



Essential Services Commission

Unbooked taxi fare review 2022

Black & White Cabs have read and considered the draft decision and would like to add the following feedback and suggestions. To simplify our response, I can confirm that having read the response of Rob Barton MP, we agree with his position and will simply add some other points/thoughts in response to the decision.

- We would point out that even with the proposed increases, unbooked services remain far behind the other eastern states who despite the higher cost do more unbooked work than Victorian taxis.
- Whilst the industry understands the difference between unbooked and booked fares, the average person in the street is not interested. They just want to get from A to B in a reasonable time at a reasonable price.
- The department needs to strongly consider whether they continue to regulate unbooked fares. As the paper points out, NSW is moving away from this, and it only makes sense to either fully regulate or fully de-regulate. Justifying cost and expense is hard to do when it is just seen as interfering. Everyone knows that rideshare has introduced surge pricing, and now the whole market is moving this way – whether we like it or not. The answer is not by regulating rank and hail jobs.
- The suggestion of averaging the flagfall as raised in the submission section has merit. A minimum fare should be set of say \$10 and this would include a distance for each of the time categories that works out the same as a normal fare, but guarantees drivers a minimum fare. This would go a long way to avoiding the problem mentioned of drivers refusing short fares.
- Cleaning Fee. Qld and NSW tie the maximum cleaning fee to the equivalent of one Penalty Unit. This would make far more sense in Victoria and remove the need to constantly review the fee.
- Time to produce stickers – the time frame of 2 – 3 weeks may prove to be optimistic. Whilst producing the stickers, calling in 400 plus vehicles and arranging removal and updating may take time. We would ask for a 2 or 3 month moratorium period for installation on to vehicles.

Aside from these points, we welcome the proposed increase

Should you wish to discuss this further, feel free to contact me

John Lobwein

Manager – Victoria and New South Wales

Black & White Cabs