



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-775
Ein cyf/Our ref KS/03015/17

David John Rowlands AM
Chair - Petitions committee.

government.committee.business@wales.gsi.gov.uk

8 September 2017

Dear *David,*

Thank you for your letter of 10 August regarding Petition P-05-775, calling on the National Assembly for Wales to urge the Welsh Government to put a stop to the 'cross border' and 'sub-contracting' loophole in the law which means hundreds of out of town taxis and private hire vehicles descend on Cardiff to work Private Hire.

The petition submitted by the taxi drivers of Cardiff highlights the weakness of the current licensing regime that regulates the taxi and private hire vehicle sector in Britain. Recent advances in digital technology and smart phone media has rendered the distinction between taxi and private hire vehicles as being less relevant to the market and the customer. Additionally, the inability of local licensing authorities to take enforcement action against drivers operating out of their licensing areas has apparently led to vehicle overcapacity in some areas, seriously depressing the earning potential of some drivers.

On the 23 May, I made an oral statement in the National Assembly for Wales stating that I believe that the outdated legislative framework has become too extensive in some respects, imposing unnecessary burdens on business and artificially restricting the range of services available to consumers; and insufficiently comprehensive in other ways, undermining the fundamental goal of protecting not only the travelling public, but safeguarding drivers from exploitation that is becoming more common place.

The enactment of the Wales Act 2017, and its expected commencement early next year will for the first time, bring the licensing of taxis and private hire vehicles within the legislative competence of the National Assembly for Wales. It is on this basis that I am considering afresh the significant work undertaken by the Law Commission for England and Wales for the reform of the licensing of taxis and private hire vehicles.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Gohebiaeth.Ken.Skates@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Ken.Skates@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

The consultation I started on 12 June is a first step in my ambition to work with the industry, local licensing authorities and users to develop arrangements that may be introduced in Wales to ensure that taxis and private hire vehicles continue to contribute to our ambitions for a connected and sustainable society.

On that basis, I welcome the petition that has been registered by the taxi community in Cardiff.

*Yours ever,
Ken*

Ken Skates AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi a'r Seilwaith
Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure