

## Fares for rank and hail taxis to be reviewed

The state's pricing regulator is preparing to look at the maximum fares payable by passengers for catching a cab on the street.

The Essential Services Commission has released a consultation paper seeking feedback from taxi users and other stakeholders on its approach to reviewing the maximum fare that can be charged for 'unbooked' taxi services.

Unbooked services are where passengers hail a vehicle from the street or take a taxi from a rank while booked services are arranged prior to travel through an app, online or over the phone.

The commission's director of pricing, Marcus Crudden said that competition in unbooked taxis is not as strong as pre-booked services.

"Consumers hailing a vehicle in the street can't shop around for a better deal, so there is less competition and pricing options for passengers."

"Our review aims to protect passengers who use rank and hail services from paying too much" he said.

Mr Crudden said the scheduled review, which occurs every two years, would be mindful of the current uncertainty facing the industry.

"We acknowledge the review comes at a time of uncertainty for the taxi industry and have taken that into consideration in preparing the options put forward in the paper," he said.

The consultation paper seeks stakeholder input on the method the commission will use to assess fares.

The review will only look at fares for trips that start in metropolitan Melbourne, urban and large regional zones including Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo, Frankston, Dandenong and the Mornington Peninsula.

Stakeholders can have their say via Engage Victoria until 7 May 2020.

The commission will then release a draft decision proposing maximum fares in June 2020, providing another opportunity for feedback. The final decision is expected to be released in September 2020.

**For further information call: Michelle Bryne, Head of Strategic Communication, 9032 1324 or 0437 677 385**

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