

MEDIA RELEASE

David Campbell MP
Minister for Transport
Minister for the Illawarra



TAXI REFORMS TO MAKE IT EASIER TO GET A CAB

Wednesday 7 October 2009

Minister for Transport David Campbell today announced reforms to the taxi industry which aim to get more taxis on the road for passengers.

Mr Campbell said the Government was changing the way taxi licenses were issued by introducing a new licence which can be renewed each year and would allow more people to get into the taxi market.

“Taxis play an important role in complementing other forms of public transport and keeping the city and our communities moving,” Mr Campbell said.

Mr Campbell said those who want to run a taxi business would have the option to either lease an existing licence on the open market or obtain a new non-transferable licence for an annual fee from NSW Transport and Infrastructure.

He said existing transferable licences would still be able to be bought and sold on the open market, but the Government would not be issuing any further tradeable licences.

“The high cost of long term taxi licences are a hindrance for many people wanting to enter the market and the new renewable licences, will make it easier and more affordable for people to get into the industry,” Mr Campbell said.

“These reforms are about getting more cabs on the road and improving customer services, with shorter waiting times, better reliability and, in the longer term, smaller fare increases.

“I expect many of the state’s 20,000 taxi drivers will take the opportunity to become their own boss by purchasing a renewable licence.

“At the same time, the Government’s reforms will ensure that any impacts on existing licence holders are properly managed.

“In setting and reviewing fees for the new licences, the Government will consider a range of factors including passenger demand for services and current lease rates.

“We need to strike the balance between continuing existing services, as well as encouraging sustainable growth in taxi numbers.”

Mr Campbell said the new arrangements would also resolve outstanding issues surrounding the Nexus licences and provide certainty for the future. The Nexus Scheme refers to licences issued between 1982 and 1990 which are linked to the operation of wheelchair accessible taxis.

The Government will standardise Nexus licences to continue supporting the operation of wheelchair accessible taxis. The Government has confirmed:

- the Nexus licence can only operate while the accessible taxi is operating
- Nexus licences can continue to be traded but only with their accessible taxi licence pair
- the Nexus licence pairs can only be transferred to a taxi network that is an accredited operator, so that their performance can be monitored.

Mr Campbell said in recognition of the other measures now available to support the operation of accessible taxis across NSW, no further Nexus licences would be issued.

“Today I am also releasing the Deloitte Report into the Nexus Scheme, which found there was no basis for payment of any back fees or compensation, and that transfer taxes had been paid,” Mr Campbell said.

“The Government’s reforms provide a realistic approach which balances the needs of passengers and the taxi industry, including drivers and existing licence owners,” Mr Campbell said.

The reforms are the result of the work carried out by the Department of Transport and Infrastructure and The Better Regulation Office. The Government will take the required legislative amendments to Parliament at the next sitting.

The Deloitte Report can be found on the NSW Transport and Infrastructure website at: www.transport.nsw.gov.au

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