

19 November 2013
Our ref: C/13/27139

ESC TAXI FARE REVIEW – INDUSTRY UPDATE

Dear Colleagues

It's been a very busy couple of months since we began our taxi fare review in September 2013. Our taxi team, headed by Andrew Chow, has been out visiting as many taxi operators, owners, drivers, and suppliers as possible.

The team has spoken to many operators and visited their sites, spending time to observe how the different businesses operate. In addition, we have spent time with owners and drivers to listen to their concerns and issues regarding taxi fares. We have found the information provided to us by operators, owners, drivers and suppliers to be insightful and useful to build on our working knowledge of the industry.

This information is also beneficial to our analysis regarding the costs involved in running a taxi service as well as in developing and assessing new fares. We would like to thank everyone we have visited and/or spoken to so far for their time and interest in working closely with us in this review.

In addition to our face-to-face meetings, we have also released a number of papers to help guide our review: These are:

- our *Call for Ideas* paper (released on the 10th September) to which we are grateful to those who have responded (24 submissions). We will release a summary paper on submissions received to date by the end of November.
- our *Principles Paper* (released on the 22nd October) to guide us in designing new taxi fares.

Towards the end of November, we will be sending out two surveys: an operator survey and a driver survey via the Taxi Services Commission network.

- Our operator survey is aimed at gathering information from operators on the costs and revenues associated with running a taxi service. This will inform our draft decision on taxi fares.
- The driver survey is aimed at understanding the matters relevant to drivers and what they expect from new taxi fares.

We appreciate it's always a nuisance filling out surveys, but we are making every effort to keep our surveys as short and as focussed as possible. I urge you to please take the opportunity to contribute to the first formal review of taxi fares in a number of years.

Obviously we will be continuing our rounds of consultation in the lead up to our March draft decision to hear your views, understand your issues and test our ideas and thinking.

Down the track, we intend to release our draft decision by March 2014. The draft decision will detail our preliminary views about what the new taxi fares should be for the metropolitan and urban areas of Victoria. Following this, we will be keen to talk to you again.

Should you wish to talk to us in the meantime, we would be pleased to hear from you as we want to ensure that we gain the best understanding possible of the matters that are relevant to our review. Please contact us on 9032 1300 or email us at taxifares@esc.vic.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Dr Ron-Ben David
Chairperson