

## from the chairman



### New Terminal Suppliers

**The Board of Management have now made a decision on whom the preferred supplier of our new MDT's (Mobile Data Terminals) will be. I have sent them a letter of intent, stating that Dial-a-Cab are prepared to take our negotiations to the next phase subject to contract and delivery schedules.**

I am delighted to say that the prospective supplier is a British company and will, in my opinion, produce an MDT far in advance of anything currently in production anywhere in the world! If we can suppose that everything goes to plan and that the prospective supplier becomes our supplier, then we hope to commence fitting terminals to our fleet shortly after Christmas.

Our plan has always been to fit a new MDT that is completely compatible with our current system and terminal, consequently avoiding the need to have a 'big bang' changeover to another system that both our competitors did and found out very quickly just what a big mistake it can be. Because the introduction to the new system has been very carefully considered, we will be in a position to take delivery according to any time-scale that we choose.

I suggest that it will be over a twelve to eighteen month period in order to ease the financial burden on DaC and, as the new system can be integrated with our present one, if for any reason we choose to stop the conversion, then we can at any time. This, in my opinion, safeguards our future as we would not be committed to buying a new system that we could not afford. DaC will not in the future, be in the position that it found itself in some seven years ago when it was trading on a day to day basis because the company's finances had been

over committed.

Our changeover has been well planned and thought through. Over the last three years, our surpluses have accrued to something in excess of three million pounds which will certainly help ease our future burden. DaC will increase the size of its fleet while, at the same time, fit new equipment to our existing members vehicles on the basis of the amount of work covered by them.

Quite simply, the new administration computer will run off details of members who cover the most work and they will receive the new equipment first. The members that do the least amount of work will receive their new equipment anything up to eighteen months after the first conversions. I have already started the clock ticking and the counting has commenced!

You will all be pleased to know that we have instructed the company who have designed the terminal for DaC, to also design a bespoke cab fitment for the terminal.

### I Am Your Enemy!

According to the Transport and General workers newspaper *Cab Trade News*, DaC is the enemy within the licensed trade. A columnist has accused us of daring to try and secure nearly three million pounds of existing Taxi work! No doubt, you will not be surprised to learn that the writer remained anonymous.

The latest update on the Ground Transportation plan is that DaC has given the Corporate client its presentation. David Adelman, Keith Cain, Alastair Hill and myself gave the presentation which lasted nearly two hours. Going by the DaC personnel that were present at the meeting, you can judge how important I believe it is that we secure this work. In total,

five companies - including DaC - have given presentations with DaC being the only company from the licensed trade. The company that secures the contract will be responsible for arranging all the ground transportation needs of the Corporate client. If one of the four unlicensed companies wins the contract, I wonder where the DaC work will go? Well, I'll tell the T&G this, most of it will go to cars and whatever is left will be divided amongst the three big circuits.

### The T&G And The Forty-Eight Hour Week

Speaking of the enemy within, I watched T&G General Secretary Bill Morris give a passionate speech at Bournemouth during the Labour Party conference. The subject of his speech was the 48 hour working week and he was adamant that the whole country should embrace the shorter working week with no exceptions. Oh really? Does he know what that will do to the Taxi trade not just in London, but nation-wide? I now await the T&G cab section saying that it will apply to everyone except the cab trade. But who really is the enemy within?

The T&G talk about minicabs, but it was the T&G who were responsible for allowing them to become established in the first place. Licensed taxi drivers during the mid-sixties felt so disgusted with the T&G's apparent impotence, that the LTDA was set up. The union has a very short memory.

No doubt I and DaC will now come under a barrage from the T&G, not anonymously this time, I hope. How dare the T&G criticise DaC for endeavouring to secure work for our members, just look at our last three years' annual reports. That is what we have helped to do for our members, how much money have you put in your members' pockets, Mr Anonymous?

**Brian Rice**