.

The company's new chief executive, **Trevor Parker**, said that the group was looking at moving into supplying other types of vehicles to complementary niche markets. Whether that refers to disabled vehicles for PH or getting a franchise to sell the **NV200 Nissan** taxi isn't clear. But with large amounts of finance behind **Geely** and subsidiary **The London Taxi Company** now again supplying the TX4, competition could be fiercer than ever before...



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# DaC driver to star in movie

Dial-a-Cab driver and *Call Sign*'s long-time trusty photographer, **Alan Green (E52)** has been chosen to star in a documentary movie about London's banking community and about the parts of their lives that perhaps don't get aired so often.

*Dance until the music stops* is about the banking culture of one of the world's most important global financial centres - the City of London - but the difference to most other films about finance and the people involved in making it such a ginormous business, is that it will be seen through the eyes of a London licensed taxi driver.

Alan will be followed as he drives across the city, picking up and dropping off bankers while the movie attempts to discover the periphery of the banking sector and what their idea of entertainment involves. Bankers often use taxis on their way to various destinations and will hopefully be prepared to tell the producers something about the culture of the banking sector and even some things outside of their banking that perhaps we know little about.

In the meantime, Alan will act as a guide to the city as a geographer, describing places and institutions as they pass them.

The film maker is **Thomas Vroege**, from Rotterdam in Holland and he recently vis-



**Keith Cain explains how the call centre operates to Thomas Vroege as Allan Evans looks on**

ited *Call Sign* at Dial-a-Cab House. He showed us his last movie, which told the fascinating story of a Dutchman who suddenly decided to convert to becoming an orthodox Jew with the astonishing changes to his life that he had to explain to his family. Things such as no longer being allowed to touch a woman again unless it was his wife and how his whole diet had changed with so many items of food he could no longer eat. It may sound like a strange movie, but it left *Call Sign* fascinated

Following a tour of the building with DaC Compliance Officer, **Allan Evans**, Thomas told *Call Sign*:

"The taxi driver himself needs to be a 'mirror' for the banking sector. He is also living a tough life in the City with many of them partially under contract with the banks via DaC. We hope to hear stories from the driver, who is trying to make a living in a difficult arena, as well as the bankers..."

Alan Green will tell this mag how he gets on as soon as the movie is completed...

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Alec Wilkey (W83) has been on Dial-a-Cab for eight years, but for far longer than that he has continued his love as a boxing trainer with professional fighters at the established TKO Gym in Canning Town and now with Lansbury ABC. He tells Call Sign about an unusual occurrence in the world of boxing...

It revolves around the eight man line-up for the **Betfair Light-Welterweight Prizefighter III** which looks to have all the credentials of another explosive night at **York Hall** in Bethnal Green on July 6th – especially for Alec himself!

**Matchroom Sport** provides a sold-out event packed full of young talent all looking to take home the winning £32,000 cheque. Fortunately for boxing fans the sold out action is being broadcast live on **Sky Sports**. On the same evening, Lightweight **Kevin Mitchell** makes his return in a warm-up fight following a lengthy lay off after joining Matchroom Sport Promotions.

Gym mates **Danny 'Cassius' Connor** (8-5-1) and unbeaten **Eren Arif** (3-0) are both confident going into the competition after recently changing their training arrangements with trainer **Alec Wilkey**, moving from the TKO in Canning Town to Lansbury ABC in Poplar. Southern Area Champion Danny Connor has other familiar faces to him in the competition in **Chris Evangelou** (9-2) who he fought and beat in his last two title fights and who will be looking to redeem himself. Also Connor's close friend and mandatory challenger for the Southern Area title **Tony Owen** (14-1), who comes from the same area of South London, also competes in the knockout tournament.

In the line-up will also be two fighters who last contested for the Southern Area Title at

## Team Wilkey gunning for glory at Prizefighter III



Alec with Danny Connor - one of the favourites to land the £32K prize

Lightweight and will be stepping up in weight in an attempt to claim the prize. They are **Liam Shinkwin** (6-0-1) and **Ryan Taylor** (7-1-1). Another unbeaten fighter, **Charlie Rice** (6-0) and **Matty Tew** (12-1) make up the draw.

Danny Connor told *Call Sign*: "It's given me more of an idea who I'm fighting and what they bring, but to be quite honest you've got nine rounds so you have to set a high pace and make your punches count. I'm more mature in terms of how many rounds I've done, but nothing is going to stop me from winning it."

Arif, who hails from Rotherhithe, is one of the least experienced in the competition but believes that this plays into his hands. Speaking to *iFilm* London, he said that although he had just three pro fights, for this to come up at such

an early stage in his career was a fantastic opportunity.

"Yes I'm the underdog but I don't think there's anyone as strong as me or who can hit as hard as me."

Trainer Alec Wilkey will have to step aside for both fighters if they meet at any point in the tournament with **Derek Grainger** and former British title holder **Matthew Marsh** taking control of the corners.

Alec told *Call Sign*: "We recently amicably left the TKO Gym and moved to Lansbury ABC where Adam and Lenny have been great and provided a great facility for Team Wilkey to train. I'd like to thank our sponsors **Core Security** and **Glen Insurance** for helping us out as well."

**David Wilkey**

## TfL ranks news



### Zuma

A new taxi rank has been appointed for **Zuma** in **Raphael Street**. The rank is for three taxis and is in two portions, with the first portion directly outside of the door of Zuma. The rank operates between 18:30 and 08:30 and will be closely monitored. It is essential that drivers do not obstruct other vehicles or block access to buildings near Zuma, otherwise the rank may have to be removed.

### Liverpool Street marshalled taxi rank

The late night marshalled taxi rank in **Liverpool Street** is continuing to operate on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings between 22:00 and 02:00.

### Unattended taxis

Unfortunately TfL has received further complaints about taxis being left unattended on the taxi ranks in **Hamilton Place** and **Stanhope Gate**. These are exceptionally busy working taxi ranks and drivers must not leave their taxis unattended here. Not only does it prevent other drivers from using the ranks, it also damages the reputation of the taxi trade when the public and businesses see unattended taxis on ranks in busy locations. TfL's Compliance Team have recently visited these ranks and reported several drivers for leaving their taxi unattended. The Compliance Team will continue to visit these ranks and any driver who leaves their taxi unattended on either of the ranks risks being reported and further action being taken.

### Rest ranks for taxi drivers are available at the following locations:

Aldwych, Arundel Street, Eccleston Bridge, Great Portland Street, Grosvenor Street, Hyde Park Street, Lancaster Gate, Marylebone Road, Mathew Parker Street, New Bond Street (Clifford Street), Praed Street, Russell Street, Strand (St. Clement Danes), Lincoln Inn Fields, Gillingham Street and Charing Cross Road.

### There are also refreshment ranks at:

Cadogan Place/Pont Street, Embankment Place (for Northumberland Avenue), Grosvenor Gardens, Hanover Square, Kensington Road (Broadwalk), Kensington Park Road (Ladbroke Road), Lupus Street/St. George's Square, Russell Square, Temple Place, Thurloe Place, Warwick Avenue and Wellington Place. There are taxi meter bays in Palace Street, which are reported to be underused.

We know that taxi drivers would like more rest ranks and are looking at suggestions for new rest ranks. One suggestion put forward is to convert the taxi rank in Montpelier Street into a rest rank. If you have any com-

ments on this proposal then let us know by emailing TfL at: [tphranksinterchange@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:tphranksinterchange@tfl.gov.uk). Allowed timings are 60 minutes on rest ranks and 45 minutes on refreshment ranks.

### Over-ranking

Complaints have continued to be received about taxis over-ranking and queuing on the corner of **Hans Road** and **Basil Street** (near **Walton Place**). This is obstructing other vehicles and causing problems for local residents and businesses. If the taxi ranks serving Harrods are full, then drivers must not queue in the road and should move on.

## Call Sign July 2013

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**May's Call Sign editorial wrote of Addison Lee being sold to the American Carlyle Group for a reputed £300million and posed the question as to where DaC might have been now had the proposed 2002 buyout of DaC by the UK equity firm Sovereign Capital been accepted by drivers. DaC driver Jon Robinson (E88) gives his view...**



**In May, Alan Fisher asked "What if?" I wish we could ask Mr Peter Brooks of Sovereign Capital that question. However I can but speculate...**

It's January 2003, the first issue of the year's *Call Sign* has just landed on my doormat with the Chairman's picture on the front cover. The headline reads: *Membership says YES! DAC set to sell!*

My mind is made up, I'm going to cash most of my shares in and take the money. Now fast forward to this present time, 10 years on. Our Chairman is still with us, but most of the Board has changed. DaC House has been sold and we now rent it from a landlord. Drivers are eager to see the latest new terminals - the second new terminal in the last 5 years.

The fleet has tripled in size since three guys suggested the idea of an APP for the new smart phones. It has proved to be a great success for our private hire fleet as well. *GetTaxi* is the only other taxi company offering this service. A huge private hire fleet in NW1 is also offering this service, but our private hire fleet is helping DaC accounts to remain loyal. Subscriptions have hardly changed, 30 year men still get free subs but like the rest of the membership, many longer and higher priced trips have a percentage deducted. Run-ins are only allowed at busy times and waiting time premiums, station and theatre pick-up charges are now a thing of the past.

Most members seem happy with the work levels, but are not very keen on the new dress code or the 10 year age limit for taxis on DaC, but at least the 4 year interest free loans help. The option to take an account fare to your home zone at private hire rates has proved very popular with drivers and customers.

The use of GPRS linked to your passengers' phone to help find where your passengers are is also a great help and our newly launched App called 'find my taxi' will help customers to locate their cab.

**So Alan, never mind what if? It should be more of if only!**

I could go on with my fantasy, but in the real world I still worry about DaC because when I'm working I drive past more and more account addresses that I haven't picked up from lately and some days I sit with my *for hire* sign turned off to take a radio trip that goes locally just to help pay my subs.

I don't think we need - or needed - to become a PLC to expand or compete. We may have needed to change our status, but more than that I think we need to change our ways. Mr Chairman, do you really think the way we operate and charge our customers, ie run-ins, gratuities, booking and handling fees are sustainable? With *Hailo* taking cash from Addy Lee and off the street and *GetTaxi* after more of our business, which I think they will take as their fleet gets bigger, they will also soon be invited to tender by our major accounts and their pricing will give them an edge - especially when asked what sort of booking fee they charge and their reply comes back as zero!

**So what do I think? Does anyone care what I think? Perhaps you're happy with the way things are?**

I believe we need to change the way we charge our accounts, albeit slowly with members given time to adjust so as our service remains great. Should the economy pick up, we could aim to regain the longer trips that have been lost by offering a more open pricing policy on longer rides. We should just bill the metered fare on all trips starting or ending outside London postcodes and all airports. That would be a big saving for our account customers without affecting coverage, as I feel most drivers would cover this work while our local trips will remain as now. A small reduction in subs would compensate for a £1 or £2 surcharge paid by drivers for the longer trips. Surely it's better for DaC and

# What if...???

for our drivers to be offered more trips with a lower booking fee than a few roaders here and there with large booking fees. Customers find it hard to understand why it costs more to book a longer trip than a shorter trip.

In the long term, if the economy improves it may still be profitable for a DaC driver to accept a longer journey for the meter fare with no run-in. If we try to follow Hailo with no run-ins on all trips, our service will suffer. However, with fleet numbers falling and work being flat, it is no good for anyone. Word on the street and in the cafes is that DaC hasn't got any work. On some quiet days I wonder if they are right!

Our IT department need to give our account customers an APP for smart phones asap to make using DaC easier and less of a chore. It's easier for an account passenger to walk out to the street to hire a taxi than to call DaC. If the economy remains slow and our customer base continues to shrink, then so will the size of our fleet. That would leave DaC as a company in decline and I fear that means a company bumping along until it's too late.

**So what do you think? Do you think we should talk about PLC? Should we take over a private hire company? Would you be happy to say goodbye to run-ins? Would you want pay per trip as a form of subs? Do you think it would be a good idea to take on Hailo? I'm sure our Editor and the Chairman would like to hear your views. My thanks to all for reading my article...**

**Jon Robinson (E88)**

*Do you have any views on Jon's suggestions? Since the article was written, DaC have built and released credit card and account client Apps. Those customers can book by phone, on-line or via the App ...Ed*

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# CONTACT CENTRE CHAT

With Keith Cain

For so long as I can remember, articles have been written in *Call Sign* about the problems of covering early morning work in certain areas. Well that particular problem is back!

Coverage in the mornings is again becoming a very serious issue with some regular clients now threatening to stop using our service due to unreliability. I know there are many drivers who put themselves out during the morning to assist in covering this work - which I hasten to add are not trips just going round the corner. Those drivers who put themselves out will, I'm sure, be just as frustrated as we in the Contact Centre are becoming, because the service of some could impact on the rest of the fleet. Not only will we lose those morning rides, but more often as is the case, the return trip in the evening going back home will also be lost.

**Dial-a-Cab** Controllers have been instructed to do all they can to get these trips covered, even if it means making them **non-rejectable**. I have to also remind drivers who let these trips time out or put their meters on to avoid taking one when it becomes non-rejectable, that a complaint will be forwarded to Compliance Officer, **Allan Evans**, who has been instructed by the Board to follow up each complaint.

If you think that offering a long delay time will get you off the trip, please think again. Procedures are in place for our CSR's to advise controllers each time a long delay is offered. The driver's position is then checked and a more realistic delay is offered to the client. It is



so difficult at the moment to obtain new work, but it's so very easy to throw away what we have - especially at a time when things are picking up.

## New terminals

I am pleased to say that we have now commenced the fitting programme for the new terminal and the new *chip and pin* credit card facility.

I would ask all members to keep to the appointments that have been made as this does help speed up the fitting process. While you are being fitted, please make yourselves aware of the written instructions of how to accept credit card trips. There is also a four page pull-out

inside this issue that you can leave in the cab when you go to work.

You should also watch the CD to familiarise yourself with the new terminals functionality and if you are not sure about something, please don't be afraid to ask.

**Keith Cain**  
Call Centre Manager  
Driver Operations Manager

## Roy Manor leaves GetTaxi

Taxi App **GetTaxi** has announced that CEO, **Roy Manor**, has left the company after two years.

Mr Manor said that he was an entrepreneur and had "too many ideas in mind and wanted to make at least one of them happen."

He joined in 2011 as a consultant and was made CEO last year. His departure comes just months after *Call Sign* published an article concerning a story regarding what we had been told was a previous GetTaxi link to a minicab platform. He denied the story.



### Celebration Gala Dinner & Dance

Reception:	The Crypt	18.30
Dinner:	Livery Hall	19.30
Dancing:	East Crypt	21.30

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Dress: Formal

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# London taxi prices are the world's most expensive?



world's most expensive city, to a more mod-

The yearly travellers cost guide carried out by *TripAdvisor* had both good and bad news for London. The good news was that the UK capital moved down from last year's position as the

est seventh place. Moving above us were Oslo, Zurich, Stockholm, New York and Paris.

At the other end of the scale, Sophia (Bulgaria) was the cheapest with Hanoi and Warsaw just slightly more expensive. Also down there were Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur.

The bad part was that London was said to have the world's most expensive taxis with what was called "an average trip" costing just over £27. The cheapest were in Kuala

Lumpur where the same journey cost around £1.40. That "average trip" was taken as a two mile each way return trip and not one driver that *Call Sign* asked the question to of how much would a 4 mile journey cost, came anywhere near the *TripAdvisor* answer of £27 – most answering at around £15.

A similar 4 mile taxi trip in Sophia would cost £3.14, Beijing £2.21, Hong Kong £4.56, Barcelona £10.36 and New York £15. Closest to London was said to be Zurich at £25.50...

## Wimbledon Tennis



The 2013 Wimbledon Tennis Championships continue until next Sunday (7 July). For those that don't know the ranking facilities, there are several options.

### Church Road

There is a rank for 30 taxis outside **Gate 4** where spectators will be able to take shared taxi trips to Southfields and Wimbledon stations. The rank will also operate normally for passengers wishing to travel to central London and other destinations. This rank will also be the drop-off point for all taxi passengers and stopping elsewhere on Church Road is not permitted.

### Somerset Road

There is a rank for 8 taxis outside **Gate 13** offering shared taxi trips to Wimbledon Station and operating normally for passengers wishing to travel to Central London and other destinations. Marshals will be at Church Road and Somerset Road ranks from 17:00 onwards.

*Please do not leave your cab unattended on these ranks at any time.*

### Pre-booked taxis

There are two spaces in Somerset Road for pre-booked taxis.

If you haven't yet started watching the 6-part **BBC 2** programme on London's traffic, then we suggest you *Sky Plus* Tuesday evenings at 9pm because this isn't what you'd expect if you go just by the title of **Route Master**. It isn't a programme solely about buses, but it looks at **Transport for London's** nerve centre and its various departments from the control centre with its myriad of video screens overlooking every part of the capital, to the two men who go out to clear dead foxes off the highway – one of whom is a Ghurkha and who admits to his favourite food being sheep testicles!

Then there are the people who open and close Blackwall Tunnel and those who go out looking for potholes. But it's the way they try to keep the traffic moving that makes *Route Master* such a compelling watch as TfL attempt to keep London's streets flowing and manage the 21 million daily journeys by car, bus, taxi, cycle, delivery lorry and van, motorcycle, scooter and on foot.

Even **Dial-a-Cab** has a presence as former dispatcher **Howard Taylor** – son of former Chairman **Jack Taylor** – expresses the views of a London taxi driver stuck in the never-ending traffic, while the TfL nerve centre seems to be run by former DaC telephonist, **Chis Huckstead**!

The series was made by **Blast! Films**, the same production company behind **The Tube**, which was watched by around two million viewers each episode last year.



Fed up with traffic? Now you can at least see why!

## ROUTE MASTER!

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We Invite Dial-a-Cab drivers and their guests to our restaurant where you can partake of the finest food and wine

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Dial-a-Cab driver **Jim Rainbird (T25)** often appears in *Call Sign* thanks to his – and his taxi's – various filming and photo shoots. Over the years they include appearing on an **NHK** Japanese TV quiz, being hired by newspapers to follow **Princess Diana** and publicising a *Motorcycle News* Excel show alongside 2-wheel stars **Chris 'The Stalker' Walker** and **Tommy Hill**. Neither has he missed the four-wheeled versions, having starred with F1 stars **Lewis Hamilton** and **Mika Hakkinen** in a **Johnnie Walker** anti-drinking campaign! More recently he was hired by **Barclaycard** to help publicise their **Contactless** card being used with the new DaC terminal PED. But filming a shoot for Christmas in May was a new one for Jim! He gave *Call Sign* the lowdown...

"This was a photo shoot for German department store **Appelrath-Cüpper** who are based in Cologne and operate women's apparel stores. Founded in 1882, they also operate a huge online business.

"The shoot took place in **May** and must have cost a fortune because there were around twenty people involved, including a special effects guy who covered my taxi with 'snow'! He also did the same to a couple of red phone kiosks. They had two Winnebagos and a catering truck, so the store must be akin to our **Harrods** to cover the cost of all that!

"It was actually a stills shoot for their website/catalogue. They choose a city as a theme for each season's collection, which I believe was **Paris** last time with **New York** before that. Now it was **London** and what represents London worldwide better than a **TX4** taxi and a red phone box!"

But why, we asked, was it only Jim's cab



*Was this young lady good looking enough to keep Jim off the photo shoot? Yep!*

*inset: More young ladies with their Appelrath Cüpper "Xmas parcels" in May!*

in the shoot and not Jim himself? After all, we're talking about last year's **Master of the Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers**?

"Well," said Jim, "they filmed it as in the making of documentary, but it used stills. Then when I saw how beautiful the models in the cab were, I assumed that it might have been

too much of a contrast to have me in the shot!"

And before anyone writes in, yes, Jim has to remove the DaC logos before most of the film or photo shoots and is one of the few drivers allowed magnetic logos. Looking at the female model, we bet he couldn't get them off quickly enough!!!

**Michel Toomey**  
Call Sign Online

## Late nights at LTC here to stay!

Following fortnightly test evenings over the past few months, **London Taxi Company – formerly M&O – at Brewery Road** will now open late **EVERY** Wednesday from 8.30am until 9pm.

Experimental late openings attracted customers taking advantage of being able to talk about new and used vehicle sales, buy parts, find out more about **Geely Automobile** (the new owners of The London Taxi Company) or simply to see if the team were really going to stay open that late!

UK Retail General Manager, **James Dennison**, said:

"We made the decision to test the theory of late nights following direct feedback from some of our customers that our 'office hours' weren't always convenient. It's been great to see some new faces, especially some of the night drivers who simply weren't able to get in to see us previously.

"Our initial test opening hours were until 11pm, but after the past few weeks we've settled on a 9pm closing time – this gives day and night drivers the chance to come in when it suits them."

**All areas of the dealership will be open, so customers can buy new and used TX4s or parts; they can also pre-book servicing or warranty work to take place during these longer evenings.**

The limited edition patriotic paint job for new black or white **TX4 Elegances** was also very popular with late night buyers who were able to choose a full colour Union Flag on a white vehicle, or a silver version on a black TX4 - the silver on black proving to be the favourite after the first week of the launch. The free limited edition was limited to the first 100 TX4s.

**For more information, contact the team at Brewery Road on 0207 700 088 or email them at london@london-taxis.co.uk**



*The Union Jack taxis have proved popular at Brewery Road's late night openings*





Transport for London notice re the former CRB process...

# CHANGES TO DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE

***This notice sets out important information that is relevant to all existing and new drivers and operators. TfL has been informed that with effect from 17 June 2013, the Disclosure and Barring Service (formed by the merger of the Criminal Records Bureau and Independent Safeguarding Authority) is introducing some important changes to the service it provides.***

*These changes will have a significant impact on all new and renewal applicants for taxi (and private hire) driver's licenses.*

## Applicant-only certificates

We have been advised that with effect from 17 June 2013, the DBS will only issue disclosure certificates to applicants and will no longer send a copy of this certificate to TfL. This differs from the current system where both the applicant and TfL receive a copy of the disclosure around the same time. The only information that will be provided to TfL directly will be to advise whether or not the disclosure sent to the applicant contained any information or was clear. In the event we are advised the disclosure contained information, we will not be provided with details of what this information is.

Therefore if information has been disclosed to the applicant, we will not be able to make a licensing decision on a new or renewal application until such time as the disclosure has been provided to TfL from the applicant. If we are advised that information has been disclosed to the applicant, we will write to them directly and ask him/her to send us their original certificate. We will take a copy of this certificate and return it to the driver. As is usual practice and in accordance with DBS requirements, we will destroy our copy once a licensing decision has been made.

As we will not be able to make a licensing decision until we have received the certificate and been able to consider the information disclosed, drivers must respond to the request as a matter of urgency.

This process will be undertaken on our behalf by TMG CRB, our service provider. Applicants must respond to any correspondence from TMG CRB and failure to do so could result in them not being licensed. We cannot process any applications until a result has been received on your CRB. If no information is disclosed on the certificate, drivers will not have to take any further action.

TMG CRB will pass a copy of the disclosure certificates to TfL before returning it to the driver. As previously stated, we will destroy our copy once a licensing decision has been made and TMG will not be retaining any copies.

As a result of introducing this process, TMG CRB will be increasing the fee they charge for processing disclosure applications. As of 17 June 2013, the fees charged by TMG CRB will be £56.85 for an online application and £58.85 for a paper application.

## Applications in progress

All disclosures issued on or after 17 June 2013 will be issued to the applicant only, even if the application was made before this date. Applicants who have already submitted a disclosure application should be aware that it may be dealt with under the new arrangements.

## Renewal applications

To allow sufficient time to accommodate these new arrangements, we will send licensed drivers licence renewal packs four months prior to the expiry of their licence and drivers intending to renew their licence are advised to complete and submit both their licence and disclosure applications without delay.

## Update Service

The applicant-only certificate system will be launched at the same time

as the new DBS Update Service. From 17 June, anyone who applies for their next criminal record check can choose to subscribe to the new Update Service. This will cost £13 per year in addition to the original disclosure application fee. The Update Service will allow them to keep their criminal record certificate up-to-date so that they can take it with them from role to role, within the same workforce.

The Update Service will allow us to carry out free, instant online checks of an individual's certificate, to check that it is up-to-date. When someone is subscribing to this service, we will only have to seek a new criminal record check if the DBS tells us something has changed.

Any driver who subscribes to the Update Service will need to provide us with details on their licence application form and confirm that they consent to us carrying out the online check.

We are in the process of developing a system to accommodate drivers who choose to use the Update Service and we will announce further details in due course.

**Please note these changes are being made by the DBS and not by TfL. It is one of the government's priorities to overhaul the criminal records regime to give individuals greater control of their own information, allow DBS Certificates to be reused when applying for similar jobs and reduce the burden of red tape on employers. Please see April's edition of DBS news for further information or contact the DBS at [customerservices@dbsgsi.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@dbsgsi.gov.uk), 0870 9090811.**

**Helen Chapman**

**Interim General Manager, Taxi and Private Hire**



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*The civilisations of the galaxy call it... MASS EFFECT.*



This month I thought I'd tell you of an amazing video game trilogy I recently discovered. Available on PC, XBOX 360 and PS3, the **Mass Effect** trilogy is an astounding piece of cinema-quality gaming.

Utilising the latest video game technology, the Mass Effect games not only deliver high-octane action and blockbuster-like cinematics, they provide a rich, immersive story unlike any other game. You play the games as *Lieutenant Commander John Shepard* (third-person view), commander of the starship *Normandy*, who must save the galaxy from total destruction.

The story isn't linear; sure, the main plot guides you through the game but you have to make choices which affect Shepard, his crew and ultimately the outcome of the game. The choices you make - both in the main plot and in the multitude of side missions - will have repercussions on what happens throughout the first, second and third games. This is what is so unique about the Mass Effect trilogy. Once you complete the first game, you can import your profile into *Mass Effect 2* and continue the story. Your decisions and actions in the first game will alter the course of the second and third games.

Each of the three games is a complete story in its own right, providing at least 25 hours of compelling gameplay per game. However, the overarching story encapsulates all three games, providing a rich and detailed movie experience in which you play an active role. There's plenty of shooting action to be had, but not like the mindless run 'n' gun shooter

DaC Network Administrator Jon Winterburn enjoys playing the latest computer games, but this month he reviews what he calls the greatest video game he has ever played...

## GAMING WITH JON



games out there. Instead, tactics, skill and timing help you destroy the enemy in a satisfying and believable adventure.

**The replay value is impressive due to the number of choices you get to make. Even when you've finished the games, playing through each game again is recommended. Doing this allows you to try different choices, which in turn provides different outcomes and at times, fundamentally changes your journey.**

And if this isn't enough, there are three novels set in the Mass Effect universe. Whilst not essential to the game, they are extremely well written and just as exciting. *Mass Effect: Revelation* is a sequel to the first game. *Mass Effect: Ascension* bridges the gap between the first Mass Effect game and the second. Finally, *Mass Effect: Retribution* bridges the gap between the second and third game. Each book has a self-contained story which serves to enrich the overall experience.

**I've been playing video games for 30 years and I've played hundreds of games on almost every gaming device ever created. Having only recently discovered the**

**Mass Effect trilogy and corresponding books, I have to say that they are the greatest games I've ever played. Nothing else comes close!**

There are plenty of shooters, plenty of big-budget games out there. They all fade to insignificance compared to Mass Effect. The pseudo-science is more compelling than *Star Trek*, the action more fun than *Call of Duty*, the visual effects more immersive than *Battlefield 3* and the story is more intriguing than any blockbuster movie I've ever seen.

If you are a gamer, own a gaming PC, XBOX or PS3 and enjoy playing sci-fi and/or shooter or RPG games, give Mass Effect a go. You can pick up the first game for under £10 online at <http://store.origin.com>.

Give it a try and see what you think. Then once you're hooked, you can get Mass Effect 2 and 3 from the same place. The novels are available on *Kindle* or in paperback on *Amazon* for around a fiver each.

*Happy gaming!*

**Jon Winterburn**  
DaC Network Administrator

## Coventry workers get jobs back!

**A**s another sign of its re-emergence into mainstream taxi building since being taken over by Chinese car builders, Geely, thirty two of the TX4 workers at the London Taxi Company's Coventry facility at Holyhead Road who had previously lost their jobs when the former Manganese Bronze went into liquidation, have been offered re-employment.

Vice president of The London Taxi Company, **Peter Johansen**, said: "We've already recruited 38 employees this year and have 58 in total that we're going to be taking on in the coming months across the UK. Thirty two of those will be in production at the Coventry factory."

He added that the new company had already sold over 200 new cabs in the UK over the previous weeks and that they had a five-week waiting list for a new TX4s. They expect to be back in full production by August.

As for the international market, Mr Johansen said that it was going to be a record year for LTC because they had already taken orders for over 800 vehicles, with many more orders pending.

A **Unite Union** spokesman, **Peter Coulson**, said he was quite optimistic of there being more workers employed in the future who would be taken on at previous rates of pay and hours of work and that it sounded like very good news.





Terry with grandson Ralph

## GRANDSON FOR TERRY!

Five years ago, *Call Sign's* Mickey Lappin wrote on his *Mickey's Music* page about London Busker, **Dean Saunders** and his daily grind of travelling from home in Rainham (Essex) to Vauxhall for his regular job, but how at night he turned into Deano the busker, playing his guitar and singing his own songs to help cheer up the tube-travelling public. We also mentioned Deano's new book that had been published at the time - *Nice work if you can get it*.

Linking the two stories was Laura, daughter of Dial-a-Cab's Terry Catherall (Y90), and who was soon to marry the same Deano in an obviously low key affair – at the Riva del Garda

end of Italy's Lake Garda!

Back to the present day and both Terry and wife Dawn are now delighted to say they have a grandson, **Ralph James Dean**, who put in his first appearance on 10th April, weighing in at 8lb 6oz. He makes a pair, adding to Laura and Dean's first baby, daughter **Robyn**.

Dad Deano now takes the slightly easier music playing route by playing lead guitar with Romford-based **Car Boot Tetris** and wasted no time in giving Ralph his first guitar lesson!

Meanwhile a bashful Terry told *Call Sign*: "Ralph is a real handsome chap, obviously taking after his granddad!"

## Wedding Bells

On 16 June 2013, **Alexis Burnetts**, elder daughter of **David Burnetts (S43)** and wife **Maureen** uttered the words "I do" and instantly became **Mrs Matthew Bennett** to the sounds of 'Mazeltov' from the several hundred guests attending the wedding in the sumptuous surroundings of Hemel Hempstead's **Shendish Manor Hotel**.

Alexis met Matt some time ago through shared interests.

A happy Matt told *Call Sign*: "I knew right away she was the one person I wanted to spend the rest of my life with, but it just took me a while to persuade Alexis!"

*Call Sign* sends its best wishes to both Maureen and David and Matt's parents Cynthia and Stewart and of course to the happy bride and groom...



## Taxi driver of the Year dinner and dance

The Taxi Driver of the Year Charity Fund is pleased to announce their 41st annual dinner and dance to be held on 30th November 2013 at the: Holiday Inn London Kensington Forum  
97 Cromwell Road London SW7 4DN

We have also been able to hold the price again this year at just £62.50 per person. That includes a welcome drink at the reception, 4-course meal, half a bottle of wine per person and tea/coffee. Later in the evening to quench your thirst, there will be more tea / coffee served with Danish pastries. There is also dancing to a live band.

We also have arranged a special deal if you would like to stay at the hotel overnight. For more information please call (phone/fax) 020 8952 1357 or mobile 07850 056 765

Remember all money raised will be split between the five taxi charities: The Albany Taxi Fund for Children with special needs, LTFUC, Benevolent Association for War Disabled, East London Cabbies Outing and the Southend Fund for Underprivileged Children.

Russell Poluck MBE (T55)  
TDoY Hon Chairman

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# New terminal credit and debit card transactions

Daren Morley

## Card Transaction Hail and Ride

With the imminent rollout of the new MDT I thought it would be a good idea to make drivers aware of the changes to card transactions.

Once you have the new MDT, you will also have a Pin Entry Device (PED) installed in your cab. This will sit in the front of the cab and you will pass it to the passenger at the end of the journey. There should be no need for you to handle the passenger's card in future.

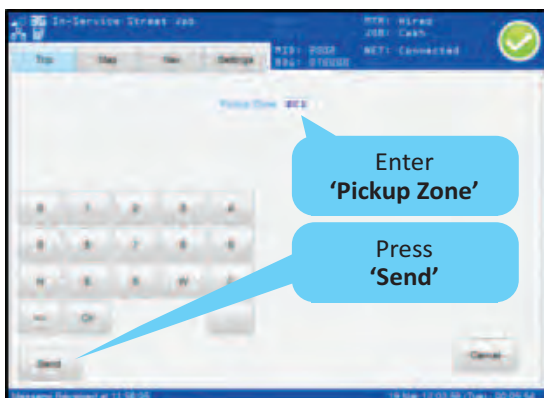
You are no longer required to pre-authorise a credit/debit card trip at the start of the journey.

The **'To Card'** button can be pressed at the start, during, or at the end of the journey.

1. Press the **'To Card'** button.



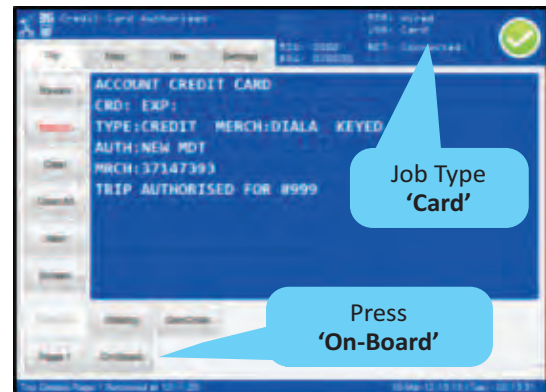
2. Enter the **'Pickup'** zone. Press the **'Send'** button to update the information.



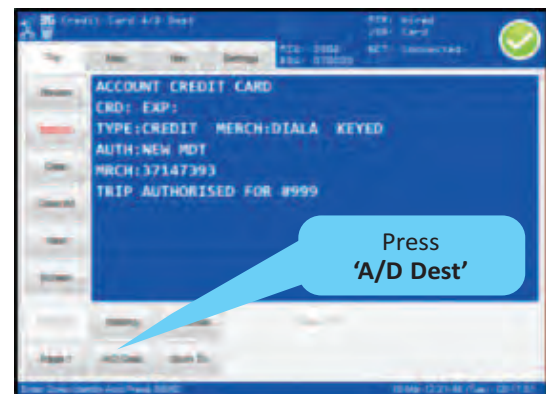
Now the terminal is in card mode, the trip detail screen changes to **'Account Credit Card'**. The job type is also displayed as **'Card'**.

**Note:** Although the screen shows **'Trip authorised #999'** no form of authorisation request has gone through the terminal. Only after the passenger enters their pin number on the chip and pin device is an authorisation requested.

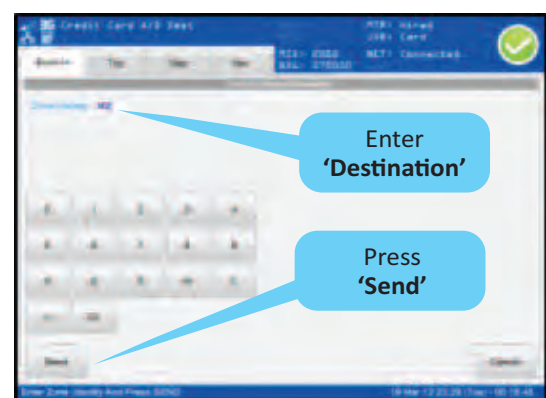
3. Press the **'On-Board'** button.



4. To add the destination of the trip, press the **'A/D Dest'** button.



5. Enter your destination into the **'Zone Identity'** field. Press the **'Send'** button.

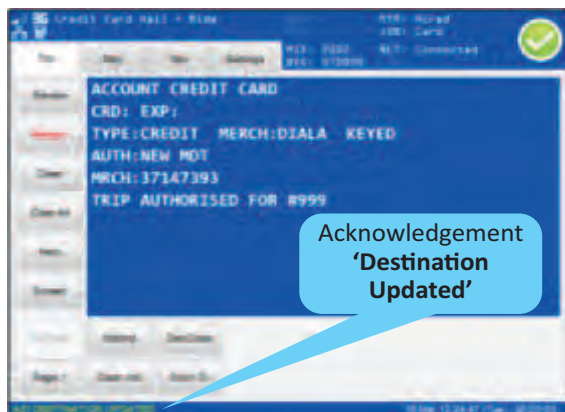


At the bottom of the screen you will see an acknowledgement confirming that the **'As Directed Destination'** has been updated.

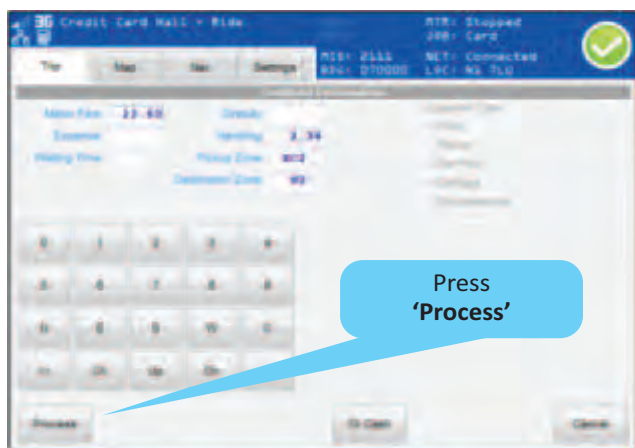
**Note:** If you do not update the **'As Directed Destination'** the terminal will not allow the trip to be cleared.



## Credit/Debit Card Step by Step Guide

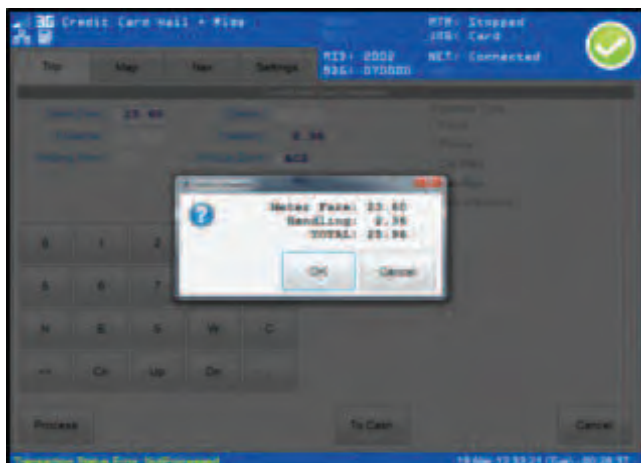


6. You also have the option to 'Soon to Clear' into the zone, when you are no more than **15** minutes away from the destination.
7. At the end of your journey stop the meter.
8. Press the 'Clear Job' button.
9. The screen will change to the **Credit/Debit Card Completion** screen. Check that the amount is correct, then press the 'Process' button.



**Note:** The handling charge of **10%**, minimum of **£2**, is automatically calculated.

10. The **Confirm Amounts** pop-up box will appear. Press the 'OK' button to send the amount to the Chip and Pin device. Press 'Cancel' to return to the **Credit/Debit Card Completion** screen.



11. The **Credit/Debit Card Completion** screen will turn grey and the following message appears at the bottom of the screen:

Use PED to Process Card

**Note:** If the transaction times out, the following message will appear at the bottom of the terminal screen:

Transaction Status Error: NotProcessed

Just re-press the 'Process' button to resend the information to the Chip and Pin device.

Pass the Chip and Pin (PED) device to the passenger through your partition window or luggage door. The device will instruct the passenger and yourself through the process.

12. If the trip is under **£20**, and the passenger has a Contactless Card, they have the option of making a Contactless payment. All the passenger is required to do is touch their card onto the screen.

The terminal will print a merchant copy, which you retain. Press the green 'Enter' button to clear the trip from your screen and send the information through to Dial-a-Cab.



**Note:** On a Contactless payment, the passenger does not receive a receipt. If the passenger requires a receipt, they should insert their card into the device.

13. Alternatively, if the card is not Contactless, or the transaction is over **£20**, the passenger inserts their card into the Chip and Pin device.



14. Once the passenger has entered their pin and pressed the green 'Enter' button, and the transaction is authorised, the **customer copy** receipt will be printed on your terminal.
15. Tear off the **customer copy**, and ask the customer to press the green 'Enter' button and then remove their card, and pass the **customer copy** receipt to the passenger. Ask the passenger to pass the Chip and Pin device back to you.



## Credit/Debit Card Step by Step Guide



16. Once the passenger has removed their card, the **merchant copy** receipt will be printed. Tear off the **merchant copy** of the receipt and retain for a minimum of **12 months**.
17. Press the green **'Enter'** button to finish the transaction and send the information through to Dial-a-Cab.

**Note:** Always ensure when the receipt is printed that the receipt does not show **\*\*Void\*\*** or **\*\*Cancelled\*\*** this can occur when a connection to the host is lost or the customer presses the **'Cancel'** button.

If the receipt does indicate that the transaction was unsuccessful. Pass the passenger their copy of the **'Voided'** receipt and explain that you need to carry out the transaction again. Press the green **'Enter'** button on the Chip and Pin device (PED) and then press **'Process'** on the terminal. Follow steps **10 to 17** to complete the transaction.



As soon as you press **'To Card'** the screen will switch to the **Credit/Debit Card Completion** screen.



2. You now need to manually input the **'Pick Up'** and **'Destination'** zones. Press your finger in the **'Pickup Zone'**, once the cursor is flashing in the field, enter where you picked the passenger up from. Carryout the same procedure for the **'Destination'** field. Check all the information entered is correct and then press the **'Process'** button.
3. There will be a few second's delay whilst the trip is created by the host at Dial-a-Cab House. Once the trip is created the confirm amount box will appear.



## Change Cash Booking to Credit/Debit Card Booking

Cash trips can be changed to Credit/Debit card transactions even when the meter is in **'Stop'**.

1. From the **'Cash Completion'** screen press the **'To Card'** button.



4. Once you see **'A/D DESTINATION UPDATED'** at the bottom of the screen. Press the **'OK'** button and pass the Chip and Pin device (PED) to the passenger.
5. Follow steps **11 to 17** to complete the transaction.



## Credit/Debit Card Step by Step Guide



### Swipe Cards

As I am sure you are aware the UK and the majority of Europe are now Chip and Pin.

However if you ever have a visitor from the U.S. they currently don't have Chip and Pin cards. To process a card without a Chip and Pin follow the same procedures up to step 11.

Instead of putting their card into the Chip and Pin device the passenger must swipe their card down the right hand side of the B, with the magnetic strip facing inwards.

It is essential that the passenger does not swipe the card until you have pressed the **'Process'** button and the terminal states at the bottom of the screen **'Use PED to Process Card'**.

If the passenger sees the message **'Abort Card'** this indicates that they have swiped their card too early.

Press the **'Process'** button again to re-swipe card.



### Charge cards

Dial-a-Cab Charge cards cannot currently be swiped through the PED. If you are hailed in the street by a Dial-a-Cab Charge card holder you will need to go to Gen Code and press the Charge card button.

You will then need to manually input the card details into the terminal.

There is a video on the DaC Member's Portal and a DVD, which will be available at the time of fitting.

## The new terminal is now being fitted



Daren Morley  
DaC Trainer

*The Alpha Power Pill has been advertising in Call Sign for many years and a large number of DaC drivers use them in their taxis (and cars) regularly. Several years ago we carried out scientific tests on Power Pill, using independent mechanics from the Cricklewood Carriers garage. The photos in this article were taken by Call Sign after the test period.*

*So we asked Power Pill supplier, Steve Vale, to introduce himself for those concerned about who's at the other end of an online purchase and to explain about the amazing Alpha Power Pill...*

"As most **Call Sign** readers will know, **Alpha Power Pill** is the unique scientifically formulated fuel conditioner that is healthy for your vehicle, healthy for your business and healthy for the environment.

Power Pill has been proven, when added to your usual fuel, to lengthen the life of your engine, to improve its fuel efficiency and to save costs. Not generally recognised, PowerPill does all this while bringing significant 'green' benefits.

Alpha Power Pills have never really been promoted as a 'green' product because it is an accepted - even if sad - fact that most people are more interested in financial savings, getting better MPG and reducing maintenance costs than saving the planet by cutting emissions caused by the fuel we use.

**But possibly its most remarkable effect is the almost instant reduction of visible and invisible pollutants from the exhaust. Just watch your exhaust after just a few days!**

Power Pills are proven to reduce emissions as well as extending the life of the engine, catalytic converter, injectors and fuel system. But different people use Alpha Power Pills for different reasons.

For some, the reason is the extra power released when the fuel is burnt more efficiently. This extra power can be used in two ways; the **Jeremy Clarkson** way - ie just go faster! Or perhaps more now take note of the **James May** way and use it to go further for the same money. You can almost see Clarkson tightly gripping the wheel, eyes gleaming and teeth juddering, saying:

*"Using these pills, I can now get 210 out of this RS Cosworth!"*

Or James May, elbow out of an open window casually looking at the camera and saying:

*"Since I've been using these Alpha pills, I can get to Cornwall and back on a single tank!"*

Maybe there's a little of both Clarkson and May in all of us at times - especially in **Dial-a-Cab** drivers! But the choice is always yours as to how to use the extra power.

**Take a look at our totally revamped website to see proof and to get more details and testimonials. I am already adding DaC driver's helpful suggestions; after all it's designed for you and for your convenience.**

Just go to <http://www.OnlyCabs.co.uk> or like many do, give me a call..."

**Steve Vale 020 3239 6101.  
I'm always here to help...**

## DAC AND THE ALPHA POWER PILL



Two similarly aged taxi valves - one using the Power Pill (under test conditions with Cricklewood Carriers) and one that didn't

## PCN for going in cyclist ASL boxes

On behalf of **Mayor Boris Johnson**, **TfL** have asked the **DfT** to decriminalise enforcement of the **Advanced Stop Line** cycle boxes that you see beyond the stop lines at many sets of traffic signals. The result will be CCTV-enabled PCNs by taking enforcement away from the police and passing it over to local councils (see editorial on page 3).

The result of such legislation means that should you stray over the ASL stop line, or indeed into a cycle lane, you will receive a £60 penalty charge notice.

The real problems will come for drivers whose road is suddenly blocked and they become stuck in the ASL box as the lights turn red.

Responsibility for any change to the legislation lies with the Secretary of State for Transport, **Patrick McLoughlin**. Drivers wishing to contact the Minister to give their views can do so at:

[Patrick.mcloughlin.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:Patrick.mcloughlin.mp@parliament.uk).





# COMPLIANCE OFFICER'S REPORT



*Hello ladies & gents*

## Apps

As you know, in an effort to further market our **Credit Card and Account App**, we are now running a campaign, initially amongst a limited number of our members who have agreed to display the 'Superside' ads and tip-up seat ads on their taxis for a period of one year.

The **Dial-a-Cab Universal App** was launched in October last year and although the usage is progressively increasing, it is time to further market this tool to both account clients and fare paying customers. The Board of Management have fitted a considerable number of our taxis with the livery, which were randomly picked from a substantial list of applicants, so I would like to thank everyone who added their call sign to the list; it was a great response.



## The DaC Superside ad

I hope that by now you would have noticed some of our branded taxis out in the workplace. We have taken quite some time and made every effort producing something that is not only effective, but equally important, pleasing on the eye.

On each of the taxis there is a **QR (Quick Response) code**, which is a type of exclusive bar code that can be downloaded and then scanned on a smart phone and it will then automatically direct you on to the **DaC App**.

I have mentioned to you on previous occasions that as a stand-alone account, Credit Cards are right up there with the best and are steadily increasing. The average trip is not far short of thirty pounds and it is certainly the type of trip that can be increased in volume, as long as all of us do our little bit to make it work. Coverage is so important and a prompt and friendly service will go a long way to making it a success and first time as well as regular users

will continue to use our service.

I can't stress highly enough that without your help it will miss the mark, please do your best to further promote this campaign. Remember that there is a run in on Credit Cards booked through the system (charged at your discretion), you always receive the full meter fare and you will not be charged for the privilege of completing the trip.

## Coverage

Work has picked up and at particular times of the day and in certain zones coverage has again become a major problem. I was always advised to at least offer a time and let the customer make the choice rather than tell them there is nothing in the area. It is becoming more and more prevalent, especially in the mornings when unrealistic times and reasons are offered on unmatched or problem trips or if members engage or time their meters out on a trip they feel is not worth their while covering. Not only does it lead to late arrivals and delays, but more importantly it can seriously jeopardise an account, and a local trip can quite regularly turn into a roader - **so please try to do your best**

Finally for those of you that have holidays booked, I hope the sun shines for you.

*Be very lucky...*

**Allan Evans**

**DaC Compliance Officer**

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Winner 2010

Winner 2011

I'd like to offer a stark warning in this issue of **Call Sign** to any **Dial-a-Cab** driver who decides to challenge a road traffic violation at a Magistrate court hearing without any legal representation, even if you are armed with a mountain of compelling evidence that you believe takes the result way beyond any reasonable doubt.

On Monday 15th November 2010, I was at the set down area of Terminal Road North, Stansted Airport waiting briefly for my mother-in-law. My daughter was in the back seat. I made contact, hurried her inside and passed my mobile to her so that she could speak to my wife. We set off negotiating Molehill Green roundabout, where I noticed from the periphery of my eye a marked police car sited on the actual roundabout. We continued along Terminal Road South when I was flashed from behind by a police car.

He said I was using a mobile phone, which I denied. I asked the police officer's colleague whether she had seen anything. She said nothing. I was given the choice of a fixed penalty ticket or be summonsed to court. I was cautioned, accepted the fixed penalty notice but said I would challenge the road violation in court. On the journey home, I stopped off at my local police station and submitted my personal details whilst explaining the predicament to my brother, who knows a bit about procedure and law. I then awaited a summons from the court.

Eventually a court summons arrived for a hearing on 4th May 2011 together with the police statement. Unbelievably, the PC's statement said I was the only person in the car and that I was 5 metres distance away from his car when I had paced 18 metres. QED, thought I.

Ryanair kindly sent a copy of the air fare details that had been retained on their

*Thinking of challenging the word of the police in court?*

## A WARNING FROM STEPHEN BERNDES...



records and the journey from Lithuania showing the time of arrival, whilst I had a **Barclaycard** statement showing the purchase of the ticket. I also revisited the scene to take photo evidence of distances between cars.

At the start of the court hearing, I told the Magistrate of the irrefutable evidence; the prosecutor was flummoxed by the disclosure, the clerk busied herself trying to convince the PC to drop the case – particularly when I said my Lithuanian mother-in-law could be flown in but would need a translator. The cost to the public purse or me was becoming exorbitant. To my dismay and the Clerks, the PC refused to capitulate and his Worship arranged another hearing, allowing time to fly over my mother-in-law. Crucially, the Magistrate allowed my evidence to be presented at the next hearing without being submitted for consideration.

I received notice of a new hearing date together with a letter from the CPS stating that the PC's colleague would not give a statement because she saw nothing and could not remember anything.

Again I picked up my mother-in-law at an undodly time and headed straight to the Magistrates court feeling quite confident.

The hearing began with the PC giving evidence. Eyebrows were raised when his colleague said she had a blank memory and in my cross examination of the PC, I drew to his attention of two people being in the car, which he denied. When it was time to produce the telling evidence, the prosecutor quickly stepped in, leading his Worship by claiming the evidence was inadmissible because it hadn't gone through the correct procedure, being unaware of the agreement I had with the Magistrate at the first hearing or cunningly outmanoeuvring the Magistrate. My mother-in-law took the stand, but I now sensed my situation was deteriorating.

When his Worship summed up the case, no mention was made of anybody else being in the car. He backed up the PC's words as though he was his repatriated lost brother!

I was fined £835, which together with air fare came to £1032. My brother was surprised and told me to appeal. My Brother is a Magistrate. Rotter...!

**Stephen Berndes (R14)**



## Tax Refunds for All???

### It's a phishing scam!

If you have an email address, then the chances are that you would have received something informing you that you have a taxi refund waiting. Headed *Tax Refund Notification*, the email usually says:

**A tax refund of 472.49 GBP is still pending. Due to invalid account records we were unable to credit your account. Please submit a verified tax refund form. A refund can be delayed for a variety reasons. For example submitting invalid records or applying after the deadline. To access your tax refund, please follow these steps: Download the Tax Refund Form attached to this email - open it in a browser (recommended mozilla firefox) and follow the instructions on your screen**

**Call Sign** asked HMRC about the spate of emails informing readers they have a tax rebate due and the answer was that they were fraudulent. The scam is known as *phishing* and around 22,000 different ones were reported to have been sent out last year by fraudsters in places such as Austria, Mexico, South Korea, USA, Thailand, eastern Europe, Japan, Africa and of course, the UK. Together with other agencies, HMRC managed to shut down more than 147 scam websites. However, at the same time other similar sites were created by scammers.

Phishing emails often promise money back and if the email recipient clicks on the link, they go to a fake replica of the HMRC website and are then asked to provide credit or debit card details or other sensitive information such as passwords. The fraudsters then try to take money from the account. Money may then be stolen from victims' bank accounts or their personal details could be sold to criminal gangs, even leading to possible identity theft.

**Nick Lodge**, Director General of Benefits and Credits at HMRC told us:

"HMRC will never ask you to disclose personal or payment information by email. We are committed to your online security, but the methods fraudsters use to obtain information are constantly changing, so you need to be alert.

**"Before deleting this type of email, send it to [phishing@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:phishing@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk)."**

HMRC also suggest checking for security advice at: [www.hmrc.gov.uk/security/contacts.htm](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/security/contacts.htm) but reiterate that you should avoid clicking on websites or links in suspicious emails or opening attachments.

If you believe you have been the victim of an email scam, you should report the matter to your bank or credit card issuer immediately.

Anyone in doubt should check with HMRC at [www.hmrc.gov.uk/security/fraud-attempts.htm](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/security/fraud-attempts.htm). In any case, never open an email that only has a link and no text.

### TAXI AIR CONDITIONING

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the Home Counties*





Over the past few months, *Call Sign* has heard from several Dial-a-Cab drivers who found themselves with a Notice of Intended Prosecution from the Metropolitan Police.

The NIP usually says that in accordance with Section 1 of the *Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988*, proceedings are contemplated against a driver who is alleged to have exceeded the speed limit on a particular stretch of road. You are asked to fill in the form that comes with the NIP.

In the February 2010 issue of *Call Sign*, there was an article about a stretch of the A13 between Canning Town flyover and the Goresbrook Interchange that was about to begin working on motorists average speed between the two points, rather than those as they pass any of the cameras en route. Thirty seven different locations, using eighty four cameras along the 7.5 miles stretch would work out motorist's average speed and if caught breaking the limit, a minimum £60 and three points on the licence would be imposed. The scheme was apparently set to go live in the summer of 2010. We heard nothing else afterwards to suggest that it would not go live...

Ray, Alan and Brian all contacted this magazine recently and gave us very similar stories about how they were caught after apparently being naughty boys – all of them in their taxis allegedly speeding on the A13 earlier in 2013 while coming into town on their way to work. For obvious reasons, they didn't want their names published. Ray called first and we have used his view of events...

"I have driven into London along the A13 the same way for the past seven years since moving to Rainham. I drive along there five days a week and knew all the speed limits and where all the average speed cameras were. I remember several years ago when the cam-

To save getting points on their licence, some naughty DaC drivers go on the...

## SPEED AWARENESS COURSE

eras were written about in *Call Sign* and the assumption was that they were to soon be switched on. But for whatever reason, they weren't. Most drivers going along the A13 must have assumed they were on and drove accordingly. I assumed they were working and as I drove pretty much the same way each day and as I hadn't received a NIP, that my average speed was ok. But it appears that the police didn't actually switch them on until February this year and they must have caught thousands of motorists in one fell swoop. Most of them, like me, had assumed that their average speed must have been ok.

I was upset at the likelihood of getting three points on my licence as I had not received any for over 20 years and felt that I had been lured into a false sense of belief that my average speeds had been ok. Then I received a letter from the Met Police that gave me the choice of accepting a penalty fine and three points or to attend a speed awareness course organised via Transport for London by AA DriveTech. The decision is a no-brainer! A four hour course by the AA with no police participation or three points – even though the £95 cost of attending the course actually costs more than the £60 speeding fine! But the big plus is that there are no points on your licence. Obviously I said yes!

There was a choice of venues and I chose Edward House in Wakley Street at The Angel, working out that I could then go to work. The actual name of it was the National Speed Awareness Scheme Course and it was run by the AA. To be honest, parts of it were quite dull but it also had interesting parts that either I didn't know or had long ago forgotten. You can't pass or fail and there is virtually no writing – although there is some "audience participation" when you are asked to press numbers 1, 2, 3 or 4 buttons on a mobile phone-like contraption in answer to some questions. The answers appear as per-

centages on a large screen and show how many of the 25 people there are right – or wrong! As an example, two people present (you don't know who they are) thought that the speed limit on a motorway was 80mph. When asked the speed limits on urban, rural single carriageway or dual carriageway roads, not one of the three questions had 100 percent of correct answers – and no, I'm not going to tell you the answers in case you have to go to one.

The person taking the course was – as you'd expect – very knowledgeable and encouraged questions. He also made it clear that everything said in the room stayed in the room. We had to turn our phones off, not because of the possibility of calls, but because there were often celebrities on the courses and they didn't want their photos put onto Facebook as having been naughty! I didn't recognise anyone but I'd have to look twice to recognise The Queen!

Towards the end of the four hours – there is a break for lunch and you can exit at any time for the loo or surprisingly perhaps, a quick puff outside – my view of it had changed from something to use as an escape from getting three points to something quite useful. So I asked if the course was open to those who hadn't broken the law? The surprising answer was no. It was only available to naughty people that had been caught speeding. If that isn't plain daft, then I don't know what is!

But, if anyone on DaC is given the option of the Speed Awareness course rather than three points, not only is that a bargain exchange, but you may even find it interesting and useful. To be honest, I thought I'd know all the answers and I'm almost ashamed to say that I didn't. I bet you don't either..."

Dennis Latchett  
Call Sign Online

**Just like buses, you wait ages for one - then half a dozen come along together!**

## ANOTHER NEW TAXI?

For many years, London taxi drivers looking to buy a new taxi were faced with a choice of two vehicles – the latest LTI TX or the **Metrocab**. But however popular the latter of the two cabs was with those owners who loved it, its ongoing financial problems made a Metrocab purchase a dubious investment and helped LTI to go forward almost unopposed.

But round the country, the Peugeot-based E7 taxi was making inroads and claiming to be ready for London, the Vito was beginning to increase sales in the capital, VW began promoting their new – if somewhat small – electric Taxi, Nissan's NV200 is now being used in New York with a promised release in London soon and Intelligent Energy are working on a TX4 hybrid.

And if that wasn't enough for a trade whose drivers were always told that it was too small to make competition viable, yet another new taxi has come out of the shadows claiming to be a possible new London taxi. This is **Karsan's Concept V1**.

The vehicle was on show recently at Canary Wharf and claims that it specialises in passengers with disabilities or carrying heavy bags and prams etc. It boasts an automatic wheelchair ramp on both sides together with doors that open to 90 degrees to make access easier. Wheelchair access inside the vehicle is made easier with the Concept V1 low floor and like the NV200, it has a see-through roof allowing passengers a peep at London's ever-higher skyline, as well as letting in even more light.

Possibly its biggest plus (and possibly minus) is its state of the art electric power pack that can use a simple AC power supply. The downside is that the current maximum distance before a recharge is needed is just 80 miles, although countering that, Karsan say the Concept V1 can be recharged in just 30 minutes.

The vehicle provides a surprisingly large and comfortable interior with ample legroom for five passengers and somewhat similarly to the Metrocab, it comes with pre-painted plastic body panels which would save substantial costs in the case of an accident.

The Karsan Concept V1 was entered into New York's *Taxi of Tomorrow* competition and ended up in third place behind the **Ford Transit Connect** and eventual winner, the **Nissan NV200**. However, it also has to be said that while New York care only about the colour, London is more choosy and the Concept V1 doesn't look like a London taxi. Vito drivers will attest to the fact that some passengers still ignore it when a TX taxi is behind.

It will be interesting to see which taxis – if any – eventually join the TX4 and the Vito...



The Concept V1 came third in New York behind the NV200 but will it do better in London?

Ron Yarborough Call Sign Online



***This is your invitation to attend a unique event at St Paul's Cathedral. Ranks of Angels: A service of thanksgiving for the London Taxidriver's Fund for Underprivileged Children.***

**\*\*\*Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2013, doors open at 6pm\*\*\***

**\*\*\*Music and songs 6.15pm, followed by a special service at 7pm\*\*\***

*Dear ladies and gentleman,*  
Although it is still a little way off, I thought it important to let you know about a forthcoming exceptional event for which all drivers and their families - and indeed members of Dial-a-Cab staff - are invited to.

You may not be aware that this year, the London Taxidriver's Fund for Underprivileged Children are celebrating 85 years of assisting special needs children. Apart from the regular activities enjoyed by many hundreds of disadvantaged children from Greater London, the Fund will also be celebrating during this special year.

**The doors will open at 6pm, when guests will be able to listen to some beautiful music and song, followed by a service at 7pm hosted by St Paul's Cathedral and The**

## *On behalf of the LTFUC...* **Mike Son's invite to DaC drivers**



**London Taxidriver's Fund for Underprivileged Children.**

I am also delighted to be able to tell you that the London Charity Orchestra with Conductor William Carslake and the New London Children's Choir, under Conductor and founder Ronald Corp will both be at the service playing and singing some beautiful music and songs. Those attending are sure to be enchanted.

The guest list will include many children with their parents / carers together with representatives of those who have given the charity both physical and financial support, and of course the taxi drivers on whom the Fund relies when taking children on outings.

Invitations will also be sent to representatives of the many City Livery Companies; City, Essex and Metropolitan Police Services; the Royal Automobile Club; St John's Ambulance and the Red Cross, all of whom have support-

ed the outings and continue to so do. I will also be inviting Mayors from boroughs where the Fund has assisted in the special needs of so many children over so many years.

As well as celebrating the work that past and present LTFUC committees have undertaken over the years, the day will also be a celebration for children whatever their faith, background, culture or disability. With this in mind, invitations will also be sent to various faith leaders.

Complementing the event and with kind permission given by both the Clergy of St Paul's and the Corporation of the City of London, use has been granted for the whole day of Paternoster Square, where the Fund will have the opportunity of self-promotion and a little fund-raising. On display will be taxis decorated as if on an outing, including vintage taxis and many other interesting features for visitors to enjoy.

On behalf of Hon President Bill Tyzack BEM, Hon Chair Susan Angel, the Fund committee and the children, I would be delighted if you, together with your guest, would consider an invitation to attend this special event.

*If you are able to attend, please let me know as soon as possible and I will reserve your seats for which a formal invitation will be sent.*

**You can contact me on 07710 388588 or [m.son@btconnect.com](mailto:m.son@btconnect.com).**

My fellow trustees and I are extremely excited to have been given the opportunity to host this event in London's most prestigious and historic setting.

**Michael Son**  
**Special Projects**

## **CALL SIGN'S DANNY RUNS FOR CHAI...**

***In memory of his mum Carole and Ed's son Reed***

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 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**





# EAMMON – DAC'S RAINBOW MAN!



Rainbow man Eammon wonders about the professionalism of new drivers

## But it isn't always sunny...

"I have chosen *Nightfire Red* for my new TX4 taxi this time for a change," Eammon Barrett (K58) told *Call Sign* recently – with *change* being the operative word.

Eammon has been driving a taxi since 1997, joined *Dial-a-Cab* four years later and has owned five cabs in that time starting with the regular, bog standard *Black*. Then when it came to updating his cab, he decided to go for the *Oxford Blue* version.

"I kept that taxi for a while, but when it came to getting a new TX4, I had become a bored with that colour and fancied *Charcoal* for the body colour - which met with my wife, Zena's, approval."

Soon Eammon decided to go back to the traditional *Black* again. Unfortunately that one turned out to be a bit of a troublesome and unreliable cab.

"I live a fair distance from London and have to use the M1 to commute to and from work, so I need to be able to trust that the cab will perform reliably - and that one was a bit of a rogue. So we decided to change the cab and the colour - so here it is, *Nightfire Red*!"

"Residing a considerable distance from town, I have also taken out the extended warranty so together with the existing core warranty provided by the **London Taxi Company**, I have peace of mind with regard to the cabs' dependability. And after two days it's so far so good...!"

Eammon, who says he is an avid *Call Sign* reader, asked if he could also raise another point – one that has irritated him involving the lack of apparent professional etiquette of other taxi drivers – possibly drivers who have only recently 'passed out' and who seem to show little regard for other fellow taxi drivers on the road.

"I recently slowed down to let another cab out of a side road and not only did the young driver not acknowledge my gesture, but he promptly took the job standing on the kerbside ahead which was really *my* fare!" Eammon's sigh expressed his feelings..

"I always assumed that Knowledge schools gave new drivers some sort of guidance on these matters," he mused, "but I guess that's how life is nowadays."

"Being a philosophically minded person, I take the view that it all balances out at the end of the day, but it does make you wonder what sort of image of professionalism the next generation of cab drivers are promoting to the general public."

With that, Eammon drove off but not before admiring the *mauve* cab that was speeding along the road. Would that be the next part of Eammon's rainbow...!

Alan Green  
Call Sign Online

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

## Kupkake's Korner



### Embankment encounter

I saw him from a distance  
standing all alone,  
holding up a lamppost  
talking on his phone...

His overcoat undone  
shirt hanging over his belt,  
a wet patch down his left leg  
his flies open to the world...

I struggled with the traffic  
checked my doors were locked,  
he was getting slowly nearer  
approaching Puddle Dock...

He spotted me and stumbled  
heading for my door,  
dropped his phone and it tumbled  
crashing to the floor!

It bounced beneath my rear wheels  
as the traffic moved ahead,  
I heard the sound of crunching...  
his iPhone now quite dead...!

I watched him in my mirror  
cross-legged on the kerb,  
like a drunken broken Buddha  
just looking so absurd...

Was I sorry for his situation?  
No, not one little bit,  
I see his kind each Friday night  
in Soho and Shoreditch...

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

# The Brethren of the Whip



It's a mixed up, muddled up, shook up world...

In 1878 a policeman stops a hansom cab that is being driven furiously down Grays Inn Road. On the box of the cab sits Mrs Caroline Sooley and a man, William

Messenger, but it is Mrs Sooley who has the reins in her hand. Within days, newspapers up and down the country are talking about the female cab driver of London!

Mrs Sooley, of Wakefield Mews, Regent's Square, was the wife of a cab driver and according to police was drunk at the time she was pulled over. She was subsequently charged with being drunk, furiously driving a horse and cab and unlawfully acting as a cab driver. Either of these last two offences could see her sent straight to prison without the option of a fine as had happened to several people previously. She admitted the charge of driving the horse and cab, but denied being drunk. Very noticeable was that no reports described her as a *respectable married woman* - very few wives of cabmen were ever described as such. Either way, she got off fairly lightly with a ten shilling (50p) fine or seven days hard labour. She chose the fine.

The man on the box, 20-year old William Messenger - considerably younger than his image as portrayed by the artist of the *Illustrated Police News* - was dealt with more severely. He was charged with being drunk during his employment as a cab driver, again an



## A 19th century woman cab driver is stopped by a policeman

offence for which he could have gone straight to prison, but the magistrate inflicted a fine of £2 on him or hard labour for one month should he fail to pay. Again the fine was paid.

Despite the notoriety of that case, five months later a policeman stopped another cab driven by a woman who was wearing the badge and the hat of a cabman. She was undoubtedly drunk, so was the man alongside her on the box, Alfred Sinfield, who was wearing her bonnet on his head! They were taking it in turns to drive the cab and they too were accused of driving furiously. The woman, Isabella Graham, was fined £1 whilst Sinfield, who had been previously warned about being drunk, was fined £2 and had his cab licence revoked.

Perhaps even more startling was the case of Billy Seymour. He had driven a cab in London for three years before moving to Liverpool in 1869. There he plied his craft for a further six years before being found guilty of stealing 30lbs of meat from a shop. He was sentenced to two months imprisonment. It was only as he was being processed at Walton Gaol that it emerged

that Billy Seymour was actually a woman named Mary Hannington!

She had grown up with horses and a speech defect was said to have masqueraded her sexuality when conversing with other drivers. On the day of her release from prison, the Liverpool cabbies formed a guard of honour, proclaiming her a heroine. However, she had slipped out of a side exit in the morning and remained anonymous for the rest of her life. That was just as well because by the end of the day, the waiting drivers were soaked through and grumbling at how they had been treated!

And finally there was the case of the transvestite cabman called Shirley. In September 1860, James Shirley - badge number 14343, which he had only held for two months - had been engaged by Emily Franklin, aged 24, to drive up and down Swallow Street (a much longer street then before the construction of Regent Street). Once there, they stopped at various pubs where she, dressed as a man "for a bit of fun" went in and had a drink. She caused quite a stir and a policeman "knowing her not to be a man" (probably a budding detective), arrested both her and Shirley. They were incarcerated at Vine Street police station over the weekend and Emily Franklin, still dressed as a man, was fined 10 shillings, as was James Shirley just for driving her.

A large crowd had gathered outside Marlborough Street Court and Emily Franklin was feted as a hero, but poor James Thomas Shirley slunk off into anonymity, no doubt wondering how commonplace such jobs were...

Sean Farrell  
Call Sign Online

## LOOKING AT (TAXI) LIFE

### Just keep giving!

Many years ago, it was quite usual that a community would have a special fundraising evening for a family falling on hard times or suffering an unfortunate bereavement. Nowadays it seems to be the accepted norm.

**If my wife and I have a night out, generally speaking it will involve going to a fundraiser. Even if it's not, the evening usually has a raffle or some other competition to raise money.**

In pubs and bars, where once you only ever saw the Salvation Army collecting or there was the pyramid-like pile of old pennies stacked high, which would usually be pushed over by a celebrity living in the neighbourhood, with the money being given to the local children's home. Now on every bar or corner there will be a donation box with a flower or sticker for you to prove you are generous. You walk along every High Street and you are guaranteed to be accosted by chuggers, collecting for animals, water or some far off land that they claim is in need.

Every week in every supermarket, someone will rattle a box or bucket for some cause. Even when I go to my gym to relax and rewind whilst trying to stay healthy, as soon as I stop and chat over a cup of coffee the conversation soon turns to one of their group who will be riding a bike,

### With Tom Quigley (Y33)



climbing a mountain or swimming a lake - sometimes all three! The crunch is that they can only enter if they raise a certain target, which inevitably means that coffee has cost me a tenner. Still they will look nice and slim in the free T-shirt I paid for and of course they will get all the praise and the enjoyment. Then they will be ready to bore me with all the details of the event!

Sit and watch the telly; every channel's adverts will sooner or later ask you to give just £2 a month to save someone or perhaps sponsor a gorilla - who perhaps will then refer to you as daddy!

I can no longer throw old clothes away, I have been brainwashed into believing that by not recycling then I am damaging the Earth, so another charity will have to be set up to save it. So I bag them up and give them to a charity shop, at least in the old days they went to a jumble sale and helped the local youth club, churches etc.

Now whilst these causes and charities all seem to be worthy, I cannot help but think and wonder that if we all stopped giving, what would really happen? Would Governments be forced to solve these problems or would it be left to my newly sponsored gorilla???

Tom Quigley  
Call Sign Online





Smiling again even though he is already £2700 down

Yes, ok, we offer our sincere apologies to anyone who is offended by our somewhat uncouth heading taken mainly from *Isaiah 6:5*, but possibly better remembered as being uttered thrice by **Frankie Howard** during his time as a slave in *Up Pompeii*. But hey, we've just suffered *Call Sign's* annual month off and need to let off some steam and possibly get some new complaints in!

Be that as it may, our story involves Dial-a-Cab driver **Brian McKenzie (A63)** and an accident between his Vito and a TX4 at a popular cab eatery. Little did Brian think that his coffee and sandwich would end up costing him £2,700!

Oh woe is me...

## My Vito (door) is undone!

"No," Brian told this magazine with his rediscovered smile, "I didn't order a bottle of *Dom Perignon 1966* to wash down my snack, but when I got back to my cab after lunch I found a TX4 stuck sideways into the off-side rear of my cab. As you can imagine, the other cab caused substantial damage to the bodywork and bent the wheel itself. The TX4 was stuck at an angle of about 45 degrees and looked to be wedged against my Vito. Not much of an ad for professional driving!"

"I eventually managed to get the TX4 driver to admit it was his TX4 that had caused the damage and admit liability, but only with the aid of a witness in my favour who had seen what happened."

But that wasn't Brian's biggest problem. That happened when the DaC driver took his cab to a **Mercedes Benz** dealership to get the bodywork sorted and assess any possible damage to the rear wheel. He was told that the wheel and rear steering parts were ok, but Brian remembers not feeling very happy with their diagnosis.

"When the cab went in for the repairs to be carried out, I mentioned the rear wheel again but the insurance examiner would not accept that the misalignment of the wheel was part of the insurance claim and said that the bent actu-

ator arm of the rear wheel steering was down to wear and tear. He was adamant and would not budge, despite the obvious co-incidence between the impact to the off-side rear of my taxi and the bent actuator arm right underneath!"

Brian's smile now returned to a look of exasperation as the memory returned and he told *Call Sign* that he had been left with no alternative but to fund the repairs himself.

"I also had some further body damage from a previous 'hit and run', which I had intended to have repaired at the same time at my own cost, so I arranged for a rental cab while mine was being fixed and that's how it all mounted up to £2,700 when you factor in the VAT."

Then Brian took us to look at the "repaired" bodywork. The nearside door still did not fit flush to the body and was now booked in to go back to the garage to be sorted out. But as all taxi drivers know, that will mean more time off the road and explains why he is less than happy and felt like quoting a version of Frankie Howard's biblical phrase: Oh woe is me, my Vito door is undone...!

**Ron Yarborough**  
Call Sign Online

## James Bond and me!

As the passenger was about to enter his taxi, **Dial-a-Cab driver Melvyn Pruden (R56)** carefully – while attempting to look fairly nondescript – gazed around for anyone who looked as though they could have ties to *SMERSH*. And as Melvyn told *Call Sign*, it turned out to be a close shave....

"Well yes," said Melvyn, "it really was a close shave - because I nearly didn't get paid!" With that, Melvyn told *Call Sign* about his brief encounter with agent **007** aka **James Bond**.

"I stopped in Harley Street for **Pierce Brosnan** and took him to Sloane Square. When we arrived at the Peter Jones store, he put his hand inside his jacket. I took a deep breath and hoped it was to get out his wallet rather than his *Walther PPK* handgun!"

Then I spied the Bond frown when his hand slowly came out of the jacket as empty as when it went in. Was this some sort of *SPECTRE* or *Quantum* plot perhaps? If it was the wallet he was searching for, did he give it to *M* before she snuffed it and perhaps forgot to get it back? Then Bond spoke...

"Oh dear," said 007 quietly yet with purpose, "no money!" An unusually worried look spread across his face.

"I may have lost my wallet," he muttered to Melvyn while possibly fearing a possible future embarrassment involving the new enemy... *Facebook*!

"Pierce then suggested we shoot around the corner to his hotel to see if he had left it there," Melvyn said, perhaps returning to some sort of reality before within seconds returning to his secret agent identity of **DaC 56.5**.

"Sure enough, around five minutes later he came rushing out of the hotel doorway waving his wallet towards me calling out: 'I found it!, I found it! He had a very relieved look on his face," Melvyn recalled, "perhaps a glass of 007's favourite *Bollinger* champers helped to calm what I'd previously assumed to be non-existent nerves!"

As Mr Brosnan finally paid the fare, Melvyn asked him for an autograph for his wife and he politely proffered his credit account book to write on together with his DaC 56.5 free Barclays pen!

Forever the gentleman, Bond wrote using an obvious pseudonym: *To Tina, have a cocktail on me, love, Pierce Brosnan*. He added a heart-shaped icon at the bottom!

As for Melvyn, he carefully looked around to make sure they hadn't been followed before taking a roundabout route and finally squeezing onto the back of the Harrods rank!



DaC 56.5 and (inset) 007

**Alan Green**  
Call Sign Online

While we may not have to worry about the world's finances, there is undoubtedly a lot of stress involved in driving a London taxi. It may come from a harassed passenger who hasn't allowed enough time to get to his destination or it may just be that nothing has gone right on a day when you have some big bills to pay.

People recognise London taxi drivers as the world's best, but that in itself brings its own stress when passengers expect you to know everything. But one of the effects of stress is that familiar tightness in the neck and shoulders, often with an irritating backache. If the pain becomes unbearable, then medical assistance should be sought, but very often the best remedy can be an expertly applied **back, neck and shoulder massage**. The problem very often is where to go because the word 'massage' in a window has all sorts of different connotations!

So when the **Barking Bathhouse** approached us with a special offer following a review in the last *Call Sign* when DaC driver **Alex Constantinou (N05)** praised the **deep tissue massage** treatment he had there, we thought there must be many drivers who live east that would be delighted to try out a special offer that the **Barking Bathhouse** have given us.

## BARKING BATHHOUSE

Special massage offer for Dial-a-Cab drivers



The usual price for a thirty minute therapeutic back, neck and shoulder massage is usually £25, but if you quote *Call Sign Magazine*, then you will only be charged £19. It could be the best £19 you spend this month - assuming you have no current plans to retire and get rid of your stress in one fell swoop!

Holistic therapy treats the body as a whole', which means that not only will a massage treatment pamper your physical body but it will also establish internal and external problems and provide an effective method of rebalancing.

Holistic massage is a therapeutic application of touch that is also a supportive, relaxing treatment that encourages the mind to slow down whilst energy is increased. This treatment also lifts the spirit on an emotional level.

Besides the £19 special offer for DaC drivers, prices for their body treatment range are from £25 for 30 minutes to £35 for an hour. There is also Neal's Yard facials and waxing on request. Some of the other treatments on offer include Deep Tissue massage, Indian Head massage and Reflexology. There is also Thai massage in addition to a nail lounge.

The spa is closed on Mondays and open Tuesday to Friday from 10am to 7pm, Saturday from 10am to 5pm, with Sunday bookings available by appointment.

The **Barking Bathhouse** is at the **Barking Learning Centre, which is at Town Square, Barking IG11 7NB. For bookings, call 0208 227 2991 / 07889 008 828 or visit [www.barkingbathhouse.com](http://www.barkingbathhouse.com).**

## Lee back in training!

No sooner has the football season ended, than the football season is... well starting! At least it is in the lower leagues with teams such as **Evo Stik** league **North Greenford United**, who have **Dial-a-Cab** driver **Lee Pearce (J71)** as their first choice goalkeeper.

Last season was pretty much of a disaster for the Middlesex team, when they avoided relegation thanks only to a late run of form and the fact that the appalling **Woodford United** with their played 42... lost 42, goals for 21... goals against 185... points gained zero took the pressure off!

But according to Lee, that late run when they lost just once in their last 11 games will be the springboard the team hope to be bouncing off this season.

Lee told *Call Sign*: "North Greenford is a lovely club with a great set of players and a manager who is going places in former **Chelsea** and **Southampton** star **Neil Shipperley**. Most of the players that ended the season so well are staying and I really think that this could be a very successful campaign. Certainly *Shipps* is confident that we have the talent to really challenge the top teams."

The only departure of any significance was Neil Shipperley's number two, **Mark Nicholls**. Although he will be missed, his famed red card temper – mainly aimed at referees – might not be! One downer for Lee is that he was sent off towards the end of last season in a match against **Slough** and will miss the first match of the new season.

"I'm gutted about that," says Lee, "but I'm injury free and ready to come in from that second game. I really believe that this could be our best season for years."

Another bright spot is that the team now have an under 18 team in which young players can be developed and also the sponsorship of an all-weather training pitch for at least one day a week.

"That can be really important," Lee continued to *Call Sign*, "we undoubtedly lost some games that we should have won or at least drawn because of our fitness levels dropping over the last 15 minutes of matches. Hopefully this welcome sponsorship will help us in that respect and with that little rub of the green that all successful teams seem to get, we could be onto a really exciting season."

It's often said that supporting a football team can be horrendously expensive, but if you live in west London why not try supporting **North Greenford United**. They play at **Berkeley Fields**, which is in **Berkeley Avenue, Greenford UB6 0NX** and it will cost you just £8 for adults and half for concessions. For reserve and under 18 matches, admission is just £4 and £2 for concessions. You may well be surprised at the standard and if the team are doing really well, perhaps the goalkeeper will have time to tell you about who he picked up last week!



Lee believes this will be a good season for the team

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*Every issue of Call Sign takes a look back at ODRTS history through the pages of the magazines of the time with a flashback*

# DIAL-A-CAB FLASHBACK

*This issue barks back to a 1956 issue of the ODRTS Newssheet and an update from the Society's former secretary, Doug Naismith...*

From ODRTS Newssheet, October/November/December 1956

## SECRETARY'S NEWS UPDATE

*Good afternoon gentlemen,*

In this issue of the Newssheet, I would like to update you on some ODRTS news and dispel some malicious gossip. In addition, this will be my last report as I have now stood down as Secretary and indeed left the Committee of Management, although I am still on ODRTS as a driver.

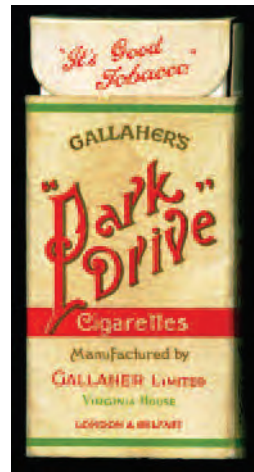
Firstly, yes we are still proud members of the *British Travel and Holiday Association* and the *Mobile Radio Users Association* – both groups having brought us some welcome jobs. Of course we have to be registered under the *Industrial & Provident Societies Acts 1893 (1952)* and while this does cost us money, it isn't a matter in which we have any choice.

There have been rumours concerning myself for some time regarding a job to **Ramsgate** in Kent. The Committee have graciously accepted my explanation, but I feel that in any case as a founder-committee member, I have done my bit and someone else can now help to take us forward. The Committee have asked me to write this update so that you may all know what is going on here at **172 Pentonville Road**.

Firstly, it is untrue that we are thinking of merging with **Radio Taxis (Southern)**. Whilst it is fact that their Chairman, **Joe Stern**, has been to our premises it was purely as a return courtesy after **Bonnie Martyn** was invited to their Highgate office. **Mr Roth (D18)** has told us that Radio Taxis told him there was a possibility of a merger. However, as no one has told ODRTS, it remains no more than a rumour.

I have received a letter from **Sailor Papier**, who many of you will know. He left ODRTS last year following sickness in the family. He would like me to pass on his thanks to all those drivers who have kept in touch with him. He appreciated your support at a terrible time.

Thank you also to all those who have supported **Joe Assenheim (A25)** in his desire for us to be referred to as **The Gentleman's Circuit**. Whilst a noble desire, it tells nothing about us should we ever decide to advertise in a bigger way. However, the sentiment is certainly appreciated.



**Sponsored by Park Drive cigarettes: 10 for 4d and 5 for 2d**

If you know of someone who would like to join our circuit, please let

**Frank Duncan** or **Henry Defries (D03)**

know and they will arrange for them to be fitted at the first opportunity.

Well done to **Mr Jefferson (B30)**, who on an emergency taxi journey to Birmingham from Euston, possibly saved his passenger's life after he suffered a heart attack. He found a phone box in minutes and then helped the passenger's wife to give him the assistance he required. The passenger gave him an extra £5 to push the fare up to £20. Not just a nice day's work, but also a very worthwhile one!

Lastly and on a more personal note, I recently saw film of a singer – and I use the word loosely – on **Bonnie Martyn's** new television set who I believe could do terrible damage to the morality of our children. His name is **Elvis Presley** and he is from America. I could not understand one single word that he sung, but it isn't his voice I worry about, it is his hip movements in a way that one would not want to describe whilst singing, that concerns me.

He says that he has nothing in common with **Johnnie Ray** other than they both sing. Well Mr Presley, Johnnie Ray can certainly sing, sadly I don't think you can. Those who offer church services to help you get some sort of salvation are right to do so. I too would complain except that I doubt you will still be around by the time I even finish writing this. And when you go back to driving your truck, **Edmund Hockridge** and **Dickie Valentine** will still be here to entertain us because the **Light** programme will never play the noise you emit.

*Our thanks to Park Drive cigarettes who helped us put out this newssheet by their welcome sponsorship...*

**Mr D. Naismith, On behalf of the ODRTS Committee**

**Flashback 1956**

## First exhibition for new London Taxi Company

A team of delegates from across the UK represented **The London Taxi Company** at last month's *Private Hire & Taxi Exhibition* at Manchester's Event City.

The LTC team consisted of London-based UK Retail General Manager James Dennison, Government Affairs Manager Julian Francis and Customer Relationship Executive Dennis Hough. Also there were Coventry-based Sales Director Rob Laidler, Regional Affairs Manager Paul Kelsey, UK Marketing Database Analyst Nicola Donovan and Marketing Manager Nyasha Pitt.

The annual event is the only one of its kind in the UK and provided a great opportunity to ensure that news of the company re-launch, its new owners and focus was kept at the forefront of customers' minds. It also gave drivers the chance to meet the LTC team and talk about everything from the Product Enhancement programme for TX4 to suggestions for the development of future vehicles.

The team also showcased the limited edition **Union Flag** paintwork available on 100 new TX4s, which the company recently launched from its **Brewery Road** dealership.

The stand attracted a steady flow of visitors over the two days, from owners to licensing officers, as well as *Coronation Street* and *Red Dwarf* actor **Craig Charles**!



**Corrie's Craig Charles visits the LTC stand**

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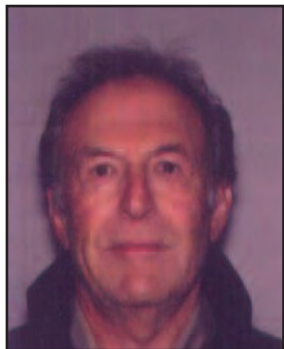
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A terrifying thought struck me the other day and I'm still feeling a little queasy. I suddenly realised I might have been an Arsenal supporter!

It was like this. My baker grandfather, Simon, came from Russia in 1902 and settled in Lily House, **Brick Lane**, which apparently was on the corner of Gosset Street. His five sons were born there - my father was number three with the fifth son being **Uncle Solly**, aka Sidney.

Sometime in the twenties, Simon moved the family to the corner of **Great Titchfield** and **Clipstone Streets** and set up a bakery in the basement. It was only a few years ago that I found out exactly where the shop was. I was chatting to an old lady in the area who remembered sitting on the steps and feeling the heat coming up from the bakehouse. Fascinating memories!

But Simon thought he could do better elsewhere and this is where the scary 'gooner' thing might have happened, because he moved to **Newington Green Road**. Thankfully he soon changed his mind and

## Another true story from Geoff Levene **A LIFE GETTING CABS... BUT ARSENAL???**

went back to the West End and Solly, the only football fan in the family, found *the way, the truth and the light* down the **Fulham Road!**

After the War Solly found work in the menswear trade in **Burlington Arcade** and remained there for the rest of his working life. And throughout that time he was always a cab user. But it was never a happy relationship.

"Cabdrivers," he once asked me, "anyone ever seen one smile?"

I think the problem was that wherever he lived, it didn't suit the cab trade! In the fifties and early sixties, it was **Anson Road**, Cricklewood, while working and playing in the West End. Getting a cab home at night that went through **Kilburn** could be a struggle. When he married, he moved to **Streatham**... well 'nuff said!

But in the seventies he acquired three shops in the arcade and moved to **Dorset Street**. All sorted cabwise? Not really, because now the journeys were too short as exemplified by a driver who snarled:

"Do you know what time I started this

morning, guv," after learning the destination. Charming!

Finally he bought a house in a Mews off **Wilton Place**. Now the problem was Solly's. He told me:

"You see if I stop a cab and the driver looks my age and background and I ask to go to **Belgrave Mews North** in an accent that proves I didn't go to **Eton**, he probably thinks this bloke's getting above himself. It makes me feel uncomfortable."

I suggested that if the driver thought anything at all, it was probably that this bloke has done well. But

Solly was never convinced.

As a **Chelsea supporter**, he also didn't have much to cheer about. The old **First Division** title in 1955 and the **FA Cup** in 1970.

Solly passed away in 1996, so he didn't witness the fourteen major trophies they've won since then. Oh wait a minute, they just won the *Europa League*... make that fifteen.

**Geoff Levene (W32)**

# Shakespeare & the City

In 1613, **William Shakespeare** purchased a property in Blackfriars, a location convenient for both the **Globe** and **Blackfriars theatres**. The deed which records the sale is one of only six documents in the world which bears his signature and is cared for by the **London Metropolitan Archives**.

To celebrate the 400th anniversary of this amazing document, **LMA** are presenting an exhibition which explores the relationship between **The Bard** and the capital from his first recorded appearance in the city in 1592.

A range of documents, posters, prints and photos from the **LMA** collections dating from Shakespeare's lifetime to the present day will be displayed, illustrating how his plays and influence have lived on through London's streets, performers, theatres and even pubs.

Due to the age and significance of the 1613 deed, the original will be displayed at specified times, which will be published on the **LMA** website at [www.city-of-london.gov.uk/lma](http://www.city-of-london.gov.uk/lma).

**The London Metropolitan Archives is at 40 Northampton Road, Clerkenwell EC1. This free exhibition runs until 26 September 2013.**



This 17th century drawing shows **The Globe** (right) with **The Rose** (centre) and **Hope Theatre** (left) - Pic courtesy **LMA**

## LONDON LEGEND *Limousine Taxis*



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Call Sign's Bob Woodford asks DaC drivers...

## FANCY A WALK DOC???

Inspired by the recent TV series **Fit to Rule**, my walk is a light-hearted look at our rulers connections with Marylebone – and whether they were fit either mentally or physically to rule us.

My fellow walkers can expect more than a whiff of scandal as we take a stroll around Marylebone's 'medical sector'! Scandal is inevitable as I introduce them to some right Royal icons – together with their legendary healers.

They can hear how Royal illness would change history — the sex scandal that brought down a Monarch's government and the throng of mistresses of British Royalty - and one in particular who favoured cham-

pagne baths and even his own specially designed 'sex chair'!

Check out our new website at:  
[www.discovermedicallondon.com](http://www.discovermedicallondon.com).

Any readers wishing to take part in my 'Fit to Rule' walks on any of the forthcoming dates - 10th July, 28th August or 16th October - just turn up at 2pm. It's half price to any **Dial-a-Cab** subscribers and your £5 will be donated to the **Magical Taxi Tour Appeal**. And you get the chance to enjoy an Interior Tour of the Royal College of Physicians.

I look forward to seeing you...

**Bob Woodford**  
Call Sign Online

The opportunity came up recently to present Discover Medical London walks in conjunction with the Royal College of Physicians, which offers a new and refreshing challenge!

## Peter Johansen visits the ranks

**T**he London Taxi Company's new Executive Vice-President, Peter Johansen, has been out talking to taxi drivers in central London as part of a series of planned visits this year. Peter, who promised actions not words in his open letter to the trade in February, spoke to drivers at Great Suffolk Street, Paddington and Eurostar.

Commenting on his day out with the trade, Peter said: "It was a thoroughly enjoyable experience and an excellent opportunity for me to explain our plans for continuous improvement in terms of both customer service and product quality. I'm very thankful for the time drivers gave me. I received a lot of useful feedback and will personally ensure it is passed to my engineering and retail teams and that we address as many of these issues as possible in moving forward."

Some of the feedback gathered on the day included a re-design of the TX4 central partition coin tray, adding universal mobile phone charging points for passengers, putting in USB ports for drivers and to offer Wi-Fi as an option.

Peter added: "Visiting ranks is just one of several new ways in which we plan to interact with customers. We simply cannot continue to improve without talking to the trade about the things that matter to them."

Drivers wishing to contact Peter Johansen direct can email him at [peter@london-taxis.co.uk](mailto:peter@london-taxis.co.uk).



Peter Johansen speaks to a DaC driver at the Eurostar rank

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It was **Monday 8th March 1965** that we moved from **172 Pentonville Road** to **144 Shirland Road**. Back then phone numbers started with letters and we would soon become known as **Lords**, with our new number being **Lords 6128**.

Although the building itself was more spacious, many felt that not enough time had been given to where the control room should have been sited. It was in the basement and although there was a door leading out to a yard, it was not ideal bearing in mind that there were other parts of the building that could have been used and which many thought might have been better suited.

The new front shop was used for paying out credits and that could become quite crowded with drivers involved in queries. Our first Pentonville Road telephonist, **Florrie Culverwell** would stand there trying to sort it all out! There were times when she must have wished she was back in the Pentonville Road control room! Some thought the front shop should have been the control room. Others said the third floor Boardroom.

Moving with ODRTS to Shirland Road was our cleaner, **Mrs Gee**, who also moaned that the control room was in the wrong place and too difficult to clean. Fortunately she never stood against then-Chairman **Jack Russell**, or with the way many felt about the new facility, she might have won!

On the day of the actual move from Pentonville Road to W9 and in order to keep the work flowing from our old **Terminus 6444** number, part time dispatcher/drivers **Bernie Lyons** and **Sam Harris** were detailed to stay in the old control room and sort out the many problems that came up.

But it just served to make the point that the control room in the new building wasn't set up as well as it should have been and already needed changing after just a few days use! Within months, it was completely redesigned and the moans stopped. Even Mrs Gee got her smile back...!

*Photos: Norman Kerstein (Ex-A81)  
Info: Ivor Belkin (C97)*

1. 1965 and the dispatcher was Ivor Belkin - just as he still is in 2013!
2. Looking up is Judy
3. Howard Mateus (centre) and Georgie (rear) who was later to become the partner of founder Board member Frank Duncan

48 years ago, ODRTS moved from Pentonville Road to Shirland Road. Thanks to former driver Norman Kerstein, some new photos have come to light so Call Sign has taken a trip back to 1965...

## Moving from Pentonville Road...





# Mailshot

Continued from page 33

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

## EOBD light problem solved...!

Hi Alan,

Finally it appears to have been solved! The EOBD light showed up as **Code P0402** and has, at the time of writing, been off for five days after replacing the air inlet meter and the air inlet temperature sensor. The latter was initially only cleaned, but the **London Taxi Company** chap said it should be replaced and now the code has gone as well.

So I owe thanks to **Felix Vincent (O14)** and **Rodney Green (G49)** for their suggestions in *Call Sign*, you for the use of *Mailshot* and Ben at **Putney Bridge Taxis**, which almost became my second home for several months!

Now the question has to be whether there is any money to be made in writing a treatise on the subject!

**Alasdair Kay (C47)**

**My fingers are crossed for you Alasdair. And to think I didn't know what the EOBD light was before you first wrote! ...Ed**

## Contactless

Hi Alan

Do you know if any consideration has been given to making the new terminals being able to accept Contactless as well as chip and pin on DaC charge cards and mainstream debit and credit cards?

**Stephen Field (F68)**

**Hi Stephen, yes it is. For fares of £20 (or less), just touch the card to the PED and it becomes a Contactless payment. Just one point, Contactless is also receipt-less! If the passenger wants a receipt, that would either have to be handwritten or they can use the card in the normal way via the PED ...Ed**

## Personalised number plate for sale

I have a personalised registration number plate with its obvious connotations to the taxi trade available for sale at £200 or nearest offer. Anyone interested please contact Pete on 07970 074627. The number is T4XXJ.  
**Peter Graovac (O54)**

## Blue Peter badge!

Alan

Re the letter in the *May Call Sign* about running long distances to cover work for the prize of a **Blue Peter badge**, do you remember the **Virgin West Coast** account? I was in the South Kensington area when NN99 came out in the bid zone. I bid for it and was offered Peterborough going to Euston with a two hour run-in time. I took the job and made the pickup with a few minutes to spare as this was a Sunday morning at about 4am, so it was a lovely clear run up the A1 – although with no satnavs in those days. So it was find the local nick and ask directions or buy a local map from a garage. Those were the good old days.

I recall doing the same job some months earlier, but got it from home as I signed on in Kenton. Somehow I don't think those days will return.

**Ray Sorene (A53)**

## And another...

Hi Alan

The *May Call Sign* mentioned running long distances to cover work not covered first time round with the presentation by then-dispatcher **Warner Harris** of a non-existent Blue Peter badge to whoever did the job. It reminded me of when an account job was called from **Bournemouth** back to **London**. I thought about it for a few seconds and decided that there really was no difference in covering that to one going from London to the south coast resort. So I ran for it and with no signals past Heathrow or mobile phones back then, there was no way of DaC letting me know that the passengers had gone!

I'm not sure what happened, but I got a fair scrub, had some lovely fish and chips and then returned empty back to London. But the most disappointing part of the day was the lack of the promised Blue Peter badge!

**Jonathan Raymond (S39)**

Thanks to everyone who wrote in about their lack of a Blue Peter badge over the past few issues. I'll see what I can do – and if you believe that then you'll believe anything! ...Ed

## Change 1

Dear Alan,

In the last issue of *Call Sign*, **Brian Rice** voiced his view that allowing drivers who had been on the circuit for 10

years who then chose to rent a cab from a garage and still remain a member of Dial Cab, "...would compromise the whole fabric of Owner Drivers Radio Circuit." Yes, but we are in exceptional times with an urgent need to make some meaningful changes. We cannot just continue to look back on past success (for which Brian deserves many thanks), but some far reaching adaptation or reorganisation needs to be considered.

I would like to know if the Board have had a chance to discuss this, or has the Chairman taken it on himself to decide unilaterally?

**Laurence Kelvin (W88)**

**Brian Rice replies:** Laurence, for the past 60 years we have been Owner Drivers Radio Taxi Service (ODRTS), the name implies everything. For us to alter standards and include all garage cabs in our membership would be to go against what ODRTS was originally set up to provide, in my opinion, but that doesn't necessarily mean I am against what you suggest. Anything that can grow the fleet would be welcome.

You are correct Laurence in that the answer I gave last time was a unilateral decision, but Board members do read the magazine and no-one has mentioned your letter or my answer.

If we start fitting garage cabs, those cabs could be rented to drivers that are not registered to Dial-a-Cab, which in itself could cause problems with the public. There is also a good chance that we could lose track of equipment. Personally, I believe what you are suggesting could compromise our standards. However, in the past and before my time what you are suggesting was implemented by the then BoM, but the garage owner became a Bond Holder and not a Member. There are still some on the circuit today and there is no reason for that not to be resurrected should the scenario you describe materialise, as the precedent has been set.

## Change 2

Hi Alan

Rather belatedly, I would like to add my voice to the various letters etc in *Call Sign* which have been generated by the removal of the £1 subs for those of us with 30+ years of DaC service. Maybe I have missed something, but



# Mailshot

Continued from page 34

nowhere has anybody mentioned that we 30+ year members paid full subs for thirty years. Surely that is worth some recognition?

I must recount a conversation I had with Brian Rice some years ago outside our old premises of Brunswick house. He told me that most members of the BoM were in favour of withdrawing the concession, but that Brian would fight to keep it because in his words, one day he may be driving his cab once again!

However, as it stands when either through age, illness or even the cab being taken off the road, when one leaves DaC you get almost nothing other than the share you paid when joining all those years ago (can't remember if that is £25 or £50). This cannot be right. I also understand that in double teams one or both of the parties pay only a quarter subs. That too cannot be right. Why are those of us that do not share their cab being penalised?

Many drivers are complaining about the lack of work, which we know is mainly caused by the current economic conditions, and threaten to leave DaC, yet it seems that DaC are doing nothing to reward those of us who have given 30+ years of loyal service. Come on DaC, how are you going to reward those 100+ of us who have stuck with the circuit through thick and thin for all those years?

**Michael Harris (F79)**

Thanks for the letter Mike. Always nice to hear from you - someone I have not only known for many years as a driver and DaC marshal - but also someone who I have never seen looking anything other than ultra-smart and a credit to DaC.

Yes, your letter is rather late and the decision to replace the £1 with half subs has now been in place for two months. But there is no point me asking a Board Member for a response because Brian has on several occasions given what I believe is the view of the Board in that they are united in saying conditions demand some action because of the cost of continuing with those £1 subs, which had been given as a reward since 1996. I understand your point because I too have to now pay half subs and I've been here even longer than you and contrary to what some may think, I get no discount that you don't! But is not half subs a reward for loyalty?

Yes, you get nothing when you leave but how much have you saved over the years of paying no subs and now paying half? How much work have you had during the busy times when paying no subs?

As for the very few shared cabs with drivers having been here over 30 years, in those double teams a member/driver pays half the full rate if they have completed more than 30 years, so the full member would pay half subs and the second driver half subs of what the second driver pays. As an example, if full subs were £100 the member would pay £50 and if the second driver subs were £70, the second driver would pay £35. Perhaps we should also bear in mind that their shared cab will probably last half the time ours will.

Then there was your conversation with Brian, but if that is the case (and I'm sure that if you say it happened then it undoubtedly did) is he now not punishing himself as well then, because he still may go back to driving a cab one day?

Look Mike, I'd also like to go back to my £1 subs, but times are more than tough out there and we lost money last year for the first time in many driver's memories, so how can DaC justify giving away £185,000 a year in lost subs. Even with half subs, it is still costing the Society over £90K

a year. If you know of a way to compensate you and the other 100+ of us against paying no subs but without DaC losing money, I'm sure the BoM would be interested. I certainly can't think of anything ...Ed

## Addy Lee v Hailo – the food review!

*Hello Alan,*

I had to smile at the recent story in *Taxi Newspaper* (issue 293) regarding many passengers apparently claiming they don't like travelling in **Addison Lee** cars, not because they prefer a 'black' cab as **Hailo** suggests, but because **Addy Lee** cars often smell of curry where the drivers are forced to eat in their vehicles due to working restrictions.

What made it funny was the advert at the bottom of the page from a restaurant in Bedford Street, Strand. It wrote of a taxi driver's special offer of traditional 'Piccadilly' cod & chips. All the reader had to do was to phone the number and they would bring it out to your taxi! Undoubtedly a bargain at £3.99, but on the same page as an **Addy Lee** story on cars smelling of curry? Perhaps the headline should have been **Curry v Fish 'n Chips!**

**Jon Robinson (E88)**

Anyone for a Gorgonzola and garlic sandwich! ...Ed

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