

From: [REDACTED]
To: [taxiinquiry](#)
Subject: Fwd: My submission for the CPV Inquiry
Date: Friday, 28 June 2019 4:55:57 PM
Attachments: [REDACTED]

Dear Sir / Madam,

Please find attached my submission for the above mentioned matter for your consideration.

Please kindly confirm receipt of this email.

Regards,

Hilmi Hussein
Taxi licence owner

Dear Sir / Madam

My name is Hilmi Hussein.

I am the owner of a WAT licence and a taxi licence.

I came to Australia on 19 March 1974.

I was only 15 years old when I arrived to Australia.

I attended Footscray Technical College for 2.5 years.

I only attended TAFE for one day when I decided to leave and start working in various companies as a labourer.

Allens Confectionary was my first employer and worked as a forklift driver for 8 years.

Due to the development of the Crown complex in Southbank, I lost my job. Luckily, I was able to organize a job with Ansett Airlines not too long later and worked there for 2.5 years.

I got married in 1982 and shifted into our matrimonial home in 1983. I had already owned land and got builders to build our matrimonial home.

I had my first son in 1986. I had another son straight after in 1988. Consequently, my wife and I decided that my wife will stay home to look after the kids. So, I had to look for a second job.

I decided to drive taxis on a part time basis even though it was dangerous at the time. In 1988, I clearly remember there was a taxi driver who was shot which caused me anxiety while driving.

Finally, in March 1989, I successfully purchased my own taxi licence and started working full time including weekends. I refinanced just over \$140,000 from a state bank for the purchase of both the taxi licence and the taxi vehicle itself.

Little did I know that there was going to be a series of hardships headed my way.

The taxi vehicle which I purchased was not in the best state.

Soon after, my car was written off by a reckless driver who had no vehicle insurance. As a result, I was pushed to the brink of bankruptcy.

I was forced out of work for 4 weeks after the abovementioned accident.

I had to purchase another taxi vehicle. Just after a week from the purchase, I was hit again by another uninsured driver. I was emotionally and financially devastated.

As taxi licence owners, we are insured by taxi clubs and if they cannot recover from the other side, we are left to dry.

Nevertheless, I was able to put my vehicle back on to the road again. The Australian economy was experiencing turbulence during the 1990s which caused interest rates on bank loans to increase to 19%. It was not until 1997 that I was able to get back on to my two feet financially and lease a new taxi licence to operate.

In 2000, I decided to go in partnership with my nephew to purchase a taxi licence as he was only leasing and driving a taxi himself and I wanted to assist him to own a taxi licence.

In 2001, I sold my fully owned taxi licence at the time.

In 2004, my nephew and I purchased a WAT licence plate and WAT vehicle to operate and drive together.

However, in 2005, we decided to go our own ways after my nephew decided to own and operate his own bakery.

By 2006, I borrowed another \$200,000 to purchase my nephew's share of the WAT licence plate (as a form of goodwill). As a result, my borrowed amount from the bank totaled \$350,000.

So, I was left with one taxi licence and a WAT licence. I leased out my taxi licence.

The State Government ('Government') began to move into the industry by leasing out Green Top taxis that would operate peak hours (3 – 7pm) to taxi drivers for as little as \$700 per year. This was a negligible amount compared to lease amounts that taxi licence owners were receiving which was roughly about \$2,000 per month.

Lots of night shift drivers for taxi licence owners moved to operate their own Green Top taxis.

This began to really shake up the industry and hurt us taxi licence owners.

Thereafter, the Government brought in the concept of hybrid taxis, which was a taxi that operated in between a Yellow Top and a Green Top taxi. Rent was only \$800 per year and the taxis were allowed to operate for 16 hours.

This caused a further dip in value of taxi licences, capacity of rent proceeds for taxi licence owners, and an inability for licence owners to find drivers to assist them.

The Government brought out a further type of taxi which it leased out to potential lessees for 10 years. These taxis operated exactly the same way as a Yellow Cab, with the option to purchase the licence by prepaying 10 years' worth of the lease. Potential owners only has to pay \$180,000. At the time, taxi licences were worth \$500,000.

You don't need to be a rocket scientist to guess what happened to the value of taxi licences.

It became a real burden for me to pay my debts. I worked very hard to pay off my first taxi and thereafter my other taxi licence but could not keep up.

I had to sell land that I owned to pay off my loans as I was not making enough money from the lease of my second taxi licence. It took a toll on my mental health and my family's happiness.

Finally, the Government forcefully bought out my taxi licences and only compensated me \$150,000. My two taxi licences combined worth was over \$1 million only a few years ago.

I was hoping that when I became 65 years old, I would either lease out my taxi licences and rely on the income produced or sell my licence(s) to bank my retirement money.

This dream is now over for me and now I am dependent on any Government pension after I retire. This is added burden on the cost of the pension fund.

The only real asset I have now in my possession is my matrimonial home. That is it. I have clearly lost hundreds of thousands of potential retirement dollars.

Further, there seems to be no limit on how many taxis are being accredited and allowed on to the road by the Government these days. There were only 6,000 taxis. Now there is a whopping 12,000 to 13,000 taxis on the road as we speak. The wait at ranks for taxi drivers has drastically increased.

My financial future looks bleak. I hope the Government considers taxi licence owners who have worked so hard for so long and come up with a fairer compensation scheme.

So many hard working licence owners retired through leasing out their taxi licences. It is now gone. They are out of retirement and back to work. So many licence owners and drivers have committed suicide as a result.

My friend purchased 3 taxi licences and purchased a fourth one just 5 years ago for \$480,000. Due to not being compensated properly and suffering severe financial hardship as a result, he had a heartache at the end of last year and died. His family is distraught as a result. His name was

██████████.

Please, for the sake of humanity and common decency, please consider mine and my fellow colleagues' hardships.

Regards,

Hilmi Hussein