

Unbooked taxi fare review 2022

Submission received through Engage Victoria

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From 16 February 2022, we began accepting submissions on our Unbooked taxi fare review 2022: Consultation paper via Engage Victoria (www.engage.vic.gov.au). On this website, people were given the opportunity to send us a response to a set of questions we provided.

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of our proposed market outcomes approach?

I want to correct ESC when they say fares are only getting reviewed for unbooked services. As a matter of fact fares can also not be increased or decreased for booked services if the customer is using an MPTP subsidy. The only players who can change fares for those customers are Uber and cab charge. It does not present enough competitive environment for small players to react in the marketplace.

2. Are there any other assessment approaches that we should consider? What are the advantages and disadvantages of these approaches?

ESC should look into fare increase for both booked and unbooked services. Especially when there is only one player who provide services to clients on wheelchairs.

3. What costs should we include in our new taxi cost index?

Taxi fare should include a minimum hourly income for the drivers at least for the time when they are on work. Suppose as a driver I get a job 10 minutes in advance and then the customer takes me for another 10 minute ride, then the driver should be considered busy for 20 minutes and should get a minimum payment for 20 minutes at least.

Now considering the Australian minimum wages and operating expense, if we take half of the fare is retained by driver after expenses that means driver must get at least \$10 out of that fare. That will make him eligible for 30 hours per hour for the time he is busy. 10 dollars will be considered as operating cost. Now we consider it is a hail booking even then driver is waiting for his turn in the queue. So the fares should be considered as operating expenses and driver wages differently. On the other hand when ESC is considering as demand and supply that is where companies like uber flourish on the expense of underpaid labour.

And even the customer cannot plan his journey as the expense can increase or decrease dramatically.

4. How should we use the Fair Work Commission's annual wage review in our review of fares? Should we use it to determine the change in fares? Should we use the Fair Work Commission's annual wage review to measure changes in the cost of driver labour?

Fair work should make sure a hard working person wants to stay in the industry and it should be fair platform where everyone can take enough money from a days work.

5. Are there any barriers to implementing 'time and distance' tariffs that we should consider?

Definitely, as a driver payment should be in respect to his time spend than his speedometer. Speedometer may be good from operator point of view but not from driver point of view. If we want to keep the same structure in that case may be operator must pay driver an Australian minus wages and keep on charging customer on speedo.

6. How has the customer experience of catching unbooked taxis changed in the past two years? How has the quality of the vehicles and service changed? How has vehicle availability changed?

Do not know about the customers but definitely driver conditions had become worst. By the way is that ESC is aware of the fact that Melbourne fares are the cheapest in Australia while same is not true as far as liveability index is concerned.

7. What changes in the commercial passenger vehicle industry should we consider in setting maximum fares? What is the impact of these changes on the demand, supply, and or the cost of operating taxis?

Taxis should also be allowed surge. May a customer can bargain. If there are more cabs on the rank then customer may end up paying less and if there are less cars that means customer may end up paying more. That is exactly how Uber behave. Though in-between their drivers play a spoil sport by rejecting a few jobs. If you do not agree then try Uber on a surge and try again after 5 minutes and you will get quite different quotes.