

Darwin Commercial Passenger Vehicles Forum Minutes

4 August 2016

1. Meeting Attendance

1.1 Present

- Ron Fleming Industry Representative – Private Hire Car and Limousine
- Shirley Ansell Industry Representative – Taxi
- Mark Davis Industry Representative – Motor Omnibus
- Ross Robertson Industry Representative – Motor Omnibus
- Des Crowe Australian Hotels Association NT
- Trevor Cox Tourism Top End
- Greg Turner Department of Transport (DoT) (Acting Chair)
- Bernie Ingram Department of Transport
- Laura Fletcher Department of Transport (Secretariat)

1.2 Apologies

- Drosso Lelekis City of Darwin
- Melina Pachos Industry Representative – Taxi
- Bill Piantoni Industry Representative – Minibus
- David Hannon Industry Representative – Motor Omnibus

2. General Business

2.1 Confirm Minutes from Previous Meeting

Greg Turner welcomed all present and introduced new members to the group. Greg confirmed there were no objections to him chairing the meeting while the forum discussed the future role of the chair position (identified as a carry-over action item from the previous meeting). Members agreed that the role of the chair would be shared between industry members for future meetings i.e. members would nominate a member at each meeting who would act as chair at the group's next meeting.

Greg advised the Department of Transport (now the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics) will continue to provide the secretariat functions for the group.

Both Shirley and Ron confirmed minutes from the April 2016 meeting and previous action items were discussed.

2.2 Previous Action Items

Action Item 2.5 – Provide up-to-date information that can be provided to RTOs for future training materials (AHA NT)

The group agreed to continue this item for the next meeting. Trevor advised that Tourism Top End (TTE) have approached both Darwin based training providers for the provision of tourism information. Buslink asked to be included in the delivery of tourism information for internal training of their bus drivers. Des informed the group that he would provide an update at the next

meeting on how the Australian Hoteliers Association (AHA) information package was progressing.

Action Item 2.6 – Liaise with the City of Darwin on installation of taxi and minibus rank totems (Department of Transport)

The Department of Transport (DoT) informed the group that it had available funds to progress the installation of taxi and minibus totem poles at ranks in the Territory. Consultation has commenced with the City of Darwin to install totems in the CBD. Once the new Peel Street taxi rank CCTV system has been installed, the City of Darwin will finalise the relocation of the remaining taxi ranks in the CBD and the installation of the totem poles can commence. Installing totem poles in the Katherine region is also planned for this financial year.

Action Item 2.7 – Contact the Liquor Commission regarding upcoming events (DoT)

Greg advised that initial correspondence with the Liquor Commission on the provision of notice of major and large events was positive. The Liquor Commission advised that a traffic management plan is already included in many of the applications and approval process. Discussions to continue.

3. New Business

3.1 TV Plates Style Changes

DoT informed the group that the green background used for the current Tourist Vehicle numbers plates was no longer available and an alternate colour was necessary. DoT proposed that, due to the similar nature of operation, the colours used for the Motor Omnibus (MO) registration plates be used as a replacement (refer example below).

Example of the proposed Tourist Vehicle licence plate.



The MO plates were found to be stable and compatible with enforcement technology and it is likely the TV category would be merged into the single charter category of commercial passenger vehicle (CPV) with many of the MO charter operations. DoT informed the group that it would advise all TV operators of the necessary change and update published information where relevant. The issuing of the MO plates, being blue on gold, would not be applied retrospectively which would result in two types of TV plate being in circulation. There were no concerns raised by industry regarding the change.

3.2 Private Hire Car / Limousine Driver Training

DoT raised the item of Private Hire Car and Limousine driver training and invited industry to comment on whether there was need for formal driver training for Private Hire Car and Limousine drivers. Ron suggested that Private Hire Car drivers should undergo some form of approved driver training, however did not believe it was necessary for Limousine drivers.

DoT advised that Private Hire Car training standards could be formed from a number of relevant modules of the national taxi training standards. It was recognised that any proposed training would have to be at an appropriate cost for industry to absorb and which did not deter any potential drivers from entering the industry.

3.3 Private Hire Car / Limousine Standards

DoT reminded industry of Government's commitment to remove the Limousine category as part of the reform package and asked industry whether there were possible concessions to be made to the current standard relating to Limousine vehicles. DoT stated that it had received a number of recent enquiries regarding acceptable vehicle types, in particular SUVs and smaller vehicle models. Industry generally acknowledged that the Limousine category should maintain a certain level of luxury status to reflect customer expectations, however more up-market SUVs etc could be permitted into the category provided they still met dimensional and seating requirements as well as the intent of the Luxury Tax Threshold component.

3.4 Third Taxi Network

DoT informed the group that a third taxi network had recently been approved to commence operating in Darwin. The network will be branded as 13 CABS, however, as yet no taxis have commenced operating under the new network. DoT would advise industry once the operation had commenced and an operating premises had been established.

3.5 New Membership

DoT tabled the proposal to expand the forum role to include the whole of the top end, effectively becoming a forum for Darwin, Katherine, Gove and Jabiru. The proposal also included expanding the forum membership to community advocacy groups such as disability and passenger representatives. The group discussed the merits of expanding however voted down the proposal in preference to inviting specific stakeholder representatives as required.

While the group saw some positives with expanding membership scope, industry was of the opinion that permanent forum membership should be confined to industry and government only. However, the group did believe that a representative from a local industry trainer should be invited to permanently join the group.

The group did agree to expand the geographical scope of the group to include all regions of the top end and it was agreed to reflect this change in the forum's name.

- Actions:**
- a) DoT to formalise the agreed forum name change from Darwin CPV Forum to Top End CPV Forum.
 - b) DoT to seek expressions of interest from local Registered Training Organisations on becoming a member of the forum.
 - c) DoT to seek expressions of interest from regional industry representatives to join the forum.
 - d) DoT to invite Somerville Services to join the group as an invited guest at a special meeting to discuss CPV issues from a disabled user's perspective.

3.6 Nominations for Forum Chairperson

The group agreed that the role of chairperson would be shared between industry members for future meetings. Mark Davis offered to take up the role of chairperson for next meeting which was supported by the group. At the end of each meeting, the acting chair would call on a nomination for a member to chair the following meeting.

Action: Acting Chairperson to seek nominations from members to chair the next meeting.

3.7 Taxi Ballot update

DoT advised the group that on 1 July 2016, the Department conducted a taxi ballot for 13 new licences in the Darwin region. The licences were made up of nine standard and four wheelchair

accessible taxis. The commissioning of the new taxis would be in two stages, the first to commence immediately, and the second stage to commence operating from 1 September 2016. The ballot was the first ballot held which mandated strict eligibility requirements such as longevity in the industry, good compliance history and could not otherwise hold a taxi licence.

3.8 Compliance Database

DoT informed the group that the Department's new compliance database development was progressing and it was anticipated that testing would commence in the near future. The database is being built to manage key performance indicator data which the taxi networks will soon be required to provide on an ongoing basis as measurements of performance. The database will also house compliance data to assist with investigations, complaints and day-to-day compliance activities.

4. Other Business

4.1 Permit Parking in the Darwin CBD (City of Darwin)

DoT provided an update from City of Darwin (CoD) in their absence. CoD advised they had implemented permit parking in the Darwin CBD. There are several permit parking bays throughout the CBD including two on Mitchell Street and one on Smith Street. The bays may only be used by vehicles holding a permit and were designed to ensure tourist operators etc have access to on-street parking in specific areas such as outside of tourist destinations and pickup areas.

4.2 Bus Layovers

There was some discussion from industry regarding the possibility to establish a bus layover area near to the Darwin CBD in instances where buses dropped off tourists / charters for a short time (e.g. two hours) before being required to pick up the party. One possible site suggested was the parking area at the Deckchair cinema as this was not well utilised during the daytime.

Action: DoT to liaise with the City of Darwin Forum representative to provide an update so further discussions can continue at the next meeting.

4.3 Darwin Regional Transport Plan

DoT distributed the newly released 'Darwin Regional Transport Plan' for information. A copy can be found on the Department's website at transport.nt.gov.au/strategies/darwin-regional-transport-plan.

5. Action List

| Agenda Number | Action Item | Action Officer |
|------------------------|---|------------------------|
| Standing Action | Mark Davis to act as Chairperson for the next meeting. Chairperson to appoint a new Chairperson for the next meeting. | Mark Davis |
| 2.2 | (Previous Action Item 2.5 from April 2016 meeting) Relevant industry to provide update on tourist information package. | Des Crowe / Trevor Cox |
| 3.5 | a) DoT to formalise the agreed forum name change from Darwin CPV Forum to Top End CPV Forum. | Greg Turner |

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| | b) DoT to seek expressions of interest from local Registered Training Organisations on becoming a member of the forum. c) DoT to seek expressions of interest from regional industry representatives to join forum. d) DoT to invite Somerville Services to join the group as an invited guest at a special meeting to discuss CPV issues from a disabled user's perspective. | |
| 4.2 | DoT to liaise with the City of Darwin Forum representative to provide an update so further discussions can continue at the next meeting. | Greg Turner |

6. Next Meeting

The next Forum meeting will be scheduled for November 2016 and a special meeting with Somerville will be arranged prior to the November meeting.