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Media Release

uber has made illegal cool – and police need to act

Taxi Council Queensland (TCQ) says that the Government and police should be ashamed that illegal taxi operator uber has made criminality and illegality cool.

TCQ chief executive officer Benjamin Wash said that uber has mastered the art of lies and deception, with sections of the media and some MPs falling for it "hook, line and sinker".

He dismissed claims that the company has done 2.5 million trips in south east Queensland as "unfounded and laughable, designed to cloak their illegal operations".

"That police and the Government openly allow a company to break the law and ignore orders to stop, just because this company has a lot of money, is reprehensible and a blight on law and order in Queensland.

"Since when can you buy your way to break the law with money and popular publicity campaigns? It is shameful that this is being allowed."

Mr Wash said if uber were operating within regulations the Taxi Council would have no issue whatsoever but "we have illegal, tax-avoiding taxi operators who refuse to meet even the most minimal of safety standards, and these people are undermining the legal business operations of over 16,000 small business operators that make up the state's taxi industry."

He warned that regulation will no longer protect any small business in Queensland because clearly it means nothing to the Government.

"I repeat again - the taxi industry welcomes competition and we embrace new technology, but there must be a level playing field; and until there is this level playing field, illegal taxi operators cannot be allowed to operate."

Referring to recent allegations of attacks on uber drivers Mr Wash said, "while we condemn any acts of violence by anyone on anyone, it is also the ultimate in hypocrisy for police and government to tell taxi operators not to take the law into their own hands when they themselves refuse to uphold the law by policing and stopping illegal taxi operators.

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