

The Secretary
 Legislative Council
 Economy and Infrastructure Committee
 Parliament House Spring St
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INQUIRY INTO THE COMMERCIAL PASSENGER VEHICLE INDUSTRY ACT 2017 REFORMS

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Merciless, is the only way to describe the suffering bestowed on the people within the taxi industry during the so called reform process. There have been countless articles in the print and digital media of people who have told their story of loss and suffering.

The feeling of helplessness, anger and severe depression is the result of a calculated and brutal process that was put in place during the time illegal “rideshare” was allowed to operate without any application of the regulations by authorities. The inaction of the regulator not only harmed the industry financially, it allowed the identity of the taxi industry to be taken by imposters. Failure of the regulator to impose any fines on the impersonating “taxi drivers” sent a message to the general public. The public saw the illegal “ridesharing” model as equivalent to the standard regulated taxi industry.

The severe and harsh treatment to people who were part of a regulated taxi industry has not abated. Families have lost loved ones to suicide, others have been torn apart by separation and divorce. Families have to endure the behaviour of loved ones showing signs of severe depression and listening to cries of despair. The financial pressure has been enormous. Homes were sold to pay off debts, children taken out of schools as fees could not be paid. Hard work and sacrifice wiped out without care or thought. The transition payments made a mockery of the actual value of the taxi licence to the point where it did not recognise a taxi licence as an asset.

The Fairness Fund was another process to demoralise applicants. It was another mechanism that had no appeal process or gave a valid decision for payments that were denied.

The government had ample time to consider its position in introducing a form of competition within the taxi and hire car industry. The Knowledge Test was made impossible to pass, thus making potential taxi drivers drive for the illegal “rideshare”. Submissions were made detailing the destruction of a viable industry if excessive amounts of vehicles were permitted to trade. The recommendations were not given any consideration and the

regulations were torn up resulting in an industry that has no financial advantage for those working under the new system. The agenda of the government was to abolish Taxi and Hire Car Licences by revoking them. The High Court of Australia deemed them as assets and identified them as such. This resulted in people paying loans back to the bank for a non-existent asset.

With the excessive amounts of vehicles on the road, they are difficult to identify as many do not display the required signage. Our once proud taxi industry has been decimated to the point where, now a label (CPV) is placed on a vehicle of any condition or age to trade.

The government have taken no recourse in the destruction it has caused to people who have been financially and mentally crippled. The government has been complicit in many ways by allowing the defamation of a viable industry. Comments made were that we are "dirty" and "smelly". Other comments made were that we are "greedy investors" and we "should have beared the brunt of the Global Financial Crisis like everyone else".

Other insulting comments such as "they wouldn't know if their own taxi hit them" were made publicly. Having to hear this from our government made me realise that we would be targeted, but never to think to have our assets taken away.

The government not only has taken away my business, it has taken away who I am and what the taxi industry meant to me. I see pseudo "taxicabs" and I feel that my business was gifted to someone else along with my identity.

I have been placed in financial hardship and made to feel duped with the way I am continued to be treated. The government that set the rules had broken them and at the same time allowing illegal entity to steal in front of my eyes.

The future of the taxi industry has been shattered by an incompetent Minister and a careless government. The amount of vehicles on our roads has gone past saturation point, resulting in traffic congestion. The safety of passengers has been compromised and the viability of any financial benefit made unachievable. i.e. gig economy workers complaining of low rates of pay and taking strike action.

The brutal treatment of taxi licence holders is unnecessary and one could say that it violates human rights. The destruction of the taxi industry in its form today is nothing more than sabotage.

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