Wednesday, 30 November, 2016

SUPPORTING THE INDUSTRY AND PROVIDING BETTER SERVICES

The Andrews Labor Government is supporting the taxi industry while it gets on with regulating ridesharing and creating safer, more responsive services for passengers.

Applications for the Labor Government’s Fairness Fund are now open. The $50 million fund will provide targeted financial support to licence owners experiencing significant financial hardship.

After close consultation with the industry and those affected, the number of licences the Government will provide financial assistance for will be increased from two to four.

The change means perpetual metropolitan licence holders will receive $100,000 for their first licence and $50,000 per licence for up to three more, better supporting them for the investments they made.

This transitional financial assistance will be included in the first stage of legislation, which will be introduced early next year and will be paid out over two years, rather than eight – in line with the reform period.

The $2 per trip levy that funds transitional financial assistance will be also be introduced as part of the first round of legislation and be directly tied to the passage of the Bill that regulates ridesharing.

The levy will be introduced in 2018 and will replace annual licence fees – currently up to $23,000 – considerably reducing the cost of operating a taxi, paving the way for more competition and cheaper fares for passengers.

Since the Government abolished the costly and ineffective Knowledge Test in August, more than 5,000 people have applied for driver accreditation – about as many applications as the entire year prior to that.

This huge increase in accreditation means more police checks and more drivers providing services for Victorians.

The comprehensive reform package announced earlier in the year will establish a single commercial passenger industry that will create 3,500 jobs, and give Victorians greater transport choices.

For more information about the reforms and to apply for support through the Fairness Fund, visit taxi.vic.gov.au or call 1800 875 122. Information sessions will be held in late-January and applications close on 30 April 2017.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Public Transport Jacinta Allan

“We’re supporting licence holders while we regulate ridesharing, create jobs and deliver better services for passengers.”

“The industry is changing – these reforms will ensure hard working Victorians aren’t left behind.”

“We thank the industry for their feedback and will continue to work with them and all Victorians through this significant transition.”

Media Contact: Bob Neilson 0400 378 197 | bob.neilson@minstaff.vic.gov.au