

Dear Sir/Madam,

I have been in the Taxi Industry for 27 years as a Driver, Operator and a Licence Owner. Three years ago, I was operating 39 Taxis with a high occupancy rate. Today, I am operating 18 Taxis with an extremely low occupancy rate and the cars takings are approximately one third of what they were three years ago.

I had purchased 2 taxi licences and 5 ten-year licences from the Government thinking that they were property and could not be seized without compensation of market value. These Licences were all seized and now still have large loans (in excess of 1 million dollars) which I am unable to pay back. I received money from the fairness fund, but now I have a large tax obligation. So much for a hardship payment.

Drivers averaged over \$300 per shift, today the average is just over \$150, and some drivers are taking less than \$100 in a shift. Drivers can't get space on a rank in the city and are having to illegally park. City of Melbourne are then fining them which further erodes their income. At the Airport the waiting time has almost doubled, with waits of up to three and four hours becoming very common.

I have not replaced a car in nearly 3 years as I can't afford the outlay of a new car. Cars that would have been replaced in the past are now being kept on the road and having to be continuously maintained.

I also manage a mechanical repair business, servicing Taxis and other Commercial Passenger Vehicles to the public. These vehicles are not being maintained to a Roadworthy condition as the owners don't have the money to maintain them properly. Tyres, Brakes, Suspension Components to name a few aren't being replaced when they should, leaving the public at risk.

The deregulation of the Commercial passenger vehicle has been a total debacle. Drivers earnings are worse than ever, people are left with debt, cars are not being maintained, Drivers touting at the Airport and we have Drivers fighting on the streets. Taxi and Uber Drivers are putting on cars thinking they can make a reasonable living, only to realise there is very little work.

People that owned Licences need to be compensated adequately to pay off their debts and there needs to be a cap on the number of vehicles so that Drivers can make a decent living. Things need to change before they get any worse.

Regards,

Greg Collins

Kensington Taxis Pty Ltd