

SAFE TAXI TRANSPORT tries always to be a voice of conscience which should not be muted by the rich and powerful (government). We are a voice that carries a genuine concern for the weak, the vulnerable, the aged, the sick and infirm.

We intend to always hold the state to account in the promotion of good and the defence of the vulnerable.

We believe consecutive state governments have shown a complete disrespect for people's human dignity in the way it has treated the aged and infirm with taxi transport.

When the disrespect for people's human dignity is inflicted to secure goals that have nothing to do with their needs or wrong doing, it is clearly and simply ethically unjustified. And it should be said to be such. The ill treatment of people with disabilities is really neither complex nor confusing. In fact, in a just society, ethical judgement simplifies the making of policy.

It eliminates unacceptable options and so encourages good policy making.

The TAXI INDUSTRY INQUIRY had many opportunities to bring about better policy for the disadvantaged but has failed to do so. The TAXI SERVICES COMMISSION has the opportunity to make a difference but does not.

We have called on the government to widen the scope of the MULTI PURPOSE TAXI PROGRAM but they have refused to do so. The continued release of taxi licences does nothing for the disadvantaged because the government fails to understand the needs of many of these people.

Not many disadvantaged people – the aged, the disabled included – would ever use a taxi if they had another way of getting around. The government's refusal to allow these people a provider of choice is appalling and limits the amount of socialisation that is required to allow these people to enjoy many of the things life has for them.

There is a great deal of despair and uncertainty out there in the real world but for the disadvantaged this is exacerbated by the worry of using a taxi that may not turn up, may not like a short fare, may not want to have to process the MULTI PURPOSE TAXI CARD, may not know where it is going.

Even worse is getting home. The taxi networks make no commitment to turn up at the booking time and certainly will not force or penalise a driver who refuses to pick up a job. These vulnerable people are just left at home to wonder why other commercial passenger vehicles cannot be used for their transport unless they pay full fare.

The Taxi Services Commission reacts poorly to this. They just keep on using their disproportionate powers to issue more taxi licences but do not understand that quantity does not necessarily mean quality. Why doesn't the TSC make sure that every taxi licence they issue is a wheel chair accessible taxi licence? Why won't they take on some of the submissions put to the inquiry to set up a taxi depot simply for the disadvantaged? Why won't they encourage older men and women to take on these licences by giving them incentives to do so such as cheaper training subsidies, mentoring from within the industry, access to various groups calling out for these types of vehicles?

The answer is the TSC does not involve ITSELF in it. Don't THEY know that taking a psychiatric nurse away from their main responsibilities so they can "taxi" a patient to a medical appointment is just out of proportion yet it happens every day.

Our company has trained drivers to care and understand the needs. One government department advises that every time we pick up one of their "patients" we save them \$120. So just think MR

SAMUEL of how much is being lost every day to government coffers when nurses are taxiing people around. This has dramatic flow on effects.

And what's even worse when people want to speak to you, the switchboard operators at the TSC won't put us through, won't give us your contact details and really do not care. I wonder how people feel when their mother and father want to go out to a movie or have a haircut and cannot go or won't go because the taxi services are so poor and the drivers poorly trained.

You are part of a government that does not realise that the pie is no bigger. The TSC are shrinking the amount drivers can earn but still continue to over supply the market. If you increased the pie – (the amount that could be earned by a driver) by extending the MPTP you not only would help out the drivers but also the disadvantaged.

The TSC continues to lease licences but you make no effort to ensure those licences are used for the purpose for which they may be intended. But the TSC don't care about that- it is all about ensuring the government gets its money. It is nothing to do with service to the public.

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