

## Meeting Notes

### Vancouver Island Limousine Forum

*To Discuss the Application of the Passenger Transportation Act  
to the Limousine Industry*

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.  
Thursday October 5, 2006  
Boardroom 3A, 940 Blanshard Street  
Victoria, BC

#### **Attendance:**

15 Limousine Industry Representatives (for 10 licensees)  
Passenger Transportation Branch (2 representatives)  
Passenger Transportation Board (2 board members and 2 staff)

#### **Introduction**

- Vancouver Island has approximately a quarter of the limousine companies for the province.
- Dennis Day, Chair of the Passenger Transportation Board, and Tom Greene, Registrar and Director and the Passenger Transportation Branch, hosted a limousine forum for licensed Vancouver Island limousine operators.
- The forum was established so the Board and Branch can hear first hand how the current regulatory system is working or not working for you and what can be done to improve things within the existing legislation and regulations.
- It was also hosted to improve the understanding of the Passenger Transportation Act and the responsibilities of the Branch, Board and industry.
- The following notes touch on the main points of discussion.

#### **Hailing and Flagging:**

- Limousine operators asked for clarification about hailing and flagging.
- The Board noted first that pre-booked requests are no longer a standard term and condition for limousine licences. Instead, section 23(3)(a) says that a licensee must have express authorization to carry passengers who hail or flag the vehicle from the street:

Passenger Transportation Act:

23(3) Without limiting subsection (1), a person must not convey in a commercial passenger vehicle, as passengers, persons who hail or flag the motor vehicle from the street, or who cause the motor vehicle to be hailed or flagged from the street, unless

(a) the motor vehicle is a passenger directed vehicle and the licence under which the motor vehicle is operated expressly authorizes that conveyance, or...

The Branch explained that they have worked to clarify the meaning of this, stating that a prospective passenger must make an active motion toward the vehicle from the street or curb. If someone walks up to a driver and discusses a ride, that is not hailing and flagging.

### **Municipal Issues / Taxi & Limousine Distinctions**

Limousine operators discussed a number of issues in the local government context:

- Some said that business licensing costs are the same as taxicabs.
- Taxis benefit from public spaces to drop off, sit and pick up new fares.
- Some noted the inequity.
- Others noted the potential downside of blurring the distinctions between taxis and limousines. This happens, some say, when taxis encroach on the sightseeing work that limousines do, and when limousines do taxi transfers for cruise ship traffic.
- The Board reminded operators that business licensing matters and the use of public space are issues to discuss with the municipalities. Neither the Board nor the Branch can comment on municipal matters.

### **Keeping the Board & Branch Informed**

The Board noted that the submission process is an opportunity to inform the Board about issues and challenges in the limousine industry. When one or more licensees think that a new application could make an existing problem worse, they cannot expect the Board to already know about the problem. The submission process is a valuable opportunity for the Board to hear from people who understand first hand the current state of the local industry. When licensees use the submission process to demonstrate a problem to the satisfaction of the Board, that helps the Board make informed application decisions, and it can help the industry's operating environment.

With respect to enforcement, the Branch described the industry as their eyes and ears, particularly when operators are not licensed or operating contrary to the Act. The Branch stated that since the Branch was established in 2004, Branch resources are very focused on compliance and enforcement in the field.

### **Rates**

The Board extended its standing invitation for limousine operators to propose a system for setting up a rate index or surcharge for limousines. Participants were given Board Policy Guideline for limousine applicants who propose a fuel surcharge for their company alone. Some meeting participants indicated that an indexed or surcharge increase should be mandated on all limousine operators because an operator who increases their rates could become less competitive and lose business, others advocated for licensee choice. As an alternate approach, the Board may develop model rates and rules to show applicants what they might want to include in their application. The Board has received little input from the limousine industry about rates and it is very open to such input.