

Date: 28 September 2017

Item: Private Hire Vehicle Safety Performance

This paper will be considered in public

1 Summary

- 1.1 This paper summarises the latest performance and TfL's key activities to ensure public safety when using a Private Hire Vehicle (PHV) in London.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the Panel is asked to note the paper.**

3 Background

- 3.1 The Mayor's Taxi and Private Hire Action Plan (published in 2016) states how the private hire trade has an important role to play in the city's transport mix. Traditional minicab services exist all over London and remain prevalent in suburban areas, alongside suburban taxis, serving local communities. Meanwhile, chauffeur and executive services use high-end vehicles to serve London's thriving business and leisure industries. The Action Plan also makes clear of the need to ensure driver safety standards are rigorously enforced across both the PHV and taxi industries.
- 3.2 As of the end of August 2017, there were approximately 88,000 PHVs licensed by Transport for London (TfL). This is an increase of 80 per cent from approximately 49,000 at the end of 2009/10. The number of PHV licensed drivers has increased from 59,000 to nearly 117,000, a virtual doubling in size. TfL is required to licence a PHV driver or vehicle if they meet the statutory requirements. The Mayor and TfL are currently lobbying National Government to pass legislation that would give TfL the power to cap the number of licensed drivers to address concerns over air quality and congestion.
- 3.3 While the private hire industry has grown significantly in recent years, as the regulator and licensing authority, TfL has been working to ensure passenger safety is the top priority for the industry. This can be seen in the measures implemented as part of the Private Hire Regulations Review covering issues such as an English Language Requirement for drivers and the confirmation of driver and vehicle booking details shared with customers by the operator.
- 3.4 The Mayor's Taxi and Private Hire Action Plan built on the Private Hire Regulations Review and includes new safety measures such as the proposal to introduce an Advanced Driving Test for private hire drivers, quadrupling the number of Taxi and Private Hire Compliance officers with an additional 250 officers, and reviewing private hire operator compliance costs to ensure the

licence fee structure for private hire operators reflects the costs of licensing and compliance activity. The Action Plan also includes a commitment to report personal injury collisions involving taxis and PHVs separately in the interests of transparency.

4 Collision data

- 4.1 Currently personal injury road traffic collisions, occurring on the public highway, are reported in accordance with the STATS19 national reporting system. Vehicle categories are designated by the Department for Transport (DfT) and combine taxi and private hire vehicles into a single category.
- 4.2 The available information to date on all taxi and private hire (combined) occupant casualties recorded under STATS19 to December 2016 is summarised below. The data shows that the number of KSI casualties has increased by 50 per cent between 2015 and 2016 but has fallen by 18 per cent between the 2005 to 2009 average and 2016. This performance should be considered in light of the scale of increase in the industry as mentioned in Section 3.2.

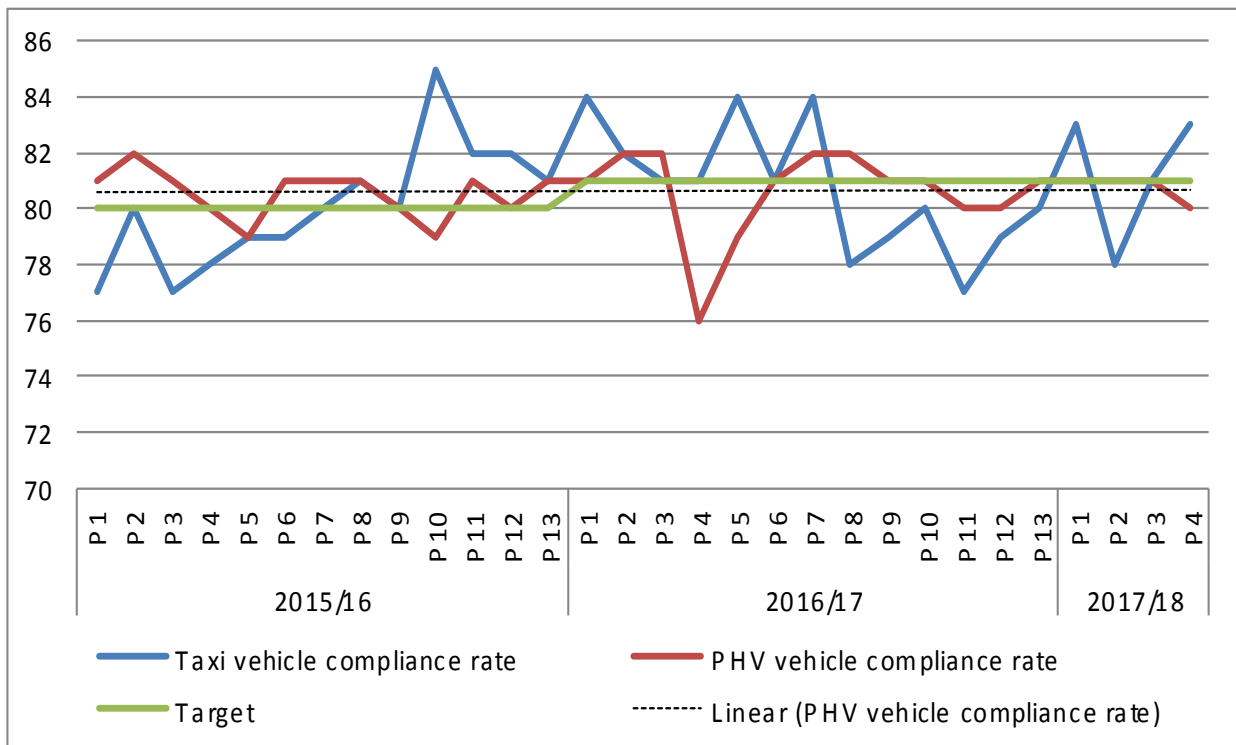
Taxi and Private Hire occupant casualties in the year 2016 compared with the 2005-09 average and 2015					
	2005-2009 average A	2015 B	2016 C	Percentage change over 2005-2009 average (C-A)/A%	Percentage change over 2015 (C-B)/B %
Killed	1	1	0	-100%	-100%
KSI	33	18	27	-18%	50%
Slightly injured	344	809	762	122%	-6%
All casualties	377	827	789	109%	-5%

- 4.3 In line with the Mayor's Taxi and Private Hire Action Plan, at the end of 2016, the MPS implemented the Case Overview and Preparation Application (COPA) system. This allows the reporting of personal injury collisions involving taxis and private hire vehicles to be shown as two separate categories.
- 4.4 Road safety figures for the first quarter of 2017, including a breakdown of collisions involving taxis and private hire vehicles, are currently being verified and will be published later in 2017.

5 PHV Pass Rate

- 5.1 As part of TfL's compliance activity PHVs are subject to roadside vehicle inspections to ensure they are meeting the relevant regulations. Taxis are also subject to such roadside inspections. The results of these roadside inspections are included in the Panel's Health, Safety and Environmental Quarterly Report. We are now checking more than five times as many taxi and PHV drivers and vehicles than in 2016/17. Between 23 July and 19 August 2017 (Period 5), there were 27,182 PHV driver and vehicle checks and 9,195 taxi driver and vehicle checks.

- 5.2 Compliance levels of these roadside inspections remain high, at 90 and 89 per cent for taxis and private hire respectively.
- 5.3 In addition to these roadside inspections, PHVs are subject to a TfL specific annual inspection at one of six centres across London as part of their licensing requirements, as well as six-monthly MOT inspection. The 'first time pass rate' of PHVs (and taxis) is one performance measure TfL uses to assess the general road worthiness of the taxi and PHV fleet. The performance of PHVs' first time pass rate is shown below – including those for taxis for way of comparison. The general linear trend for PHVs shows a regular performance against the target of 80 per cent in 2015/16 and 81 per cent since 2016/17.



6 TPH Compliance and Enforcement Activity

- 6.1 The previously mentioned additional 250 Compliance Officers are part of the wider taxi and private hire compliance and enforcement activity undertaken by TfL (either directly or through its partnership with the police) to ensure passenger safety. The current priorities for Taxi and Private Hire (TPH) enforcement and policing are:
- TPH journey-related sexual offences – there were 136 offences in 2015: 28 of these were rape offences. The majority were sexual assaults, which can include offences such as intentional sexual touching of another person without their consent, a driver attempting to kiss or grope a passenger or a driver grabbing a passenger's hand to kiss it. The official TPH journey-related sexual offence figures for 2016 will be published in the autumn
 - touting and unlawful plying for hire – both pose a serious risk to the travelling public – these vehicles are unregulated and uninsured for the purposes of carrying passengers, and present an economic threat to the licensed and

booked trade by intercepting their customers and representing unfair competition;

- (c) unlicensed drivers and illegal trading – such as forged licences and insurance documents; and the fraudulent impersonation of a licensed driver also present a serious risk to public safety, take business away from the licensed, law-abiding trade and has the potential to damage the world class reputation of taxis and of PHVs;
- (d) road danger reduction – proactive work to contribute to Vision Zero by tackling any risk posed by licensed drivers; and
- (e) compliance activity – to deter unlawful activity and provide visible reassurance to the law abiding licensed trade. There has been an increased focus on new requirements as part of the recent Private Hire regulations review.

6.2 Work involves intelligence-led and routine inspections of licensed operators; roadside vehicle and driver inspections; investigating reports from the trade and members of the public relating to unlawful and non-compliant activity; test purchases to detect offenders; joint work with the police to investigate cases of fraud by unlicensed drivers and forgeries of drivers' licences and insurance certificates and undertaking joint operations with the police at key locations such as Heathrow and the West End or as part of targeted operations on key issues e.g. Operation Safer Travel at Night (Operation STAN, improving the safety of traveling by taxi or minicab at night) and Operation Neon (high visibility enforcement in the West End every Friday and Saturday night).

7 Next Steps

7.1 In line with the actions and commitments made within the Mayor's Taxi and Private Hire Action Plan, TfL will continue to take action to ensure PHV passenger safety. Particular focus includes:

- (a) lobbying Government to pass legislation that will tackle cross-border hiring and allow a cap on the number of PHVs licensed by TfL;
- (b) lobbying Government for additional enforcement powers, including powers to issue Fixed Penalty Notices for a small group of more common, less serious offences;
- (c) publishing separated collision data;
- (d) defending implementation of the Private Hire Regulations Review in light of legal challenge; and
- (e) building on the enhanced topographical test for PHV drivers (which assesses drivers' ability to read maps and plan journeys) by requiring they take an advanced driving test before they can be licensed or relicensed.

List of appendices to this report:

None

List of Background Papers:

The Mayor's Taxi and Private Hire Action Plan, September 2016

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