

31 January 2018

SUPPORTING TAXI AND HIRE CAR PLATE OWNERS THROUGH INDUSTRY CHANGES

Taxi plate owners will be supported by a temporary \$1 levy which kicks in tomorrow as part of an assistance package designed to ease their transition to the fast-changing point to point transport industry.

As announced by the NSW Government in 2015, the point to point transport industry is being reformed to create a more level playing field for taxi, hire car and rideshare operators. The industry has been freed up from prescriptive red tape regulation, which has reduced costs and given the sector freedom to innovate and provide better customer services and more competitive fares.

The levy starts on February 1 and will fund an assistance package of up to \$250 million for taxi plate owners impacted by regulatory changes and the entry of new players into the point to point transport market.

“The temporary levy is to help people who have put their lifetime savings into the industry and are now doing it tough,” Point to Point Transport Commissioner Barbara Wise said.

“Many taxi plates are held by small business owners: mums and dads, retirees and war widows and it is fair to say that the reform process has not been easy. These hardworking people have seen their assets shift from a highly regulated one, to what you see today.”

The assistance package has already distributed \$92 million to around 4,000 plate owners. The Minister for Transport and Infrastructure has committed to remove the temporary levy in five years or when the maximum of \$250 million is raised.

“While the \$1 per trip levy is payable by the industry’s service providers, passengers need to be aware that the cost of the levy could be passed on and added to their final fare (with 10 cents GST added, making it \$1.10),” said Ms Wise.

“The charges will be offset by other benefits from the reforms. Sydney taxi customers have already had a drop in price of up to \$4 when catching a taxi northbound over the harbour bridge, and a price freeze on taxi fares since 2014.”

Transport for NSW and the new regulator for the industry, the Point to Point Transport Commissioner, are continuing to work closely with the industry, to help everyone understand their new obligations regarding safety and the payment of the levy.

Transport for NSW has also been running a customer awareness campaign since January, to help passengers understand the likely impact of the levy on their fares. Passengers can check whether the levy is being passed on with their driver or service provider when their trip commences or at the time of making the booking.

Customers are encouraged to contact Transport for NSW on 131 500 with any questions or comments about the levy or visit www.pointtopointtransport.nsw.gov.au.

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