

mailshot

Mailshot continued from page 32

never acknowledge). Our finances are non BoM yet you still manage to mistrust Alastair Hill. And as for me and my "...continued stance as a propagandist on their behalf whilst ignorant of the contents of the report," well Mark, I don't really have the time (or inclination) to study a 7 year old report. What you also overlook (for your own reasons, no doubt) when you speak of democracy, is that once a year we have an AGM and those members of the BoM that you constantly castigate, could have been thrown off many times. Could it be that your views are in the minority and that most drivers are happy with the way things are run?...Ed

FIXED PRICES

I was interested to read how Allen Togwell justifies his fixed price jobs at a time when long standing clients are threatening to close their accounts because we cannot supply them with a cab in the city when they want it. Firstly, he waffled on meaninglessly about how the price is calculated: "...we load the first 6 miles to compensate drivers doing a short trip and then reduce the on-going miles in bands according to the distance" and secondly, he goes on to state irresponsibly that "...the journey value in time is never less than £50 an hour..." leading anyone from outside the trade who read this article, to believe that is how much a cab driver takes - when we all know it's not half that amount.

People such as Mr Togwell, who I believe to be predominantly a competent person, nevertheless has a duty when given the privilege of being able to convey their views via the medium of a monthly magazine, not to print misinformation that could prove detrimental to the trade. In one breath he says "...I cannot for obvious reasons give details of our prices" and then he blurts out statements like that!

Paul Pavlou (W11)

Allen Togwell replies:

To consider my explanation of how we calculate fixed prices to be meaningless waffle is Mr Pavlou's opinion and one which he has every right to make. However, with the amount of calls I get each week from drivers asking that very question, I feel perfectly justified in publishing details. As to my irresponsibility in stating fixed prices being never less than £50 an hour, I must make an apology. Immediately on seeing a copy of Call Sign, I e-mailed the Editor to explain there has been a typo error. It should have read £30/50

Unfortunately, I don't see proofs of my articles, editing, typo and grammar checks are made at source.

With regards to misleading those outside of the trade into thinking the cost of one journey to equate the standard hourly rate, is absolute nonsense. You could, for example, spend all of one Sunday searching for a trip before finally getting an in-and-out at the airport, or you could do at least six £3 credit rides in an hour of which you are paid our minimum. To assume people outside the trade, or even our own clients, would believe the value of those trips to be your average hourly earnings is ridiculous and bordering on the paranoia.

Editor's Note: Allen did contact me to explain that he had missed out £30/50, but unfortunately the magazine had already been printed.

WHERE'S MY NASH'S NUMBERS?

I would be very grateful if you could help out a wife who is in the doghouse with her husband!!!! My husband, Jonathan Willmoth (V18), has been saving your magazine for the last four months or so, apparently because you've been printing the price of long distance jobs or something (excuse my ignorance!).

Anyway, he claims to have told me (and I have no reason to doubt him) that he was saving the magazines and not to chuck them out. To cut a long story short, I recently had a mass tidy, and THREW OUT what I thought were old (and well thumbed) Call Sign magazines. When said husband discovered my error, the air went blue and as I've said, I'm now living in the doghouse. My only defence is that I'm eight-and-a-half months pregnant, and obviously had other things on my mind. Is there any way I can get back copies of your magazine, or get the specific Nash's Numbers information that he obviously holds so dear to his heart!!!

Yours barking!

Sue Willmoth!

Loughton, Essex ... via email

Tell you what I'll do, Sue. By now, you will have had the baby. If you agree to call it Call Sign, I'll send you the info that will save you being referred to as Fido!...Ed

THE SELWYN VIEW OF RECEPTIONISTS

Probably 90% of trips despatched through the system from addresses within the City of London run smoothly. But I've noticed recently that I have been kept waiting

outside some clients premises for long periods. Furthermore, I appear to be having difficulties at times in making contact with the passenger. This seems to apply where terminal instructions say: "Driver to reception." In many cases, this is due to the poor quality of security staff at the client's reception, in particular where the premises are in multi-occupation and it is the owners of the building and not our clients who supply the reception service. So here is a typical scenario of what can occur...

21.55: Driver arrives having run from a back up zone with £4.00 on meter (£4.40 allowed). Does code 21, writes out name board, picks up money bag, locks up cab and walks 50 yards to entrance.

21.57: Driver approaches reception desk, finds receptionist reading newspaper!

21.58: Receptionist reluctantly looks up from newspaper. Driver says: "Taxi for Macarthy - extension 2280 please."

Receptionist replies: "Mr Garvie, extension 2880?"

Driver responds: "No, Macarthy, M-A-C-A-R-T-H-Y ... extension 2280."

21.59: Phone rings on reception desk. Receptionist picks up phone and proceeds to talk in hushed tones.

22.03: Receptionist to caller: "Sorry honey, getting busy here right now, call you back later." Receptionist puts phone down.

Receptionist to Driver: "What firm is it that you want?" Driver responds: "The ABC Bank." Receptionist: "Well, all their extensions start with a seven"

Driver: "Well try putting a seven in front of the number that I gave you!"

Receptionist: "Oh yes, what was the number you gave me?" Driver repeats name and number again.

22.04: Receptionist dials out and without mentioning name says: "Taxi outside for you," then puts phone back and resumes reading newspaper.

22.06: Driver gets back into cab.

22.08: Passer-by taps on window and says "Covent Garden, please." Driver replies after re-checking screen: "Sorry, but I am already booked." Passer-by says: "I'll give you an extra fiver."

Driver replies: "I've just told you, I'm already booked." Passer-by reads name board. "Well, my name my name is Macarthy." Driver asks which firm he works for and his account number. Passer-by gives driver volley of abuse and hails a passing cab...

22.11: Driver makes 'no show' request.

22.16: 'No show' denied.

