

FARE CHANGES.

Changes to the fare structure are long overdue, however before any fare increase etc. are introduced there are many other aspects that need to be looked at. First of all is what does the customer expect for their money?

From my experience customers expect a clean & tidy car a well presented driver with good knowledge of where he is going. If this criteria was met, it would go a long way and customers would not mind paying extra. This is highlighted by the hire car industry which has a higher standard and customers will pay for this service.

Over the past 2 years my involvement with the driver forum has highlighted many downfalls in the industry, one of which is short fare refusal. This is not only a problem in Melbourne but also in regional areas, due to some jobs in regional areas which involve traveling 10 to 15klms to do a \$9 fare. Drivers are reluctant to cover these jobs.

One idea that was raised, which I believe has some merit, was to set a flat flag fall of say \$10 for a maximum of 2.5klms, or a maximum time of 3 minutes before the klm rate starts. This would I believe encourage drivers to do the shorter fares as most short fares are less than this distance or time.

This could be applied to both metro and regional taxis, but again it all revolves around the type of service provided. Good service brings customers regardless of the fare, again this is highlighted by the hire car industry.

A set flag fall for the first 2.5klms with an increase in the klm rate thereafter would go a long way to making taxis more viable and increase driver income.

One of the greatest problems in the regional taxi industry is dead klms. An increase in the klm rate along with an increase in the % allowed for dead klms, would again increase both the viability of regional taxis and driver income, but again it all comes back to customer service.

Another thought is to apply a late night tariff this could apply from 10p.m to 6a.m this could be in either a increase of the flag fall or an increase of 12.5% of the total fare, again it comes back to customer service but this type of increase may encourage more drivers to work nights which would inturn give better customer service with more taxis available.

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