

His Worship the Mayor Matt Brown  
and Members of City Council  
The Corporation of the City of London  
By e-mail, Sept. 22, 2015

**Re: Vehicles-for-Hire, new technologies, CPSC recommendation**

**London's Taxicab and Limousine Licensing By-Law can already accommodate UberX since there's no licence-to-population ratio cap on executive-class limousine licences**

1. As outlined by Orest Katolyk, Chief By-Law Enforcement Officer, the City of London's responsibility via its *Taxicab and Limousine Licensing By-law* is to ensure health and safety, consumer protection and quality of life, as well as ensuring effective and efficient service delivery, **not** line the pockets of international bandit-taxi conglomerate Uber and its international venture capitalist investors such as Goldman Sachs, the Qatar Investment Authority and China's Baidu corporate conglomerate etc. by allowing them to dictate vehicle-for-hire regulations to the City of London.

2. "Regulatory capture" whereby the business to be regulated (UberX) more or less dictates the regulations to the regulator (in this case, the City of London) is always best avoided for obvious **public interest** reasons. **Support the staff and CPSC recommendation.**

3. In the not-to-distant future, all local vehicle-for-hire companies will be using similar software applications as employed by UberX, but within the current regulatory set-up, so there's no reason whatsoever to introduce a new licensing category for bandit cabs such as UberX, which employs both "predatory pricing" and "surge pricing" in their arbitrary fare structure.

4. In its proposed self-regulatory scheme, Uber makes several questionable statements (in writing) to justify its proposed self-serving, regulatory scheme, including: "Ridesharing is not a full-time commercial pursuit for most drivers. A majority of UberX drivers drive less than 10 hours a week."

First off, UberX's service is clearly not "ridesharing" but an unlicensed cab service and secondly, driving for UberX is a commercial pursuit for *all* UberX drivers regardless how many hours they drive, with many of them driving far in excess of 10 hours per week as one would in a full-time job.

5. "New technologies" don't mean we have to jettison consumer protections we have in place for a myriad of sound reasons.

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Since the *raison d'être* for UberX, according to **Travis Kalanick**, 39, the now-enormously wealthy co-founder and CEO of **Uber Technologies Inc.**, is that municipal taxi-plates are very expensive to obtain from city halls across North America and the world due to archaic taxi licence caps, with taxi-plates often costing between \$100,000 and a million dollars in large cities.

But, lo and behold, London, Ontario, Canada, can offer the perfect solution.

For unschooled newcomers to London's never-ending Taxi Wars, London, Ontario is the only jurisdiction in North America (and likely the world) where executive-class, sedan limousines operate as *de-facto* taxicabs accepting street flags — without a licence cap. And that's a good thing arrived at during a previous round of the Cab Wars from 1990-1994.

Simply stated, anyone can acquire as many executive-class limousine plates from city hall as they want at \$750 each (annually) to do taxi work, providing they have a recent-year, four-door luxury vehicle with commercial auto insurance for each limo plate.

So there's an unlimited supply of limo licences for enterprising entrepreneurs, unlike the "restricted entry" of the local cab industry with a waiting list for \$750 taxi licences in the city clerk's office nearly three decades long. The only other way to obtain a cab plate is to fork over a large satchel chock-full of large bills to purchase a cab plate from a willing seller. Thanks to UberX, however, that large satchel is reportedly getting smaller, which is good as well.

In London, executive-class limos can accept street flags and park outside bars and restaurants, waiting for their next walk-up customer. **If UberX chooses not to exercise that street-flag option as they've indicated, that is their choice but they could still be accommodated within the existing executive-class limousine category.**

So there's nothing stopping UberX from obtaining a limousine broker's licence from London city hall (no cap on those licences either) and recruiting drivers with their own licensed, fully insured executive-class limousines. And yes, UberX is a dispatcher of vehicles-for-hire, albeit unlicensed ones.

Will UberX do this? Not likely because this international conglomerate of bandit taxis funded by venture capitalists doesn't appear interested in operating legally anywhere in the world, unless by-laws are amended to suit their existing, low-cost business model to maximize their revenue and minimize their expenses while compromising consumer safety and protection.

On the other hand, London's existing licensing setup for limousines provides the perfect, bullet-proof response for city council members when UberX officials attempt to rambo them into doing their bidding:

'You want to operate in London? We'll provide your qualified licensed drivers with as many limo plates as they want and they can do taxi-like work. But if you're going to operate illegally in London, they'll face prosecution.'

Demonstrating Uber's bad faith when it comes to operating in the public interest is the following excerpted paragraph from a recent online article in a Mumbai, India (pop. 18.5 million) newspaper:

**"In a September 10 [2015] update of its terms and conditions, Uber has blatantly denied any responsibility for the safety, quality or reliability of its service. In fact, the app-based cab aggregator goes as far as to ask passengers to acknowledge that 'Uber does not provide transportation or logistics services or function as a transportation carrier,' and shifts all liability onto 'independent third-party contractors' or the drivers."**

Reference: <http://www.mid-day.com/articles/drivers-are-not-our-problem-says-ubers-new-policy/16534161>

An absurd policy for Uber to adopt since the well-established legal doctrine of **vicarious liability** trumps their desire to shirk their responsibilities to their paying customers, drivers and the general public.

Once again, **support the staff and CPSC recommendation. In the public interest.**

Respectfully yours,  
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