

Regulatory Committee

10.00am, Friday, 21 June 2024

Licensing Training: Taxi and Private Hire Drivers

Executive/routine
Wards

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 Regulatory Committee is asked to:
 - 1.1.1 Note the contents of this report, which provides an update to a previous report to Committee in February 2023;
 - 1.1.2 Consider and agree the option set out in relation to non-attendance at training detailed in paragraph 4.17.1; and
 - 1.1.3 Agree that officers will carry out a review of fees as detailed in paragraph 6.3.

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Licensing Training: Taxi and Private Hire Drivers

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report provides an update on Taxi and Private Hire Car ('PHC') Driver Training Foundation and Intermediate courses and makes proposals to address concerns where drivers have not completed training as required by the relevant licensing conditions.

3. Background

- 3.1 The City of Edinburgh Council exercised its powers to license taxis and PHCs in 1983. The [Civic Government \(Scotland\) Act 1982](#) ('the 1982 Act') creates a two-tier licensing regime, where a taxi may pick up passengers in a public place without a prior booking, and a journey in a PHC must be pre-booked.
- 3.2 Section 13(5) of the 1982 Act allows a Licensing Authority to require an applicant for a Taxi Driver's Licence to take a test of knowledge of the area to which the licence relates, the layout of the roads in that area, and such other matters relating to the operation of a taxi as the authority considers desirable. Section 5 (1A) of Schedule 1 of the 1982 Act allows a licensing authority to vary any standard condition so far as it is applicable to the grant or renewal of the licence, or to impose conditions.
- 3.3 Section 64 of the Air Weapons and [Licensing \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#) amends section 13 of the 1982 Act. This change, which took effect from 1 November 2016, allows Local Authorities to require an applicant for a PHC Driver's Licence to take a test of knowledge of the area to which the licence relates, the layout of the roads in that area, and such other matters relating to the operation of a private hire car as the authority considers desirable.
- 3.4 On 21 November 2016, the results of a consultation with the Taxi and Private Hire Car Trade Group were presented to Committee, which agreed to adopt a compulsory training programme for all new taxi and PHC drivers.
- 3.5 Training was due to start in Spring 2020, but this was not possible due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Committee agreed to delay the full training programme but recognised that there was still a need for training for new drivers entering the trade.

An online solution - Taxi and Private Hire Driver Training - Foundation Course (Appendix 2) - was subsequently developed. This was rolled out to all new drivers from December 2020. The online course continues, but from August 2023 all applicants have been required to complete a face-to-face multiple choice assessment at the Licensing Hub at Murrayburn.

- 3.6 Following a [report](#) to Committee on 6 February 2023, the first Taxi and Private Hire Driver Training - Intermediate course (Appendix 5) for existing licensed drivers started in November 2023. All training is in person at the Licensing Hub at Murrayburn. The cost of the training was set at £300 in 2018 and has not been updated for inflation since the course began.
- 3.7 It is a condition of taxi and private hire drivers' licences in Edinburgh that "The driver is required to comply with the requirements of any scheme of training introduced by the Council" (Taxi Condition 52 and PHC condition 106). These conditions were adopted at the Regulatory Committee on 21 November 2016. Additionally, the Scottish Government's [Taxi and private hire car licensing: guidance - third edition published 31 May 2023](#) commended "as best practice the importance of such vocational training for drivers and would encourage authorities to adopt a positive approach to vocational training". Training has been a priority for Committee since 2016, and has been communicated through various committee reports, business bulletins, newsletters and at the Taxi and Private Hire Car Trade Group which has generally been supportive of it. Additional background information is attached at Appendix 1.

4. Main report

Taxi and Private Hire Driver Training - Foundation Course

- 4.1 To date, 37 training courses have been delivered to over 1,884 new taxi and private hire car drivers entering the trade (Appendix 3). The courses have received very positive feedback (Appendix 4) on their content and delivery.
- 4.2 The Foundation course provides support to new drivers entering the trade. It has been designed to raise standards and to be a precursor to the Intermediate training course for all existing drivers.
- 4.3 This training continues as an entry level course for new drivers, which enables them to start working and to gain a basic level of knowledge in relation to the operation of a taxi or PHC and relevant licensing conditions, prior to completing the Intermediate training course at the end of their first year as a licensed driver.

Taxi and Private Hire Driver Training – Intermediate Course

- 4.4 586 existing taxi and private hire drivers have so far been invited to attend training, with 351 attending over 27 training courses. The courses have generally been well

received and attendees have provided positive feedback (Appendix 7) on their content and delivery.

- 4.5 However, there has been a general reluctance for existing drivers to participate in training. This is particularly prevalent in, but not restricted to, the taxi trade (Appendix 8). The main areas of concern relate to cost of training, loss of earnings and previous trade experience and training.
- 4.6 Training was originally introduced in 2007 and delivered by Edinburgh College. Since that time, additional modules have been added e.g. wheelchair accessibility. Whilst acknowledging that some taxi drivers may have carried out that initial training or subsequent training delivered by Edinburgh College, that is not true of all drivers. Drivers who have completed that initial training course would have done so well over 10 years ago, and have had no subsequent training. Private Hire Drivers have had no previous training. There are no other training providers have been approved to deliver training to the City of Edinburgh Hire Car Trade.
- 4.7 Licensing legislation, conditions and the Highway Code have all changed in recent years, including regarding 'right to work' checks and more recently HMRC checks, all of which form part of the licensing process. Most, if not all, business areas in which drivers convey passengers or goods currently require Continuing Professional Development as part of their licensing requirements, which is generally self-financed.
- 4.8 There continues to be an increasing number of complaints regarding the behaviour and conduct of taxi and private hire drivers (Appendix 9). There are several recurring themes:
 - 4.8.1 Breaches of licensing conditions;
 - 4.8.2 Road Traffic Offences;
 - 4.8.3 Failure to provide assistance to customers, particularly customers with disabilities;
 - 4.8.4 Rude and aggressive behaviour;
 - 4.8.5 Conduct whilst driving taxi and conflict with other road users; and
 - 4.8.6 Routes taken by drivers.
- 4.9 The training has been deliberately designed to provide an opportunity for both taxi and PHC drivers to gain a better understanding of the wider trade issues and to address some of myths/barriers that exist within the trade. Many PHC drivers still use a PHC licence as a stepping stone into the taxi trade it provides an opportunity to learn the topography of the city. A Taxi Driver's Licence allows a taxi driver to work both as a taxi and as a PHC driver.
- 4.10 Training has already identified a number of common themes where experienced drivers are clearly unsure of conditions and/or legislative requirements. Only a small number of drivers confirm that they have read and understood licensing, despite the

fact that the application process requires them to confirm this. Common themes include:

- 4.10.1 The [Equalities Act 2010](#) and associated legislation, specifically wheelchairs and assistance dogs;
 - 4.10.2 Cross border hires;
 - 4.10.3 Taxi stances; and
 - 4.10.4 The application process.
- 4.11 Currently 80% of applications are incomplete at the time of application, and the issues identified above have generated a number of enquiries from Hire Car trade representatives.
- 4.12 The training process is dynamic, and because training is delivered in-house the course can develop within the general framework to address issues in real time. In addition, developments in Licensing policy can be explored more thoroughly because the course is delivered by those responsible for policy development.
- 4.13 Drivers are notified by email approximately three months prior to their licence renewal date informing them that they are required to complete Intermediate training. This is followed up with weekly/monthly reminders if the driver has failed to book onto a course. All drivers are required to submit their renewal application in person at the Licensing Hub at Murrayburn, at which point staff again remind the driver that that they need to complete mandatory training modules.
- 4.14 The Council is aware that City Cabs are supporting training by providing their owner/drivers with funding to attend this training.
- 4.15 Approximately 51% of drivers (Appendix 6) have failed to register for or complete an intermediate training course to date. In the absence of completed mandatory training, drivers would be in breach of their standard licensing conditions.
- 4.16 Should drivers fail to complete mandatory training without justification, then it would be a factor for Committee to consider when determining a renewal application in terms of paragraph 5(3)(d) of the [Civic Government Scotland\) Act 1982](#).
- 4.17 In order to secure compliance with the mandatory training requirement, the following options have been identified:
- 4.17.1 Where drivers have failed to comply with mandatory training, consideration could be given to granting a licence for a six-month period with a condition requiring them to complete the training by the end of that period.
 - 4.17.2 Currently, should drivers fail to provide evidence of criminal convictions, right to work checks or relevant documentation for a renewal of an application, the application is considered to be incomplete and returned to the applicant. This could be extended in circumstances where the applicant is unable to demonstrate completion of mandatory training at time of renewal. A policy

position could be that the application is incomplete for want of evidence of training and the licence will automatically fall. It is understood that Glasgow City Council has adopted a similar stance in relation to completion of mandatory training.

- 4.18 There is an ongoing risk that, in the absence of measures to secure cooperation with the training in the absence of sanctions, drivers will continue to avoid training by not registering. In terms of balancing that risk with measures that are proportionate, it is recommended that Committee agrees with the option set out in 4.17.1. This would allow drivers a short period of time to address the issue before their subsequent renewal is required, acknowledging that these are existing licence holders who have otherwise been considered fit and proper, and loss of licence would be likely to have a significant economic impact. Where a driver does not comply with the requirement to complete the training within six months then this breach of condition would be considered along with any explanation provided in the usual manner when determining the subsequent licence. The option set out at 4.17.2 could be further considered if after a reasonable period of utilising the option at 4.17.1 there were still significant number of drivers not engaging with mandatory training' which would establish an evidence base to support the proportionality of this approach.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Drivers will be given a final opportunity to apply for and complete mandatory training courses. In the absence of engagement, it is intended that applications for renewal from relevant drivers will be referred to committee.
- 5.2 A review of the current training fees will be undertaken.
- 5.3 Work on one day refresher course will start later in the year. The courses will be required every three years and will follow completion of the Intermediate

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 None arising directly from this report. The Council's scale of fees for licensing applications was approved with effect from 1 April 2024. Any costs from implementing policy changes will be contained within the current ring-fenced income generated from licensing fees.
- 6.2 The cost of training will be in addition to existing licensing fees and any income generated will be used to offset the cost of the licensing system. There are no costs to the Council's revenue budget.
- 6.3 The price of the three-day course is currently £300, which was based on prices during 2018/19. This needs to be revisited to address the subsequent cost of inflation.

7. Equality and Poverty Impact

- 7.1 Matters described in this report have no relationship to the public sector general equality duty, thus there is no direct equalities impact arising from this report.

8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

- 8.1 No environmental impact arises from the contents of this report.

9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

- 9.1 The Council's regulatory approach to taxi and PHC enforcement contributes to the Council's strategic priority to create good places to live and work in Edinburgh.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 [Licensing Policy Development – Taxi and Private Hire Driver Training - Regulatory Committee, 2 February 2015.](#)
- 10.2 [Taxi and Private Hire Driver Training Consultation Update – Regulatory Committee, 19 September 2016.](#)
- 10.3 [Taxi and Private Hire Driver Consultation Update – Regulatory Committee, 21 November 2016.](#)
- 10.4 [Taxi and Private Hire Driver Training Update – Regulatory Committee 6 February 2023.](#)

11. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Additional background information.

Appendix 2 – Taxi and Private Hire Driver Training - Foundation Course.

Appendix 3 – Taxi and Private Hire Driver Training Foundation Course - Attendees and Passes.

Appendix 4 – Taxi and Private Hire Driver Training Foundation Course – Feedback.

Appendix 5 – Taxi and Private Hire Driver Training – Intermediate Course.

Appendix 6 – Taxi and Private Hire Driver Training Intermediate Course - Attendees and Passes.

Appendix 7 – Taxi and Private Hire Driver Training Intermediate Course – Feedback.

Appendix 8 – Taxi and Private Hire Driver Training Intermediate Course – Complaint.

Appendix 9 – Taxi and PHC complaints.

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Appendix 1 – Additional Background information

In November 2016, the Regulatory Committee agreed to adopt a compulsory training programme for all existing taxi and PHC drivers. The training was due to commence in 2020 however due to the Pandemic, it was necessary to delay the roll out of this training programme.

The committee agreed in February 2023 that training would start rolling out from November 2023 and agreed that every existing driver would undertake a three day course.

This has been communicated via the Taxi and Private Hire Trade Group with this training being on the agenda at every meeting since 2016. It has been supported by the Taxi and Private Hire Working Group with trade representatives from the Companies and Unions representing the drivers.

The Taxi and Private Hire Trade Group met on 15 December and training was again subject of discussion. It was acknowledged that training had been on the agenda since 2016 and whilst the majority of the current group were not involved at that time there was a consensus that training was important and necessary to maintain and drive up standards.

The course includes a half day practical module on Accessibility including assisting wheelchair users and a half day practical first aid course.

Attendance on the three day course is compulsory (but there is no requirement to pass an exam at the end of the course) and thereafter there will be a one day refresher course at the point of each renewal. The course has been developed to ensure drivers knowledge and skills are kept up to date regarding licensing requirements, conditions, changes in legislation and policy and would address public safety concerns, ultimately promoting continuous improvement across the trade.

This will contribute to the quality of the service provided, reduce the level of complaints, and improve the quality of the taxi and PHC fleet and overall standards befitting a capital city. Training and refresher training is essential in most professions where the safety of the public is in the hands of professional drivers. Continuous professional development is a proven method of improving standards and demonstrating professional competence. Group 2, HGV and PSV drivers must complete compulsory CPD modules at their own expense in addition to passing their medical.

The three day course can be completed over three consecutive days or over a three week period, with attendance required one day each week. These dates are published on the Council website and booking should be completed online. The cost of the training sits with the driver which is common practice for professional drivers and the Council has no funding in place to reduce the costs.

The maximum number of drivers attending a course will be 24, which will enable the class to split into two groups of 12 for the practical training days. There is capacity to run more than one course per week and council officers are confident with the support of the trade that all drivers can complete training within a three-year period.

From the outset the Council advocated that drivers should complete an assessment mirroring what would happen in other areas that currently require CPD as part of their licensing requirements. At the request of the trade the regulatory committee agreed not to require a compulsory assessment on the Intermediate Course but agreed to provide an optional assessment for drivers. Drivers to date have declined the opportunity to sit an assessment. Applicant attending the Foundation course must sit and pass the multiple choice assessment prior to an application for a licence being granted.

Training should not be 'one off' in nature where drivers complete a course only once in their career. A one day refresher course is also being developed and this will provide a framework for continuous improvement Development. Refresher training will be required after three years and will create an opportunity to provide updates on any changes to legislation or conditions, allow for recertification of a first aid qualification if necessary, and address areas of concern including complaints.

From the outset it was proposed that training would be delivered 'in house' by Council staff with a background in licensing these vehicles and drivers. Delivering training 'in house' allows the Council to tailor the course content to address localised practice, Council policy, and Council conditions.

High quality taxi and private hire car services play an essential part in local transport networks, providing an invaluable service for both residents and visitors to Scotland. To meet the needs of customers and communities, the operation of the taxi and private hire car trades must reflect an appropriate standard and the introduction of this training course enables the Council to support this aim.

The benefits of training will provide an opportunity to:

- a) raise standards and improve quality of service;
- b) increase customer satisfaction, reduce the number of complaints and liabilities;
- c) engage in learning and create a locally licensed service which achieves nationally recognised standards;
- d) address any changes to legislation or licensing conditions;
- e) attract new people into the trade, offering a career path which promotes continuous professional development; and
- f) create a service within the city that truly reflects its capital city status.

Appendix 2

Driver Skills Development Programme – Taxi and Private Hire Driver Training - Foundation Course

The course consists of four online training sessions that last two hours each. At the end of the course there is a face-to-face assessment at the Licensing Hub at Murrayburn which must be passed.

Module Name	Content	Group
The regulatory framework of the taxi and private hire industry	This module will provide the knowledge required to understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to meet the criteria to obtain and renew a vehicle licence within the taxi and private car hire industry• How to meet the criteria to obtain and renew a driver licence within the taxi and private car hire industry• The requirement to comply with local conditions of licence.• Why an application for a new licence or renewal of an existing licence would be refused.• Why an existing licence would be suspended or revoked• The offences associated with breaching the licensing conditions.	Regulatory Framework
Taxi and PHC Vehicle; Compliance with Licensing Conditions and Best Practices	This module will provide the knowledge required to understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The requirements to obtain a vehicle Certificate of Compliance• The conditions related to signage, advertising and use of CCTV in the vehicle.• The requirement for regular vehicle servicing and maintenance• The procedure for routine vehicle inspections• The vehicle licensing conditions.	Vehicle
Taxi and PHC Driver; Compliance with Licensing Conditions and Best Practices	This module will provide the knowledge required to understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The factors that can affect a driver's judgement and concentration.• How to transport customers in a safe and comfortable manner• The main principles of anti-discriminatory legislation• How to support customers who have special assistance requirements• The driver licensing conditions	Driver

<p>Delivering Service Excellence in the Taxi and PHC Trade</p>	<p>This module will provide the knowledge required to understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The importance of providing a professional service and building a reputation for service excellence• The rules, safety measures and restrictions related to picking up and setting down passengers• How to accurately charge out a fare for transporting passengers• How to use communication skills to avoid conflict and minimise personal risk• How to deal with customer grievance and handle complaints effectively	<p>Service</p>
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Appendix 3 - Taxi and Private Hire Driver Training -Foundation Course Foundation Attendees and Passes

	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024		TOTAL	
	Drivers	Pass	Drivers	Pass	Drivers	Pass	Drivers	Pass	Drivers	Pass	Drivers	Pass
Jan			7	7	40	33	49	43	59	43	155	126
Feb					33	29	52	48	61	55	146	132
Mar			11	9	48	46	95	84	67	47	221	186
Apr			9	8	48	48	0	0	67	51	124	107
May			9	9	52	46	96	80			157	135
Jun					51	44	97	87			148	131
Jul			15	15	40	36	44	42			99	93
Aug			12	11	50	43	48	42			110	96
Sep					42	37	140	133			182	170
Oct			21	16	49	43	123	101			193	160
Nov			23	18	49	41	65	50			137	109
Dec	8	7	41	34	57	50	114	82			220	173
TOTAL	8	7	148	127	559	496	923	792	254	196	1884	1611

** Additional courses ran in March, May, June, September, October and December 2023 to clear backlog of bookings and reduce wait times.

** No April course 2023 due to Easter and public holidays that year.

**Appendix 4 - Driver Skills Development Programme – Taxi and Private Hire
Driver Training – Foundation Course Evaluation Course**

What was the most useful part of the course? - Most useful
“The ease of booking, joining and the in-depth explanations we received on certain, important topics. When we got to Murrayburn, Mark and Fiona were very welcoming and reassuring us about how the assessment would be sat”
“The course in general was very well presented by both teachers and very well delivered”
“All parts useful for me”.
“Knowledge about driving”
“Online session and slides were very informative. The handbook was a bit harder to understand, layout could be a bit better. Mark and Fiona were exceptionally knowledgeable and answering all of the question” Thank you.
“Understanding licensing conditions”
“Understanding the licence conditions”
“Nothing”

How could we improve this course? - How could we improve the course?
“By no fault of Mark or Fiona’s, it was very difficult getting started each module with people not putting themselves on mute or joining the call late. I’m not sure if it’s technically possible but maybe it could be wise if only the person running the course could unmute people when they have their digital hand up. Maybe it’s not possible but I think the persistent low-level disruption on day one was a little distracting”
“In general the course is designed very well. But in term of requirements to apply for Taxi/ PHC driving licence, provide a criminal record from overseas is a bit tricky because there is lot of information on gov.uk regarding how to get an overseas certificate of criminal record but for each country the process is different and, in some cases, it’s very complicated. So I think licence team should review the process of getting overseas criminal record for each country and provide specific information for some country and where possible facilitate applicants with their overseas criminal records. Many thanks”
“I think there is nothing to do so”
“Good”
“Improve layout of the book if possible”
“Would be best if at least two teachers can attend the course at all times as one can take answers through voice and the other can watch the chat”
“Overall the course was very good and enjoyable. Both trainers Mark and Fiona were very informative and knowledgeable”

**Appendix 5 - Driver Skills Development Programme – Taxi and Private Hire
Driver Training -Intermediate Course**

This training course consists of 8 units covered over 3 days, the training is delivered face to face at the Licensing Hub at Murrayburn.

Courses	Duration	
Course Option	3-day course	over 1 week
Course Option	1 day a week	over a 3-week period
Course Option	1 day a week	over a 3-month period

Course Content:

Unit Name	Content	Group
The regulatory framework of the Taxi and Private Hire industry	This unit will provide the knowledge required to understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to meet the requirements to hold and renew a licence • Local Licence Conditions • Duties and responsibilities of the licence holder 	Regulatory Framework
Road Safety when driving passengers in a Taxi or PHV	This module will provide the knowledge required to understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Factors affecting drivers' judgment and concentration • Transportation of customers in a safe and comfortable manner • Compliance requirements for vehicle and driver licence conditions • Response in an emergency 	Vehicle
Professional Customer Service in the Taxi and Private Hire industry	This module will provide the knowledge required to understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing a professional service • Requirements, licence conditions and precautions when transporting • Communication skills • Customer grievance and complaints handling 	Service
Picking up and setting down passengers and fares in the Taxi and PHC industry	This module will provide the knowledge required to understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rules, safety measures and restrictions in picking up and setting down • Calculating fares and charging • Electronic means of communication • Operation of a Booking Office 	Passengers
Transporting of children and young people by Taxi or PHV	This module will provide the knowledge required to understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of the driver and Ancillary Legislation • Safe pick up and drop off destination 	Children

Taxi and Private Hire services for passengers who require assistance	This module will provide the knowledge required to understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-discrimination legislation • Recognising passengers who need assistance. • Providing the appropriate services • Assessing risk and specialist equipment • Demonstrate safe wheelchair assistance to passengers • Providing safe assistance 	Assistance
First Aid	This module will provide the knowledge required to understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding basic principles of First Aid • Incident Assessment • Management of casualties that are unresponsive • Management of casualties not breathing/difficulty breathing • Providing safe assistance 	First Aid
Public Protection, Awareness Raising and Response	This module will provide the knowledge required to understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is public Protection • Identify different types of harm/abuse • What action to take if concerned • Awareness of principals within child and adult protection legislation 	Protection

The maximum number of drivers attending a course is 24, which will enable the class to split into 2 groups of 12 for the practical training days. There is capacity to run more than one course per week and council officers are confident with the support of the trade that all drivers can complete training within a three-year period. From the outset the council did advocate that drivers should complete an assessment mirroring what would happen in other areas that currently require CPD as part of their licensing requirements. At the request of the trade the regulatory committee agreed not to require a compulsory assessment but agreed to provide an optional assessment for drivers. To date no one has sat the Intermediate assessment.

Appendix 6 - Driver Skills Development Programme – Taxi and Private Hire Driver Training -Intermediate Course

2023

Month	No: Courses	Participants	Taxi	Taxi	Private Hire	Private Hire
November	1	22	4%	18%	18	(82%)
Total	1	22	4%	18%	18	(82%)

2024

Month	No: Courses	Participants	Taxi	Taxi	Private Hire	Private Hire
January	6	50	11	22%	39	78%
February	6	64	19	29%	45	71%
March	5	80	31	39%	49	61%
April	4	60	24	40%	36	60%
May (to date*)	5	75	16	21%	59	79%
Total	26	329	101	31%	228	69%

* as of 26 April 2024

Renewals 2024

	No: Drivers due:	No: Drivers attended course	No: Drivers booked onto a future course	No: Drivers not renewed	No: Drivers renewed but NOT booked
April	153	94	7	39	13
May	212	94	18	N/A	N/A

**Appendix 7 - Driver Skills Development Programme – Taxi and Private Hire
Driver Training -Intermediate Course – Evaluation Comments**

Please use this space for any other comments. - other comments
"I want to thank you for this course, it was well received for the refresher and to know best what you are allowed and what you are not allowed"
"Wasting time and money, should be 2 different courses for PH and Taxi drivers Only 1 day not 3 days it's to much. Print 2 books and after talking everything what was inside?? Wheelchair training for what. Most PH know how to help people, it was nothing for us.
"The course was good to remain all Taxi Drivers. Fiona and Mark were great and helpful every time. Thank you
"Generally speaking the course was well run and was useful to clarify a few grey areas, however as a long-term driver working with one of the larger black cab organisations and its contract customers, the learning experience was somewhat limited"
"I feel the course I was on some drivers came to complain instead of listening to what the trainer is saying. Drivers all need to obey the rules and laws of the road"
"Fiona and Mark were brilliant. Really helpful and great trainers"
"The course was well presented by the facilitators who were well prepared and knowledgeable on the subject matter"
"Course fee too much- needs to be reassessed"
"The course was good, and I learnt a lot of information and was good to get a refresh but what I would say is that the course could easily be condensed into 2 days 3 days was a bit much other than that Fiona and Mark were super"
"Mark and Fiona were very easy approach and we're good at their job. Overall the course dragged on though and could have been done in a lot shorter time with too many breaks. The wheelchair training was a waste of time which was not Mark's fault. Been shown on and old run down tx4 no straps in taxi. Our class was also 15 Uber drivers who don't do this. The last day we had someone from Uber come in from Glasgow. He loved the sound of his own voice and didn't stop speaking over Fiona and Mark and just ruined the last day. He almost started a fight with someone in the class and brought no value to the course whatsoever. Overall to renew my brief £200 renew £300 course £500 lost wages which in my option a complete joke which I really can't afford right now. I have raised a complaint to central. The only thing of any value was first aid i already done everything the modules when I paid for the first lot of modules when I passed. These sorts of things should be put on for people get regular complaints but it's an insult asking taxi drivers who have done the job for years to sit through that"
"Mark and Fiona were very easy approach and we're good at their job. Overall the course dragged on though and could have been done in a lot shorter time with too many breaks. The wheelchair training was a waste of time which was not Mark's fault. Been shown on and old run down tx4 no straps in taxi. Our class was also 15 Uber drivers who don't do this. The last day we had someone from Uber come in from Glasgow. He loved the sound of his own voice and didn't stop speaking over Fiona and Mark and just ruined the last day. He almost started a fight with someone in the class and brought no value to the course whatsoever. Overall to

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"After booking class I wasn't really up for this 3 day course as covered most of it before when passed brief but to my surprise actually enjoyed class as Fiona interacted with us as did Mark and Gordon which made class more enjoyable definitely, only thing was first air was very Veryan poor I've done other first aid classes and this one was absolutely garbage he never covered lots of stuff including incident with electricity and few other things I was falling asleep it was that bad and even other taxi driver who's a full time fireman said same he was clueless in his own words but in all course was very good and good refresher"

"Instructors were very good, knowledgeable, not one sided too PH or Taxi. Good interactions and delivered course well.
First aid was a bit of a poor show I do yearly full days training on this topic and felt it was rushed, lacked any real substance and instructor forgot major basic life support training. For example drabc danger response airway breath circulation he jumped straight onto breathing. Needs to be an element of what the danger and response means but mainly check airway before any breathing the casualty may have stopped breathing as just needed their airway opened which a simple jaw trust chin lift tilt. Definitely training he missed how easily pads can be placed the wrong way, never went into shaving chest or exposing metals such as chains bra straps necklaces. I just felt I could have given a better presentation"

" As a Black cab owner/ driver I found the course very informative and interesting. Also the people that delivered the course were very knowledgeable and helpful if you had any questions"

"Some points it seems we are there, so that the black cab guys can make fun of us, I completely dislike that.

"Fiona, Mark, and Gregg were very good/helpful"
"Extra thanks to Fiona for her help"

"Thank you for providing us with the DSDP Intermediate Course. It was a pleasure to meet each of you in person. Seeing other drivers branching out from their daily routines to share thoughts and stories was a pleasant opportunity.
I found the course informative and believe it enhanced our skill set. This knowledge will hopefully contribute to my professional development"

"Plenty surprised. Well-presented and informative"

"Happy with the course"

"Very impressed by Mark and Fiona who delivered the course content.
Hats off to both for their continuous speech and standing for hours nonstop. That too for 3 days in a row. 🙌🙌🙌
It's not easy to do, I got tired sitting there"

"I would squeeze this course into two days, saving trip to Murrayburn
Course itself is necessary for newcomers to the trade"

"The course was very informative I learned a lot that I was not aware of such as children, public awareness, medical bit, well chair....
It also helped that both instructors were fantastic and engaged every and explain in detail if we were unsure"

"Thank you Mark and Fiona"

"Delivery of the course was very good. I didn't expect to enjoy it, but I was pleasantly surprised. Both Fiona and Mark were knowledgeable and managed to keep a relaxed, friendly feel about it"

"It was nice atmosphere knowledgeable instructors were very polite knowledgeable I enjoyed the course"

"Fiona and Mark did an amazing job. Congratulations!"

"Personally I appreciate the course is something we have to attend, all of the information given was information I already knew so it was basically a reminder although I didn't need one. I appreciate Fiona and Mark and team are just doing their job but due to the fact I knew everything more or less it was very hard to try stay focused if I'm honest. I appreciate also we finished sharp everyday due to low numbers on the course which was ideal and thank you for that however I feel the 3-day course could be put into a 1.5-day course in total. A lot of information that was given to us was elaborated on which I'm all for as it makes discussions available etc which are good but for me there was far too many examples, tangents and going off topic in some instances. If you were to cut all of those out the day could have been even shorter, you have to appreciate I am losing 3 days' work and it's costing me to sit the course. I definitely feel that examples and stories though were irrelevant at times or there were just too many. Overall, the course was set up in a high standard and delivered very well and I cannot fault Fiona or Mark"

"I actually quite enjoyed the course as it was informative and made to be informal in a good way

Haven't been in a classroom situation for 3 days since I left school 47 yrs ago so was a bit apprehensive but was comfortable all of the time"

Appendix 8 - Driver Skills Development Programme – Taxi and Private Hire Driver Training - Intermediate Course – Complaints

Dear Councillors

I have taken the liberty of copying you all into the same email for you to respond by return regarding the latest cash grab placed on the Edinburgh taxi trade by this council

You, as a council expect us now to attend three modules on our taxi drivers license renewal at a cost of £300 plus three days loss of earnings to be trained to do the job we do on a daily basis on top of the ridiculous renewal fee of £207 for the application!

I fully understand this for new drivers although the cost is ridiculous but not for drivers with a current license and please let me tell you why.

1, picking up and setting down passengers, what possible advice can be given regarding exactly what the job is all about, picking up and dropping of passengers? It is the definition of one of the oldest professions!

2, transporting children, this happens on almost every shift especially day shift and once again who is going to advise on this when it's done by us daily!

3, passengers who require assistance, these passengers are given a wide range of assistance from taxi drivers daily meeting the individual requirements of the person!

4, first aid, this nowadays is a minefield for litigation should you administer aid in the wrong way but taxi drivers don't just drive past and do administer basic first aid unless the driver may have a further advanced medical training!

5, public protection, you all have no idea what taxi drivers do above and beyond the call of duty for public protection!

Being a taxi driver, you learn something every day and on almost every shift you come to need any of the skills for all of the above. Something that you cannot be taught in a classroom by someone who has never done the job.

As a driver, you can be verbally abused by some passengers, you can be spat at, you can be assaulted, you can be threatened, you can be left to clean up a mess left by passengers, you can be left with a bill for damage done to the taxi by passengers, you can frequently have objects thrown at the taxi endangering your life and leaving you with a bill to repair the taxi, you also come across all types of accidents where you may step in to help. Not forgetting who are the first people called for help by the police.

So my point is, as a taxi driver, the only training you can get is what you learn on the job. The fact you as a council want us to sit in a classroom to learn nothing, pay for the privilege and lose income at the same time. Already there is a shortage of drivers and should this lunacy not be stopped then there will be even less when your license renewal ends up costing you around a thousand pounds.

The taxi trade has been a cash cow to this council for far too long and needs to stop here and now. You also charge us £407 for a glorified mot and cannot justify the viability of the cab office or standard of enforcement.

In writing this to you all as councillors for this ward with a number of taxi drivers and families as constituents and ask of you to step forward and stop this tax on the taxi trade and I look forward to your replies and I am more than happy to meet with you to discuss it.

Dear Councillor Fullerton I'm writing this email as a black driver for 25 years and to find out council plans for all us cabbies to be asked to do moduels that we have already done when we passed out topographical taxi test many years ago can you tell me why now council now want introduce this plus a fee of £300 plus 2 days classroom time? We are already being crushed by over inflated cab test and badge renewal fees my partner also taxi driver of over 20 years herself has said she will not renew her brief if this is forced upon us as she has form of dyslexia so she found it hard enough and stressful passing the taxi test this is just something else she doesn't need or agree with I won't be the only taxi driver to raise concerns over this stupid idea and if council stand firm on this we'll the cab office will have a lot of taxi badges handed back at renewal and drivers walk away from trade the council is playing with fire but maybe this is their plan as with all these new road closures and cycle lanes bus gates making or job virtually impossible and with talk of pedestriasing George St this would be the death of the black cab trade so please think carefully over these moduels as many many driver will walk away from the job its just no longer worth it with outrageous fees, I can understand moduels are part of the exam process but this should only apply to new applications for drivers who want to become taxi driver or phc not penalise drivers with over 20 years service I love my job and city so please Councillor don't kill the black cab trade over night by introducing these new stupid measure I hope to here your response very soon before us cab driver take to the streets in protest thanks

I am writing to you to express my dismay at hearing of your regulatory committee's decision to force Edinburgh's professional Taxi drivers to undertake a compulsory training course at their own expense.

For starters you are telling every Taxi and PHV driver they aren't good enough or aren't up to date with current regulations.

Secondly you are forcing a team of dedicated professionals, who are struggling financially, to stay off work for three whole days and also pay a staggering amount of money (£300)to learn things that could easily be learnt as an online training module .

Please tell us why this training cannot be done as an online module .

I am strongly against your Driver Skills Development programme intermediate Course in its proposed format and request that the regulatory committee have another look at how this can be acquired in a different way and that shows some consideration to the hundreds of dedicated professional Taxi drivers who are trying their best in exceptional circumstances.

Example: Lack of drivers, Lack of new EURO 6 compliant vehicles or having to convert existing vehicles to comply with emissions regulations and a rapidly dwindling trade since the COVID pandemic.

I have cc'd my local MP Alex Cole-Hamilton to also look into this matter .

you are aware the Cab Office and or Licensing Board have changed the criteria for the renewal of a Taxi Drivers licence.

We are now required to undergo a 3 day training course at an additional cost of £300, on top of the renewal cost of, I think £205.

All of the current licence holders, usually, renew every three years and I've been informed that the training course will be required for each and every renewal date.

Having driven a taxi as an owner operator since passing my topographical test in 2005, I find this absolutely ridiculous. I'm sure all of the current license holders, like

myself, have previously sat the prerequisite courses before we were given our licenses at great cost and personal time.

We are now being asked, or rather forced as a fait accompli, to pay an exorbitant sum in addition to the renewal cost and attend a 3 day course, again a great loss of earnings to each individual driver. I also believe that these courses will need to be done each time we renew our licence, ie every 3 years, surely this can't be the case?

I have no problem with new licence holders being asked to do this , I did it myself in 2005, but to force each driver to pay this to continue to drive is nothing short of, at best sharp practice, at worst just filling the coffers of the council.

I think that this should be looked at again and can assure you I am not the only very unhappy taxi driver/operator.

Dear Paul,

I have been contacted by Steven Hogg, a taxi driver in Edinburgh. He is raising with me, his concerns regarding the City of Edinburgh Council's taxi driver licence renewal process.

Could I please receive some form of explanation into the cost and requirement for what appears to be a duplicate of the original course, that now has to be completed every 3 years, as part of his licence renewal, incurring a cost of over £1,200.

My constituent has been informed that in order to renew his taxi driver licence with Edinburgh Council after Christmas, he has to attend a 3 day Driver Skills Development Programme Intermediate Course, at a personal cost of £300. This is on top of £202 for the actual renewal which has been increased from £183. In addition he will have to take 3 days off work to attend the mandatory course which will cost him in the region of another £700.

When my constituent started as a new driver in 2012 he paid for, and completed the relevant training modules at Stevenson College at a cost of over £500. This new course is a duplicate of that course, and now has to be completed every 3 years as part of his licence renewal - a cost of over £1,200 every time, and covers issues he deals with every day he sets foot in his taxi.

My constituent is understandably angry at this renewal process and the cost it will incur, and I would be very grateful if you could advise, as it will affect all taxi drivers across the board.

Kind regards,

Jeremy R Balfour MSP

Good morning

Having now done a bit research on the drivers skills training course the council want to roll out, can you confirm that this is as stated in email as " COMPULSORY " ?

From what I have learnt this is not set in stone.

The email sent is wrongly worded and misleading as this is currently not mandatory for people renewing their licence.

If I am wrong I am open to hear the councils counter response?

I am currently going to discuss this with councillors and relevant taxi bodies to clear this up and if the wording of this email is misleading.
As a very experienced professional black cab driver for 25 years this course offers me nothing I don't know and I and many others would gain nothing from it.
I understand the course for new or problem drivers with no experience or poor customer conduct.
Happy to have this email and discussion forwarded to relevant people involved with this.
As it stands I intend to renew my license but refuse to take this windfall money making course for the council that offers no benefit to myself.

No reply as usual just like on twitter Cammy day I have been driving taxis 40 years surely I have enough Experience that a three day course I can't afford due to illness I can't raise £300 so on top I pay £208 so £508 for three year license looks like life ends at 60 am being priced out being taxi driver
On Sun, 11 Feb 2024, 12:38 b Mitchell, < > wrote:

I have no been able to work for a bit I ripped my rotator cuff so toiling to drive

On Wed, 24 Jan 2024, 15:31 b Mitchell, < > wrote:

So glad lunch at tom kitchens is included I have never been able to afford to go there

On Sun, 24 Dec 2023, 04:15 b Mitchell, < > wrote:

I probably won't be able to afford it as it's a bit of a rip off Edinburgh is like north Korea now a job you have done for 30 years needs no training the councillors on other hand need training to do there jobs maybe I can show them for £300

We are suppose to be doing modules for taxi..one module Uber rep comes and gives lecture on Uber and Uber eats.what has that got to do with taxis drivers please..would appreciate if you can send me email of a councilor,as this is not acceptable,that we go to a module as taxi drivers and listen to Uber reps.Thankyou

Can you tell me why there was an Uber representative at the Edinburgh council compulsory modules today at Murrayburn. Why was he involved at all. This is supposed to be about training not a PR exerise. I'm frankly very disappointed that this has been allowed to happen. You're also asking us to look out for and report people trafficking. Are you really serious about this. I have no option but to take this matter further. Regards
Sent from my iPhone

Dear Kate Campbell, Alys Mumford, Tim Jones and Jane Meagher,

I am an Edinburgh black taxi driver (for over 30 years) and I have just been informed that upon renewal of my taxi drivers badge with Edinburgh council I am to be forced to complete a new 3 day attended course at the taxi examination centre at a cost of £300 on top of my badge renewal fee of £205. Which will result in 3 days loss of pay for a day shift driver and 5 days loss of pay for a nightshift driver.

Given that the owners already have to pay a fee of £405 for a glorified

MOT certificate for the taxi per annum and let's not mention the fact that we are now forced into renewing the vehicle every 10 years even though our taxis would pass the standard UK MOT test, set by the ministry for transport. At a time when everyone is struggling with the cost of living crisis, I find this extra £300 both scandalous and unnecessary. It is just another way for Edinburgh councillors to take even more money out of working class pockets. At the very least this should be an online FREE course at our convenience thus resulting in no working monies lost. Then perhaps a refresher online course every year . Many taxi drivers cannot afford a family holiday let alone lose 3 shifts and an extra £300. I will look forward to your response.

Appendix 9 – Taxi and PHC enforcement Summary

Complaints since 1 October 2023

595 total complaints

- 123 / 21% about Taxi's
- 426 / 72% PHC's
- Remaining 46 / 8% Miscellaneous (Booking offices, generic, taxi ranks etc.)

Complaint Categories	Number of Complaints
Aggressive Behaviour	36
Complaint from a Cyclist	2
Dress Code	65
Driving Manner	44
Fare refused	6
Greenway	1
Illegal Plying for Hire	111
Inappropriate parking	66
Licensed vehicle involved in accident	6
Miscellaneous	45
Mobile phone use	2
Outside our Remit/Alleged Driving Offence	92
Overcharging	19
Poor customer service	10
Sexual Behaviour	1
Smoking	26
Unaware of route / destination	1
Vehicle used when not of required standard	62
Grand Total	595

Enforcement Action overview

01 Compliance check completed	699
02 Corrective advice given	19
03 Written warning issued	1

Month	Compliance checks
Oct-23	208
Nov-23	289
Dec-23	82
Jan-24	154
Feb-24	182
***GRAND TOTALS:	915