

29 October 2015

Media Statement

Statement from Taxi Council Queensland on Tasmanian Government intentions to legalise uber

The following can be attributed to Benjamin Wash, chief executive officer of Taxi Council Queensland.

Taxi Council Queensland has never called for uber to be banned. We have simply called for a level playing field that ensures anyone operating a taxi service plays by the same rules and abides by the law. If legislation needs to be changed so be it, however in the meantime Taxi Council Queensland expects existing regulations to be enforced and the Queensland Government to uphold the law and ensure that illegal taxi services – which currently includes uber – do not operate.

It should also be noted that it is premature to say that uber will be made legal in Tasmania, or indeed the ACT. Both governments have made it clear that any new laws will also aim to protect consumers by imposing key standards and safeguards applicable to traditional industries. The Tasmanian Premier has been quoted as saying, "The Government believes that it's the government's role to provide a regulatory framework that's fair and that provides necessary protections...". We point out that we do not know what regulations will be enforced by the Tasmanian Government, but we do know that across the world, uber has blatantly refused to meet even minimum safety standards and has rejected any sort of regulatory framework. With their record of non-compliance and flouting of laws, it is doubtful that uber will agree to new legislation in Tasmania, the ACT or anywhere else. We expect them to thumb their nose at new legislation just like they do now, which means that despite new legislation that should make their operations legal, they will still be operating illegally.

uber is a law-breaking foreign bully that pays no taxes in Australia and wants to create a monopoly for themselves at the expense of law-abiding small business operators. State Governments should be aware of this before trying to pander to them. New technology should be embraced, but not at the expense of customer safety and regulations that thousands of Queensland small business operators meet.

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