

## Mountview To Buy Out Dial-a-Cab?

You don't believe that heading, do you? But it may well be true! I have it from an extremely reliable source - ie four of the good fellows from EC5 - that the Mountview 'buckeroos' are contemplating making a cash offer to the shareholders of Dial-a-Cab in order to buy them out and create Mountview Major.

According to the usually reliable rumours, young Geoffrey is as we speak, putting together an attractive package to place before the Dial-a-Cab membership at a specially arranged EGM to be held shortly. How attractive the package will be is not known at this time, although some suggestions are that it will be pink wrapping paper with a blue bow while others mention stripes so as to fit in with their designer 'beehive' liveried taxis.

However, Call Sign has received word from variously placed north London snitches which suggest that young Geoffrey's mind is tinkering with the idea of offering DaC subscribers two Mountview shares for each of their single DaC share. This would put their valuation of DaC at £19.40 and is expected to fall considerably short of the approximate City valuation of this company at £8.3 million.

In a possible dramatic twist, it has been suggested that those very same four drivers on EC5 are to consider the possibility of buying Mountview themselves by putting a fiver each into the pot and telling them to keep the change.



Representing this column, snitch 417769 - 'egg and chips' - tried to contact a spokesman for the Mountview BoM, however they were at a meeting trying to see whether they had jointly collected enough vouchers from The Sun to get a £1 ferry trip to France from where they hoped to hitch a lift to Luxembourg for the annual IRU meeting.

More news when we get it...

## Call Centre Messages

The following messages were left in my office in the Driver's Reception loo. They originate from terminal messages that didn't quite come out as they were meant to...!

**From Ivers:** Look in bids and offer thanks.

**Big Al says:** Amen...

**From French:** Pick up from Oxford St Destination Charing X - left Virgin carrier bag in taxi...

**Big Al says:** A virgin carrier bag? Is that one that has never been used, explaining why they want it back...!

**From Cox:** Waterloo bride VHT going north.

**Big Al says:** Caused by an excessively long veil of traffic, no doubt...

By for now  
Al..

# THE INDIANA ANSWER TO DAC TIME v GMT

October's Call Sign had David Ammar (L75) asking a question about the DaC computer clock running slow. Our software programmers in Indiana, Tom and Debbie Carter, provide the answer...

While it's true that the V6 computer's internal clock (not the software) runs slow to the tune of 34 seconds per month, David's statement that "trips normally dispatched 12 minutes before book time are actually being dispatched 9½ minutes before booked time" is not necessarily correct.

Drivers do not know how many other drivers have been offered the trip or how much 'offer time' has elapsed before they see it. Backup zone offers have an additional 'wait time' before they are presented to drivers. Also, the Delay time, as

explained by controller Lee Moreland in the August Call Sign, is simply:

**How many minutes will it take me to arrive from now?**

There is no clock required to answer this question. There is no clock that should be used to answer this question.

The same applies - and is true - for waiting time. That is simply: **How many minutes have I waited?**

Whether a driver uses a clock that is 15 minutes behind the timezone, 10 minutes ahead of the timezone, or is right on the money, the answer to this question is in **minutes** and thus will always be the same.

A computer clock time loss of under 60 seconds per month, will not alter a trip's 'delay' or 'wait' minutes if the trip takes less than 30 days to complete! **(Editor's note: I know the London traffic is bad but...)**

And lastly, all time stamps (HH:MM:SS) are recorded for all trips by the computer clock. The driver is

**never** required to give a time stamp to the system and therefore a driver could never be put on complaint as a result of a difference between the computer clock and the timezone. (ie if the driver was required to specify the arrival time and did so by a watch or clock - there **could** be confusion and controversy - but that is not the case).

And finally, I have spoken to Roy Masterson on the subject of monitoring the computer clock. If it is deemed consistently to be ahead of the timezone, then we will implement an automatic reduction of 34 seconds every 30 days. The reduction value and number of days will be parameters set by DaC personnel, so that if the problem 'changes colour' in the future, DaC can adjust the tuner.

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