

ISLE OF MAN GOVERNMENT

**ISLE OF MAN GOVERNMENT
PLY FOR HIRE TAXI AND PRIVATE
HIRE DEMAND STUDY**

FINAL REPORT

December 2006

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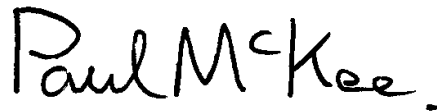
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

General

- 1.1 This report is submitted to The Isle of Man Government by Transportation Planning International Ltd, (TPi), with the following objectives:
- to determine whether or not there exists a significant unmet demand for Ply for Hire Taxi services, on The Isle of Man; and
 - to determine the number of licences required to meet any identified unmet demand on the Isle of Man.
- 1.2 Throughout this report the following definitions will apply:
- Cab = Ply For Hire; and
 - Taxi = Ply for Hire and/or private hire vehicle.
- 1.3 The study covers the entire licensing area defined by the boundaries of The Isle of Man Government. For convenience, this will be referred to as “Isle of Man”.

Relevant Entry Control Regulations

- 1.4 In the Isle of Man, Schedule 2, Paragraph 3, Item 4(a) of the Road Transport Act, 2001 states that the Committee, in determining whether to specify a district in a Section 29 Licence, shall take into account whether there are, or are likely to be, enough section 29 licences to fulfil all reasonable needs at all times and places within that district for the services of public passenger vehicles plying for hire.
- 1.5 TPi can assess whether there are enough licences by applying the tried and tested methodology we use to assess unmet demand for ply for hire taxis and private hire vehicles in English and Welsh authorities.
- 1.6 In England and Wales under the Town Police Clauses Act 1847, a licensing authority had an unfettered discretion to limit the number of Hackney Carriage licences by being able to licence only such numbers as it thought fit. It was a power, which was widely used by many authorities to restrict the numbers of Hackney Carriages for the purpose of exercising control and supervision over them. Under the Transport Act 1985, the position in law changed and the 1847 Act, as now amended by Section 16, provides as follows:
- “That the grant of a licence may be refused for purposes of limiting the number of Hackney Carriages...., if, but only if, the person authorised to grant licences is satisfied that there is no significant demand for the services of Hackney Carriages ... which is unmet”.*
- 1.7 The Act also provides for an appeals procedure whereby unsuccessful applicants for Hackney Carriage licences may call upon an authority to demonstrate that it is satisfied that there exists no significant unmet demand. If, in the eyes of the Court, the Authority fails to meet this requirement the appeal against the refusal to issue a licence will be successful.

- 1.8 In the UK no limitation is applied to numbers of private hire licences. In the Isle of Man the legislation is different, and the Road Transport Licensing Committee (RTLTC) has extended the limitation or quantity control of Ply For Hire licences provided for under the temporary provisions of Schedule 2 of the Road Transport Act 2001, to also include Private Hire.

Background to the Ply for Hire Taxi Market in Isle of Man

- 1.9 The Isle of Man has a population of approximately 75,000.
- 1.10 The Isle of Man RTLTC is responsible for licensing Ply for Hire Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles within the District of Isle of Man. The RTLTC currently licences 223 ply for hire vehicles, operating in 4 separate districts, and approximately 550 taxi drivers. There were 205 taxi licences as of April 2002 and 18 have been issued since taking the total to 223. Ply for hire taxi ranks are located in only three of the island's four districts.
- 1.11 The Ply for Hire taxi fleet is made up of a mixture of wheelchair accessible vehicles and ordinary saloons. Taxis normally have a roof sign and all have a plate, which displays colour coded Districts on a white background.
- 1.12 There are currently 29 applications pending for 35 new taxi licenses or additional districts, plus 1 other applicant/operator who has applied to operate an additional 50 taxis. There have been calls for a moratorium on the issue of taxi licenses from taxi associations until a survey of demand is commissioned. The current RTLTC policy is not to issue any more until at least the end of November 2005 in one of the Island's 4 Districts with a policy to continue to consider the issuing of licenses in the other three districts. There is a premium associated with Ply for Hire plates.
- 1.13 Approximately 80% of Ply for Hire taxis in one district undertake radio controlled telephone bookings. There are no radio networks operated in the other 3 districts; Approximately one quarter of all operators provide services with both a ply for hire car(s) and a private hire car(s)and/or minibus(es), but all Ply for Hire taxis can carry out a service of ply for hire and private hire;
- 1.14 The RTLTC licences 58 private hire executive cars and minibuses and 31 limousines or cars restricted to use in conjunction with weddings and funerals. The number of drivers restricted to private hire only is very small. The private hire fleet are mostly executive type cars, limousines, classic cars and minibuses all of which display yellow plates.

Designated Ply for Hire Taxi Stands

- 1.15 There are 15 officially designated ply for hire ranks on The Isle of Man (shown in Figures 1.1 – 1.14), namely:
- Rank 1 – Villa Marina (Harris Promenade), Douglas – East District;
 - Rank 2 – Tower House (Loch Promenade), Douglas – East District;
 - Rank 3a – New Bond Street (Back of old Bus Station), Douglas – East District;
 - Rank 3b – New Bond Street (Back of old Bus Station), Douglas – East District;
 - Rank 4a – Victoria Street, Douglas – East District [Rank Closed];
 - Rank 4b – Victoria Street (Cowley Groves), Douglas –East District;
 - Rank 5 – Sea Terminal, Douglas – East District;
 - Rank 6 – Market Street, Douglas – East District;

- Rank 7 – Central Promenade (Colours Nightclub), Douglas – East District;
- Rank 8 – Paramount City Night Club, Douglas – East District;
- Rank 9 – Adjacent to La Piazza, Douglas – East District;
- Rank 10 – Lord Street (Opposite Bus Station), Douglas – East District;
- Rank 11 – The Air Port, Ballasalla – Malew District; and
- Rank 12 – Church Road, Port Erin – South District.

1.16 In addition, informal ranking occurs at Castletown Square, Castle Town (South District) and Market Square, Ramsey (Northwest District) shown in figures 1.15 and 1.16.

Ply For Hire Taxi Fares

1.17 Ply for hire taxi fares are regulated by the RTLC through the Licensing Committee. Table 1.1 provides a full breakdown of fares.

Table 1.1 Ply For Hire Vehicle Fares in Isle of Man

FARE TABLE	
TARIFF 1 – Basic Fares	
For the first 366 meters or the first 80 seconds (or part thereof).	£2.00
For each subsequent 178.2 meters or 40 seconds (or part thereof) up to a total distance of 8,028 meters (i.e. approx 8km).	£0.15
For each subsequent 151.4 meters or 40 seconds (or part thereof) up to a total distance of 16,507 meters (i.e. approx 16.5km).	£0.15
For each subsequent 213.8 meters or 40 seconds (or part thereof).	£0.15
TARIFF 2 – Premium Rate Periods (See Below)	
For the first 366 meters or the first 80 seconds (or part thereof).	£3.00
For each subsequent 118.8 meters or 30 seconds (or part thereof) up to a total distance of 7,969.2 meters (i.e. approx 8km).	£0.15
For each subsequent 101.0 meters or 30 seconds (or part thereof) up to a total distance of 16,453.2 meters (i.e. approx 16.5km).	£0.15
For each subsequent 142.5 meters or 30 seconds (or part thereof).	£0.15
Tariff 2 to apply between midnight and 6am daily, after 6pm on Christmas Eve and New Years Eve, and all day on Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Years Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Tynwald Day Holiday any other day declared by the Road Transport Licensing Committee.	
EXTRA CHARGES	
Each passenger in addition to the hirer (two children under 12 years of age to be reckoned as one passenger).	£0.50
Each suitcase, perambulator, large parcel, box, etc..	£0.50
Booking fee for journeys where time and place of engagement is stipulated by the hirer (other than immediate engagement).	£1.00
For every journey commencing at The Airport, Ronaldsway (not applicable where a booking fee is charged).	£1.00
Contamination fee – for fouling a ply for hire PPV causing it to go out of service due to the conduct of the passenger.	£40.00

Source: Isle of Man Government

2.0 DEFINING SIGNIFICANT UNMET DEMAND

The Problem

- 2.1 The provision of evidence to aid licensing authorities in making decisions on Ply for Hire Taxi provision requires that surveys of demand be carried out. The exact form and content of these surveys varies according to the interpretation placed on the wording of Section 16, though results based on observations of activity at Ply for Hire ranks have become the generally accepted minimum requirement.
- 2.2 There also exists a Court of Appeal Judgement, which provides an indication of the way in which an authority may interpret the findings of such survey work. In the case of *Sawyer v. Yarmouth District Council*, 16 June 1987, Lord Justice Woolf ruled that an authority is entitled to consider the situation in relation to the District as a whole, and that an authority is also entitled to consider the situation from a temporal point of view as a whole. It does not have to condescend into a detailed consideration as to what may be the position in every limited area of the Authority in relation to the particular time of the day. The area is required to give effect to the language used by the Section (Section 16) and can ask itself with regard to the area as a whole whether or not it is satisfied that there is no significant unmet demand¹.
- 2.3 Below, a definition of significant unmet demand is suggested which is based on this requirement to take a broad view. In addition, an explanation is given for the methods of analysis adopted by the Consultants on this occasion.
- 2.4 The practical difficulties in defining the terms "significant" and "unmet" have come to light in many of the previous studies carried out for local councils to facilitate compliance with Section 16 of the 1985 Transport Act. First consider the word "unmet". It has become clear that this has wider application than simply representing those passengers who seek a taxi and are unsuccessful. A now accepted and most widely used measure for identifying unmet demand is the waiting times of those passengers actually served. Thus, an important component of unmet demand is the absence of a cab in the street to be waved down, or the absence of a waiting Ply for Hire Taxi at a rank when a passenger arrives.
- 2.5 This rather stringent (although relatively clear) requirement of prompt supply is blurred however by the need to determine when this unmet demand becomes "significant". This is especially the case when consideration is given to the general pattern of demand for taxi services both at different times during the day and for different days during the week (not to mention seasonal variations in demand). In many provincial settings, taxis provide the only means of travelling between certain origins and destinations for many people, or the only means of travel available at certain times of day. A prime example of this is the demand for taxis late at night at weekends.
- 2.6 Most public houses close at about the same time in the evening, and similarly, most nightclubs close around the same time. Demand for taxis at these times, especially on Fridays and Saturdays, is often higher than during many other daytime periods.

¹ Source: Legal Judgements: taxi licensing. Transport Act 1985, Section 16. TM Economics 1990.

Table 2.1 Variation in Demand for Cabs from a Centrally Located Rank in a Large City During the Hour 1500-1600

Day	Demand for cabs (cabs/hour)
Monday	48
Tuesday	39
Wednesday	62
Thursday	68
Friday	83
Saturday	103*

* Average from 3 observations with range 84 to 125.

- 2.7 This variation in demand is illustrated in Tables 2.1 and 2.2 where some results from a previous study of Ply for Hire Taxi demand are presented. Table 2.1 shows the variation in demand at one rank during the same hour on different days of the week; Table 2.2 shows the variation in demand at all ranks in a large city at different times during the weekend period.
- 2.8 Table 2.1 illustrates how demand can vary during the week, with a low of 39 cabs an hour to a maximum of 103, nearly three times as great.
- 2.9 The variation in demand at different times of day can be even more pronounced, as Table 2.2 and Figure 2.1 show. Here, demand averaged over all observations carried out during a previous study peaks at 312 cabs per hour during the hour 0200-0300. This compares to a demand of 38 cabs per hour during the period 1000-1100.

Table 2.2 Variation in Demand at Ranks in a Large City at Different Times of Day, Fridays and Saturdays Combined

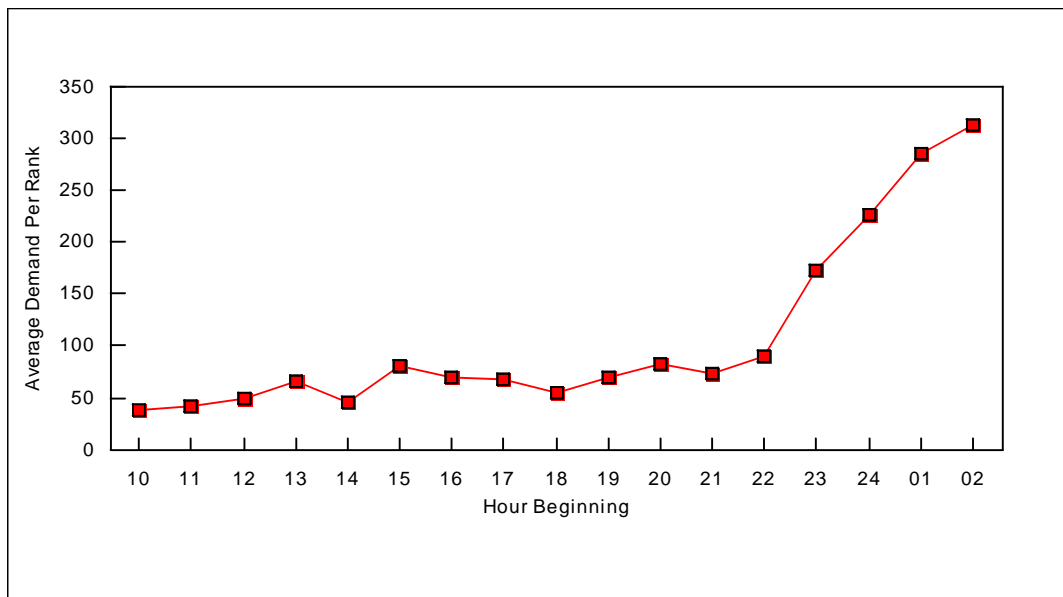
Hour	Demand (cabs/hour)
10-11	38
11-12	41
12-13	49
13-14	65
14-15	45
15-16	81
16-17	70
17-18	67
19-20	55
20-21	83
21-22	74
22-23	89
23-00	173
00-01	227
01-02	286
02-03	312

- 2.10 If demand remained at a constant level throughout the day and week, the identification and treatment of significant unmet demand would be more straightforward. Take rank demand as an example. Here, if there were more cabs than required to meet the existing

demand there would be queues of cabs on ranks throughout the day and night and passenger waiting times would be zero. Conversely, if too few cabs were available there would tend to be queues of passengers throughout the day. In such a case it would, in principle, be a simple matter to estimate the increase in supply of cabs necessary to just eliminate passenger queues.

- 2.11 The problem introduced by variable demand becomes clear when driver earnings are considered. If demand is highly peaked, an increase in cab supply large enough to eliminate delays will have a disproportionate effect on the occupation rate of cabs at all other times. If demand is unresponsive to changes in waiting time, earnings will fall and fares might have to be increased sharply to sustain the supply of cabs at or near its new level.

Figure 2.1 An Example of Peaked Ply for Hire Taxi Demand Profile



- 2.12 The main implication of the present discussion is that it is necessary, when considering whether significant unmet demand exists, to take account of the practicability of improving the standard of service through increasing supply, given the existing conditions in the particular District under consideration.

A Working Solution

- 2.13 The Consultants conclude that, taking into account the economic, administrative and legal considerations, the identification of this important aspect of significant unmet demand should be treated as a three stage process as follows:

- identify the demand profile;
- estimate passenger and cab delays; and
- compare estimated delays to the demand profile.

- 2.14 The broad interpretation to be given to the results of this comparison are summarised in Table 2.3 below.

Table 2.3 Existence of Significant Unmet Demand (SUD) Determined by Comparing Demand and Delay Profiles.

	Delays during peak only	Delays during peak and other times
Demand is:		
Highly Peaked	NO SUD	Possibly a SUD
Not Highly Peaked	Possibly a SUD	Probably a SUD

- 2.15 If demand is judged, on the basis of experience of other markets, to be highly peaked and delays are associated purely with these peaks, then although there is a demand for prompt supply which is not being met, the potential for improving service quality without an associated fares increase is small. We would therefore conclude that the unmet demand is not worthy of the "significant" label.
- 2.16 Regardless of whether demand is highly peaked, if there are (non-negligible) passenger delays occurring at off-peak times as well as peak times then this is an indication of the potential for improvement without the necessity of a fares increase and the Consultants might, depending upon the exact nature of the delays, conclude that there existed a significant unmet demand.
- 2.17 In the final case where demand is not highly peaked and delays are associated purely with those periods of higher demand, judgement is more difficult to make and the magnitude of delays should be taken into account and weighed against the sensitivity of passenger delays to given increases in supply.
- 2.18 In these ambiguous cases it is necessary to apply a certain amount of judgement before a conclusion may be reached. To aid in this judgement we have identified a numerical indicator of significant unmet demand, which draws on the principles outlined above. This is discussed further in Section 9 below.
- 2.19 The discussion above refers to existing users of Ply for Hire Taxis. A further aspect of unmet demand is associated with potential or latent demand.
- 2.20 There are a number of factors which may prevent people from using Ply for Hire Taxis at all, and may suppress their use to a lower level than might otherwise be the case. Included in those factors are:
- the adequacy and location of ranks;
 - price;
 - accessibility for those with mobility impairments;
 - waiting times at ranks;
 - search times for flagdown;
 - the availability of taxis by telephone;

- availability of other modes; and
- the availability of Ply for Hire Taxis at different locations on the island.

2.21 The package of techniques adopted for this study has been designed to address these issues as well as those pertaining to observations of actual conditions at ranks.

3.0 THE STUDY METHOD

Introduction

- 3.1 The primary aim of the study is to establish whether there is any significant unmet demand for Ply for Hire Taxi services on The Isle of Man. This has been interpreted to refer both to existing users of services in the area and to potential users.
- 3.2 Three data collection exercises were undertaken which together enable the assessment of both the quality of service to existing passengers and the possibility that there is a potential demand, which could be tapped if extra plates were issued. It should be noted that the conclusions in this report are largely based on the rank observation results with the interview data being used to provide supplementary information and information on latent demand. Where the results of the rank observation analysis are ambiguous the interview data becomes a particularly valuable source of additional evidence upon which a conclusion may be based.

Rank Observation Survey

- 3.3 The rank observation programme covered a period of 301 hours of rank observations at officially designated ranks. The rank observations were carried out during September 2006.
- 3.4 Observations at the formal ranks were carried out at the following locations as detailed in Table 3.1. The results from the formal rank observations are presented in Section 4 and Section 5.

Table 3.1 Allocation of Formal Rank Observations

Rank Location	Hours Observed September 2006
Villa Marina (Harris Promenade), Douglas – East District	39
Tower House (Loch Promenade), Douglas – East District	17
New Bond Street (Back of old Bus Station), Douglas – East District	11
Victoria Street (Cowley Groves), Douglas – East District	30
Sea Terminal, Douglas – East District	57
Market Street, Douglas – East District	27
Central Promenade (Colours Nightclub), Douglas – East District	27
Paramount City Nightclub, Douglas – East District	8
Adjacent to La Piazza, Douglas – East District	8
Lord Street (opposite bus station), Douglas – East District	13
The Airport, Ballasalla – Malew District	51
Church Road, Port Erin – South District	13
Grand Total	301

Source: TPI

- 3.5 Observations at the informal ranks were carried out at the following locations as detailed in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Allocation of Informal Rank Observations

Rank Location	Hours Observed September 2006
Castletown Square, Castletown – South District	10
Market Square, Ramsey – Northwest District	15
Grand Total	25

Source: TPI

Pedestrian Surveys

- 3.6 A survey of 1,045 people was conducted on the Isle of Man. The survey was controlled by quotas on age and sex of respondent.
- 3.7 This survey includes an assessment of all types of taxi trip. The results are included in Sections 6 to 8 inclusive.

Comparison with other Districts

- 3.8 Key results from the study have been compared with those from studies carried out in a similar manner elsewhere. The results are presented in Section 9.

Consultation

- 3.9 To determine views on the existing taxi trade a number of Ply for Hire and Private Hire operators/proprietors were contacted by letter. We also contacted representatives from the Tourism, Education and Social Services Departments, the Police, the Chamber of Trade, Nightclub owners and groups representing the elderly and people with disabilities. The responses are summarised in Section 10 and are included in full in Appendix B.

Mobility Impaired User Survey

- 3.10 A Mobility Impaired User Survey in the form of a postal return survey was also carried out. The survey was administered by the Consultant from contacts given by the District Council and independent research. People with disabilities in the District were canvassed as to their views on the level of service currently provided to disabled people in the Ply for Hire and Private Hire fleets. The responses are also summarised in sections 11 to 15.

Radio Base Observations

- 3.11 Results from the radio base observations are presented in Section 16.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- 3.12 Conclusions and recommendations are presented in Section 17.

4.0 RANK OBSERVATIONS – EAST DISTRICT

Delay Calculation Method

- 4.1 Identifying the waiting time at ranks of a specific passenger, or a specific cab, would have required the timing on and off the rank of every unit. This would have been very expensive in terms of survey staff. Instead, an estimate is obtained by using the following procedure. For every five minute period, the number of cabs departing and the number of passengers departing was observed and recorded. At the end of each five minute period, the queue lengths of cabs and passengers were also recorded. Within each hour the mean delay was then estimated as being the queue length divided by the throughput per five minute period, multiplied by five minutes. Thus:

$$\text{MeanDelay} = \frac{\text{QueueLength}}{\text{Throughput}} \times \text{RecordingPeriod}$$

- 4.2 The method of analysis relies on the technique of compiling "representative weeks" of activity at each major rank and then using these to estimate overall passenger and cab delays and loading. This method provides consistent estimates within the bounds expected for passenger delay. In cases where long cab queues coincide with small levels of cab throughput the method tends to overestimate delays.
- 4.3 In constructing a representative profile of demand at a rank over the period of a week a number of assumptions are made. Firstly, 'daytime' observations refer to observations made between 0700 and 1800 hours and 'night-time' observations refer to the remaining period. Secondly, observations conducted between Monday and Friday daytime and Monday to Thursday night-time are regarded as one, and will be known as typical weekday observations. Observations conducted on Friday and Saturday night-times and Saturday daytimes are all grouped together and known as typical weekend observations, with Sunday treated in isolation.
- 4.4 Appendix A contains a summary of the entire rank observation programme. The results presented in this Section attempt to summarise the information and draw out its implications. This is achieved by using four indicators:
- **The Balance of Supply and Demand.** This indicates the proportion of the time that the market exhibits excess demand, equilibrium and excess supply;
 - **Average Delays and Total Demand.** This indicates the overall level of passenger and cab delay and provides estimates of total demand;
 - **The Demand/Delay Profile.** This provides the key information required to determine the existence or otherwise of a significant unmet demand; and
 - **The Effective Supply of Vehicles.** This indicates the proportion of the fleet that was off the road during the survey.

The Balance of Supply and Demand

- 4.5 The first indicator of the performance of the Ply for Hire Taxi trade can be gauged from a general assessment of the market conditions. This is assessed in terms of three broad areas: excess demand, equilibrium and excess supply. If the minimum cab queue occurring during one hour was greater than two vehicles the market is considered to be in excess supply in that hour, that is, there were always ample cabs to meet the observed level of demand. If the maximum passenger queue exceeded two in an hour then the market is considered to be exhibiting excess demand in that hour, that is, there was at least one occasion during that hour in which the observed level of demand could not be met without passenger delay occurring. If the maximum passenger queue is below three and/or the minimum cab queue is less than three then the market is considered to be in equilibrium in that hour, that is, there was broadly speaking just sufficient supply to meet the observed level of demand.
- 4.6 The results of the analysis are presented in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 The Balance of Supply and Demand on the Isle of Man – East District. Rank-Based Ply for Hire Taxi Market (Rows Sum to 100%)

Period		Excess Demand	Equilibrium	Excess Supply
Weekday	Day	0.0	98.4	1.6
	Night	0.0	100.0	0.0
Weekend	Day	0.0	100.0	0.0
	Night	5.6	90.3	4.2
ALL (including Sundays)		2.5	95.8	1.7

Source: TPI

- 4.7 Table 4.1 shows that, overall, the market exhibits equilibrium conditions in 95.8% of hours, the predominant market state. Excess Demand is observed in 2.5% of hours, while excess supply is experienced in 1.7% of hours. Conditions are worst during weekend night times and at their best during weekday daytimes. During weekday daytimes the proportion of hours exhibiting excess demand is 0%. This is an important element in the consideration of significant unmet demand.

Average Delays and Total Demand

- 4.8 The rank observation programme was designed to allow estimates of a week's activity at each rank. To observe each rank for a complete week would have been costly and unnecessary. Instead the week was divided up into periods and observations designed to sample from these. The periods are "daytime" i.e. 0700-1800, "Night-time" i.e. 1800-0700, "Weekday" (i.e. Monday to Friday 'daytime' and Monday to Thursday 'night-time'), "Weekend" (i.e. Friday 'night-time' and Saturday), and Sunday, which was treated in isolation.
- 4.9 Using this method the following estimates of average delays and throughput were produced for each of the main ranks in the licensing District as shown in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2 Average Delays and Total Demand (Delays in Minutes)
– East District**

Rank	Passenger Departures	Cab Departures	Average Passenger Delay	Average Cab Delay
Villa Marina (Harris Promenade)	661	817	0.38	21.92
Tower House (Loch Promenade)	84	128	0.00	18.11
New Bond Street	144	234	0.00	32.63
Victoria Street (Cowley Groves)	1143	1420	0.00	10.53
Sea Terminal – East District	337	331	0.24	11.96
Market Street – East District	891	671	0.50	9.55
Central Promenade (Colours Nightclub)	520	318	0.21	7.03
Paramount City Nightclub	716	788	0.31	1.53
Adjacent to La Piazza	20	9	6.67	0.00
Lord Street (opposite bus station)	0	28	0.00	33.00
Totals and Averages	4516	4743	0.28	12.13

Source: TPI

- 4.10 On average passengers wait 0.28 minutes for a cab. Cabs wait for an average of 12.13 minutes.

The Delay/Demand Profile

- 4.11 The previous analysis may hide a lot of variation in service performance at different times of the day and of the week. To investigate the nature of passenger delay at ranks further, analysis has been conducted by time of day and day of the week.
- 4.12 Figure 4.1 provides a graphical illustration of average daily passenger demand per rank from 0500 Monday to 1800 Friday. Figure 4.2 shows the equivalent information for the period 1800 Friday to 0400 Saturday.
- 4.13 Figure 4.1 shows a relatively stable demand throughout the day. Demand gradually rises from 0900 until 1700. Demand then gradually drops off until 2100 when it rises dramatically, reaching a peak. After 2100 it gradually recedes for the rest of the evening apart from a small increase around 0100.
- 4.14 The situation at the weekend is shown in Figure 4.2. Demand increases fairly steadily until 1700. It then decreases until 1900, when it again begins to increase reaching a small peak at 2100. It again falls off slightly, but begins to increase after 2200 reaching a peak at 0100 and 0200.
- 4.15 The two profiles are combined and factored accordingly to represent average weekly profiles in Figure 4.3. The figure shows that, overall, demand on the Isle of Man East

District does exhibit a high degree of peaking late at night at weekends, which is often associated with the ply for hire market, and as such demand can be classed as being highly peaked at weekends.

- 4.16 Moving onto passenger delays Figure 4.4 and 4.5 provide an illustration by time of day for the 0500 Monday to 1800 Friday and 1800 Friday to 0400 Saturday periods respectively.
- 4.17 During the 0500 Monday to 1800 Friday period delays of over 1 minute occur between 2400-0100 and 0100-0200. The peak average daily passenger delay of 10 minutes occurs between 2400-0100.
- 4.18 During the 1800 Friday to 0400 Saturday period no delays of over 1 minute occur. The highest delay of 0.58 minutes occurs between 0300-0400.
- 4.19 Figure 4.6 provides an illustration by time of day for the weekday and weekend periods combined.

The Effective Supply of Vehicles

- 4.20 Observers were required to record the Ply for Hire licence plate number of vehicles departing from ranks. In this way we were able to ascertain the proportion of the fleet that was operating during the survey. Of the 118 licences permitted to operate in the East District, 103 (87.3%) were observed at least once at the official ranks. This implies that the Ply for Hire Taxi trade were operating at close to full capacity during the period covered by the observations.

Figure 4.1 Average Daily Passenger Demand per Rank (5am-3am) for the Weekday Period 0500 Monday to 1800 Friday Inclusive

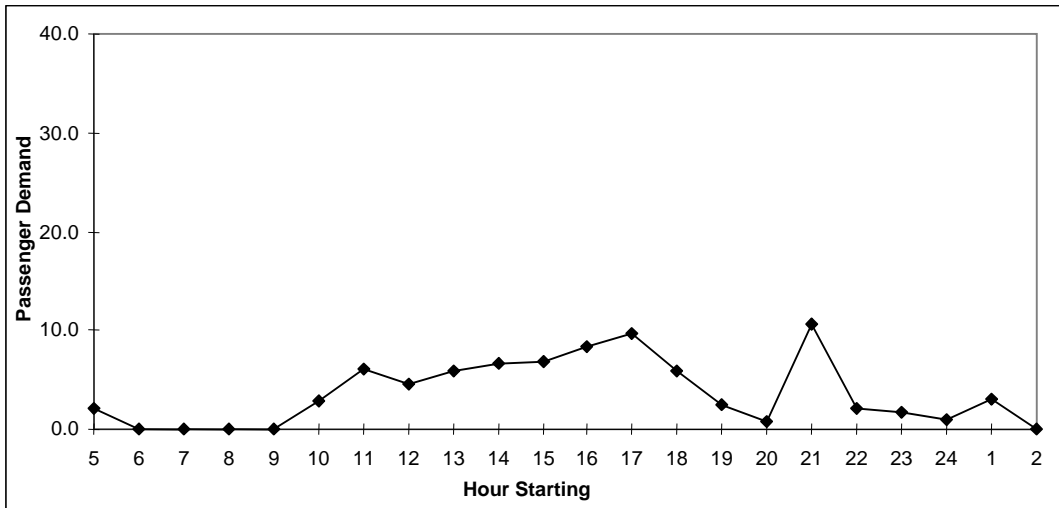


Figure 4.2 Average Daily Passenger Demand per Rank (5am-4am) for the Weekend Period 1800 Friday to 0400 Saturday Inclusive



Figure 4.3 Average Weekly Passenger Demand per Rank (5am-4am) for the Weekly Period 0500 Monday to 0400 Saturday Inclusive

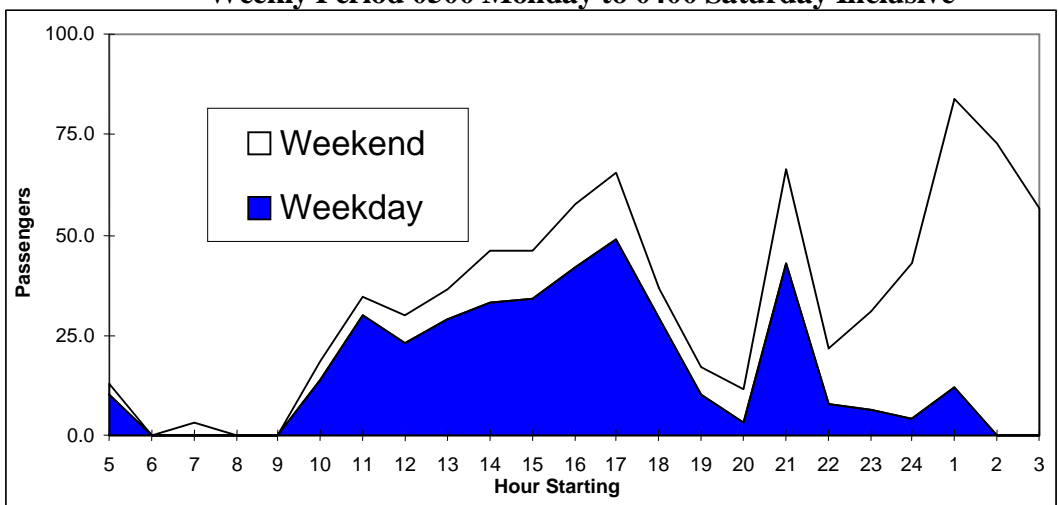


Figure 4.4 Average Daily Passenger Delay (5am-3am) for the Weekday Period 0500 Monday to 1800 Friday Inclusive

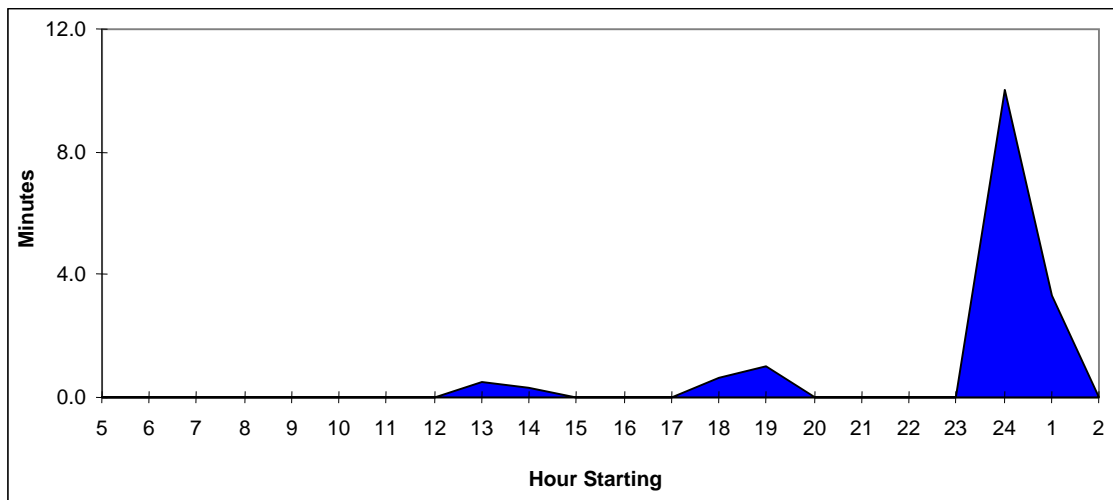


Figure 4.5 Average Daily Passenger Delay (5am-4am) for the Weekend Period 1800 Friday to 0400 Saturday Inclusive

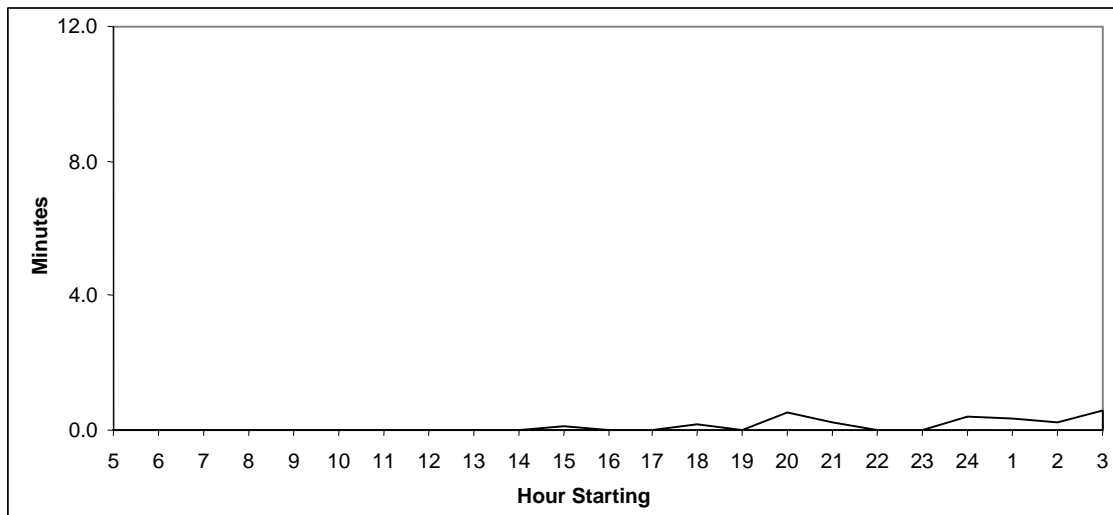
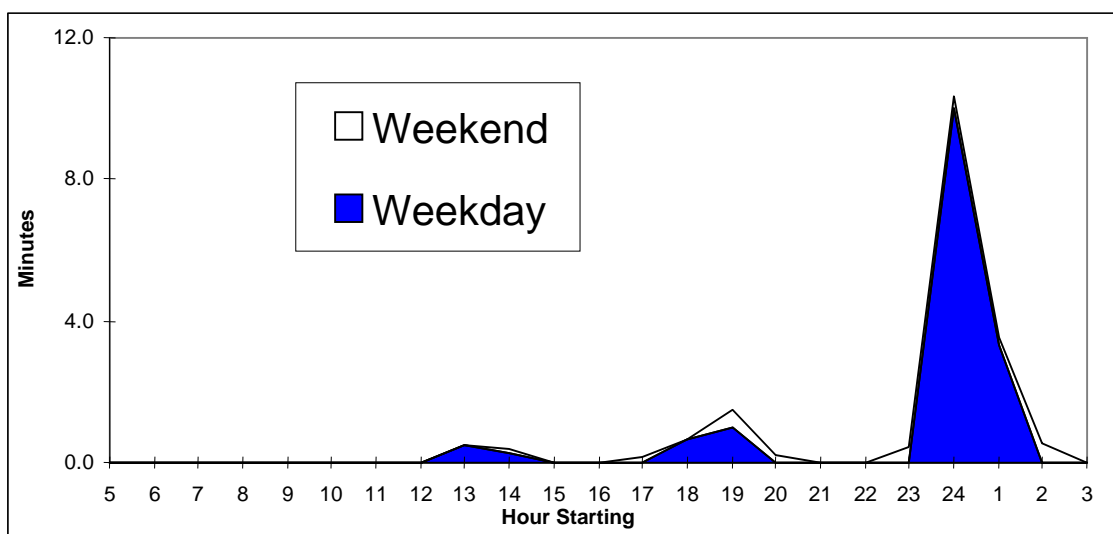


Figure 4.6 Average Daily Passenger Delay (5am-4am) for the Weekly Period 0500 Monday to 0400 Saturday Inclusive



5.0 RANK OBSERVATIONS – MALEW DISTRICT

Delay Calculation Method

- 5.1 Identifying the waiting time at ranks of a specific passenger, or a specific cab, would have required the timing on and off the rank of every unit. This would have been very expensive in terms of survey staff. Instead, an estimate is obtained by using the following procedure. For every five minute period, the number of cabs departing and the number of passengers departing was observed and recorded. At the end of each five minute period, the queue lengths of cabs and passengers were also recorded. Within each hour the mean delay was then estimated as being the queue length divided by the throughput per five minute period, multiplied by five minutes. Thus:

$$\text{MeanDelay} = \frac{\text{QueueLength}}{\text{Throughput}} \times \text{RecordingPeriod}$$

- 5.2 The method of analysis relies on the technique of compiling "representative weeks" of activity at each major rank and then using these to estimate overall passenger and cab delays and loading. This method provides consistent estimates within the bounds expected for passenger delay. In cases where long cab queues coincide with small levels of cab throughput the method tends to overestimate delays.
- 5.3 In constructing a representative profile of demand at a rank over the period of a week a number of assumptions are made. Firstly, 'daytime' observations refer to observations made between 0700 and 1800 hours and 'night-time' observations refer to the remaining period. Secondly, observations conducted between Monday and Friday daytime and Monday to Thursday night-time are regarded as one, and will be known as typical weekday observations. Observations conducted on Friday and Saturday night-times and Saturday daytimes are all grouped together and known as typical weekend observations, with Sunday treated in isolation.
- 5.4 Appendix A contains a summary of the entire rank observation programme. The results presented in this Section attempt to summarise the information and draw out its implications. This is achieved by using four indicators:
- **The Balance of Supply and Demand.** This indicates the proportion of the time that the market exhibits excess demand, equilibrium and excess supply;
 - **Average Delays and Total Demand.** This indicates the overall level of passenger and cab delay and provides estimates of total demand;
 - **The Demand/Delay Profile.** This provides the key information required to determine the existence or otherwise of a significant unmet demand; and
 - **The Effective Supply of Vehicles.** This indicates the proportion of the fleet that was off the road during the survey.

The Balance of Supply and Demand

- 5.5 The first indicator of the performance of the Ply for Hire Taxi trade can be gauged from a general assessment of the market conditions. This is assessed in terms of three broad areas: excess demand, equilibrium and excess supply. If the minimum cab queue occurring during one hour was greater than two vehicles the market is considered to be in excess supply in that hour, that is, there were always ample cabs to meet the observed level of demand. If the maximum passenger queue exceeded two in an hour then the market is considered to be exhibiting excess demand in that hour, that is, there was at least one occasion during that hour in which the observed level of demand could not be met without passenger delay occurring. If the maximum passenger queue is below three and/or the minimum cab queue is less than three then the market is considered to be in equilibrium in that hour, that is, there was broadly speaking just sufficient supply to meet the observed level of demand.
- 5.6 The results of the analysis are presented in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1 The Balance of Supply and Demand on the Isle of Man – Malew District. Rank-Based Ply for Hire Taxi Market (Rows Sum to 100%)

Period		Excess Demand	Equilibrium	Excess Supply
Weekday	Day	0.0	38.5	61.5
	Night	0.0	50.0	50.0
Weekend	Day	7.7	46.2	46.2
	Night	0.0	25.0	75.0
ALL (including Sundays)		2.0	41.2	56.9

Source: TPI

- 5.7 Table 5.1 shows that, overall, the market exhibits equilibrium conditions in 41.2% of hours, the predominant market state. Excess Demand is observed in 2.0% of hours, while excess supply is experienced in 56.9% of hours. Conditions are worst during weekend daytimes and at their best during weekday night times. During weekday daytimes the proportion of hours exhibiting excess demand is 0%. This is an important element in the consideration of significant unmet demand.

Average Delays and Total Demand

- 5.8 The rank observation programme was designed to allow estimates of a week's activity at each rank. To observe each rank for a complete week would have been costly and unnecessary. Instead the week was divided up into periods and observations designed to sample from these. The periods are "daytime" i.e. 0700-1800, "Night-time" i.e. 1800-0700, "Weekday" (i.e. Monday to Friday 'daytime' and Monday to Thursday 'night-time'), "Weekend" (i.e. Friday 'night-time' and Saturday), and Sunday, which was treated in isolation.
- 5.9 Using this method the following estimates of average delays and throughput were produced for each of the main ranks in the licensing District as shown in Table 5.2.

**Table 5.2 Average Delays and Total Demand (Delays in Minutes)
– Malew District**

Rank	Passenger Departures	Cab Departures	Average Passenger Delay	Average Cab Delay
The Airport (Ballasalla) – Malew	1177	784	0.22	47.17
Totals and Averages	1177	784	0.22	47.17

Source: TPI

- 5.10 On average passengers wait 0.22 minutes for a cab. Cabs wait for an average of 47.17 minutes.

The Delay/Demand Profile

- 5.11 The previous analysis may hide a lot of variation in service performance at different times of the day and of the week. To investigate the nature of passenger delay at ranks further, analysis has been conducted by time of day and day of the week.
- 5.12 Figure 5.1 provides a graphical illustration of average daily passenger demand per rank from 0500 Monday to 1800 Friday. Figure 5.2 shows the equivalent information for the period 1800 Friday to 2200 Saturday.
- 5.13 Figure 5.1 shows fluctuating demand throughout the day. Peaks in demand occur at 1000, 1200, 1700 and 2100.
- 5.14 The situation at the weekend is shown in Figure 5.2. There is no demand until 0800, when demand rises steadily and dramatically until 1000. After 1000, demand falls off gradually until 1400, then rises to a small peak at 1500. It then falls off again before rising to another small peak at 1800. There is a small fall off before demand again rises.
- 5.15 The two profiles are combined and factored accordingly to represent average weekly profiles in Figure 5.3. The figure shows that, overall, demand on the Isle of Man Malew District does not exhibit a high degree of peaking late at night, which is often associated with the ply for hire market, and as such demand can be classed as not being highly peaked at weekends.
- 5.16 Moving onto passenger delays Figure 5.4 and 5.5 provide an illustration by time of day for the 0500 Monday to 1800 Friday and 1800 Friday to 2200 Saturday periods respectively.
- 5.17 During the 0500 Monday to 1800 Friday period no delays occur.
- 5.18 During the 1800 Friday to 2200 Saturday period delays only occur between 1200-1300, during this period there is a delay of 11.82 minutes.
- 5.19 Figure 5.6 provides an illustration by time of day for the weekday and weekend periods combined.

The Effective Supply of Vehicles

- 5.20 Observers were required to record the Ply for Hire Taxi licence plate number of vehicles departing from ranks. In this way we were able to ascertain the proportion of the fleet that was operating during the survey. Of the 51 licences permitted to operate in the Malew District, 49 (96.1%) were observed at least once at the official ranks. This implies that the Ply for Hire Taxi trade were operating at close to full capacity during the period covered by the observations.

South District

- 5.21 13 hours of observation were carried out at the officially designated Church Road rank, Port Erin in the South District. The results in Appendix B show that no passenger delay and no ply for hire taxis were observed. This indicates that there is currently no significant unmet demand for Ply for Hire taxis in the rank-based South District market.

Figure 5.1 Average Daily Passenger Demand per Rank (5am-10pm) for the Weekday Period 0500 Monday to 1800 Friday Inclusive

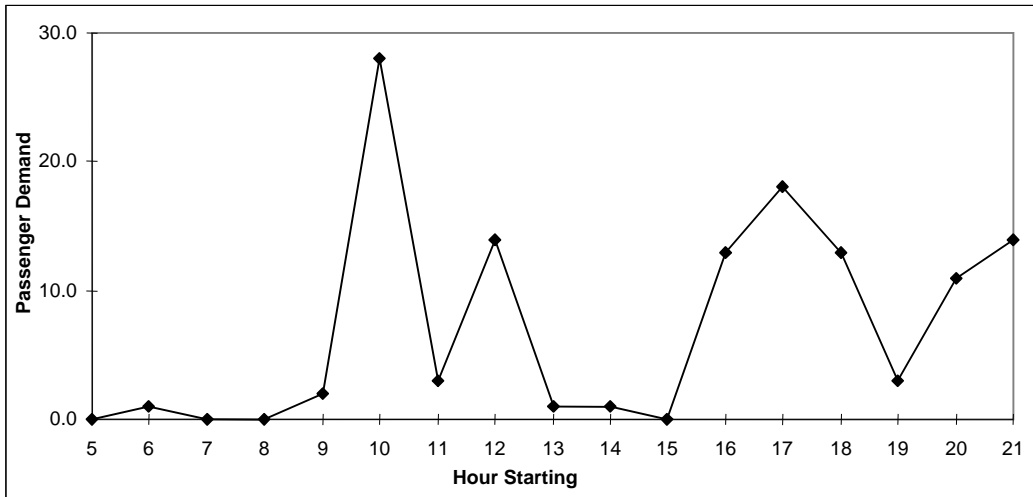


Figure 5.2 Average Daily Passenger Demand per Rank (5am-10pm) for the Weekend Period 1800 Friday to 2200 Saturday Inclusive

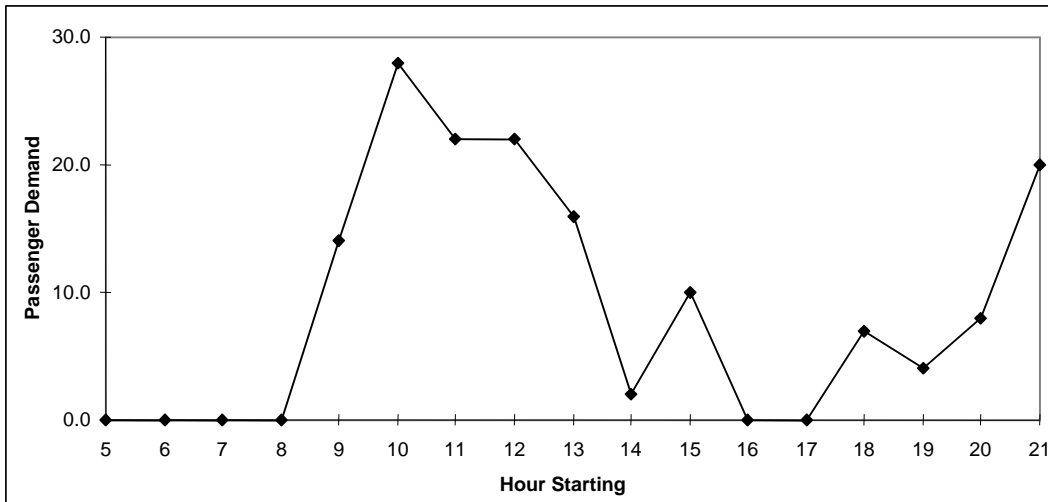


Figure 5.3 Average Weekly Passenger Demand per Rank (5am-10pm) for the Weekly Period 0500 Monday to 2200 Saturday Inclusive

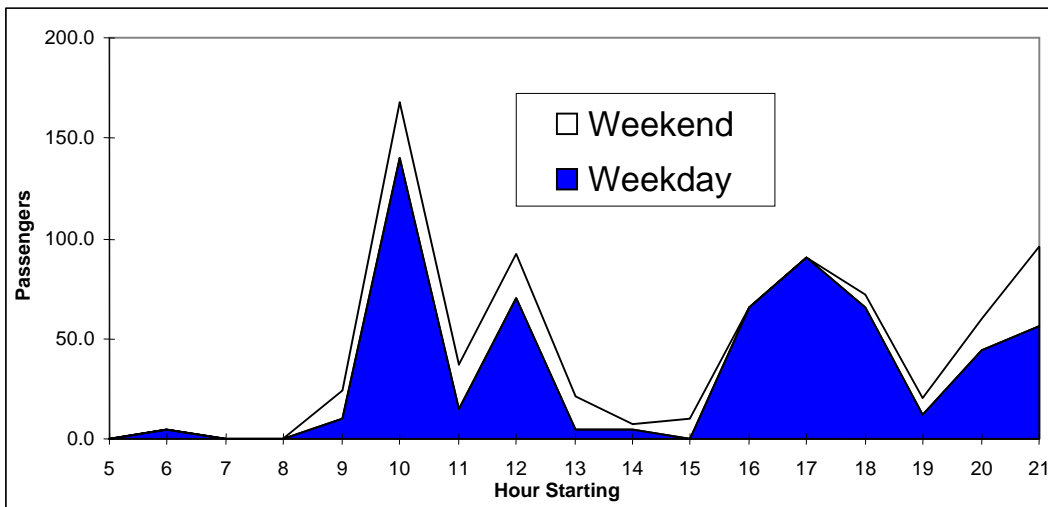


Figure 5.4 Average Daily Passenger Delay (5am-10pm) for the Weekday Period 0500 Monday to 1800 Friday Inclusive

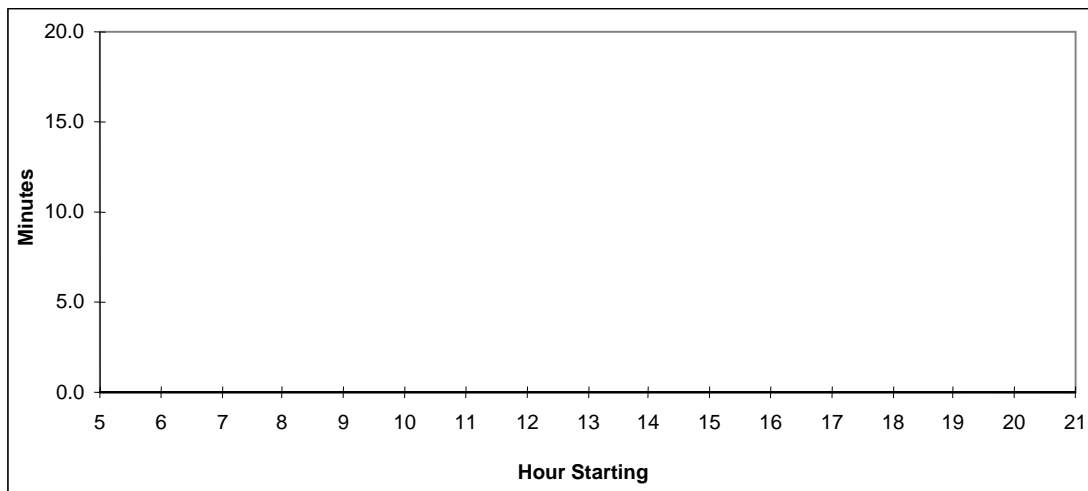


Figure 5.5 Average Daily Passenger Delay (5am-10pm) for the Weekend Period 1800 Friday to 2200 Saturday Inclusive

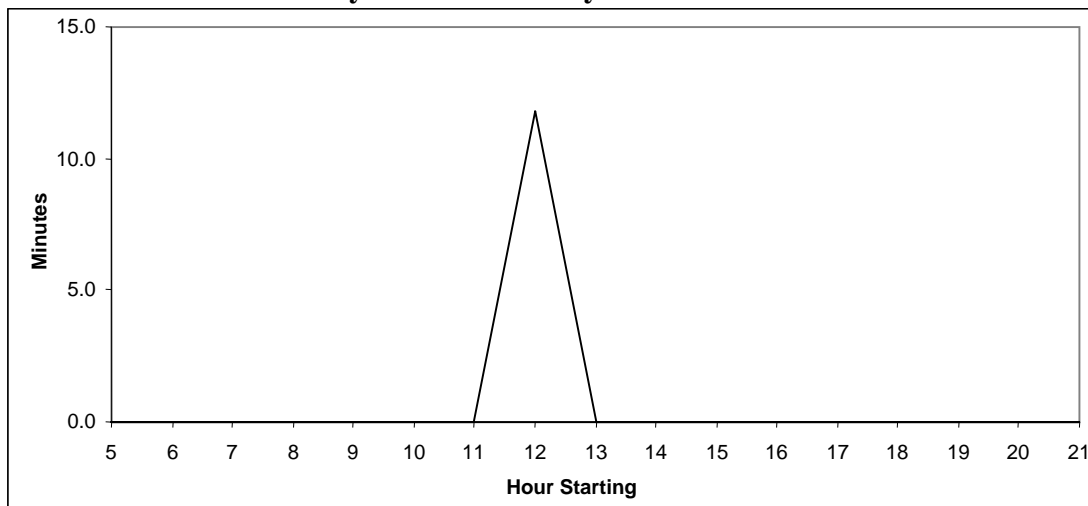
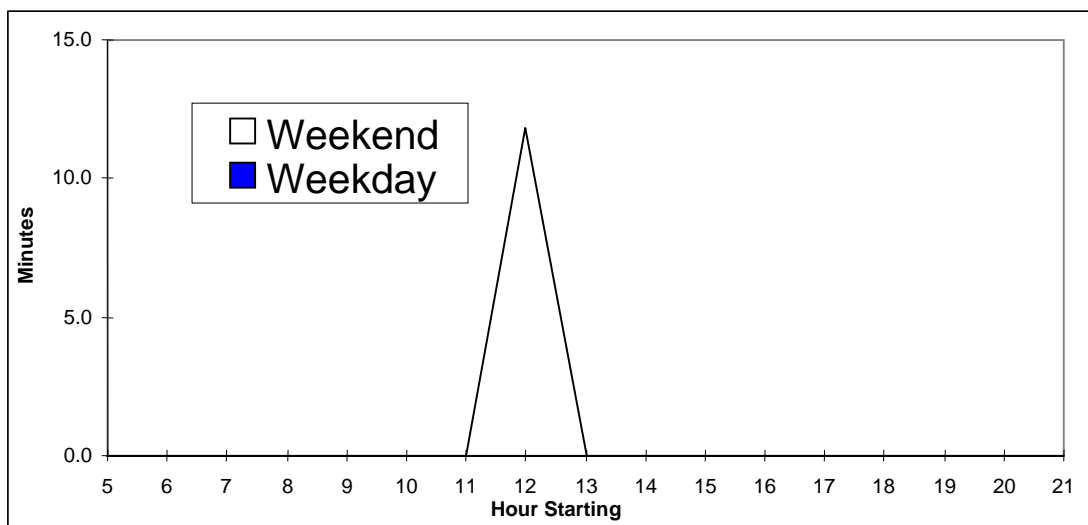


Figure 5.6 Average Daily Passenger Delay (5am-10pm) for the Weekly Period 0500 Monday to 2200 Saturday Inclusive



6.0 PUBLIC ATTITUDE PEDESTRIAN SURVEY

Introduction

- 6.1 A public attitude interview survey was designed with the aim of collecting information to supplement the rank observations. In particular, the survey allowed an assessment of flagdown and telephone delays, the satisfaction with delays and general use information. It also provided information on the views of users and non-users throughout different parts of the Island. The survey structure comprised three elements. The first part identified the specific characteristics of a person's last taxi trip. This is reported in the remainder of Section 5. The second part analysed a respondent's more typical, longer term, taxi requirement and factors influencing their amount of taxi travel. This is summarised in Section 6. The third part addressed peoples' views on the potential for improving taxi services in the area. This is covered in Section 7.
- 6.2 It should be noted that in the tables that follow the totals do not always add up to the same amount. This is due to one of three reasons. Firstly, not all respondents were required to answer all questions, secondly, some respondents failed to answer some questions that were asked and thirdly, some questions allowed multiple responses. Where the latter case applies this will be highlighted in the title of the table.

Survey Administration and Sample Selection

- 6.3 Some 1,045 interviews were carried out in and around the Isle of Man, principally in May 2006 with a small remainder carried out in September 2006. A quota was followed so that the survey sample reflected the age and gender characteristics of the local community. This, in turn, ensured that representative results were obtained. The age and sex and out-turn samples are given in Table 6.1.
- 6.4 Interviewers were given a written and verbal briefing on the need to maintain confidentiality and quality checking procedures were in place to help ensure questionnaires were completed accurately, and to confirm the veracity of the data gathered.

Table 6.1 Target and Actual Samples for Interview Surveys by Age and Sex

Category	Target Quota		Actual Quota	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
15 - 29	208	19.9	224	21.4
30 - 64	621	59.4	608	58.2
65+	216	20.7	212	20.3
No Response	0	0.00	1	0.1
Total	1,045	100.0	1,045	100.0
Male	508	48.6	496	47.5
Female	537	51.4	547	52.3
No Response	0	0.0	2	0.2
Total	1,045	100.0	1,045	100.0

Source: TPI

- 6.5 Table 5.1 demonstrates that the structure of the sample conforms well to the quotas.
- 6.6 The economic status of respondents was also recorded during the interviews. The frequencies falling into each category are given in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2 Economic Status of Respondents to Pedestrian Survey

Status	Frequency	Valid Percent
Full-time Employed	456	43.6
Retired	255	24.4
Part-time Employed	131	12.5
Housewife/Husband	89	8.5
Student/Pupil	42	4.0
Unemployed	30	2.9
Other	35	3.4
No Response Given	7	0.7
Total	1,045	100.0

Source: TPI

- 6.7 The residency of the respondents was recorded during the interviews and residents were then asked for the first half of their postcode and place of residence. The results are shown in Table 6.3 and Table 6.4.

Table 6.3 Residency of Respondents

Residency	Frequency	Percent
Permanent Resident	956	91.5
Visitor	65	6.2
Tourist	19	1.8
No Response	5	0.5
Total	1,045	100.0

Source: TPI

Table 6.4 Post Code of Respondents

Postcode	Frequency	Per Cent
IM9	205	19.5
IM2	191	18.3
IM5	129	12.3
IM8	111	10.6
IM1	109	10.4
IM4	89	8.5
IM3	64	6.1
IM7	42	4.0
IM6	16	1.5
IM	2	0.2
LA1	2	0.2
LM1	2	0.2
BC2	1	0.1
BL3	1	0.1
BL4	1	0.1
CH6	1	0.1
CO9	1	0.1
CW1	1	0.1
CW2	1	0.1
DA8	1	0.1
DE2	1	0.1
EX3	1	0.1
HP	1	0.1
IMF	1	0.1
IN2	1	0.1
IP1	1	0.1
IP7	1	0.1
L	1	0.1
L11	1	0.1
L9	1	0.1
LE2	1	0.1
LE9	1	0.1
LL1	1	0.1
LL2	1	0.1
LM3	1	0.1
LS1	1	0.1
N7	1	0.1
NN1	1	0.1
NR2	1	0.1
NR6	1	0.1
SS1	1	0.1
SY1	1	0.1
WA5	1	0.1
WA6	1	0.1
YO1	1	0.1
No Response	50	4.8
Total	1,045	100.0

Source: TPI

6.8 Respondents were each asked if they had made a journey by Ply for Hire Taxi in the last month. The survey showed that 355 people (34.0%) had used a taxi during the last month and 689 people (65.9%) had not used one. Recent users were then questioned about their last trip in terms of the following:

- journey purpose;
- cost of the trip;
- group size using taxi;
- time of travel;
- method of hire;
- ease of hiring; and
- satisfaction with service.

Characteristics of Last Taxi Trip

6.9 By far the most predominant journey purpose for those making a trip within the previous month was for leisure (21.7%). Full results are shown in Table 6.5.

Table 6.5 Trip Purpose for Last Trip

Trip Purpose	Frequency	Percent
Leisure	227	21.7
Work/Education	36	3.4
Link to Other Transport	32	3.1
Shopping	31	3.0
Hospital/Medical	20	1.9
Personal Business	10	1.0
No Response	689	65.9
Total	1045	100.0

Source: TPI

6.10 Those respondents who had taken a taxi trip were asked to state the cost of the journey. The costs ranged from £2.00 to £65.00. The average journey cost was £10.75. Table 5.6 shows the frequencies of the different responses.

Table 6.6 Reported Cost of Last Trip

Cost (£)	Frequency	Percent (of 313 respondents who gave specific answer)
£2.00	2	0.6
£2.01 - 3.00	26	8.3
£3.01 - 4.00	44	14.2
£4.01 - 5.00	47	15.1
£5.01 - 6.00	40	12.9
£6.01 - 7.00	21	6.7
£7.01 - 8.00	21	6.7
£9.00	5	1.6
£10.00	17	5.4
£10.50	1	0.3
£11.50	1	0.3
£12.00	6	1.9
£12.01 - 13.00	4	1.3
£14.00	1	0.3
£15.00	9	2.9
£16.00	4	1.3
£17.00	4	1.3
£18.00	8	2.6
£19.00	1	0.3
£20.00	11	3.5
£21.00	2	0.6
£22.00	2	0.6
£23.00	1	0.3
£24.00	1	0.3
£25.00	5	1.6
£25.61	1	0.3
£27.00	1	0.3
£28.00	1	0.3
£30.00	7	2.2
£32.00	2	0.6
£33.00	3	1.0
£34.00	1	0.3
£35.00	3	1.0
£36.00	1	0.3
£38.00	2	0.6
£40.00	2	0.6
£50.00	3	1.0
£60.00	1	0.3
£65.00	1	0.3
Don't know	40	-
Total	353	100.0

Source: TPI

6.11 The respondents were then asked if they thought that the fare they had been charged represented good value for money. Table 6.7 shows the recorded responses.

Table 6.7 Public Perception of Value for Money on Last Trip

Value for Money	Frequency	Percent
Yes	158	44.5
No	159	44.8
Don't Know	38	10.7
Total	355	100.0

Source: TPI

6.12 As can be seen, 44.5% of those who responded felt they were receiving good value for money for their taxi journey, whilst 44.8% thought that they were not given value for money.

Group Size and Time of Trip

6.13 The average group sizes by time of trip are given in Table 6.8 below.

Table 6.8 Average Group Size on Last Trip by Time of Travel – Pedestrian Survey

Time of Travel	Average Party Size	Sample	Percent
0301 - 0700	2.3	9	2.6
0701 - 0800	1.8	14	3.9
0801 - 0900	1.8	13	3.7
0901 - 1000	1.7	16	4.6
1001 - 1100	1.5	11	3.1
1101 - 1200	1.8	12	3.4
1201 - 1300	1.6	22	6.2
1301 - 1400	1.4	27	7.7
1401 - 1500	1.8	16	4.6
1501 - 1600	1.0	1	0.3
1601 - 1700	1.8	5	1.4
1701 - 1800	1.7	14	3.9
1801 - 2300	2.7	78	22.2
2301 - 0300	2.8	114	32.4
Total		352	100.0

Source: TPI

6.14 Average party size exhibits an evening peak between 2301-0300.

6.15 It was found that 12.8% of respondents travelled alone, 11.8% travelled in pairs whilst 9.2% chose to travel in groups of three or more people.

Method of Taxi Hire on Last Trip

- 6.16 The highest proportion of respondents (74.9%) hired their taxi through a telephone booking. A total of 15.8% obtained their taxi at a rank and 9.3% flagdown trips occurred. Table 6.9 reveals the pattern of taxi hire.

Table 6.9 Method of Taxi Hire for Last Trip - Pedestrian Survey

Time Period	Frequency	Percent
Telephone	265	74.9
Rank	56	15.8
Flagdown	33	9.3
Total Tripmakers	354	100.00

Source: TPI

Ease of Taxi Hire

- 6.17 Table 6.10 provides summary statistics relating to key service quality characteristics on last trips.

Table 6.10 Delay in Obtaining Taxi on Last Trip (Delays in Minutes)

Measure	Average	Minimum	Maximum	No of People
Time to walk to Rank	3.1	0	20	55
Rank Wait	2.4	0	15	53
Flagdown Wait	8.5	0	90	33
Number of Taxis Flagged Down	2.8	1	15	30
Immediate Booking Wait	9.7	0	99	188
Number of Operators Telephoned	1.1	1	3	191
Pre-Booked Taxis Arrival	0.9	-15	45	89

Source: TPI

* Minus sign signifies early arrival

- 6.18 People reported walking for 3.1 minutes, on average, to the nearest rank. Rank hirers reported an average wait time of 2.4 minutes before obtaining a taxi. **50.9% of rank hirers reported no delay.**
- 6.19 The time of response for pre-booked taxis (29.6% of telephone bookings) was good, with, on average, the taxi arriving **0.9 minutes late.**
- 6.20 Of the 70.4% of telephone booking respondents who wished to travel straight away, **93.0% of the time they were able to obtain a booking with the first operator they contacted. Once the booking had been accepted the average delay was 9.7 minutes.**
- 6.21 Respondents were asked how satisfied they were with the ease of obtaining a taxi on their last trip. Results were compared with the time of day the journey was made. (Table 6.11)

Table 6.11 Public Satisfaction with Delay on Last Trip

Method Of Hire	Sample	Percentage Satisfied
Telephone	265	88.3
Rank	56	92.9
Flagdown	33	72.7
Time of Day		
0301 – 0700	9	88.9
0701 – 0800	14	78.6
0801 – 0900	13	92.3
0901 – 1000	16	87.5
1001 – 1100	11	100.0
1101 – 1200	12	91.7
1201 – 1300	22	90.9
1301 – 1400	27	96.3
1401 – 1500	17	94.1
1501 – 1600	1	100.0
1601 – 1700	5	100.0
1701 – 1800	14	100.0
1801 – 2300	78	84.6
2301 – 0300	116	81.9

Source: TPI

- 6.22 The results show that the majority of people questioned are satisfied with delay by time of day. The percentage of dissatisfied respondents increases slightly during the period between 0701 and 0800.

Flagdowns

- 6.23 For those respondents that obtained a taxi by Flagdown, it is possible to explore their responses further. Out of 33 people who obtained their taxi by flagdown, 18 (54.5%) replied 'No' when asked if they had experienced a problem in obtaining a Ply for Hire Taxi.
- 6.24 Out of 33 people who obtained their taxi by flagdown, 30 (90.9%) of respondents assessed the general standard of the service provided by Ply for Hire Taxis in the Isle of Man as Very Good to Average.
- 6.25 Out of 33 people who obtained their taxi by flagdown, 1 (3.0%) cited unacceptable waiting time/availability as the main reason they do not use Ply for Hire Taxis in the Isle of Man more often.
- 6.26 Out of 33 people who obtained their taxi by flagdown, 8 (24.2%) cited more Ply for Hire Taxis as one of a number of improvements that could be made.

7.0 GENERAL PATTERNS OF TAXI USE ~ PEDESTRIAN SURVEY

Introduction

- 7.1 Whilst part one of the questionnaire survey was aimed at those people assumed to be regular taxi users and who had travelled by taxi within the last month, part two was directed at regular users, infrequent users and non-users alike.
- 7.2 To identify a profile of frequency of taxi use, all respondents were asked how often they used taxis at ranks, on-street and by telephone. Results are shown on Table 7.1 below.

Table 7.1 Frequency of Taxi Use

	Rank Hire	%	Flagdown	%	Phone	%
Every Day	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	0.7
At Least Weekly	54	5.2	37	3.5	125	11.9
At Least Monthly	114	10.9	57	5.5	224	21.5
At Least Annually	258	24.7	123	11.8	338	32.4
Never	618	59.2	825	79.2	350	33.5
Totals	1044	100.0	1042	100.0	1044	100.0

Source: TPI

- 7.3 Across all hiring methods, 7 respondents stated that they use a taxi every day. A total of 12.6% of respondents use a telephone booked taxi at least weekly, whilst 5.2% use ranks this often.

Deterrents to Increased Ply For Hire Taxi Use

- 7.4 To determine general opinion toward the use of Ply For Hire Taxis, respondents were asked to identify the principal factors which limit their use of Ply For Hire Taxis. Table 7.2 summarises these main “demand suppressers” in order.

Table 7.2 Reasons for Not Using Ply For Hire Taxis More Often

Reason	Frequency	Percent
Car Available	432	41.3
Too Expensive	217	20.8
No Need	142	13.6
Walk/Cycle	124	11.9
Bus Available	60	5.7
Waiting Time/Availability	15	1.4
Prefer/Use Private Hire	7	0.7
Distance to Ranks	0	0.0
Other	31	3.0
No Response	17	1.6
Total	1,045	100.0

Source: TPI

7.5 The main deterrent is the fact that people have a car available (41.3%), followed by too expensive (20.8%). Other reasons cited for not using Ply For Hire Taxis more often in the Isle of Man included:

- Not from here/visitor;
- Only on holiday;
- On a coach trip;
- Only just arrived;
- Don't drink;
- Should be better access for disabled;
- None;
- Speed;
- Only been here 24 hours;
- Some drivers don't have good personal hygiene;
- Been refused to be taken to Lacey;
- Not enough taxis;
- Charge you to put shopping in car;
- Don't have car seat for baby;
- Motorbike;
- Came on a coach;
- Lifts from friends;
- Not here all the time;
- Don't move about - bad eyesight;
- Don't go out much;
- Live just outside Peel - don't need except to go to Airport;
- Private hire more reliable; and
- Drivers are ignorant.

7.6 Interviews were conducted in 5 different locations, namely Port Erin, Douglas, Castletown, Ramsey and Peel. The above results can therefore be disaggregated into these zones as shown in Table 7.3.

Table 7.3 Reasons for Not Using Ply for Hire Taxis More Often – Disaggregated into Zones

Reason	Port Erin (South District)	Douglas (East District)	Castletown (South District)	Ramsey (NW District)	Peel
Too Expensive	29	97	22	25	44
Waiting Time/Availability	1	8	4	2	0
Distance to Ranks	0	0	0	0	0
Car Available	48	193	48	69	74
Bus Available	6	29	9	9	7
Walk/Cycle	10	66	11	21	16
No Need	6	86	22	13	15
Prefer/Use Private Hire	1	4	0	0	2
Other	0	0	0	0	0
No Response	7	34	0	5	2
Total	108	517	116	144	160

Consumer Knowledge of Ply For Hire Taxi Fares

7.7 People were asked to estimate the cost of a three mile daytime taxi journey from a rank in the Isle of Man. A summary is shown in Table 7.4. The average estimated cost is £5.87, £0.11 above the actual cost of £5.76 for a daytime journey and £2.76 below the actual cost of £8.63 for a night-time journey.

Table 7.4 Estimated Cost of a Three Mile Trip in the Isle of Man From a Rank During the Daytime - Pedestrian Survey

Fare Band (£)	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
£1.00	1	0.1	0.1
£1.01 - 2.00	22	2.1	2.2
£2.01 - 3.00	67	6.4	8.6
£3.01 - 4.00	137	13.1	21.7
£4.01 - 5.00	274	26.2	47.9
£5.01 - 6.00	113	10.8	58.7
£6.01 - 7.00	71	6.8	65.5
£7.01 - 8.00	58	5.5	71.0
£8.01 - 9.00	15	1.4	72.4
£10.00	49	4.7	77.1
£11.00	3	0.3	77.4
£12.00	9	0.9	78.3
£12.01 - 13.00	3	0.3	78.6
£13.50	1	0.1	78.7
£15.00	8	0.8	79.5
£15.01 - 16.00	2	0.2	79.7
£18.00	1	0.1	79.8
£20.00	8	0.8	80.6
£22.00	1	0.1	80.7
£30.00	1	0.1	80.8
Don't Know	198	18.9	99.7
No Response	3	0.3	100.0
TOTAL	1045	100.00	-

Source: TPI

Knowledge of Distinction between Ply For Hire Taxis and Private Hire Cars

- 7.8 Respondents were questioned about their knowledge of the legal distinction between Ply For Hire Taxi and Private Hire cars. To the statement “All taxis are allowed to pick up in the street or at a rank”, 913 people responded. Of these 913, 484 (53.0%) said ‘false’. When pressed, 125 (25.8%) of these 484, could demonstrate a satisfactory level of understanding of the difference. This shows that 12.0% of the 1,045 people questioned were already aware of the legal difference between the two types of service at the start of the interview. Surveyors ensured that the others clearly understood which mode of hire (i.e. Ply for Hire) was being discussed in the course of the interview.

Awareness of 4 District System

- 7.9 The Isle of Man operates a 4 district system and Ply For Hire taxis are not allowed to pick up outside of their district. Private Hire vehicles are *not* restricted to a District and they can operate an all-Island service. Respondents were questioned about their knowledge of this system and asked if they were aware of any reason why a licensed taxi displaying taxi signage is not allowed to pick up in the street or at a rank. In total, 245 respondents (23.4%) professed awareness of a reason, their reasons included:

- Licence related: licence permit (18); not licensed (18); licences (10); not licensed to (5); different licence; to do with the licence; the licensing (3); licensed; not a proper hackney carriage licence; restrictions on licences (2); certain licence; condition of licence; depends on licence; difference licence - need to phone; due to licence; got a licence for certain area; got the wrong licence; Hackney carriage licence; have a special licence; have to have a certain licence to tout; licence for four areas; licence plate; licences on cars; licensed locally; licensing is different; might not have a licence; not the right licence; other ones have a hire licence; passenger safety licence; pay less for the kind of licence; restricted licence; restricted licence; right licence; type of licence; not fully licensed; not licensed to pick up; some are licensed to; badge they have; depends on badges; depends on the plate you have; don't buy a plate that can (1);
- Type of taxi: pre-booked (8); private hire (7); phone to book ones (3); only black cabs; private hire pre-booked (2); minicabs; radio cabs; Hackney cabs; metered ones; based in a phone place licensed; minicabs have to be booked; need an address in advance; because it's got private hire on the top; have to phone private hire; not private hire; pre-booked private hire; private hire – districts; private hire can't; private parking places; private plates on taxis; some are private hire; split into two types (1);
- Law: the law (7); illegal; have to be registered; not legally registered (2); local by-laws; road laws; some stupid law; stupidity of laws of commissionaire on island; it's illegal in case they are undesirable; it's just the policy; not allowed; restricted to certain districts; restrictions; restrictions on certain taxis; regulations; traffic regulations; a law against it; Douglas by-laws; just because it's against the law; not registered as taxis; rank ones registered (1);
- Zoning: certain areas (4); if he is out of his area/they are out of their area (3); it's the district they are from (2); can't pick up outside their areas; divided areas for taxis to go in; have certain areas to go in; not in their area; so many number of taxis in certain areas; some are North and some are South; the areas; different zones; they are divided into zones; to do with the zones; to do with their own sections; zoned; different regions; have regions on the disc; depends which part of the island they are licensed for; someone's were districts all-one; can only go so many miles from their office; depends on part of town; depends on where it is; encroaching on someone's territory; if outside Douglas not allowed to come in; ones up North; taxis from out of town centre (1);
- Airport: airport restrictions; airport taxis; airport taxis; licensed for airport; could be an airport taxi (1);
- Ranking: only in ranks (2); different taxis in different ranks; have to work off rank – safety; rank available; can't pull in anywhere they want; not in a bus stop (1);
- Insurance: insurance (3); not covered by insurance maybe; something to do with insurance (1); and
- Other: safety (3); accidents in way; because of traffic; congestion; could be anything; could be fakes; different franchise; exams; if person would be a danger; invalid signage; it's dangerous; no need; not proper taxis; one way streets; other calls to do; parking; plying for business; public safety; security; size of them; take more passengers; they could be any one; they may not be a taxi firm; too busy and not allowed; too many drinks; traffic flows; traffic hazard; you don't know who they are (1).

Availability

- 7.10 We asked whether respondents had experienced problems in obtaining a taxi. Of the 1,045 respondents, 213 (20.4%) said that they had whilst 829 (79.3%) said they had not. Of those who had, we asked what the reason for the difficulty had been. Problems in obtaining a Ply For Hire Taxi experienced by respondents included:
- Availability: none available (12); not enough (11); none around; never one available; because you can't get one (2); off the boat - none in rank; none at ranks; none available and they drive past; not enough when we phoned; taxis full; all booked; all booked and driving past; not available; couldn't find one - had to keep phoning; you can't find one; difficulty getting one (1);
 - Demand: (too) busy (22); rung and too busy; all too busy; too busy and not enough; too busy on a Sunday; everyone wants one at same time (1);
 - Availability at nights and weekends: late at night (30); at night 4; Saturday night; Friday/Saturday night; weekend (3); at busy times; busy nights; at night 2/3 am (2); three years ago - no taxis late at night; after midnight at weekends; late night/phone engaged; late at night in Douglas; night time - Douglas to Ramsey; finish work for the night at 12.30; busy at nights and weekends; at night from Douglas; late Friday night; none at nightclub time; pub closing time; late and busy; not available Friday/Saturday; Saturday morning in Douglas - 2am onwards; Friday and Saturday when raining; late on never enough taxis available; early hours in the morning (1);
 - Waiting time: don't come on time (2); on phone wait an hour or two; phoned and didn't turn up or come too late; wait too long; long wait as it came from Douglas; arriving on time; delays; came late and had gone for plane (1);
 - Don't turn up/Don't stop in street: didn't/never answer phone (3); didn't supply one when they said they would; didn't turn up; kept driving past (2); sometimes haven't turned up; drivers ignore you; don't stop in street; getting them to stop (1);
 - Time of year: TT week (4); New Years Eve (3); Christmas and New Year; time of year (1);
 - Location: going to Douglas; in Douglas they don't want to come to Port Erin at night; in Castletown; in Stilby; in Peel; in Ramsey; didn't want to drive from Douglas to Ramsey; wouldn't come - said it was too far out; not local taxis (1);
 - Weather: when raining (3); when weather's bad; after school – raining (1);
 - Access: pushchair/pram problems/if you want a pram taxi (2); getting double pram in car; asked for 8 seater, they sent two 4 seaters and charged double; keep saying they haven't got wheelchair access (1); and
 - Other: walking home at night on prom; on the prom; a strike a while ago; too far away; off a boat - not enough taxis or they don't arrive at home; at boat times; once at the airport; quite bad here (1).
- 7.11 It was estimated by 66.4% of respondents to be most difficult to obtain the service of a Ply For Hire Taxi on a Friday/Saturday night.
- 7.12 Respondents were asked what proportion of the time they had problems in obtaining the services of a Ply For Hire Taxi. 895 (85.7%) evaluated this as being 50% or less.

Overall Assessment of the Availability of Taxis

- 7.13 Overall, the availability of Taxis in The Isle of Man was considered to be good. Of the 1,045 respondents, only 9.2% thought availability was below average, 46.1% perceived availability as being good or very good. 28.9% of respondents believed the availability to be average.

Accessibility

- 7.14 Respondents were asked about difficulty in entering or exiting any type of taxi, and more specifically about difficulty entering or exiting Taxis with steps (such as people carrier type vehicles or London style black cabs). Only a small proportion (4.0%) stated that they had experienced difficulty in entering or exiting any type of vehicle, whilst 2.6% had experienced difficulty with vehicles with steps.

Overall Assessment of the General Standard of Taxis

- 7.15 Overall, the general standard of the services provided by Taxis in The Isle of Man was thought to be good. Whilst 51.0% thought the standard of service was good or very good and only 5.7% thought it was poor or very poor, 24.9% rated the standard of service as average.

8.0 THE POTENTIAL FOR IMPROVEMENT ~ PEDESTRIAN SURVEY

Introduction

8.1 This section examines the areas in which people feel that the Taxi service could be improved.

Need for Improvement

8.2 People were also asked whether or not they felt that Taxi services could be improved. The responses highlighted that 47.2% of respondents believed improvements possible.

Suggested Improvements to Taxis

8.3 Table 8.1 summarises respondents' suggestions for improving taxi services. Multiple responses were permitted. The recommendations are listed in decreasing order of priority.

Table 8.1 Suggested Improvements to Isle of Man Taxi Services (Multiple Responses Allowed)

Improvement	Frequency	%
Lower fares	339	32.4
More Ply for Hire and Private Hire vehicles	85	8.1
Driver quality/customer care	62	5.9
More ranks	25	2.4
Better driving	24	2.3
Better conditioned vehicles	23	2.2
Better driver appearance	10	1.0
Better Disabled access	9	0.9
Better rank security	5	0.5
Shared Ply for Hire vehicles	3	0.3
Low Emission vehicles	3	0.3
Standard vehicle type/colour	3	0.3
Other suggestions	96	9.2

Source: TPI

8.4 By far the most often cited improvement is lower fares (32.4%).

8.5 Other suggestions for improvements included:

- More taxis (14);
- Come on time (5);
- Come quicker (5);
- More availability (5);
- No smoking cabs (5);
- Car seat for baby (3);
- Allow people to smoke in them (2);
- Cleaner (2);

- Lady drivers (2);
- More reliable (2);
- More taxis at night (2);
- Nicer drivers (2);
- A bit quicker;
- Airport taxi men not so pleasant;
- All island pick ups;
- Availability - more especially at night;
- Availability at weekends;
- Better cars;
- Better organised;
- Bigger taxis for prams;
- Change licensing system - don't divide the zones;
- Cigarette smoke;
- Cleaner vehicles;
- Don't go out as much;
- Don't help with shopping - not a service anymore;
- Drivers smoking;
- Drivers using mobiles when they drive;
- Honest drivers - they don't charge right price;
- Licences should be districted;
- Miserable drivers;
- More at airport;
- More at busy times;
- More at holiday times like New Year;
- More at weekends;
- More bigger taxis;
- More efficient;
- More London cabs;
- More on road - availability/lower price;
- More taxis and drivers;
- More taxis at night;
- More taxis at TT;
- More taxis at weekend;
- More taxis on Sunday;
- Music;
- Newer cars;
- Nicer non-smelly taxis;
- Not allowed to stop;
- Not charge for how many kids with you;
- Pick up anywhere;
- Punctuality service monopolised by one owner;
- Services can always be improved;
- Sticking to what they say;
- Taco on taxi;
- Taxis too small;
- Time efficient;
- Too many unlicensed;
- Turn up when ordered;

- Waiting times; and
- Won't go out of town.

8.6 Interviews were conducted in 5 different locations, namely Port Erin, Douglas, Castletown, Ramsey and Peel. The above results can therefore be disaggregated into these zones as shown in Table 8.2.

Table 8.2 Suggested Improvements to Isle of Man Taxi Services – Disaggregated into Zones (Multiple Responses Allowed)

Improvement	Port Erin (South District)	Douglas (East District)	Castletown (South District)	Ramsey (NW District)	Peel
Lower fares	4	36	16	28	1
Better rank security	0	11	6	8	0
More Ply for Hire Taxis	0	0	2	1	0
Better driving	0	2	1	0	0
Driver quality/customer care	4	10	3	5	1
More ranks	0	2	0	0	1
Better Disabled access	2	12	1	8	1
Better driver appearance	2	4	2	1	1
Better conditioned vehicles	5	39	5	4	9
Shared taxis	28	149	53	63	46
Standard vehicle type/colour	2	1	0	1	1
Low Emission vehicles	2	6	1	0	0
Other suggestions	12	38	11	24	11
Total	61	310	101	143	72

Improvement to Rank Facilities

- 8.7 The survey also focused attention on the possibility of improving taxi rank facilities in the area. Respondents were first asked whether there are any locations where they would like new ranks introduced. Subsequently they were requested to identify any existing ranks which they would make greater use of if a more reliable taxi service was provided there.
- 8.8 147 (14.1%) of the respondents stated that they would like a new rank to be introduced. Table 8.3 lists the main locations outlined.

Table 8.3 Suggested Locations for New Ranks.

Location	Frequency	% (of 1,045 valid responses)
Ramsey	15	1.4
Castletown	12	1.1
Peel	10	1.0
Douglas promenade	6	0.6
Douglas	5	0.5
sea terminal	4	0.4
along the prom	4	0.4
Tesco - Douglas	4	0.4
Port Erin	3	0.3
all bus stations	3	0.3
Douglas bus station	3	0.3
In the middle of town	3	0.3
In the square	3	0.3
Castletown square	3	0.3
Parliament Street	3	0.3
outside Havana, Douglas	2	0.2
Queens in Douglas	2	0.2
KirkMichael	2	0.2
(middle of) prom in centre	2	0.2
Villa Marina	2	0.2
closer to town centre	2	0.2
by Colours nightclub	2	0.2
Sefton Hotel - Douglas	2	0.2
Market Square	2	0.2
Market Place - Ramsey	2	0.2
St Johns Peel	2	0.2

Source: TPI

- 8.9 68 people (6.5%) considered that they would use existing ranks more often if they were supplied with a more reliable Ply for Hire Taxi service. The responses are shown in Table 8.4 below.

Table 8.4 Existing Locations Requiring Improved Service

Location	Frequency	% (of 1,045 valid responses)
Douglas	8	0.8
Douglas bus station	4	0.4
Port Erin	3	0.3
Shoprite near prom	3	0.3
outside Villamarina	2	0.2
Peel	2	0.2
Victoria Street (Douglas)	2	0.2
Promenade	2	0.2
prom anywhere	2	0.2
Castletown square	2	0.2
Douglas bus station and police station	1	0.1
Douglas promenade	1	0.1
Castletown	1	0.1
Prom and Villamarina	1	0.1
by the boats	1	0.1
outside the casino	1	0.1
outside tower house on prom	1	0.1
all of them	1	0.1
Nightclubs	1	0.1
Villamarina	1	0.1
Villa marina Tesco's Shoprite	1	0.1
by Royal Bank	1	0.1
Kirkmichael	1	0.1
Marina Douglas	1	0.1
West Coast taxis	1	0.1
Terry's	1	0.1
Unions Mill	1	0.1
Gaiety theatre	1	0.1
make them bigger	1	0.1
shoprite Douglas	1	0.1
Tower	1	0.1
Lord Street bus station	1	0.1
sea terminal	1	0.1
down town – tower	1	0.1

Source: TPI

Benefits of Delimiting

- 8.10 Respondents were asked whether they felt that removing the limit on the current number of 223 Ply For Hire Taxis would be of benefit to them. Only 15.3% of respondents felt that it definitely would benefit them, whilst 52.7% felt that it definitely would not. The remaining 32.0% did not know or did not respond.

Benefits of Removing the 4 District System/Amalgamation of Zones

- 8.11 Respondents were then asked whether removing the 4 district systems to allow PFH taxi operators to operate an all-island service would benefit them. 35.5% felt that this definitely would benefit them, whilst 59.9% felt that it definitely would not.

9.0 ISLE OF MAN COMPARED TO OTHER DISTRICTS

COMPARISON WITH THE RESULTS FROM PREVIOUS STUDIES

9.1 It is useful to compare the situation on the Isle of Man with that found in similar studies carried out elsewhere. Comparable statistics are available from 81 previous studies and these are listed in Table 9.1 below with the average values based on all 81. The Table highlights a number of key results including:

- population per Ply for Hire Taxi at the time of the study (column one);
- the proportion of rank users travelling in hours in which delays of greater than zero, greater than one minute and greater than five minutes occurred (columns two to four);
- average passenger and cab delay calculated from the rank observations (columns five and six);
- the proportion of Monday to Thursday daytime hours in which excess demand was observed (column seven);
- the judgement on whether rank demand is highly peaked (column 8); and
- a numeral indicator of significant unmet demand

9.2 Comparisons between disparate markets should be treated with some caution. Districts vary according to density, population, public transport provision, car ownership and many other socio-economic and physical characteristics. On the other hand each has been subject to analysis carried out over similar periods and using a common methodology. On balance, we believe that valuable insights may be drawn from these comparisons.

Results of the Comparisons

9.3 The following main points may be made about the results on the Isle of Man compared to other Districts:

- the population supplied by each Ply for Hire Taxi in the Isle of Man is well below the average for the 81 Districts cited. If the Isle of Man conformed to the average there would be 44 Ply for Hire Taxis. If it equalled the best provision there would be 313 Ply for Hire Taxis and if it equalled the worst provision there would be 13.
- the proportion of passengers who travel in hours where some delay occurs, at 30.32% in the East District and 5.67% in Malew District is below the average for the 81 Districts cited. **The proportion of passengers travelling in hours where the delay equals or exceeds one minute is 7.48% in the East District and 5.67% in Malew District, which is again below the average for the 81 Districts cited.** The proportion travelling in hours where the average delay exceeds five minutes is also below the average;

- **overall passenger delay at 0.28 minutes and 0.22 in the East and Malew Districts respectively is below the average for all 81 Districts cited;**
- average overall cab delay is above the average for all Districts shown;
- **the proportion of weekday daytime hours in which excess demand conditions are observed, as defined in Section 4.5 and observed from Appendix A, is 0%; and**
- demand on the Isle of Man is considered to exhibit a high degree of peaking in the East District, but does not exhibit a high degree of peaking in Malew District.

9.4 A further indicator may be derived from the comparative information contained in Table 9.1 that is useful in summarising the implications of the findings in relation to the issue of significant unmet demand, as discussed in Section 2. It allows a greater degree of objectivity than the inherently judgmental matrix assessment alone can provide.

9.5 This indicator is calculated taking into account the size and incident of passenger delay and the effect of peaking in demand. It is defined as the product of the average passenger delay, the percentage of passengers travelling in hours where the average delay is greater than or equal to one minute and the percentage of excess demand. If peaking demand is present the average delay is factored by 0.5 to allow for the disproportionate effect of late night demand on the overall average delay.

9.6 At the time this method was devised, those authorities where previous studies had resulted in a conclusion of significant unmet demand, had produced values of 90, 162, 196, 275, 282, 408 and 972. At that time, the highest value obtained for a study where a conclusion of no significant unmet demand had been reached was 72. This suggested a threshold value of around 80 to use as a benchmark. **The value of this indicator for Isle of Man, in both the East District and the Malew District, is 0 resulting in a conclusion of NO Significant Unmet Demand.**

9.7 Figure 9.1 shows the Significant Unmet Demand (SUD) Indicator Value in the Isle of Man compared with other Authorities. It can be seen that the location of the Isle of Man SUD Indicator Value suggests No Significant Unmet Demand.

Table 9.1 A Comparison of Isle of Man with Other Recently Studied Authorities

Authority	Population per Ply for Hire Taxi	Proportion Waiting at Ranks (%)	Proportion Waiting ≥1 minute (%)	Proportion Waiting ≥5 minutes (%)	Average Passenger Delay	Average Cab Delay	% Excess Demand	Demand Peaked	SUD ++ Indicator Value
Isle of Man – East District	276	30.32	7.48	0.81	0.28	12.13	0.00	YES	0
Isle of Man – Malew District	*across all districts	5.67	5.67	5.67	0.22	47.17	0.00	NO	0
Worthing	1,337	33.33	23.19	8.13	1.49	18.68	10.00	YES	173
Dover	1,452	36.80	21.84	10.51	0.98	13.62	0.00	YES	0
Braintree	2,807	34.54	7.63	1.17	0.45	15.28	0.00	NO	0
Kirklees	1,461	35.04	12.12	0.55	0.45	13.44	4.90	YES	13
King’s Lynn & West Norfolk	1,813	35.73	33.07	3.20	0.74	27.48	2.40	NO	58
St Helens	2,807	18.61	14.06	1.76	0.40	8.43	1.39	NO	8
Wakefield	1,537	12.42	4.82	0.35	0.18	11.93	6.06	YES	3
Castleford	2,680	43.49	29.78	6.57	1.84	1.85	13.33	NO	730
Pontefract	1,662	57.32	38.71	8.19	1.74	3.70	20.00	NO	1347
Teignbridge	1,475	31.73	7.82	2.91	0.42	20.51	10.52	YES	17
Exeter	1,915	3.06	3.06	1.84	0.33	21.25	2.33	NO	2
Tameside	1,490	48.83	27.74	2.14	1.05	7.67	35.4	NO	1031
Newcastle-under-Lyme	2,596	79.18	57.57	12.92	2.69	5.27	33.3	NO	5157
Salford	2,771	31.27	16.64	3.51	0.78	7.60	10.8	NO	140
Barrow	474	3.36	3.36	1.15	0.11	8.15	0.00	YES	0
Wansbeck	2,036	51.87	36.43	0.9	1.43	7.47	0.00	NO	0
Lancaster	1,266	49.17	34.27	11.17	1.32	7.38	7.55	YES	171
Torridge	1,255	10.06	0.76	0	0.03	18.06	0.00	NO	0
Plymouth	587	17.66	10.24	4.36	0.35	15.88	0.50	NO	2
Wyre	660	34.94	34.61	2.12	0.65	10.23	0.00	NO	0
Chester	1,619	59.45	35.38	10.09	1.40	9.69	10.43	NO	516
Rugby	1,901	69.15	52.47	16.54	3.20	10.87	19.44	NO	3266
Barnsley	3,575	80.00	55.40	10.91	2.44	4.76	14.77	NO	1997
Harrogate	1,016	39.68	31.08	5.02	0.78	15.82	0.00	NO	0
Aberdeen	240	74.72	53.94	21.19	2.7	8.69	14.37	YES	1046
Woking	1,664	19.31	2.66	0	0.18	18.15	0.00	NO	0
Durham 2003	1,595	77.48	68.99	22.35	3.62	9.14	10.87	NO	2715
Forest Heath 2003	434	19.36	4.86	0.53	0.19	11.74	0.00	YES	0
Rhyl 2003	384	54.05	38.76	19.30	1.68	13.55	8.89	NO	579
Prestatyn 2003	1,375	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	NO	0
Havant 2003	2,757	27.30	8.21	3.18	0.98	13.06	4.05	NO	33

Table 9.1 Continued :- A Comparison of Isle of Man with Other Recently Studied Authorities

Authority	Population per Ply for Hire Taxi	Proportion Waiting at Ranks (%)	Proportion Waiting ≥1 minute (%)	Proportion Waiting ≥5 minutes (%)	Average Passenger Delay	Average Cab Delay	% Excess Demand	Demand Peaked	SUD ++ Indicator Value
Reading 2002	856	64.37	32.91	6.43	1.27	6.08	6.98	No	291
Huntingdonshire 2002	3,611	29.4	19.50	4.50	0.91	14.55	7.02	NO	124
King's Lynn and West Norfolk 2002	2,258	54.34	32.7	16.94	4.37	15.69	14.63	NO	2091
Hyndburn 2002	1,285	25.96	8.48	8.48	0.78	25.22	0.00	NO	0
Basingstoke and Deane 2002	3,148	79.56	59.68	8.12	1.67	3.72	40.74	NO	4060
Sunderland 2002	830	42.9	28.0	15.4	2.04	12.20	4.92	NO	282
Washington 2002	1,869	35.65	12.97	1.46	0.50	6.55	9.52	NO	62
Oxford 2001	1,456	69.60	47.60	11.86	1.72	8.36	10.00	YES	409
Windsor 2001	1,127	38.60	25.40	6.00	1.07	14.25	0.00	YES	0
Maidenhead 2001	1,289	24.90	19.30	0.00	0.57	14.70	4.00	YES	22
Ascot 2001	3,154	1.89	1.89	0.00	0.01	79.40	0.00	NO	0
Wyre Forest 2001	1,225	61.50	43.50	11.70	1.29	5.20	13.64	NO	765
Wansbeck 2001	2,024	37.50	21.46	2.49	0.84	8.79	0.00	NO	0
Chorley 2001	3,328	52.70	21.90	8.60	0.88	6.92	12.50	NO	241
Lancaster 2000	1,370	60.00	26.10	8.87	0.97	7.62	11.00	NO	278
Congleton 1999	3,175	32.46	15.46	1.96	0.58	15.93	0.00	NO	0
North Devon 1999	934	22.00	6.50	0.30	0.32	14.86	1.00	YES	1.04
Bournemouth 1999	689	64.00	42.00	8.00	1.29	7.58	20.00	NO	1084
Stratford-Upon Avon 1999	1,860	50.00	34.00	7.00	1.20	10.20	13.00	YES	265
Sunderland 1998	1,362	72.00	38.00	20.00	3.58	4.62	47.00	NO	6394
Washington 1998	1,579	46.00	13.00	1.70	0.56	6.70	24.00	NO	175
Burnley 1998	5,572	69.00	30.00	0.00	1.12	5.10	74.00	NO	2486
Blackpool 1998	474	25.00	12.00	0.10	0.43	10.24	5.00	YES	13
Wansbeck 1998	2,000	51.00	38.00	12.00	2.62	7.77	0.00	YES	0
Sheffield 1998	1,779	46.00	25.00	14.00	1.47	12.87	0.00	YES	0
Nottingham 1998	1,054	37.00	21.00	8.00	1.60	14.60	36.00	NO	1210
Cambridge 1997	804	79.00	55.00	20.00	2.69	5.19	27.00	NO	3995
Forest Heath	510	12.00	8.00	0.00	0.23	11.48	1.00	YES	1
Reading	1,007	40.00	26.00	10.00	1.42	14.58	0.00	NO	0
Bassetlaw	3,638	52.00	43.00	11.00	0.92	9.01	0.00	YES	0
Bedford	3,038	27.00	11.00	2.00	0.21	14.73	3.00	NO	7
Lancaster 1997	1,390	34.00	24.00	2.00	0.61	14.16	13.00	NO	190
Ellesmere Port	3,220	56.00	42.00	19.00	2.22	5.89	37.00	NO	3450
St Albans	1,016	28.00	3.00	1.00	0.26	12.54	2.00	YES	1
Wigan	2,279	12.00	3.00	2.00	0.32	7.29	10.00	YES	5
Southend	913	45.00	24.00	7.00	1.35	7.29	10.00	YES	162
Bath	862	42.00	22.00	8.00	0.53	8.53	4.00	YES	23

Table 9.1 Continued :- A Comparison of Isle of Man with Other Recently Studied Authorities

Authority	Population per Ply for Hire Taxi	Proportion Waiting at Ranks (%)	Proportion Waiting ≥1 minute (%)	Proportion Waiting ≥5 minutes (%)	Average Passenger Delay	Average Cab Delay	% Excess Demand	Demand Peaked	SUD ++ Indicator Value
Merthyr Tydfil	1,412	31.00	7.00	0.00	0.14	6.96	8.00	NO	8
Sheffield 1995	1,893	16.00	10.00	1.00	0.72	15.56	10.00	NO	72
Copeland*	506	33.00	23.00	1.00	0.71	7.85	0.00	YES	0
Richmondshire*	588	20.00	8.00	0.00	0.13	17.28	3.00	YES	2
High Peak*	591	21.00	7.00	0.00	0.31	11.89	0.00	YES	0
Sunderland 1993	1,423	45.00	30.00	14.00	1.51	9.95	9.00	NO	408
Washington 1993	1,667	28.00	7.00	2.00	0.33	6.50	6.00	NO	14
Houghton/Hetton 1993 +	3,494	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.91	0.00	NO	0
Warrington	2,033	47.00	38.00	8.00	1.35	13.26	1.00	NO	51
Teignbridge	1,288	22.00	8.00	1.00	0.25	31.70	6.00	NO	12
Liverpool	360	19.00	8.00	4.00	0.21	11.20	0.00	YES	0
Nottingham 91	1,395	31.00	8.00	3.00	0.55	12.40	8.00	YES	18
Newcastle U/ Lyme	2,836	70.00	40.00	11.00	1.43	7.16	17.00	NO	972
Oldham	2,895	26.00	10.00	2.00	0.45	7.50	20.00	NO	90
Dover	1,067	14.00	12.00	1.00	0.14	21.70	0.00	NO	0
Deal	1,400	72.00	15.00	1.00	0.43	5.40	26.00	NO	168
AVERAGE	1,722	40.19	23.67	6.16	1.07	11.65	9.92	-	-

Source TPI

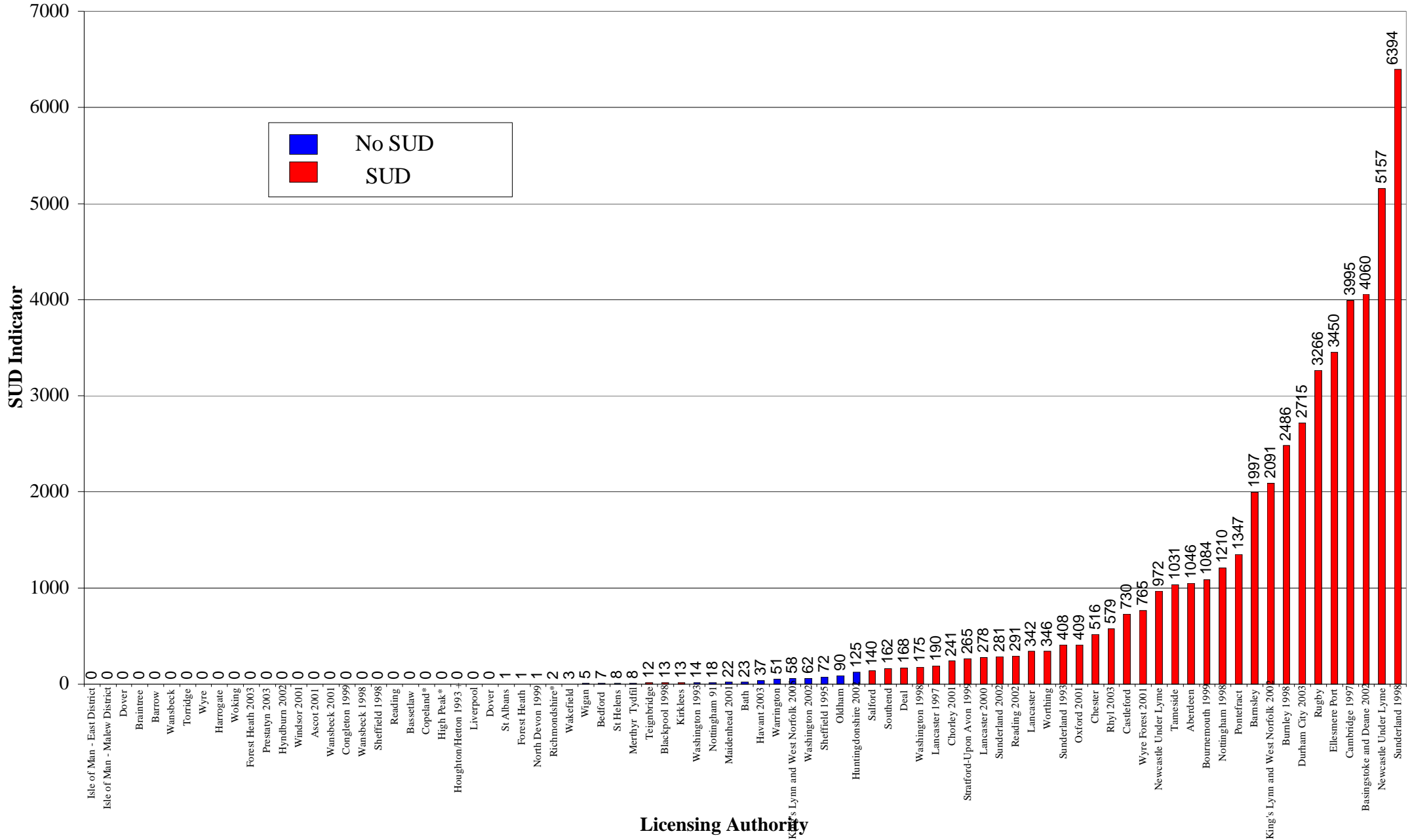


Figure 9.1 - Significant Unmet Demand (SUD) Indicator Value in Isle of Man Compared With Other Authorities

10.0 CONSULTATION

10.1 To inform the study of the views of the Ply for Hire Taxi trade, private hire trade and other organisations/interested parties, letters were sent to a number of individuals and organisations. A copy of all the replies to the issued letter is included in Appendix B.

10.2 The following individuals and organisations were contacted:

- The Trade (Ply for Hire and Private Hire);
- Government Departments – Education, Trade & Industry, Tourism & Leisure, Health and Social Services, Highways and Transportation, Traffic Management, Environment;
- Local Parish, Town and Village Commissioners;
- Isle of Man Constabulary;
- Douglas Development Partnership;
- Chamber of Commerce;
- The Association of Corporate Service Providers;
- Colleges;
- Manx Entertainment and Nightclub Association;
- Licensed Victuallers Association;
- IOM Pub Watch;
- Drug and Alcohol Strategy Committee;
- Woman's Institute;
- Hotels;
- Night Clubs;
- Restaurants;
- Banks; and
- Other Financial Services.

10.3 Responses were received from the following individuals and organisations:

- Mr Ray Teare, Chairman, Manx Taxi Federation;
- Mr James Colin Christian, Driver, PPV Badge No 99;
- Mr Peter Clague, Taxi Proprietor;
- Mr Michael Corlett, Taxi Proprietor;
- Mr G Cringle, Cringle & Co. Ltd (Funeral Services Limousine Hire);
- Mr R Warren Davies, Taxi Proprietor;
- Mr J A Dougherty, Taxi Proprietor;
- Mr Paul Heavey, Managing Director, Island Taxis Limited;
- Mr Shane Hesketh, Ronaldsway Taxi Services;
- G M Ivey, Ply for Hire Taxi Proprietor;
- Mr W Kelly, Taxi Proprietor;
- Mr Roy Lightfoot, Chairman & Managing Director, Protours Isle of Man Limited;
- Mr Brian Machin, Elite Cars;
- Mr C Mayers, Chauffeur Drive, American Limo Hire;
- Mr P Mclean, Taxi Proprietor;
- Mr and Mrs Les & Lucia McMurdo, Taxi Proprietors;

- Mr Barry Murphy, Private Hire Taxi Proprietor;
- Mr John Nicholson, Taxi Proprietor;
- Mr Juan Qualtrough, Manager, Crennell's Garage Limited (Taxis, Coaches, Limousines);
- Mr T A Shepherd, Terry's Taxi;
- Mr Barrie Turner, Ply for Hire Taxi Proprietor;
- Mr Paul Turner, Ply for Hire Taxi Proprietor;
- Mr Peter G S Westwell, Taxi Proprietor;
- Mr R A Hamilton, Chief Executive, Department of Local Government and the Environment, Isle of Man Government;
- Mr John Swindlehurst, Transport Manager, Department of Education, Isle of Man Government;
- Mr David R Howard, Director of Public Transport, Isle of Man transport;
- Mr Colin Meakin, Town Clerk of Castletown Town Commissioners;
- Mr Chris Pycroft, Development Manager, Douglas Development Partnership;
- Ms Barbara O'Hanlon, Chief Executive, Isle of Man Chamber of Commerce;
- Ms Caroline Mallon, Secretary, Chronically Sick & Disabled Persons Committee; and
- Mr Peter Cartmel, Team Manager, Disabilities Social Services Division, mobility impaired.

- 10.4 **Mr Ray Teare, Chairman, Manx Taxi Federation**, refers to the Isle of Man's Road Transport Act 2001, and more specifically to Schedule 2 of the Act, paragraph 3, subsections 3 & 4. He also attaches a copy of the Tynwald debate on this Schedule and states that it was specifically designed to introduce the concept of 'unmet need' (which is not mentioned elsewhere in the Act) and to give an assurance, in the words of the Minister of Transport, "... that all-Island plying for hire and removal of the principle of unmet need for grant of any additional licences in a district will not occur for five years at least."
- 10.5 Since that time, however, the Road Transport Licensing Committee have allowed the number of Ply for Hire vehicles in the East District to be increased from 100 in 2001 to 117 as they have refused to accept that the provisions of Schedule 2, i.e. unmet need, are of equal relevance to the requirements of section 10 of the Act, i.e. good repute, appropriate financial standing and professional competence.
- 10.6 It is for this reason that this organisation has, since the inception of the Road Transport Act 2001, pressed for a full and independent survey of the taxi trade on the island, such as the one currently being carried out, to assist in providing the RTALC with the relevant information for assessing any unmet need within the four districts, rather than relying simply on hearsay, subjective views and personal opinions.
- 10.7 Availability of both Ply for Hire taxis and Private Hire cars and minibuses across the island: Using figures acquired from the most recent census, 2001, the total population of the East District is 40,809, which would give a ratio of potential customers to Ply for Hire vehicles of 349:1. However, as the parishes are open to Ply for Hire from any district, the numbers are reduced to 33,248 giving a ratio of 284:1 which is a lower figure than would be obtained from the vast majority of jurisdictions in the UK. In purely statistical terms, therefore, the East District has more than enough taxis to fulfil all reasonable needs.

- 10.8 The North West District, with a population – including parishes – of 20,033, is served by 49 Ply for Hire vehicles; giving a ratio of 408:1. The South District, comprising 12,208 people, has only 11 ‘dedicated’ Ply for Hire, giving a ratio of 1109:1. However, if the dual Malew & South District plates are included, the number of Ply for Hires increases to 27 and the ratio becomes 452:1. The Malew District, where the population of just 2,262 is a less significant factor than the fact that it contains the island’s only commercial airport, is served by 33 Ply for Hires, plus a further 16 dual South & Malew vehicles. Employing the same format on an island-wide basis, the population of 76,315 are served by 223 Ply for Hire vehicles giving a ratio of approximately 342:1 which, once again, appears to be a more than satisfactory outcome.
- 10.9 In considering the numbers available to serve the various districts, it is also worth noting that Private Hire Vehicles are not merely available for pre-booking but are also allowed to deal with what has been termed ‘immediate response’ via telephone or radio communication. In simple terms, this means that all Private Hire Vehicles, other than those reserved for ‘special occasions’, are able to ‘support’ the Ply for Hire work available in any district.
- 10.10 As, within any district, Ply for Hire Vehicles from other districts are able to act in a Private Hire capacity, it means that all of the 223 Ply for Hire vehicles, the 30 Executive Private Hire vehicles and the 27 Private Hire Minibuses are, in theory, able to provide ‘immediate response’ to requests from customers. As this gives a total of 280 vehicles, the ratio to population potentially becomes 272:1.
- 10.11 Although it is difficult to quantify the numbers, it is clear that a number of Private Hire vehicles have invested with radio service providers and are engaged in work that would otherwise have been carried out by Ply for Hire vehicles. It may also be of interest to note that tables 54, 55, 56 & 57 of volume 2 of the census show a total of almost 50,000 private vehicles, whilst table 39 reveals that less than 6.5% of the working population uses public transport – including buses – to travel to and from work.
- 10.12 The number of Ply for Hire and/or Private Hire Vehicles the company operates: As can be seen from the list of licence plate holders, 104 operators make their livings from a single vehicle whilst a further 22 do so from 2 vehicles. Only Buntys in the South District (14) and Crennels in the North West (24) have numbers that reach into double figures. Therefore it is reasonable to state that Taxis in the island are mostly operated as very small businesses.
- 10.13 This is slightly complicated, however, by the radio service providers such as A1, Telecabs, Elegance Taxis and Taxicabs. In some cases, as many as 30 vehicles are available from each of the larger organisations to provide both pre-booked and immediate response work via this medium, as well as to provide the 24-hour service that is offered. In the East District, somewhere around 80% of the Ply for Hire vehicles are attached to a radio service provider and, with the advent of mobile telecommunications (approximately 55,000 on the island) it is reasonable to assume that a considerable percentage of work available is dealt with in this way – both at peak and off-peak times.

- 10.14 Although it may be difficult to gauge accurately, there is little doubt that the concept of immediate response has had an impact on Ply for Hire work and most particularly for the single, independent operators who rely on this as the major source of their income.
- 10.15 Numbers and types of jobs etc: The percentages of telephone/contractual bookings to ‘flag downs’ and ‘rank hirings’ are very much dependent on the efficiency or otherwise of the radio service providers and the public profiles of their companies and will, therefore, vary from individual to individual. Those who employ a radio service provider obviously do so in the belief that the cost is more than offset by the increased takings and, as this appears to be true even in the case of Private Hire vehicles with radios it suggests that there is little or no shortfall of taxis to service the Ply for Hire business available in terms of ‘flag downs’ and ‘rank hirings’. The hours between 4am and 7pm are often a period of considerable activity in terms of boat and plane arrivals and departures, and of people setting out for work.
- 10.16 Vehicle type/colour/livery: Neither colour nor liveries are applicable to local conditions. As far as ‘types’ of vehicle are concerned, there is a mix of 4/6/7 & 8 seat vehicles available in most areas. In recent years there has been a general increase in the numbers of higher capacity vehicles as well as Private Hire minibuses, even though it remains the case that the type of vehicle most frequently requested by customers continues to be the conventional saloon car.
- 10.17 Ply for Hire vehicle type with respect to Disabled Access vehicles across the island: This is a very involved and intricate problem. Firstly, it is difficult to obtain any reliable information on the numbers of people who might require, for example, wheelchair accessible vehicles – and even more difficult to discover how many would require the use of taxis, and how often. In relation to contractual work, the picture becomes even more complicated by the insistence of many authorities that vehicles employed in such work must have 4-point, rather than 2-point, securing of wheelchairs, which eliminates conventionally accepted types such as the TX1 & TX2. As most of the people who require a wheelchair accessible vehicle prefer the security of knowing that it will be available as and when they need it, they tend to pre-book both outward and return journeys in advance. This convention is unlikely to be changed, even by a dramatic increase in the number of wheelchair accessible Ply for Hire vehicles available. The only Private Hire vehicles that are permitted to be used for wheelchair access are minibuses. The list of Executive Private Hire vehicles that are permitted by RTLC regulations do not include any that are capable of being wheelchair accessible. Despite extensive enquiries, they have been unable to discover any cases of wheelchair bound passengers unsuccessfully attempting to hire from the ranks or to flag down taxis in the street. There is now a considerable number of wheelchair accessible taxis in the East District, many of whom have never been required or requested to carry a wheelchair bound passenger. Minibuses, whether pre-booked or contractual, carry out most of the wheelchair accessible work, and are supported by vehicles owned by local authorities or charities, or by the Ply for Hire vehicles especially adapted to the purpose, and there does not appear to be any unmet need in this sector. The elderly infirm, who might be counted in this category, generally prefer – and request – saloon type vehicles, which they find easier for the purpose of entry and exit. There are more than sufficient saloon Ply for Hire and Private Hire vehicles to meet this need. People with visual disabilities usually declare no preference for the type of vehicle offered – only requesting assistance when necessary. People with aural disabilities do not normally

experience problems in ‘open’ vehicles such as saloons or MPVs. ‘Closed’ vehicles, such as the TX models should (and usually do) have ‘loop’ systems installed. Although it is frequently stated that it would be desirable to have a greater degree of disabled access available, the evidence for any unmet need does not appear to have been gathered or collated, and it would appear that the current variety of vehicles is probably the best way to meet these needs on an island-wide basis.

- 10.18 Driver quality/Helpfulness & Customer Care: There is particular concern at the moment with regards to the quality of newly qualified drivers. The qualifying test that was used to weed out unsuitable applicants has now been watered down to such a degree that even a new arrival to the island, with little or no previous knowledge of it, could probably obtain a badge. This has been made possible by allowing applicants to take a road map with them into the written part of the test. Although it may confirm their ability to read, it does nothing to show their suitability to drive a taxi on the island’s roads and adequately serve the needs of the general public.
- 10.19 Due to a reduction in the amount of work available to individual drivers – the result of increased numbers of taxis and the departure of itinerant building workers following the completion of many major capital schemes – there have been allegations of an increasingly frantic rush to capture a fair share of what is available with a resultant deterioration in driving standards. It must be emphasised that, however logical this may appear to be, it is only a matter of unsubstantiated allegations. However, should the decline in the amount of work available continue, it may prove to be at least prophetic.
- 10.20 The vast majority of workers in the taxi trade are accustomed to being helpful in terms of assisting with luggage or shopping, offering physical support to those who require it, setting passengers down at the most convenient point and so forth. In a highly competitive environment such as the local taxi trade, and in a small community such as the island, those who do not observe such common courtesies quickly become known and find their customer base being appropriately reduced.
- 10.21 In general terms, if the public showed the same degree of courtesy towards taxi drivers as taxi drivers display towards them – in respect of being on time for bookings, for example – it would enable the service provided to become even more efficient.
- 10.22 The location and number of EXISTING ranks across the island: The official existing ranks, other than the one at the airport, are only to be found in the East District. ‘Found’, unfortunately, is the operative word, because many residents are unaware of their location.

Lord Street/Bus Station. The last time that there was a satisfactory rank in this locale was several years ago when it ran the length of the Lord Street Frontage of the bus station. It was clearly visible to the general public, well known to them, and accommodated 12-15 taxis. When the bus station site was first cleared for potential redevelopment, the rank was temporarily moved inside the car park – less satisfactory, but still reasonably visible. It was then moved to its present location at the back of the Douglas & Clarendon hotels – no longer very visible, almost impossible to use when deliveries are being made to the other two hotels in the area in the narrow, one-way street immediately ahead of it, and totally unsuitable for anyone of a delicate sensibility after dark. There is now a second rank on the

opposite side of Lord Street that no one appears to know what to do with. It appears that it can only come into use once the other one is removed. It is hardly surprising that the general public have become less inclined to seek taxis from the ranks in the area. The future of any rank in the area, however, seems uncertain due to the proposed new hotel developments. Whether any appropriate provision will be made is open to question.

Sea Terminal. Because of the limited parking space available, this rank has long been bedevilled by the intrusion of private cars parking on it to pick up friends/relatives from the boat. As the main entrance/exit of the terminal is in the centre of the building, only half of the spaces on the semi-circular rank are of any use, which restricts its capacity to little more than 6 or 7 vehicles. Using that door purely as an entrance, restricting disembarking passengers to the side entrance, and providing a new and more extensive rank there might ease the situation.

Victoria Street. The builders' hoardings to a considerable degree unfortunately obscure the temporary rank currently being used to facilitate the redevelopment of buildings alongside the old one. It is however a popular and well-used rank, and it is to be hoped that provision will be made for a fairly substantial one once the work is completed.

Tower House. This rank is completely unknown to most members of the general public. There are very definite problems with private cars parking on it and the promises of the Project Centurion officials that such ranks would be kept clear have certainly not been fulfilled.

Villa Marina. Designed as a series of bus stops, it was decided to convert it into a taxi rank when the long-used and popular one in front of the Sefton Hotel was removed. The move was extremely unpopular with taxi drivers and with the general public and, although it has now been in place for some time, the situation has not improved. When approached from the main shopping area, it is virtually invisible – and certainly it is impossible to determine whether there are any taxis parked on it awaiting fares. It is much more difficult to enter the stream of traffic when setting off from it than it ever was at the Sefton (bus drivers allegedly made the same complaint about it) and, when customers wish to head in the direction of the Loch Promenade, it involves a difficult and traffic blocking manoeuvre at Broadway lights. At peak times, it is quite common to see people trying to flag down taxis at the old Sefton rank rather than walk to the Villa rank – even when there are taxis available there. It is a failed experiment.

Safeway/Shoprite, Market Street. Before the general downturn in business experienced over the last two years – along with the proliferation of extra taxis – it was generally the case that this rank was principally occupied by independent PFHs. Recently, however, PFH vehicles attached to radio service providers have increasingly found it necessary to queue up on this rank, with the obvious consequence of a reduction in the potential earning capacity of independent operators. It is also another rank that is bedevilled by private car parking – especially after 5pm when the traffic wardens are no longer on duty.

Colours Nightclub. Another night time innovation of Project Centurion. It would appear that the local police were aware of the survey taking place, as that was the only weekend that anyone can recall the private cars being made to move from it.

Taxis have always lined up there – usually double-parked alongside the private vehicles – and it is a busy rank at the weekends.

Paramount City Nightclub. The Project Centurion officials must have realised that their presentation of Douglas Promenade as something akin to a suburb of Baghdad would eventually reduce the number of people willing to risk visiting it at weekends because they provided a rank for no more than 2 or 3 vehicles where previously upwards of 9 or 10 had queued for custom. Another one that is often occupied by private vehicles at the optimum times.

- 10.23 The location and number of potential places for NEW ranks across the island: The Northwest and Southern Districts are reportedly unenthusiastic about the setting up of ranks in their areas. However, there are ‘unofficial’ ranks in several places (e.g. Castletown Square, outside Nightlife nightclub in Ramsey, etc.) that might benefit from being made official if it reduces the incidence of private vehicles occupying them at optimum times. In the East District, the picture is very different. Although the problems with the ranks in Lord Street, Sea Terminal and Victoria Street are not insoluble – and the restoration of the rank outside the Sefton Hotel extremely desirable – there are few places that would currently justify the creation of new ranks:

Jaks, Loch Prom. This is already being used as an ‘unofficial’ rank – especially after 11pm when the bus service has ceased – as it is easily the busiest late-night pub in Douglas. As it also serves customers emerging from Strand Street, it has been suggested that a permanent rank should be created, possibly on the southern side of Granville Street that would also benefit shoppers emerging from Strand Street during the daytime.

Outback Nightclub, Barrack Street. Once again, there is an unofficial rank outside the club at weekends, and it would certainly benefit from a ‘peak hours’ rank such as the ones at ‘Colours’ and ‘Paramount City’.

- 10.24 There are, however, two other matters that need to be addressed as a matter of urgency. The first is the signage on the ranks. As many of them are not particularly visible, and it would certainly be difficult for any visitor to the island to locate them, they do beg for appropriate, preferably illuminated, signs. At present there are only the yellow markings on the road surface along with small signs of warning to other motorists not to park. Unfortunately, the situation is exacerbated by the fact that, although taxis are governed by the RTLC, the placement of ranks and their signage is the responsibility of the Department of Transport. Some degree of cooperation and coordination between the two ought to be able to resolve this problem. The second is that there appears to be little regard for the offence of parking on a taxi rank. That is why it is to be hoped that the account of this survey is read by the Department for Home Affairs as well as the other interested parties.

- 10.25 Fares: As in most places, the fare structure is the thing that comes under most criticism from members of the public. The current fare structure places the Isle of Man at No 127 out of 377 in the most recent league table of fares produced by *Private Hire & Taxi Monthly*, issue 159, December 2005. When the extra cost of fuel (current price 98.9p per litre for diesel) is taken into consideration, as well as the generally higher cost of living on the island compared with the UK, that seems to be a very satisfactory result as far as giving value for money is concerned. From the

same source, the national average Flag Fall for tariff 1 is £2.15, while theirs is £2.00 and the average prices for journeys in the island appear to be in line with the averages in the UK. In part, this is because fares have only been adjusted according to the local rate of inflation in recent years.

- 10.26 Recruitment of drivers: It is a source of considerable regret that, due to the downturn in business and the rising costs involved in maintaining a taxi on the roads, it has become more difficult to recruit full-time taxi drivers. More than ever before, it has become (apart from owner-driver) a part-time profession. Without wishing to be derogatory about their abilities and efforts, it is inevitably the case that part-time drivers do not have the same degree of commitment to the profession as would be expected from full time workers for whom it would be the primary source of income. Unfortunately, it appears that a shortage of part time drivers has led to a reduction in the standard of competence required.
- 10.27 Identification – Uniforms and/or Badges: Although uniforms are not part of the local trade, there has recently been an attempt by the RTLC to introduce a universal dress code. So far, the trade has generally dismissed it as being too restrictive and formal. In particular, the prohibition of jeans, trainers and baseball caps has been resisted and the problem is one that will hopefully be resolved in talks between the authority and the trade. Drivers’ badges have also been the subject for discussion, with an ongoing debate about the balance to be struck between conveying sufficient information and ensuring clarity.
- 10.28 Publicity & Advertising of PPV services across the island: For most of the year, when it is mainly the local population who make up the customer base of the business it would be unproductive and uneconomic to invest heavily in advertising. All of the radio service providers and some smaller groups are to be found in the local yellow pages, some advertise on the local radio stations and, occasionally, the local press. Information about specialised services – such as wheelchair accessible vehicles, for example – may appear more difficult to access, but a call to any of the service providers would (as most local people are aware) supply the necessary information. Most of the smaller operators – and many of the larger ones – have found that the distribution of business cards is the most cost-effective and productive form of advertising available to them.
- 10.29 As the RTLC is the regulating authority, with access to information about all of the Ply for Hire and Private Hire vehicles on the island, it might be worth considering whether a raising of their profile with the general public might not prove to be advantageous. At the moment, there seem to be remarkably few members of the public who know how to contract them.
- 10.30 Restrictions: According to the RTLC’s interpretation of the Road Transport Act 2001, there are no restrictions on the current number of Ply for Hire taxis. As long as they insist that the conditions enumerated in section 10 of the Act section, i.e. good repute, appropriate financial standing and professional competence, are the only qualifications required for the issue of a new licence to any applicant, there cannot be said to be any form of restriction on the overall numbers available. If, however, they feel bound to address the question of ‘unmet need’ as expressed in Schedule 2 of the Act then the question of restriction becomes relevant.

- 10.31 Without wishing to anticipate the outcome of the survey, the statistics presented earlier regarding the ratio of taxis to population, suggest that there is unlikely to be any 'unmet need'. The information received from their members and from many other sources, is that the amount of trade available has declined and that, in the East District, the considerable increase in the number of Ply for Hire vehicles has also had an adverse effect on their earning capacities. Along with the increased use of Private Hire cars and minibuses in the area, this has, in some cases, led to owners seeking alternative employment and leaving their taxi businesses in the hands of part-time drivers.
- 10.32 It is the opinion of this organisation and its members that the introduction of restrictions, with licences only being issued on the basis of 'unmet need', is the only way to secure the long term future of a taxi trade that will maintain professional standards of service to the general public.
- 10.33 Removal of Districts: As has already been stated, this organisation opposed the division of Malew & Southern Districts and it seems logical to support their reunification. This would leave just 3 Districts, which in their opinion would provide the best possible balance between earning potential and maintaining a satisfactory service in rural areas.
- 10.34 Outlying districts have long suffered from the misconception that Douglas is some kind of 'Promised Land' for taxi operatives. Should the decision be made to remove the districts (a decision that has already been put back from 2007 to 2008 and, in the words of a recent Minister of Transport, is 'unlikely to happen before 2012') there would be two immediate effects: the first would be an enormous surplus of taxis creating traffic chaos on Douglas Promenade at the 'peak' times; while the second would be the virtual impossibility of obtaining a taxi in the rural areas.
- 10.35 There might be some slight benefits to be gained by some of the taxis currently operating in other districts. The effect on those currently plying for hire in the East District would be entirely negative.
- 10.36 The prospect of an eventual all-island service has already done some harm to the taxi trade, with experienced operators in some districts becoming so beset by uncertainty that they have sold their businesses to credulous newcomers, whilst some in other districts have chosen to 'sit' on their previously valueless assets in the hope that they may eventually become saleable.
- 10.37 It is, however, worth pointing out that, in the expectation of an eventual all-island taxi service, the RTLC has already chosen to allow variations on some Malew District vehicles to enable them to operate in the East District. Although a constraint to principally serve the Malew District as long as the airport was open, whether or not this has been adhered to is a matter for some conjecture.
- 10.38 Ply for Hire minibuses: The idea of this is so ridiculous that it is almost impossible to take it seriously. The average Ply for Hire fare comprises 1 or 2 passengers. Even in a 7 or 8 seat taxi, a single passenger often expresses concern and appears intimidated at the prospect of having the whole vehicle available for his/her individual hire; how much worse would that sense of intimidation be when climbing, alone, into 14 or 16 seat minibus? As for occupying a place on the rank, Heaven help the saloon car driver called away to a radio job who has to find a way into the

stream of traffic while minibuses fore and aft are obscuring the view! Minibuses have their uses, especially with regard to contract work, providing pre-booking for groups and wheelchair access customers, but there is certainly no place for them in the local Ply for Hire trade.

10.39 General comments made by Mr Teare:

Sale of Businesses: Before the government assumed responsibility for regulating the taxi trade in 2001, it was the task of the local authorities to do so. In the (then) Douglas & Onchan area there was a rule that licence plates had to be held for a minimum of 10 years before they could be transferred to a new owner. Naturally exceptions were made in the cases of death, severe illness or permanent retirement. Although there were accusations that this led to an artificial inflation of the cost of taxi businesses, it did serve to ensure that those who came into it were making a long-term commitment to the trade. Since the abandonment of that provision there has been a dramatic increase in the number of businesses being bought and sold. In some cases transfers have been made within a couple of years (or less) of purchase, and it appears that ‘quick profit’ has replaced the former commitment. Although the Manx Taxi Federation has, on several occasions, suggested the revival of some minimum period of ownership, it has been informed that, “after taking legal advice”, the RTLC are convinced that they are unable to do so.

Peak times: Daily: The nearest thing to peak times would be between 8 & 9 am and 5 & 7 pm, when people are travelling to and from work. As has previously been pointed out, however, only a small proportion of the population use public transport for the purpose. Some peak times are also noticeable at the airport – usually when several scheduled flights arrive within a short space of time or when the same thing happens as a result of flight delays. It would have to be an exceptional circumstance for either occurrence to cause undue delays for passengers seeking taxis.

Weekly: As little as 4 years ago, it would have been accurate to list Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights/Sunday morning. The first is immediately before 1am (due to the introduction of a rule at most nightclubs that the doors are closed to new arrivals after this time) and the second is between 2 & 4 am when the club’s customers are heading for home. Although there were calls for more late-night transport to be made available, various attempts at supplying it – such as minibus services to the North and South of the island – have proved to be economic failures because, ultimately there was not a sufficient customer base to justify them.

Monthly: It is very easy to make a correlation between weekly earnings in the taxi trade and the fact that a very considerable number of people on the island receive their salary payments on the 25th of each month – and they would assume that this was one of the reasons why the survey was carried out at that time. There is absolutely no doubt whatsoever that the weekend nearest to that date – and the week that follows it – are the busiest of every month.

Annually: The island’s former status as a holiday resort now has little impact on the taxi trade. Although there may be slightly more business available during the summer months, this is as likely to be due to the local population being tempted out of doors by the fine weather as to large any influx of tourists. The absence of daytime school-contractual work, however, does reduce the level of work available. The two most specifically exceptional periods are:

- Christmas. The initiating of ‘late-night shopping’ at the beginning of December naturally has an impact on the trade available – as does the incidence of office

parties, works outings and so on – which will no doubt be reflected in the survey's results as the beginning of this period formed a part of it. The downside of this, however, is shown later in the month when, as the schools take their holidays, there is a considerable reduction in the contractual work available for taxis during the daytime.

- **TT Festival.** The benefits accrued from the TT Festival have been diluted in recent years for several reasons. Firstly the cost of travelling to the island has led to a reduction in arrivals – particularly in the numbers from overseas. Secondly, the reduced availability of places to stay – with many hotels and guesthouses having been replaced by apartments and offices – has obviously curtailed the numbers who wish to stay for the whole festival. This has led to a more 'selective' pattern of visitors, with people arriving for just a few days to take in the particular race(s) that interest them. The peak period has, therefore, been reduced to the opening weekend of race week itself, with a gradual decline of numbers as the week proceeds. Thirdly, the 'home-stay' Scheme – along with the proliferation of campsites – has altered the profile of tourism during the festival. Where it was, at one time, almost entirely focussed on the Douglas area, it has now spread across the island as the whole, with the trade as a whole receiving a share of the work that used to be mainly the preserve of the East District.

In addition to the two listed above, there are a variety of 'special events', although they have little or no impact on the taxi trade. The only one that may have done in the past – the Irish Festival in October – has been made a non-event by the absence of any sailings to Ireland at the relevant time.

- 10.40 **Mr James Colin Christian, Driver, PPV Badge No 99**, states that on the occasional wet Saturday night at the end of the month (i.e. pay cheque weekend) they do sometimes struggle to clear the streets, but he believes this is the same everywhere. Private hire and minibuses are actually fitted with proper taxi meters and radios and are being used within radio firms as taxis. Mr Christian does not work in a company so has no private hire or minibuses.
- 10.41 As he is an independent he solely depends on taxi ranks and flag downs. Depending on the night of the work/time of the month he can sit for up to an hour on the ranks waiting. When the taxi firms are quiet midweek they sit on the taxi ranks waiting which makes his waiting longer! Because he does not work on a radio he might get up to 5 bookings a night midweek, at most.
- 10.42 With respect to the same type of vehicle and colour, because the Island is not like England in respect of all taxis being black cabs and all private hires being saloons, lots of passengers including the elderly do not like the few London style black cabs they have. Along with the vehicle drivers' preference, not everybody likes/is comfortable with certain makes/models. There is no need for vehicles to be the same colour, a taxi with an illuminated sign is all that people worry about. If a livery was introduced, Mr Christian wonders who would pay for it.
- 10.43 It is Mr Christian's opinion that there are enough black cab/Mercedes-Vito/VW type wheelchair accessible vehicles. He cites an example in support of this view, involving a well known disabled resident of the Island.

- 10.44 On the subject of driver helpfulness, being a freelancer/independent he can only speak for himself/wife and part time son, who are courteous, polite and helpful, but he makes the point that there is good and bad in every job. As it is a small Island where they pick up lots of people very often, discourtesy would not go unnoticed.
- 10.45 Mr Christian has been a full time taxi driver for 19 years and they have always had a taxi rank at either end of the main shopping street (Strand Street), i.e. the bus station and the Sefton taxi rank. The rank at the Sefton was a great asset to the Sefton owners when there was a pub in the hotel and the taxi rank was right outside their door. However, the pub closed and the Sefton decided to open a restaurant/dining room and did not want their customers looking at taxis and so the drivers were forced to move from the rank they have had for years. The trade refused and were threatened by the police with legal action. The rank outside the Hilton was taken from a full time rank that was inaccessible due to parked private cars to a weekend rank to service the club there, with promises that it would be kept clear. The taxi rank at the Empress is the same, always full of parked cars. The Department of Transport in their wisdom moved the rank from the Sefton some 500-700 yards up the road to the Villa Colonnade. Where the rank used to be there was a cut out by the flower beds for traffic to turn back down towards the sea terminal, now from the new rank if someone wants to go back that way they either go up Broadway (long way round) or do an illegal u-turn at the lights or do a u-turn further up. Customers notice and complaints are directed at the drivers, who did not want to move the rank in the first place. Across the Island there is a rank at the airport and elsewhere outside Douglas.
- 10.46 The R.T.L.C decides what fares are charged, the trade puts forward its recommendations but the R.T.L.C has the final word. With regard to driver recruitment, this is down to the individual taxi owners/firms and nothing to do with the R.T.L.C. The R.T.L.C had until recently kept the old knowledge type test going but now any applicant can bring in his/her own street map to answer the written question.
- 10.47 As long as the driver is clean, tidy and comfortable Mr Christian does not see the need for a specific uniform. As for ID, his badge has his full name on it meaning it is easy to find out his full address and telephone number, this is why he and many other drivers refuse to have it on show. Showing his picture and licence number is not a problem. With regard to publicity, the relevant firms advertise their numbers, etc., and that is it.
- 10.48 Mr Christian does not think removing the restrictions on the number of Ply for Hires would benefit him. They live on an Island with a set number of people. If they have 100 runs with 10 taxis that averages 10 runs. Do the same 100 runs with 15 taxis! Easy arithmetic.
- 10.49 On the subject of removing the current 4 District Ply for Hire system, Mr Christian states that this is supposed to come in to force in 2007. He predicts that what will happen is that, for example, a Ramsey resident phoning for a taxi to take him 2 miles down the road at 2am will be told all their cabs are working the busy period in Douglas and will not be available for approximately 1 hour. The same will apply in the south, west and north. Before the four districts came about, each local authority licensed its area. A prime example is Laxey, a small village that had 3 private hires operating as Laxey taxi. The R.T.L.C gave them full taxi status and this was owned

by a village resident, whilst at the moment they seem obliged to offer a bit part service to Laxey, the 3 Laxey Taxis are spending more and more time in Douglas working. The same applies to the 3 “Golden” plates (three airport/Malew licence holders that applied for and were granted joint Malew/eastern licences). These are supposed to service their own area but spend more time in the eastern/Douglas area. Mr Christian does not believe that removing the 4 District system would be beneficial.

- 10.50 With regard to the removal of the restriction on minibuses to allow such vehicles to also Ply for Hire, Mr Christian considers this to be a similar scenario to private hire. The minibuses all have taxi radios and taxi meters fitted doing taxi work already within taxi firms. There is no way giving them anymore freedom will improve Mr Christian’s job. There is already a number of taxi owners that have “sold” taxi licences and been given private hire or minibus licences and fitted with everything a taxi has, doing radio work. Mr Christian is happy that an independent survey has been done as the trade have pressed hard enough for it to happen. Which way the R.T.L.C view the results is something else entirely.
- 10.51 **Mr Peter Clague, Taxi Proprietor**, is in his eighteenth year full time as a local taxi owner/driver. In the past he has served as Chairman of the Isle of Man Taxi Owners Association and a past part owner and director of TELECABS Ltd. He thinks that the availability of Taxis, Private Hire & Mini buses is generally pretty good. The ongoing commitment of the RTLC should steel the way forward provided they are prepared to listen to both customer and operator feedback. Trade opinion currently is that they will not in fact respond favourably and will follow their own instructs. Most complaints about the industry are night time related where drink is concerned and this should be taken into account with regard to both accuracy and creditability!
- 10.52 The number of Private Hire vehicle in the company where he works is of concern to him and other drivers/owners. These vehicles are working as “Taxis” under fake pretences and really leave the travelling public with the impression that a car without a roof sign but carrying company side panels is a legitimate taxi. This is not the case and Private Hire vehicles should not be allowed to masquerade in this way! Clear identification and guidelines to operators and public alike are an absolute necessity.
- 10.53 There is a good mix of vehicle type and “local rural” identity of cars is good from a community level where people get used to recognising their “local” vehicles. Stronger more stringent enforced driver rules and regulations should be employed and if this deters some of the poorer quality applicants so much the better. Drivers should be made aware through education of their obligations to their customers and their vehicles. Enforcement of personal and vehicle standards, day and night, is necessary. The ingress of part time drivers should, prior to commencement of work, be made aware they are entering a properly run industry which is not just a licence to make a “fast buck”. Part timers “on the make” make the job very hard as they are the first line of complaint from regular customers.
- 10.54 On the subject of ranks, the current crop of drivers do not know how to keep a rank moving along by pulling up into empty spaces thereby creating a “tail-back” off the end of the rank. The public do not actually care about parking at ranks because apart from drivers asking them to move (at their own personal risk) they know they will not generally be bothered by anyone. The ranks should be given proper enforceable legal standing!

- 10.55 The trade will always attract its fair share of odd balls and eccentrics but there is a definite need for proper voting and upgrading the acceptance terms and conditions of entry for drivers. Their problem is they have a government body regulating a privately subsidised industry, with no financial support from the regulators. The RTLC has no representation from the trade and have an obligator to provide them with the best new owners/drivers. It is an “Island Community” and when a factory or an office closes down everyone resorts to being a taxi driver!
- 10.56 With regard to number of vehicles, better control and enforcement of the current fleet of vehicles is priority. Private hire vehicles and minibuses working in taxi companies competing on “block order” for work is causing resentment and animosity amongst taxi owners/drivers. Again another instance where Private Hire vehicle licences quickly become used as taxis.
- 10.57 An all Island service sounds good in principle. The problem is that Douglas, especially at weekends, is seen as the “honey pot” and all vehicles will flock here. The outlying districts will be hard pushed to provide a decent service. It is quite pertinent to note that most owners will say that the Douglas weekend trade is somewhat diminishing due to the changing pattern of people’s social habits towards home entertaining. The economic boom is also slowing down and the market place is definitely getting smaller.
- 10.58 Minibuses plying for hire is an absolutely ridiculous idea. They have a purpose and that is for carrying large numbers of people on pre-booked jobs.
- 10.59 **Mr Michael Corlett, Taxi Proprietor**, states that, due to a lack of work for taxi drivers for all but an hour or two a week and the fact that in the past five years there have already been far too many new plates issued, he would have to assume any more plates issued would be a direct attempt to destroy the incomes and investments of the present operators. Anybody with a practical working knowledge of the taxi trade knows how much money has to be put back into the car and drivers also need to make a living wage. They are not working the very unsocial hours for fun and if plates continue to be handed out in a decreasing market savings have to be made somewhere.
- 10.60 The removal of the four District system for an all island plate would mean all the out of town taxis would be in Douglas on Saturday night, making it impossible to get a taxi in Peel, Ramsey etc. People would then have a genuine reason to ring the R.T.L.C complaining they could not get a taxi, thus allowing the R.T.L.C to issue still more plates.
- 10.61 Eight seats minibuses can be used as Ply for Hire at present, so no change is needed in this area. The best location for a new taxi rank is to reinstate the SEFTON RANK, this is the place the public ask for.
- 10.62 Mr Corlett hopes this study has observed the shortage of work for taxis in the island, bearing in mind that the survey was carried out in the busiest month of the year, and that the R.T.L.C will be advised that there is no justification to issue any more plates.

- 10.63 **Mr G Cringle, Cringle & Co. Ltd (Funeral Services Limousine Hire)**, has only one comment to make, this is that the vehicles he uses are for funeral use only and are not offered for any other use of private hire and therefore should be exempt from private hire vehicles as is the case in England.
- 10.64 **Mr R Warren Davies, Taxi Proprietor**, has developed a lot of experience of both the North-West and East taxi districts in the Isle of Man. The East District, Douglas, is the only taxi district to be run properly with at least four operators offering a full 24 hours service. It has the only taxi ranks on the Isle of Man, excepting the specialised airport rank. The East District, Douglas, has borne the brunt, if not all of the action from the recently formed RTALC. It has been encumbered with a great deal of (fuel-thirsty) handicapped vehicles. The extra plates were issued, without consultation, because of a perceived shortage at peak times. Mr Davies is of the view that the peak taxi flow in Douglas is caused by police insistence as to when people can legitimately enter and leave a club. The other effects this club curfew has is to cause fights and dangerous driving conditions with frustrated people trying to get a cab, and deprive the rest of the District the chance to get a cab in a timely manner. The issue of extra plates attempted to solve a non-taxi problem and that is why the problem still exists.
- 10.65 On other Districts: In Ramsey, in the town alone (i.e. not the North-West District as a whole) there are 32 plates. Despite all protestations to the contrary, only 13 as an absolute maximum are ever used. A 24 hour services is not available. Phones (from all three companies in the town) are off in the week at 10.30pm, or after 4am on the weekend, forcing people to walk along dangerous stretches of road in the country (even in Ramsey all lights are off after 1am). The overnight service around the rest of the Island is just as bad.
- 10.66 On other Districts 2: At the Airport only a specialised plate is allowed to pick up, but Mr Davies has had to go down there to pick people up on numerous occasions because all of the Airport taxis have gone home. 50% of one Douglas Taxi service (Elegance) is provided by Airport licensed taxis and it is not surprising therefore that they are not at the airport, although they are very quick to defend their patch. Mr Davies wonders why the RTALC cannot address the problem of the Airport being under-served by taxis.
- 10.67 With regard to driver training, Mr Davies passed a stringent, from memory, written test some 19 months ago. Recent complaints suggested that this test is too difficult and so students are now allowed to bring in the Isle of Man Street guide. This has led to people passing their test and being let loose without a clue as to where they are going, and, worse still, how to get there. There have been two such drivers on Mr Davies' network and they are costing everybody money, most of all the customer. The test should revert back to being a memory test of the Isle of Man road infrastructure – not a reading test.
- 10.68 On the subject of an all-Island plate, Mr Davies hopes that such a suggestion is pure fantasy because nobody outside Douglas will ever get a taxi again if the four District system is removed. Laxey Cabs were allowed free reign to operate in the East District and nobody has ever seen a taxi there since. Douglas cabs are not interested because it is not even close to being economic to pick somebody up in Laxey and take them to the Glen Mona. That is why local cab companies exist – to provide a local service.

- 10.69 If the RTLC would concentrate on providing an effective 24 hour taxi service for all of the communities then they would be fulfilling the role they were employed for rather than wasting £2M on overcrowding Douglas with wheelchair vehicles.
- 10.70 **Mr J A Dougherty, Taxi Proprietor**, runs a single vehicle taxi business in the Douglas area (or Eastern Area). He does very few telephone bookings. Most of his work is found at ranks, or as flag down work (approximately 95%). He does not have contract work.
- 10.71 Mr Dougherty thinks there are more than enough P.P.V.'s available in Douglas, and with 223 Ply for Hire Vehicles Island wide, he would say that number is also enough, taking into consideration the Private Hire vehicles as well. There are no restrictions for vehicle type, or colour, within the island. Disabled access vehicles seem adequately catered for. With regard to quality, help and care of drivers, his own experience is second to none.
- 10.72 With regard to ranks, Mr Dougherty believes there are enough ranks in Douglas. There is not one though that can be regarded as 'the' town rank. There are too many small ranks for just 4 or 5 cars. A 'town' rank(s) should be provided for the public, for approximately a dozen, or more taxis. He is not sure where any new ranks could be placed in Douglas. But a return to the rank outside the Gaiety Theatre could be considered.
- 10.73 Fares are generally accepted by all. Mr Dougherty does not employ any drivers. His current dress code is smart enough but badges could be worn. He considers that the publicity of P.P.V.'s seems adequate.
- 10.74 Remaining restrictions on Ply for Hire: There are no restrictions on the current number of 223. For years taxi organisations have fought for a restricted number. They continue to live with the fear of more licenses being issued without a proper investigation for a need first. Their standard of living continues to be eaten away as the RTLC insist on issuing more licences.
- 10.75 All island service: In 2001, when the Road Transport Licensing Committee took over as the governing body of the taxi trade, an all island service could have worked. But now, with the addition of new licences in Douglas, it is too late to consider anything but to keep the 4 districts.
- 10.76 Removal of the restriction on minibuses: To allow a minibus to work Ply for Hire would definitely not benefit him or any other taxi driver in Douglas, as it would mean even more vehicles on the rank.
- 10.77 **Mr Paul Heavey, Managing Director, Island Taxis Limited**, feels that availability of both Ply for Hire taxis and Private Hire cars and minibuses across the Island is frequently inadequate in both the towns and the rural areas, in particular during the peak demand hours. There would also appear to be a shortage of cover in many areas for early morning bookings for boat and airport runs.
- 10.78 Island Taxis Limited currently operate three ply-for-hire, one private hire car and two private hire minibuses. There is an application in process to increase this number to seven ply-for-hires and one minibus. The vast majority of their business

is pre-booked. However, this is mainly because their operating area (North West) has been traditionally poor in providing taxis available on the streets for immediate hire. They hope to improve this situation in due course by providing more street based cars on proposed new taxi ranks. Approximately 60% of their business is contractual.

- 10.79 Mr Heavey would like to see all taxis being the same type but he does not believe that this is practicable. He also believes that taxi companies of a large enough size should be required to burden the cost of providing at least one disabled access vehicle in their fleet. According to comments he hears from the public, Mr Heavey observes that driver quality and customer care is generally poor, particularly in the Douglas area.
- 10.80 The location of existing ranks across the island is acceptable, but they are not clearly signposted enough to make the public aware of the rank when empty. New ranks should be considered, especially in Ramsey.
- 10.81 Fares are reasonable at most times. However, the tariff 2 rate is so high it causes complaints from the public and does little to encourage taxi usage if an alternative is available. Also, customers are alarmed at the rate the meter goes up at when they start off and then wonder what is going on when it starts slowing down after ten miles. They should have a clearer tariff structure so that the customers can calculate an approximate cost per mile, not a variable rate displayed in kilometres.
- 10.82 Driver recruitment can be problematic due to the low level of unemployment on the island. This is worsened by the lack of benefits a taxi driver can expect to receive in comparison to other occupations. For example, no pension scheme, no sick pay no redundancy money, no holiday pay, no bank holiday entitlement, etc.
- 10.83 Identification should be displayed on the driver and in the vehicle. Uniform could be improved by better enforcement of existing dress code.
- 10.84 Removing restrictions on the current number of vehicles would not concern Mr Heavey providing the criteria for new licenses was stringent enough to ensure that new operators/vehicles show a large financial commitment to providing a high quality, full time, professional service.
- 10.85 The removal of the current 4-district ply for hire system would benefit everyone. The current system is antiquated and inefficient. It is a throw back from the old days when restrictive practice was commonplace and does little to help the small operator or benefit the consumer.
- 10.86 The removal of the restriction on minibuses to allow such vehicles to ply for hire would be of little benefit in Mr Heavey's view. Most of the work for specialised vehicles would continue to be pre-booked through companies that provide such a service. There is a misconceived belief that a minibus will cost more than a taxi even if there is only one person travelling in it, so individuals are already cautious when a minibus arrives to pick them up.
- 10.87 **Mr Shane Hesketh, Ronaldsway Taxi Services**, begins by stating that there is good availability of all taxis across the island during the daytime. Some shortages at certain times of the night, mostly weekends in Douglas, could be rectified if the

Malew plated taxis were allowed to ply for hire in Douglas after 9pm when the airport closes.

- 10.88 Ronaldsway Taxi Services operates 1 ply for hire taxi. As a Malew taxi the majority of his work is taken straight off the airport rank. Between 7am and 6pm weekday approximately 4 rank fares are taken, and at weekends 3 rank fares are taken. Between the hours of 6pm and 9pm weekday when the airport closes he would expect to get approximately 2 rank fares, and at the weekend 1 rank fare. There is no rank work outside of these hours as the airport is closed. He would expect to get 2 telephone bookings between the hours of 7am and 6pm and 2 bookings per week between the hours of 6pm and 9pm during the week, and no bookings at weekends.
- 10.89 There are 52 Malew plated cars to serve the airport between its opening hours and to serve one public house and a lot of countryside in the parish of Malew when the airport is closed. After 9pm Mr Hesketh receives no bookings as there is very little work in the Malew area. He has never been flagged down in the parish of Malew. Only in Douglass after dropping a customer off. This usually happens on a night time when returning to the airport, especially on Friday and Saturday nights when people are trying to get from pub to pub as there a shortage of Douglas taxis, but Malew taxis are not allowed to pick these customers up.
- 10.90 Between the hours of 7am and 6pm he may get about 5 bookings per week, which are subcontracted school runs for special needs children. Between the hours of 6pm and 9pm he may get 1 booking per week. These would be through the week and nothing on the weekend.
- 10.91 Mr Hesketh does not think there is a need for the same livery or type of vehicle across the Island. With regard to disabled access vehicles, he has not been asked for one on the airport taxi rank. There are a number of purpose-built disabled vehicles spread through the Island and there is no need for a larger percentage of vehicles to have disabled access.
- 10.92 On the subject of customer care, there is currently a hospitality training course being held at the RTALC office which Mr Hesketh will be attending.
- 10.93 The number of rank in Douglas is probably all right and they seem to be well situated. The one rank at the airport works well the way it is laid out. New ranks could be put in Castletown, Port St Mary, Port Erin, Peel and Ramsey, although most of the work in these towns is pre-booked by telephone and the taxi owners who live in these towns work from home and probably would only use the ranks on a rare occasion.
- 10.94 Fares on the Island are all right for customers and taxi companies due to the amount of dead miles they have to do because of the countryside area. Mr Hesketh finds recruitment difficult because of the opening hours of the airport.
- 10.95 Identification badges are to be displayed at all times now and should continue to be displayed. Uniforms are not required but shirt and tie dress code could be brought in. The RTALC could advertise the benefits of hiring taxis. There was very little mention of taxis in the Christmas drink driving campaign by the police yet there is the centurion scheme run by the police. More publicity on drink driving and the dangers of walking home at night would make the public more aware of taxis.

- 10.96 Mr Hesketh does not think that removing restrictions on the current number of 223 Ply for Hire taxis would benefit him. However, he does think that removing restrictions on the current 4 District Ply for Hire (PFH) system to allow all PFH taxis to operate an all-Island service would benefit him. Mr Hesketh does not think that the removal of the restriction on minibuses to allow such vehicles to also Ply for Hire would benefit him.
- 10.97 **Mr G M Ivey, Ply for Hire Taxi Proprietor**, has a ply-for-hire Malew Licence (one plate). He can honestly say that unless a taxi firm has a lot of pre-booked or contract work, there is a very grim living operating anywhere on the Island. This has noticeably been happening in the last 2½ years, ask any taxi driver in any area (unless Saturday night between 9pm-3am) and they will agree there is not enough work to support a driver.
- 10.98 What is happening to the island is a slow down in people going out in the evenings. Also the Airport is no longer a guaranteed day's work, if they turn up at 7am they might get a ride by 9.30am and that is if they are lucky.
- 10.99 Mr Ivey considers that there are too many taxis, especially Private Hire. The number of jobs he has varies all the time from nil to busy enough for the odd hour. With regard to a standard vehicle type and/or livery, Mr Ivey thinks the total cost of this would be too great for most operators.
- 10.100 Mr Ivey has sat on several ranks all over the Island, mainly in Douglas, and remembers only once having been asked to take a man with a wheelchair, which he did with no problem. He did not have a purpose built taxi. He feels there are very few hirers of this nature. Most Isle of Man taxi drivers are reasonable to the general public at all times. There are not enough ranks, and new ones should be introduced in Ramsey, Peel, Laxey, Port Erin, Port St Mary, Castle town and Onchan, all of which have no ranks. At least two car places would help the general public in all of these areas, as close to bus stops as possible in the town centres.
- 10.101 On the subject of fares, Mr Ivey states that some people consider them to be too expensive, but in his opinion they are about right. In comparison to some people's wages, taxi drivers earn much less. Driver recruitment is very difficult. Mr Ivey does not think uniforms are a good idea. Advertising Taxi services is very helpful, but Mr Ivey finds it can be more trouble than its worth as it can lead to overbooking on Saturday and hardly any other work at other times.
- 10.102 Mr Ivey thinks removal the current 4-district system would make everywhere overworked at certain times. For example, on Friday/Saturday nights every available taxi Island wide would be in Douglas; during the week, Douglas doesn't have much rank work so all the taxis would go to the Airport Rank. At the same time, he can see that it would be easier to manage to be able to stop anywhere. It is better to have restricted Ranks to keep the possible numbers down, and keep work flowing.
- 10.103 Mr Ivey also thinks that people who run minibuses use them as taxis and this is not what the licence was issued for. They are small coaches and should only be used for outings and parties, not at night as an extra licence for a taxi base. He concedes that

there are very few that use them this way, but he does feel they should be restricted always to what they are meant to do.

- 10.104 **Mr W Kelly, Taxi Proprietor**, he has been in the trade, in Douglas, for 36 years. He considers that there are too many cars and too many part-time drivers with other employment including new plate owners with government jobs. There is not enough work for the cars which are out even when it is busy on the weekend. Daytime work is a waste of time.
- 10.105 He makes various disparaging remarks about the RTLC.
- 10.106 **Mr Roy Lightfoot, Chairman & Managing Director, Protours Isle of Man Limited**, believes that when (if) the All-Island licensing comes into force in 2007 it will be seen that there are too many ply for hire and private hire vehicles on the Island. This 2007 protocol should have been in force sooner.
- 10.107 As a company, Protours Isle of Man Limited do not operate private hire or ply for hire motor cars. They do have licences for 5 private hire minibuses, which are fully adapted for welfare-use and are primarily used on contract work. They have a company policy of being available for pre-bookings daily from 0530 to 0230, but primarily this is for their larger vehicles (47-70 seats).
- 10.108 With regard to standard vehicle type for Ply for Hire vehicles, Mr Lightfoot believes this suggestion has some merit, however to be type specific for ply for hire vehicles would be authoritarian and, he believes, counter productive. Certainly there should be minimum standards for types of vehicle, perhaps to a higher minimum specification than is presently applied, and a standard livery would be a sensible requirement.
- 10.109 There is a danger that too much concentration on the needs of a small sector of the public could be counterproductive. As part of the Road Traffic Licensing committee's remit it should set a percentage of the overall licence holders as a "Disabled" requirement, commensurate with the percentage of disabled in the overall population. This, he believes, would be a practical yardstick, bearing in mind that a great many disabled are to all intents and purposes reasonably mobile over short distances, and many have motability vehicles.
- 10.110 There is in existence a code of conduct for P.P.V. drivers. It addresses most of the concerns expressed by public bodies and users. Sadly, in common with most of the requirements of the Road Transport Act 2001 there is no enforcement! The Road Traffic Licensing Committee is either unwilling – or because of Government staffing policies or budgets – unable to properly enforce the Act, although section 1 (6) of that Act makes enforcement a specific requirement. Personally, Mr Lightfoot perceives unwillingness within the taxi trade to comply with any form of dress code or code of conduct.
- 10.111 Existing taxi ranks are, by and large, within the Douglas area (apart from the Airport and some isolated out of town locations) and there are few of these in places convenient for the public. None of them is effectively controlled or regulated. Again enforcement is lacking. There is the potential for additional or new taxi ranks within Douglas and outside Douglas, and the need for a full review involving both the trade

and the public to relocate/reposition ranks within Douglas. If the service is not user friendly it will not attract users.

- 10.112 Fares are set by the Road Traffic Licensing Committee. Mr Lightfoot thinks that they are reasonable. The problem in the Isle of Man is that several sections of the public (i.e. school children, people over 60, unemployed, disabled) get free bus travel and in a great many cases have no real perception of operational costs when commenting on taxi fares. Equally, there is a perception that “profit” (which all operators need) is a dirty word. However he does feel that the RTALC (and the D.O.T.) are to some extent led by taxi owners in this regard.
- 10.113 On the subject of recruitment, Mr Lightfoot has no idea when related to taxi/private hire drivers except that he would think a great many are part-time! Generally in the P.P.V trade recruitment is not easy and is often a “stop-gap” occupation.
- 10.114 There is a dress code drawn up by the Road Transport Licensing Committee – provided this is adhered to it is sufficient. Again enforcement is the problem. Badges are a must!
- 10.115 Government, as part of its Road Safety Initiative, could do more to publicise taxis. Properly identified taxi ranks – efficiently patrolled and kept clear of the casual motorist – would go a long way to promote the various services. It is not hard to find an operator to pre-book.
- 10.116 Owing to a misplaced enthusiasm to cover what were peak times on Friday & Saturday nights the various authorities and agencies concerned pressed for additional licences to be issued, since the ‘ill-drafted’ Road Transport Act 2001 sets no “Evidence of Need” criteria too many licences have been issued – “to satisfy an unquantified need! A survey should have been commissioned before any additional licences were issued in 2004. The perceived need was at best transient and at worst ill conceived.
- 10.117 In General, Mr Lightfoot believes that all Island Licensing should be brought in on schedule (April 2007) and without further prevarication. Once this is achieved then it will be seen that there are more than sufficient licences and vehicles. However, the licensing regulations should specify levels of service (to cover public holidays, peak times, unsociable hours, etc.) and ensure compliance, standards of dress and passenger service. Uniformity of taxi livery could then be adopted and minimum standards for vehicles could be set. A taxi rank at the Sea Terminal could be reinstated and an obligation to service this put in place for boat arrivals, both scheduled and delayed services.
- 10.118 All of the foregoing depends on sensible and co-ordinated enforcement, since the Act came into force this has been sadly lacking, promoting, in Mr Lightfoot’s opinion, a casual approach to customer service throughout the P.P.V. trade. It is detrimental to the Island’s image to both holiday and business visitors for the trade to present anything but a professional image – too many “part-time cherry picking” operators drag this image down. Again – enforcement is the key.
- 10.119 **Mr Brian Machin and Mrs Kathleen Moore, Elite Cars**, believe the number of taxis is certainly adequate and in the case of ply for hire plates excessive, the queues of taxis in Douglas and at the Airport at most times of the week show this. They

operate 1 Ply for Hire and 3 Private Hire. All their Private Hire work is pre-booked. The Taxi gets its work from a radio company. All their Private Hire work is account work. They use silver Mercedes. The training courses are well received but are voluntary. Smoking by drivers in cars should be banned. Fares are adequate and reviewed regularly. Driver recruitment is difficult due to the knowledge test requirement putting potential drivers off. The excessive number of plates also causes long periods waiting for the next fare, which is demoralising and detrimental to possible earnings. Current identity badges are satisfactory. Publicity is well covered in papers and yellow pages and travel pamphlets.

- 10.120 They not consider that removing the restrictions on the current number of 223 Ply for Hires would benefit them as the number is too high already. They do not consider that the removal of the current 4-district Ply for Hire system to allow all Ply for Hire taxis to operate an all-Island service would benefit them. They consider that the removal of the restriction on minibuses to allow such vehicles to Ply for Hire would only make the situation of long waits between fares worse and therefore would not be a benefit. They observe that the perception of a shortage of taxis comes from a short period on Saturday nights, which is only about 2% of the week.
- 10.121 **Mr C Mayers, Chauffeur Drive, American Limo Hire**, states that the main concern of the average operator is the fact that this licensing committee has no problem in diluting the existing amount of work available to the established taxi trades, this being both private hire and hackney work. This is being done by issuing more operator licences at a time when they are seeing a drop in business due to the fact people are leaving the Island. He feels the licensing committee is made up of people who know nothing about the trade. To assess whether they should allow an operator to be registered all the applicant has to do is tell them they are convinced there is plenty of work and the committee then grants their registration, this is with no regards to any impact on existing trade.
- 10.122 There are busy times and quiet times. Most of the time it is very quiet, it is only busy on Friday/Saturday perhaps twice a month. Mr Mayers does not think this validates the granting of more licences. He considers that the problem is the same everywhere, when there is a mass exodus of people all wanting to go somewhere all at the same time there will always be a transport issue.
- 10.123 Mr Mayers states that himself and other existing operators are not trying to monopolise the value of their business (even though some have been operating for many years and put a lot of man hours in to ensure a decent standard of living), they are just trying to ensure a continued standard of living which is not diluted by part time taxi operators (the majority of whom are the type of people applying for operator registration) and who are only interested in 'creaming' the busy times (there are many new operators that have other full time work and even some are civil servants).
- 10.124 **Mr P Mclean, Taxi Proprietor**, states that, as a taxi driver operating in the Douglas area for the past 22 years, he has never experienced a year worse for business than this last one. His overall takings are down by 30% on the previous year. The vast majority of this he considers to be the allocation of more hackney carriage licences and the growing number of private hire licences. During the week (Monday to Friday) it is almost impossible to find a rank to park on and when one is found there

can be a wait for up to 2-3 hours for a job on certain occasions. Even at night time work seems to have dried up dramatically. The only time of the week they seem to be busy now is a Saturday night/Sunday morning between 11pm and 4am. This is the only time of the week that people can not get a taxi straight away, which is the same in any big town or city throughout the United Kingdom and possibly the world. There is no room and certainly no demand for any more taxis of any kind in Douglas. The main reason for it looking so busy on a Saturday night is because people will not queue at taxi ranks. Instead they will walk away from them and try to flag a taxi before it reaches the rank.

- 10.125 Mr Mclean does not think taxis should all be the same type or colour. As long as a car passes all the specific standards to be a taxi then surely that is all that matters. As for disabled access, there will always be a certain amount of owners who prefer these type of vehicles and anyone who is disabled and a regular taxi user would know how to obtain said vehicle.
- 10.126 On the subject of recruitment of drivers, Mr Mclean has always been of the opinion that during the winter months taxis should only be driven by the owners of the vehicles because the work just is not there. During the summer months there should be a maximum of one other driver per vehicle. There are too many taxi owners who are never seen on the roads but employ drivers to do the work for them. If they do not want to work themselves they should not own plates.
- 10.127 Finally, minibuses should not be allowed to operate as ply for hire. If they do Mr Mclean observes that he may as well get out now because it would not be worth him going out at all. To sum up, there is nothing wrong with the taxi system as a whole the way it is now except that there are too many taxis all week long except for late Saturday night.
- 10.128 **Mr and Mrs Les & Lucia McMurdo, Taxi Proprietors**, think there is more than enough availability of the vehicles across the Island. Mrs McMurdo who works daytime only, on a regular taxi, finds it increasingly difficult to earn a decent wage. After deducting radio rent and fuel they are questioning if it is worth her carrying on or finding employment elsewhere. It does not help when the RTLC keep issuing free plates when they had to buy theirs for £40,000. There has been a dramatic slope in the building trade resulting in the loss of approx £4,000 contractual workers who were potential customers.
- 10.129 When Douglas corporations were in charge, anyone who held a disabled taxi plate was obliged to make their vehicle available for disabled customers therefore there was no shortage of disabled taxis. When the RTLC took over this rule no longer applied enabling some of these drivers to transfer to ordinary saloon vehicles as this was financially beneficial to them, leaving a shortage of disabled vehicles. There was a shortage because the RTLC terminated the disabled taxi in service rule resulting in the RTLC having to issue more disabled taxi plates to the drivers who have not been appropriately trained and these drivers refuse to pick up disabled customers. Again they have the situation of more plates and less work for the existing drivers.
- 10.130 All taxis should charge the same fare and be allowed to run on red diesel to make it more economical to run a taxi as fuel prices are becoming crippling.

- 10.131 At the moment the recruitment of drivers is a joke. Potential drivers can take an A-Z road and street map in to the 'list' and copy the answers down. It is unbelievable but true. This has resulted in new drivers who have 'passed' the test not knowing where the most basic of locations are.
- 10.132 Mr McMurdo is wholeheartedly against the removing of restrictions on the current number of ply for hire taxis. Saturday evening is the only time they are 'busy' and this is only in short bursts. The rest of the week they are struggling to make a living. If the taxis from around the island were permitted to work in Douglas there would be even less work than there is now and north, south and west would have a problem getting a taxi as they would all be in Douglas. It would be a disaster if this was allowed to happen as they are struggling to work as it is and can not get on a rank anywhere due to taxis sitting around the island.
- 10.133 Removing the restrictions on minibuses would be the final nail in the coffin for saloon car drivers and put many out of business. If people want a minibus they will order one and some people complain about getting in the big cabs.
- 10.134 **Mr Barry Murphy, Private Hire Taxi Proprietor**, comments that from a customer point of view he has never waited more than twenty minutes to hail or order a taxi on the Island. He has lived on the Island for a period of ten years.
- 10.135 He operates one taxi which is an East Region ply for hire, i.e. Douglas, Onchan, Laxey, and this taxi can be ordered for a private hire anywhere on the Island. He drives days and his colleague drives nights. This arrangement is regularly changed.
- 10.136 Mr Murphy would say that on weekday days and nights telephone bookings make up 80% of his business. He would say that on weekend days the percentage is the same but on weekend nights the percentage of telephone bookings drops to about 65%.
- 10.137 His taxi uses "Telecabs" as a job provider agency so generally all his pre-bookings come through base. He does occasionally get calls from friends and arrange to pick them up but generally he tends to avoid private work.
- 10.138 Mr Murphy does not think that having uniform vehicle types and/or colour (i.e. Livery) is necessarily essential or beneficial. Certainly the cost of a vehicle would be a major factor for him whilst replacing a vehicle. The Isle of Man Government could possibly make a grant available if they decide that same colours and types are a good idea.
- 10.139 Regarding Disabled Access Vehicles, he would not have a problem operating one of these. Yet again the problem for him is the cost of the vehicle. He paid £45,000 for his taxi ply for hire licence and he is really struggling to try and earn it back. Many other taxi operators are probably struggling as well to meet repayments. If the government was to make money available to help he would operate a Disabled Access Vehicle.
- 10.140 He believes customer care is of key importance. He strives to give 100% at all times and also aims to ensure that anybody who drives his vehicle does the same.
- 10.141 He thinks there are an adequate number of ranks in Douglas. He thinks there should be a rank in Onchan. He cannot speak about taxi ranks anywhere else because he

- does not know. From the point of view of new ranks, Mr Murphy does believe a rank in Onchan would be beneficial.
- 10.142 He thinks fares should be increased slightly on a yearly basis. Certainly fuel prices do and fuel is approximately 4p a litre more expensive on the Island.
- 10.143 He is very happy with the current system of recruiting drivers on the Island.
- 10.144 He wears smart trousers and shirt since the RTLC's recent introductions. He is aware that some drivers do dress "scruffy". He guesses as long as they do not smell it's not too bad. He does not support the idea of a uniform.
- 10.145 He does not have any views regarding the publicity and advertising of PPV services across the Island.
- 10.146 Mr Murphy considers that to remove the restriction on the current number of 223 ply for hire taxis would be detrimental to put it mildly. Certainly at the moment the only really busy time on the Island (in Douglas) is between 11pm and 2am, Saturday night to Sunday morning. Otherwise there really is very little to do. Yet again he cannot speak about the taxi trade outside of Douglas because he does not really know.
- 10.147 He does not think the removal of the 4 District ply for hire system would benefit him. He certainly does not have any intention of plying for hire anywhere but in Douglas. It would worry him that outside taxis from the other three regions would consider coming to Douglas.
- 10.148 He does not think that the removal of restrictions on minibuses would benefit him. There quite simply is not the business on the Island at the moment to allow minibuses to ply for hire.
- 10.149 **Mr John Nicholson, Taxi Proprietor**, reports that the RTLC has stated that it has a mandate to deregulate and they appear to have the opinion that issuing licenses and driver badges wholesale will solve the problem of a shortage at some peak times, but Mr Nicholson states the view that there are problems at peak times in all industries. The RTLC appear to overlook certain facts and by doing this they lessen the return, thus stifling investment. As the Isle of Man has almost full employment, if people are not able to earn a decent wage from taxi driving then they are not going to do it.
- 10.150 With regard to standard vehicle type for Ply for Hire vehicles, Mr Nicholson reports that during a debate with RTCL he commented on the system used by the taxis in Seville in Spain where they all have a white livery with the license number clearly placed on each front door of the vehicle. He commented on how smart it all looked and thought it would create a good impression to people visiting the Island, he felt his comments were treated with disdain. Mr Nicholson believes Disabled Access vehicle provision is now adequate. He thinks driver quality and customer care is much improved.
- 10.151 On the subject of rank locations, Mr Nicholson thinks the existing locations need to be looked into. As regards, new locations, he appreciates the difficulties involved with this, but thinks ranks should be located for the convenience of the public not the corporation, who he observes seem to be able to clutch disabled spaces out of thin

air which remain empty for long periods of time. He is not anti-disabled, far from it, but a compromise has to be reached. For example, when the now Villa rank was situated outside the Sefton Hotel two spaces were taken for the disabled to visit the adjacent theatre and surely these could have been designated at show time only as they were not used 90% of other times.

- 10.152 Mr Nicholson considers that a general improvement in the knowledge of new drivers would be helpful. He is totally against the removal of the current 4 District Ply for Hire (PFH) system to allow all PFH taxis to operate an all-Island services as this would just create over capacity in Douglas and neglect in the rural areas, it will also lessen the standard of local knowledge. He adds that deregulation will not improve the service to the public, and will destroy the livelihoods of a lot of genuine cabbies.
- 10.153 **Mr Juan Qualtrough, Manager, Crennell's Garage Limited (Taxis, Coaches, Limousines)**, considers availability to be adequate except for between 0100 hours and 0500 hours weekday nights and on Sundays (at these times there is very little demand so it is difficult to get drivers to work and to make any money). He operates 21 Ply for hire and 3 Private Hire vehicles. During a weekday daytime he has 54 telephone bookings, on a weekday night time he has 19 telephone bookings, on a weekend daytime he has 24 telephone bookings and on a weekend night time he has 70 telephone bookings and 6 flag down fares. In their fleet they have 14 different vehicle types and 9 different colours. They have one disabled access vehicle, a rear ramp loading Renault Traffic Minibus.
- 10.154 With regard to driver quality, Mr Qualtrough estimates that 95% are very good and 5% are moderate to poor. There are no ranks in their area to his knowledge, and no new ranks required. Local town run fares (say below £4) are too low, they require at least a 30% increase. Fares between 0500 and 0600 are too high. Tariff 1 should start at 0500. Driver recruitment is difficult due to low pay and unsocial hours, the same as Taxi business anywhere Mr Qualtrough would assume. Their full time day staff wear company jumpers and coats. Of their part time night staff some wear the same and some prefer their own gear. Publicity is generally regarding problems in Douglas regarding issuing of licenses or the cost of the RTLC, both give a negative impression to the public.
- 10.155 Mr Qualtrough does not consider that removing the restrictions on the current number of 223 Ply For Hires would benefit him. He thinks that the removal of the current 4 District Ply for Hire (PFH) system could possibly be of benefit, as at peak times (i.e. Saturday nights) they may be able to put some taxis in areas where there is a shortage. In general he supports all Island licensing. He does not consider that the removal of the restriction on minibuses to allow such vehicles to also Ply for Hire would benefit him.
- 10.156 **Mr T A Shepherd, Terry's Taxi**, mentions that after 30 years in business in Peel, first as private hire and now as ply for hire, they own three vehicles, two minibuses and one car. They feel there is enough taxis on the Island and taxi ranks are only needed in Douglas and at the Airport. Small towns like Peel manage well as they are with most people phoning for taxis when they are ready or pre-booking for weekend nights when especially busy.

- 10.157 One of their minibuses is equipped for wheelchair access, but has not been asked for in the last two years. It is an expense they will not be repeating when they renew this vehicle in the next few months.
- 10.158 **Mr Barrie Turner, Ply for Hire Taxi Proprietor**, feels that there are far too many private hire, mini buses and ply for hire taxis in operation now. The public are confused and use private hire as if they were ply for hire making matters even worse for ply for hire licence holders. He only operates 1 ply for hire taxi with wheel chair access. It is his opinion that there are insufficient ranks and the ranks that exist do not provide enough space for the number of taxis trying to use them. New ranks are needed at appropriate places where the public would find them easily accessible.
- 10.159 Removing the restriction on the current 223 ply for hire taxis would definitely not benefit Mr Turner and he feels it would cause further problems and be detrimental to the taxi trade. He thinks that the removal of the 4 district ply for hire system would not benefit anyone within the trade. The removal of the restriction on minibuses would not be of any benefit and in Mr Turner's opinion it would put taxis out of business.
- 10.160 **Mr Paul Turner, Ply for Hire Taxi Proprietor**, is of the opinion that there are far too many minibuses, private hire and public hire taxis now. The public do not know the difference between them and use private hire as normal taxis. He personally operates 1 ply for hire taxi with wheelchair access. On the subject of disabled access vehicles, the Isle of Man Government seem to be changing rules on clamping wheelchairs in the taxis. As a result this would leave many taxi drivers with EEC and EEU approved taxis out of pocket as they have spent a very large amount of money purchasing appropriate wheelchair accessible taxis.
- 10.161 Mr Turner thinks that taxi ranks are not in the right places and are not big enough for the amount of taxis that are on the road. New ranks are needed at appropriate places where the public would find them easily accessible.
- 10.162 Mr Turner believes that removing the restriction on the current 223 ply for hire taxis would cause hardship to taxi drivers, or even worse would put hard working taxi drivers out of business or if need be taxi drivers would operate part time and this would not benefit the general public. He thinks that the removal of the 4-district ply for hire system would not benefit anyone within the trade. The removal of the restriction on minibuses would not be of benefit and he believes would put taxis out of business.
- 10.163 **Mr Peter G S Westwell, Taxi Proprietor**, believes that this study should concentrate on the facts: population size, percentage of population that use taxis and frequency of that use. Number of vehicles now in operation should be a massive consideration in the scheme of things and comparison to other similar areas. Also the current economic climate on the island must surely have an influence into our conclusion.
- 10.164 Availability is not a problem due to the number of vehicles now licensed. At peak times (i.e. Saturday night/Sunday morning) there may be a short wait but is there anywhere in the world where this is not the case? Making a definite booking would alleviate this.

- 10.165 Having same vehicle type and/or colour would not make any significant improvement and who would decide the criteria? However, if the IOM Government/RTLTC regards this as important then perhaps they should make substantial efforts to assist financially as in many European areas.
- 10.166 As has been proved over many years, purpose built disabled access vehicles (i.e. London cabs) are not very suitable for use on the island. Many older but able-bodied people cannot or do not want to use this type of vehicle. However, once again Government financial assistance and consultation with operators may prove fruitful.
- 10.167 Mr Westwell personally strives to be helpful and show due customer care in his operation and has operated for sixteen years without complaint. He suggests that perhaps the Government/RTLTC should look closely into who they issue drivers licenses to.
- 10.168 The question of location and number of existing ranks can be answered simply, there are not enough ranks and the existing ranks are not large enough to hold the ever increasing number of vehicles trying to use them. This increase is caused by the irresponsible issuing of licences by the Government/RTLTC and the use of Mini Bus vehicles as radio taxis. Many times in a day Mr Westwell witnesses rows of radio ply for hire vehicles ranked up, whilst private hire vehicles (with taxi meters fitted) from the same firms drive about doing the work of the ply for hire.
- 10.169 Location and potential places for new ranks is not high on the Government/RTLTC priority list. How can it be, when the new multi-million pound Nobles Hospital does not have one? Instead there is a Radio Cab telephone on the wall inside and cars from that firm (ply for hire and private hire) lurk around outside waiting for a radio call. How can ranks be a priority when a rank which had been in the same location (Sefton Hotel) for one hundred years was moved to an inferior site further on because the Police were unable to keep law and order? The result of this being loss of business (not for the radio cab firm with a phone in the hotel) both from the Hotel and people going just short distances in that area.
- 10.170 Fares speak for themselves, refer to current UK list of fares. This is an area where the Government could help the Taxi Trade. What fuel do the buses, shipping line, airline, farmers and pleasure boat owners use? If it is the much less taxed 'red' fuel and taxi drivers were able to use it, this would help both the operators and the taxi users by stabilising fares.
- 10.171 Taxi drivers already have identification, the taxi plate and the registration plate can also identify the vehicle. Being a lone operator, Mr Westwell does not advertise but word of mouth seems to stand him in good stead.
- 10.172 On an island climate of banks and businesses closing, a decline in the building trade, house sales very sluggish and of course their ever-diminishing tourism arrivals, Mr Westwell does not consider that removing the restrictions on the current number of 223 Ply For Hires would benefit him.
- 10.173 Mr Westwell does not think 4-district system should be removed. If these districts are removed, he wonders who will answer calls for taxis in the less popular districts when everyone is in the perceived 'honey pot' Douglas. On the weekend nights when East District taxis have a chance to earn enough to cover sitting around for

much of the time during the week doing very little, the influx of outsiders would have a massive detrimental effect.

- 10.174 He also believes that minibus' plying for hire will be another 'nail in the coffin'. Doing the work of two or more taxis it would not take long to have massive detrimental effect. Also add into the equation the greed element of some people and they will have a private bus service taking multiple fares – a further reduction in taxi buses.
- 10.175 **Mr R A Hamilton, Chief Executive, Department of Local Government and the Environment, Isle of Man Government**, states that he cannot claim to speak with any particular authority on this subject but only from his own personal experience.
- 10.176 He has never encountered a difficulty in booking a taxi on the Island in the evenings, though he has experienced delays in waiting for taxis to arrive at the weekends, i.e. Friday and Saturday nights. In his view, therefore, there may be a case for allowing additional operators to provide a service at the weekends, though he does not know whether this is possible.
- 10.177 He has always found the taxi-drivers to be friendly, courteous and informative.
- 10.178 **Mr John Swindlehurst, Transport Manager, Department of Education, Isle of Man Government**, has responded to the survey questions in the role of Transport Manager for the Department, as they currently use taxi transport for home to school, some outside activities travel and respite care for some of the Island's schoolchildren who have special educational needs. He has also tried to provide an objective view on a personal level as a private individual.
- 10.179 He has not had any problem organising taxis during the school day for any pupils and none of the firms he deals with have advised him that they are unable to provide a taxi when requested. On a personal level, it is only later in the evening that he has had to wait any length of time for a taxi, even then this has only been 30-40 minutes which in his opinion is not an unacceptable period to wait.
- 10.180 He is not aware of any corporate livery for any of the taxi firms on the Island; this may be due to the fact that many of the cars are owned by drivers who rent radio sets from the taxi firms.
- 10.181 He thinks that there is a real need for more disabled access taxis although how this would be encouraged could be an issue. He does not think that it would be fair to insist that any new taxi plates should have disabled access as these vehicles are generally more expensive to purchase and have additional maintenance costs attached. This he feels would disadvantage them with their "colleagues" who do not have disabled friendly vehicles. Perhaps a reduced fee for licences would be a solution.
- 10.182 Mr Swindlehurst believes that the standard of some drivers is very poor. Taxi drivers show little consideration to other road users and pedestrians. They park on double yellow lines, on corners, on pavements and in places that block the flow of traffic or access for pedestrians whilst picking up or dropping off their fares. This can also put the passenger in a dangerous situation when boarding or alighting the taxi. From his personal experience, some drivers resemble a rally driver with harsh acceleration

and heavy braking, which provides a less than comfortable ride for the passenger. Most of the drivers are caring whilst passengers are getting in or out of the taxi and assist the elderly or help with luggage or shopping but this courtesy seems to go out of the window when the journey begins. He appreciates that driving standards will change from day to day and person to person and that there are some good drivers also, but he would like to see an assessor for the taxi drivers, PPV and HGV drivers. Driving would be assessed regularly and also after accidents or complaints, resulting in a loss of the taxi licence if the driving does not pass the standard required.

- 10.183 In his personal opinion there seem to be enough ranks for the taxis around Douglas, if there is a call for more space on the ranks or more ranks to accommodate the taxis then he feels that this means that there are too many taxis idle at any one time which in his opinion is a different issue. He does not personally feel that there is any need for more taxi ranks.
- 10.184 Mr Swindlehurst feels the taxi tariffs are set for too high for the standard of vehicle and service received. Whilst he believes that the setting of fares by the RTLC is the correct way to deal with this, there should be a maximum fare structure which no one should be able to go beyond but should have the facility to reduce fares to provide competition and hopefully provide better service and conditions as well as providing a healthy bit of competition. It may also dissuade those owner-drivers who just come out as a second job during the peak periods.
- 10.185 He does think that drivers should carry photographic identification including name, licence number and Taxi Company. This should be placed in a position where it can be seen by any passenger in the vehicle.
- 10.186 He does believe that the drivers should have some form of dress code. He personally thinks that this falls into consideration for passengers as taxi drivers are providing a public service. It would be nice to see a minimum standard of dress but they do have to strike a balance between comfort for the driver and appearance.
- 10.187 He personally believes that advertising should be allowed on the vehicles providing that it is not offensive to the public. It also irks him that the vehicle owners are being paid for this as well as receiving the high fares, but appreciates that this is just good business sense on the part of the owner!
- 10.188 Mr Swindlehurst does not believe that there is any need to provide any further taxi licences. In his view a properly managed coverage by the existing taxis should be a provision of the licence and an amount of late night/early morning and weekend cover should be provided.
- 10.189 He has no real experience of how the 4-District system works although if taxis were allowed to operate "all Island" it may, with the right management, fill the gap for the less desirable times or days when there can be a shortage of taxis.
- 10.190 He does not think that minibuses should ply for hire. Large parties generally book in advance and even if they were moving from one place to another then minibuses can be provided by firms at fairly short notice, or alternatively multiple taxis can facilitate the fare. If they were able to ply for hire they would generally be picking up anywhere between 1-4 people which would be a waste of vehicle space.

- 10.191 Mr Swindlehurst personally believes that they have enough taxis on the island already. The issue that he feels needs to be addressed is the times that taxis are available, which is late night or early mornings, at a weekend or late nights midweek and Sundays. Providing more licences would not address the problem of taxi availability as a number of taxi licence holders have a taxi as a means of supplementing income from an additional job and only work at the busiest, more lucrative times, i.e. Friday and Saturday nights. These owner-drivers also refuse to take short journeys at busier times as they feel they may miss out on more expensive fares, this is a practice that should be stamped out.
- 10.192 **Mr David R Roward, Director of Public Transport, Isle of Man Transport**, states that Isle of Man Transport is a Division of the Department of Tourism and Leisure of the Isle of Man Government and as such operates all of the Island's scheduled bus services. It would not be for them to comment on matters raised by the Government with respect to its Taxi and Private Hire Study as it is not an activity that they are involved with.
- 10.193 **Mr Colin Meakin, Town Clerk, Castletown Town Commissioners**, reports that complaints have been received from residents in the south alleging that some Douglas taxi operators are refusing to convey people home from Douglas late at night/early morning. The dress code for drivers needs to improve and drivers' identity badges need to be displayed on their jackets so that they are clearly visible. Drivers should not be permitted to smoke in taxis. There should be an all-island taxi service. The removal of restrictions on minibuses to ply for hire would benefit the southern community. More disabled access vehicles should be provided throughout the Island. Ply for hire vehicle should be more easily identifiable. Fares were considered to be too high.
- 10.194 **Mr Chris Pycroft, Development Manager, Douglas Development Partnership**, is concerned in the main with two important requirements: maintaining a high quality image for the island and reducing crime and disorder in the early hours of Saturday and Sunday mornings.
- 10.195 With regard to the issue of image, the Isle of Man is currently involved in a project to develop a national brand. An important part of the brand is likely to be promoting the island as a high quality place to visit and do business. As their taxi drivers are likely to be some of the first and last people visitors encounter on a trip to the island, they have a very important role to play in creating a positive first and last impression of the Isle of Man. Consequently, this encounter should be the best possible experience. He has no particular view as to whether vehicle livery and driver uniforms would be beneficial in this respect, however, a dress code, a vehicle presentation code, driver identification and customer care are he is sure important elements in creating the right type of impression for visitors.
- 10.196 Over the last three years he has been involved in Project Centurion, a multi-sector project to reduce crime and disorder on Douglas Promenade. This is the island's main focus for nightclubs, bars and the associated businesses such as takeaways. A number of factors have been identified as contributing to the relative high level of assaults, criminal damage and public order offences taking place on the Promenade. One of these is the lack of availability of public transport during the peak periods between approximately midnight and 3am on Saturday and Sunday mornings. In relation to taxis and private hire vehicles, the following issues were raised:

- A greater number of taxis was required. He understands additional licences were issued last year.
- Some taxi drivers preferred not to work during peak problem periods because of concern about crime and anti-social behaviour. A taxi-watch scheme has been set up to try to alleviate some of their concerns on this issue.
- During the peak periods, as many as a third of the available taxis were missing from Douglas taking fares on longer journeys to destinations in the rest of the island. A couple of attempts to set up late night commercial bus services have not proved viable. However, a number of taxi operators have recently started to use larger MPVs and minibuses. This is to be welcomed as it helps drivers to remove more people from the Promenade/town centre more quickly during peak periods. He certainly considers that removing restrictions on minibuses to allow them to ply for hire would be helpful.
- A public perception survey undertaken in December in relation to Project Centurion revealed that the percentage of respondents who would wish to see late night bus, shuttle or minibus services has increased from 43% in 2003 to 57% 2005. The percentage of respondents who would like more, cheaper or improved taxis has increased very slightly from 23% to 25%.

10.197 **Mrs Barbara O’Hanlon, Chief Executive, Isle of Man Chamber of Commerce,** makes the following points:

10.198 Availability: There seems to be a reasonable supply on ranks during working hours. Problems have been experienced late in the evenings. Statistics rather than anecdotal evidence are needed. There is obviously an inadequate number at busy periods hence the delay in obtaining a taxi, the high cost of the fare and the inflated “value” of the licence. There are more than sufficient licences but no regulation of supply to ensure cover for peak period requirement, anti-social hours, bank holidays. If the trade cannot regulate itself then the Act should be amended to cover this aspect.

10.199 Vehicle type/livery: Comments vary. Positive comments include – Good idea. There should be a minimum standard and vehicles should be inspected. Vehicles should be from a selected range and all one colour. A distinctive and consistent livery is an advantage for general recognition but should not dominate discussion. As part of the “branding the IoM” exercise this could be a good thing particularly if vehicle type and colour were harmonised. Include a means to show when the vehicle is available for hire e.g. illuminated sign. Reservations include – Could be prohibitively expensive. Would need to be phased in as vehicles are changed. Once all-Island licensing is adopted a standard livery could be incorporated. Suggest revisit existing vehicle standards rather than having all vehicles the same type.

10.200 Disabled access vehicles: General agreement that whilst disabled people should be catered for this should be reflected in percentage of the total number of licences, not required across the board.

10.201 Driver quality, helpfulness, customer care: It is important that drivers recognise their impact on visitors. The best drivers will be fully familiar with this but many will benefit from training and random inspection. An over-riding comment from the perspective of the image (positive or negative) that this industry can and does portray to potential inward investors when visiting the Island. She dreads to think how many decision makers have had their view of IoM negatively influenced by

their first ride into Douglas from the Airport as evidenced by the comments recounted by visitors. The industry should be educated on the important ambassadorial role they have in support of the Isle of Man. Feedback from visitors is fairly consistent about the level of moaning, etc. A more positive perception from taxi drivers would be good for the Island. The Manx Welcome Customer Care course should form a core part of driver licensing criteria. Drivers should be trained and certified in relation to their manner and personal standards.

- 10.202 Location and number of existing ranks: Can not see any point in taxi ranks other than at the port and airport – most people would call a cab using their mobile phone. Taxi ranks are in many cases ill-positioned and have little regard to public convenience. Existing ranks are uncontrolled and unsupervised – often used by other motorists to park on and subject to abuse by taxi drivers themselves who leave vehicles unattended, double park, overflow the rank, etc. Location of taxi ranks on Douglas Promenade was identified by the Project Centurion exercise as contributing to the problems there, particularly on Friday and Saturday evenings.
- 10.203 Fares: Taxis have become so expensive that they ceased using them ages ago. Charges should be displayed at taxi ranks in an easy to understand format. Maximum charges per miles on all journeys (5 miles +) should be stated plus any additional charges. Waiting time charges should be clearly stated. Charges (price list) should be available to customers to take away. It cannot be right that a one-way taxi fare from the Airport to Andreas is greater than the cost of an air ticket to Liverpool. The Airport run is obviously key and should continue to be a fixed price.
- 10.204 Driver identification – uniform/badges: Drivers should dress according to a standard code with name and number badges which are also displayed on the rear of the vehicle. The overall standard of taxis and their drivers does not reflect the image of the IoM they are trying to portray. Codes of conduct and dress codes are in existence but not enforced. This creates a down-at-heel image for the trade itself and more particularly for the Island. Operators and Principals should be encouraged to adopt a smart dress code.
- 10.205 Dress codes for drivers: Important that all drivers should be presentable. Should be part of the licensing criteria.
- 10.206 Views on the publicity/advertising of taxi and Private Hire services across the Island: Any advertising should be subject to the normal advertising standards.
- 10.207 Benefit of removal of restrictions on the current number of 223 Ply for Hires: The problem is not the absolute number but the lack of availability at peak time. This should be carefully monitored against statistics. A complete open market may be counter to efforts to lift quality. Too many licences would lead to a reduction in standards and a proliferation of part-time operators, which could lead to inferior levels of service and reduced profits for operators potentially resulting in less maintenance. There is no evidence of need requirement in the Act – this should be amended. Taxi licences should not be able to be trade but should be cancelled when the individual ceases trading. The licences should control the standard of the vehicle and the quality and character of the driver and not restrict the number of taxis. As long as the RTLC remains unable to police/enforce, the question of too many or too few licences is irrelevant. Pressure to address a perceived requirement by issue of additional licences is counter-productive. Evidence of need is required.

- 10.208 Benefit of removal of the current 4 District Ply for Hire (PFH) system to allow all PFH taxis to operate an all-Island service: All-Island taxi licensing is due to take effect 2007. This should not be delayed. Competition should be encouraged with de-regulation. The 4-district system should be removed as she never understood the reason for this. The current situation is inefficient – particularly the situation when taxis arrive and deliver customers at the airport but are not permitted to pick up people waiting. This is a better measure than increasing the number of licences. A sensible step forward and should help to remove certain peak volume problems.
- 10.209 Benefit of removal of the restriction on minibuses to allow such vehicles to also Ply for Hire: Particularly if it serves to reduce fares on lone journeys.
- 10.210 Additional comment: All smoking should be prohibited in taxis – both drivers and customers. One only has to go to places like Lanzarote to witness first hand the standards that Ply for Hire people have achieved. Regulations that apply to the retail and possibly the “Licensed” trade should apply to “Ply for Hire” trade. Black economy drivers should be discouraged. This group of people run a cartel, are over-protected and appear to have the ear of too many politicians in the IoM. Possible incentives/cost reduction measures to lower fares: use red diesel; tax breaks on quality vehicles or negotiated discounts with suppliers e.g. Mercedes. Taxis and public transport are an essential part of the Island’s infrastructure. So it is essential for the Island to have a properly regulated and efficiently policed taxi trade. Penalties such as licence suspensions should be enforced where the regulations are breached. Enforcement is essential. They have received a number of comments about the cost of the RTLC compared to its perceived lack of enforcement. In addition many of their member businesses do not use taxis because they consider them to be of unsuitable standard for business visitors. Instead they select one limousine firm which they consider to be of reliable standard and use that on a pre-booking basis for all business.
- 10.211 **Ms Caroline Mallon, Secretary, Chronically Sick & Disabled Persons Committee**, states that it is desirable for all taxis to have the facility to cater for people with a disability in the Isle of Man. However as a minimum, the Committee believe there should be a reasonable number of vehicles available to provide choice and this type of vehicle should be able to provide a service for people with all disabilities. It is also considered necessary that taxi drivers should have appropriate training.
- 10.212 **Mr Peter Cartmel, Team Manager, Disabilities, Social Services Division**, has been made aware of the study following the circulation of Departments for input or comments. He will make his own contribution via his Department
- 10.213 He did however raise a number of points about the consultation process with respect to the disabled (part of the written consultation process) and which he in principle would have wished to have been far more inclusive and with more accessible methods for those with a range of impairments to give their views.

11.0 MOBILITY IMPAIRED USER SURVEY - INTRODUCTION

Overview

- 11.1 This report supplements the findings of the Isle of Man Council Ply for Hire Demand Study. The following 5 sections record the results of a postal return survey, undertaken during December 2005, which was targeted at the mobility impaired in the local community.
- 11.2 The aims of the questionnaire were to identify the difficulties which disabled people encounter when travelling, to examine how this influences their use of taxis, and to assess whether the District's taxi operators satisfy the demands of disabled people or whether services need to be improved.

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)

- 11.3 Section 32 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 gives the Government powers to make taxi accessibility regulations in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The purpose of such regulations is to ensure that disabled people including those who wish to remain in their wheelchairs can get into and out of, and travel in, licensed taxis in safety and reasonable comfort.

Proposals for Implementation of the taxi provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 – England and Wales

- 11.4 On 28 October 2003, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Mr Tony McNulty) announced on behalf of the Government its proposals for implementing the taxi provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. He stated that this would allow them to set standards for wheelchair access and a range of other features to help disabled people use taxis. They intend to vary the application of the regulations to target first those areas where they believe accessible taxis will make the biggest impact in meeting the needs of disabled people and where additional cost will not have a major effect. They called these 'first phase' authorities and proposed to introduce the Regulations in these areas over a 10-year period from 2010-2020.
- 11.5 Authorities within the 'first phase' have been identified and each meet one or more of the following criteria:
- A licensing authority population of at least 120,000 people;
 - A major transport interchange;
 - A major tourist attraction; or
 - An existing mandatory policy resulting in 100% accessible vehicles.
- 11.6 A list of those authorities that are currently included have been placed in the libraries of both Houses.

- 11.7 Licensing authorities outside of this first phase would not be subject to the regulations in the first instance. The Government would instead issue voluntary guidance to these authorities on establishing an appropriate mix of vehicles and on the design parameters that they should be considering. They would also monitor the introduction of accessible vehicles in these areas to determine whether the guidance is effective. A view would then be taken on the necessity of extending the regulations to these areas.
- 11.8 The proposals, which apply to England and Wales only, and not the Isle of Man, will be the subject of a full public consultation process in due course. Scotland and Northern Ireland will be holding their own separate consultation processes.

The Isle of Man Council Ply for Hire Fleet

- 11.9 The Isle of Man RTLC is responsible for licensing Ply for Hire Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles within the District of Isle of Man. The RTLC currently licences 223 ply for hire vehicles. Ply for hire taxi ranks are located in only three of the island's four districts. The RTLC licences 58 private hire executive cars and minibuses and 31 limousines or cars restricted to use in conjunction with weddings and funerals. Taxis normally have a roof sign and all have a white plate which displays colour coded district.
- 11.10 The ply for hire fleet is currently made up of a mixture of wheelchair accessible and ordinary saloons.

Survey Structure

- 11.11 The survey questionnaire investigated both Ply for Hire and private hire use by disabled people and comprised four main parts. The first part addressed the nature of each person's disability, their normal travel patterns and any constraints on their usual mode of transport. The responses are discussed in Section 12 of the report. Part two of the survey examined peoples' last journey made by taxi and the standard of service provided by the operator. This is covered in Section 13. The third part of the interview referred to respondents' more general use of taxis, over the longer term, and any factors, which restrict them from making more frequent trips. This is summarised in Section 14. Finally, part four of the questionnaire asked people to suggest ways of improving local taxi services, if they considered that taxi travel could be made easier. The results are given in section 15.
- 11.12 In the Tables that follow the totals do not always sum to 153 as not all respondents answered all the questions asked of them, not all respondents were required to answer all questions and some questions allowed multiple responses.
- 11.13 Where appropriate we highlight any significant similarities and differences between the Public Attitude Survey and this Mobility Impaired User Survey. Overall, 600 questionnaires were sent to disabled residents. Of the 600 questionnaires, a total of 153 were completed and returned, giving a response rate of 25.5%. The age and gender structure of the survey sample is shown in Table 12.1.

Table 11.1 Age and Gender of Survey Sample

Age Group	Male		Female		Total	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Under 24	3	6.0	3	3.9	7	4.6
24 - 34	1	2.0	4	5.3	6	3.9
35 - 44	2	4.0	4	5.3	8	5.2
45 - 54	3	6.0	18	23.7	31	20.3
55 - 64	20	40.0	27	35.5	51	33.3
Over 65	21	42.0	20	26.3	46	30.1
No response	0	0.0	0	0.0	4	2.6
All Ages	50	100.0	76	100.0	153	100.0

Source: TPI

- 11.14 The survey responses were received predominantly from the 55 - 64 age group and the over 65 age group, with nearly two thirds of the questionnaire sample (63.4%) provided by people in these categories.

12.0 MOBILITY IMPAIRMENT AND USUAL PATTERNS OF TRAVEL

Introduction

12.1 This section summarises the part of the questionnaire in which respondents were asked about the nature of their mobility impairment and its impact upon their usual frequency and methods of travel.

Aids to Mobility

12.2 Respondents were asked what sort of physical aids, if any, they normally used to enable them to travel. Approximately one quarter of people used wheelchairs, whilst approximately three quarters of respondents used other types of walking aid. The split of responses is shown in Table 12.1.

Table 12.1 Wheelchair Use Amongst Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Wheelchair	39	25.5
Non-Wheelchair	114	74.5
Total	153	100.0

Source: TPI

12.3 Table 12.2 gives a breakdown of all the types of mobility aids used by respondents.

Table 12.2 Mobility Aids Used by Respondents (Multiple Responses)

Mobility Aid	Frequency	% (of 153 sample)
One walking stick	66	43.1
Wheelchair (manual)	26	17.0
Two sticks/elbow crutches	17	11.1
Wheelchair (powered)	13	8.5
Arm Crutches/walking frame	8	5.2
Guide Dog	0	0.0
Other	18	11.8
No aids	23	15.0
Sample	153	

Source: TPI

12.4 Overall, 23 respondents were not reliant on some kind of mobility aid. The respondents stated that their mobility was impaired due to the following reasons:

- Rheumatoid Arthritis;
- MZ (Myalgic Zmephalomyelitis);
- ZMP and Msema/Chronic Spinal condition;
- Back problem;
- Chronic asthma, bronchitis, blood pressure;
- Back, hip, knees;
- Severe osteoporosis;

- Autism - runs everywhere, very lively;
- Weakness left side from stroke;
- Multiple Sclerosis;
- Parkinson's disease;
- COPD (some breathlessness, heart strain, peripheral vascular disease, high cholesterol, diabetes);
- Spinal injury;
- Artificial leg;
- Various chronic illnesses;
- Osteoarthritis (bilateral knees and hips) diabetes melliths subject and hypoglycemic attacks without warning);
- Can walk about 75 yards but have to rest compressed nerve in spine; or
- Downs syndrome.

12.5 Other respondents relied on the following as a means of aiding mobility;

- Family drives my by car;
- Wheels walking aid;
- Always in wheelchair with assistance;
- Severe pain;
- Built up left shoe;
- Knee length caliper in right leg;
- Hot water bottles, 2 seating cushions;
- People;
- cannot walk distances;
- Mobility scooter; or
- Saloid in lungs.

Usual Frequency of Travel

12.6 With respect to all journeys made, respondents were asked how often they went out. The responses are shown in Table 12.3.

Table 12.3 Usual Trip Frequency Amongst Disabled People

No of Trips	Wheelchair		Non-Wheelchair		Total	
	Freq	Cum % (of 39 responses given)	Freq	Cum % (of 114 responses given)	Freq	Cum % (of 153 responses given)
5 or more times a week	15	38.5	49	43.0	64	41.8
1-4 times a week	17	82.1	54	90.4	71	88.2
Once a fortnight	3	89.7	1	91.2	4	90.8
Once a month	2	94.9	1	92.1	3	92.8
Less often	1	97.4	5	96.5	6	96.7
No response	1	100.0	4	100.0	5	100.0
Total	39	-	114	-	153	-

Source: TPI

- 12.7 Proportionally, there was a slightly higher trip rate amongst those not dependent upon wheelchairs compared to those who were dependent. Around 90.4% of non-wheelchair users travelled at least once per week whilst 82.1% of wheelchair users journeyed this frequently.
- 12.8 Weighting factors can be used to convert the trip frequency responses into equivalent values of person trips per week. Using this technique gives an overall estimate of 3.4 trips per week, on average, for all disabled respondents. The average trip rate for wheelchair users is 3.1 and for non-wheelchair users is 3.5.

Need For Personal Assistance

- 12.9 A further indicator of the ease with which disabled people can travel is the amount of personal help which they require to make a journey. People were therefore asked how much assistance they generally needed. The responses are given in Table 12.4.

Table 12.4 Personal Travel Assistance

Level of Assistance	Wheelchair		Non Wheelchair		All	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Assistance essential	29	74.4	26	22.8	55	36.0
Assistance helps	5	12.8	52	45.6	57	37.2
Assistance unnecessary	4	10.3	25	21.9	29	19.0
Never travel that far	1	2.5	11	9.7	12	7.8
Total	39	100.0	114	100.0	153	100.0

Source: TPI

- 12.10 Overall, 55 (36.0%) of the respondents questioned considered that they always needed help when travelling. As expected, a greater proportion of wheelchair users depended upon assistance (74.4%) than did non-users (22.8%). Only 19.0% of respondents did not require help. Amongst non-wheelchair users, 21.9% needed no assistance, whilst 10.3% of the wheelchair users were independent when travelling.

- 12.11 Respondents were also asked about the assistance they required when travelling by taxi. The results are outlined in Table 12.5

Table 12.5 Assistance Required When Travelling By Taxi (multiple responses allowed)

Travel Mode	Wheelchair		Non Wheelchair		All	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
From house to vehicle/vehicle to destination	13	33.3	20	17.5	33	21.6
Into/out of vehicle	21	53.8	46	40.4	67	43.8
Out of/into wheelchair	10	25.6	6	5.3	16	10.5

Source: TPI

Usual Mode of Travel

- 12.12 Disabled people were asked what methods of transport they usually use in the Isle of Man. A summary of their responses is given in Table 12.6.

Table 12.6 Methods of Transport Amongst Disabled People (multiple responses allowed)

Travel Mode	Wheelchair		Non Wheelchair		All	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Car passenger	27	69.2	68	59.6	95	62.1
Car driver	11	28.2	69	60.5	80	52.3
Bus/minibus	3	7.7	22	19.3	25	16.3
Ply for Hire Vehicle	5	12.8	20	17.5	25	16.3
Private Hire Vehicle	6	15.4	17	14.9	23	15.0
Walk	3	7.7	11	9.6	14	9.2
Ambulance	4	10.3	4	3.5	8	5.2
Access bus	5	12.8	1	0.9	6	3.9

Source: TPI

- 12.13 The majority tend to travel as passengers in a car (62.1%) or as car drivers (52.3%). Proportionally, far more non-wheelchair users travelled as car drivers (60.5%) in comparison to wheelchair users (28.2%).

Modes of Travel That Disabled People Cannot Use

- 12.14 Having determined those types of transport most popular amongst disabled people, respondents were then asked to identify any which they were prevented from using because of their disability. The results are shown in Table 12.7.

Table 12.7 Prohibitive Travel Modes for Disabled People (Multiple Responses)

Travel Mode	Wheelchair		Non Wheelchair		All	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Conventional bus	23	59.0	37	32.5	60	39.2
Car driver	22	56.4	33	28.9	55	35.9
Minibus	17	43.6	24	21.1	41	26.8
None	2	5.1	33	28.9	35	22.9
Car passenger	13	33.3	9	7.9	22	14.4
Wheelchair accessible vehicle	4	10.3	4	3.5	8	5.2

Source: TPI

12.15 The most difficult modes of travel for disabled people were found to be using a Conventional Bus (39.2%) and Driving a Car (35.9%). Journeys in Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (5.2%) were by far the least prohibitive. 14.4% of respondents deemed being a passenger in a car as the most prohibitive travel mode.

13.0 MOBILITY IMPAIRED USER SURVEY - CHARACTERISTICS OF LAST TAXI TRIP

Introduction

- 13.1 Within the questionnaire respondents were asked to consider in more detail whether they had used a taxi as a mode of travel within the last month. This section concentrates on the standard of service encountered by those who had made their last taxi trip during that month.

Proportion Making Taxi Trip in the Last Month

- 13.2 59 respondents (38.6%) said that they had travelled in the Isle of Man by taxi within the previous month.

Method of Taxi Hire on Last Trip

- 13.3 Of the 59 respondents who had travelled during the last month, 57 had booked by telephone (96.6%). Two people (3.4%) used a rank to obtain a taxi.

Standard of Telephone Hire Service

- 13.4 Several questions were used to measure the level of service offered to disabled people when hiring a taxi by telephone. First, respondents were asked if they were able to make a booking with the first operator they tried. A good service was provided, with some 54 people, or 94.7% of bookings, being successful at the first attempt.
- 13.5 Next, people were asked how long they had waited for a taxi to pick them up, if they required the taxi immediately. The operators' response times were reasonable, with 36.8% of customers picked up within 5 minutes and a further 34.2% within 6-10 minutes. On average, people tended to wait for 7.4 minutes before being collected.
- 13.6 Those respondents who made a telephone booking for pickup at a pre-arranged time were asked how promptly their service had arrived. A high proportion of advance bookings were said to have picked up on time or early, with 73.6% achieving this target. On average taxis arrive 1.3 minutes late when collecting disabled customers.

Satisfaction with Service Level on Last Taxi Trip

- 13.7 To gain a more general picture of how people perceived their quality of taxi service to have been, respondents were asked how satisfied they were with three aspects of their last trip, namely:
- i) wait delay time;
 - ii) ease of access to the taxi;
 - iii) driver assistance.
- 13.8 Overall, it seemed that disabled people were well satisfied with the taxi service offered. Of those respondents who had made a trip by taxi in the last month, 81.4% of

respondents had found the wait time acceptable, whilst 66.1% considered it sufficiently easy to enter and leave the vehicle. 83.1% had been happy with the amount of help given by the driver.

14.0 MOBILITY IMPAIRED USER SURVEY – LONGER TERM TAXI TRAVEL AND CONSTRAINTS ON USE

Introduction

- 14.1 Besides gaining details of peoples' last taxi trip, it was considered worthwhile to also collect some information on their more typical use of taxis over the longer term. This would take account of people who hadn't travelled by taxi within the last month and would also give a reliable assessment of any factors restricting peoples' willingness to make taxi journeys.

Usual Frequency of Taxi Trips

- 14.2 All respondents were asked how regularly they travel by taxi in the Isle of Man. The results are shown in Table 14.1.

Table 14.1 Customary Frequency of Taxi Use by Disabled People

No of Trips	Wheelchair		Non Wheelchair		All	
	Freq	cum % (of 34)	Freq	cum % (of 102)	Freq	cum % (of 136)
Daily	1	2.9	3	2.9	4	2.9
2-3 times/week	1	5.9	6	8.8	7	8.1
once/week	2	11.8	6	14.7	8	14.0
once/fortnight	1	14.7	3	17.6	4	16.9
once/month	3	23.5	15	32.4	18	30.1
less than once/month	12	58.8	56	87.3	68	80.1
never	14	100.0	13	100.0	27	100.0
No Response	5	-	12	-	17	-
Total	39	-	114	-	153	-

Source: TPI

cum % = Cumulative Percentage

- 14.3 The responses indicate that slightly more non-wheelchair users tended to travel on a more consistent basis by taxi than wheelchair users.
- 14.4 If weightings are applied to the trip frequencies, an overall average trip rate of 0.4 taxi journeys per person per week can be calculated.
- 14.5 In Section 12.8 of this report it was estimated that, on average, disabled people undertook some 3.4 trips per week. Hence, it appears that approximately one seventh of their journeys are usually made by taxi. The overall average trip rate by taxi for wheelchair users and non-wheelchair users is 0.3 trips per week and 0.4 trips per week respectively.
- 14.6 All respondents were asked to state which rank they used most often. The rank at The Airport, Ballasalla was used by most respondents (9.2%). The rank at the Sea Terminal was used by 5.2% of respondents. The rank at Lord Street was used by 3.9%. The rank at Central Promenade by Colours Night Club was used by 2.6%. The ranks at Victoria Street by KallKwik, Central Promenade by Empress Hotel and Market Square, Ramsey were used by 2.0%. The rank at Villa Marina Rank was used

by 1.3%. The ranks at New Bond Street, Victoria Street by Cowley Groves and Church Road, Port Erin were used by 0.7%. The ranks at Tower House, Loch Promenade, Market Street, Paramount City Night Club, La Piazza and Castletown Square, Castletown, were not used by any respondents.

Methods of Taxi Hire

- 14.7 The next question sought to identify the main methods by which disabled people typically hire taxis. The responses are given in Table 14.3.

Table 14.2 Taxi Hire Method

Hire Method	Wheelchair		Non Wheelchair		All	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Telephone	25	64.1	82	71.9	107	69.9
Rank	0	0.0	7	6.1	7	4.6
Flagdown	0	0.0	3	2.6	3	2.0
No Response	14	35.9	22	19.3	36	23.5
Total	39	100.0	114	100.0	153	100.0

Source: TPI

- 14.8 The most popular method of hire was by telephone. 64.1% of wheelchair users and 71.9% of non-users had used this method.

Preferred Taxi Types

- 14.9 We asked people whether they had any preference for the design of taxi in which they travelled. Their opinions are displayed in Table 14.4.

Table 14.3 Preferences for Taxi Vehicle Designs

Taxi Type Preferred	Wheelchair		Non Wheelchair		All	
	Freq	% (of 39)	Freq	% (of 114)	Freq	% (of 153)
Ordinary Saloon car or minibus	9	23.1	40	35.1	49	32.0
Wheelchair Accessible Car	9	23.1	6	5.3	15	9.8
Wheelchair Accessible Minibus	9	23.1	2	1.8	11	7.2
No preference	4	10.3	51	44.7	55	35.9
No Response	8	20.5	15	13.2	23	15.0
Total	39	100.0	114	100.0	153	100.0

Source: TPI

- 14.10 Amongst the wheelchair users, those who had any preference were equally favourable towards ordinary saloon cars or minibuses, Wheelchair Accessible Cars and Wheelchair Accessible Minibuses (23.1%). For non-users, the preference was towards ordinary saloon cars or minibuses (35.1%). There was more indifference towards taxi type amongst non-users (44.7%) than amongst users (10.3%).

Wheelchair Users Preferred Mode of Carriage

- 14.11 Wheelchair users were asked how they preferred to be carried during a taxi journey (if they were not medically required to remain in their wheelchair at all times).
- 14.12 Of the 39 respondents who cited a wheelchair as their main ‘walking aid’, 23.1% preferred to remain in their wheelchair for the entire journey, whilst 74.4% preferred to sit in a passenger seat in the vehicle throughout the journey with their wheelchair stowed in the boot. The remaining 2.5% had no preference.

Loyalty to Single Taxi Operator

- 14.13 A proportion of 74 of the 153 respondents (48.4%) said that they tended to always hire a taxi from the same operator. Fourteen of these 74 (35.9%) were wheelchair users and 60 (52.6%) were non-wheelchair users. These people were asked for reasons why they were loyal to one operator. The responses are shown in Table 14.5.

Table 14.4 Reasons for Customer Loyalty (Multiple Responses Allowed)

Attribute	Wheelchair		Non Wheelchair		All	
	Freq	% (of 14)	Freq	% (of 60)	Freq	% (of 74)
Staff are Helpful	11	78.6	36	60.0	47	63.5
Located Nearby	7	50.0	23	38.3	30	40.5
Habit	1	7.1	18	30.0	19	25.7
All Vehicles are metered	1	7.1	14	23.3	15	20.3
Other	4	28.6	15	25.0	19	25.7

Source: TPI

- 14.14 Overall, 63.5% of respondents gave helpful staff as the main reason for their loyalty. The second most important factor was nearby location (40.5%). Other responses given included:
- Booked by DHSS;
 - Reliable;
 - My family find them helpful;
 - Great service;
 - Pick the first one I see;
 - Try to use private car;
 - Leonard Cheshire once a week;
 - When I go to the airport, I have found them reliable;
 - Totally dependable;
 - They have wheelchair accessible vehicles;
 - I know the proprietor;
 - Number in mobile phone directory; and
 - There is a monopoly provider of taxi services in Douglas

Factors Deterring Greater Taxi Use

14.15 We wished to identify any reasons for disabled people being restricted in their amount of taxi use. They were therefore asked why they didn't travel more often by taxi. The responses are shown in Table 14.6.

Table 14.5 Reasons for Infrequent Taxi Use Among Disabled People

Deterrent	Wheelchair		Non Wheelchair		All	
	Freq	% (of 39)	Freq	% (of 114)	Freq	% (of 153)
Car Available	14	35.9	50	43.9	64	41.8
Too expensive	5	12.8	28	24.6	33	21.6
Don't go out often	3	7.7	13	11.4	16	10.5
Buses adequate	0	0.0	5	4.4	5	3.3
Difficult to obtain	3	7.7	1	0.9	4	2.6
Difficult to use	3	7.7	0	0.0	3	2.0
Other	6	15.4	11	9.6	17	11.1
No Response	5	12.8	6	5.3	11	7.2

Source: TPI

14.16 The majority of people cited the fact that they use a car as the main deterrent (41.8%). This was the main deterrent for both wheelchair users and non-wheelchair users. Overall, inadequacy in the available taxi services (access difficulty or hire difficulty) accounted for only 4.6% of respondents infrequent taxi use. Other responses given included:

- Private vehicle wheelchair adapted;
- Family drive me;
- Too expensive;
- Disability;
- Taxi drivers don't understand my disability. Also use of car fresheners which give me migraines and invisible MZ chemical poisoning;
- I am very independent;
- Do use them often;
- Taken out once a week by Leonard Cheshire;
- Minibus calls each Monday from Day Centre;
- Personal safety;
- Try and use my leg as much as possible; and
- Better drivers - many should be banned.

15.0 MOBILITY IMPAIRED USER SURVEY - IMPROVEMENTS TO TAXI SERVICES

Introduction

- 15.1 In the final part of the survey respondents were asked what they thought of the availability of Ply for Hire taxis, if they believed that local taxi services could be improved and whether they would undertake more regular taxi journeys if such improvements were made.

Availability

- 15.2 Respondents were asked what they thought of the availability of Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles in the Isle of Man. Table 15.1 summarises the responses.

Table 15.1 Availability of Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles

Availability	Wheelchair		Non Wheelchair		All	
	Freq	% (of 39)	Freq	% (of 114)	Freq	% (of 153)
Very good	0	0.0	7	6.1	7	4.6
Good	2	5.1	3	2.6	5	3.3
Average	7	17.9	22	19.3	29	19.0
Poor	6	15.4	18	15.8	24	15.7
Very poor	9	23.1	7	6.1	16	10.5
Don't know	12	30.8	46	40.4	58	37.9
No response	3	7.7	11	9.6	14	9.2

Source: TPI

- 15.3 Overall, 27.2% of respondents thought that the availability of Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles was below average (38.5% of wheelchair users and 21.9% of non-wheelchair users).

Suggested Improvements

- 15.4 Table 15.2 summarises people's opinions on how to improve the Isle of Man taxi services.

Table 15.2 Recommended Taxi Improvements (Multiple Responses)

Improvement	Wheelchair		Non Wheelchair		All	
	Freq	% (of 39)	Freq	% (of 114)	Freq	% (of 153)
Cheaper fares	15	38.5	56	49.1	71	46.4
Grab handles	15	38.5	44	38.6	59	38.6
Swivel Seat	14	35.9	35	30.7	49	32.0
Lower steps	11	28.2	35	30.7	46	30.1
Helpful drivers	11	28.2	30	26.3	41	26.8
More disabled access vehicles	13	33.3	20	17.5	33	21.6
More wheelchair accessible vehicles	18	46.2	12	10.5	30	19.6
Quicker booking	5	12.8	19	16.7	24	15.7
Easier hire	7	17.9	15	13.2	22	14.4
Bigger taxis	5	12.8	7	6.1	12	7.8
Able to travel without leaving wheelchair	8	20.5	2	1.8	10	6.5
No improvement	0	0.0	5	4.4	5	3.3
Other	5	12.8	8	7.0	13	8.5

Source: TPI

- 15.5 The main differences in opinion between wheelchair users and non-users were the formers' recommendations for more disabled access vehicles, more wheelchair accessible vehicles and the ability to travel without leaving their wheelchair.
- 15.6 Wheelchair users main priorities were for more wheelchair accessible vehicles (46.2%), grab handles (38.5%) and cheaper fares (38.5%).
- 15.7 Non-wheelchair users' main priority was cheaper fares (49.1%), followed by grab handles (38.6%), swivel seats (30.7%) and lower steps (30.7%)
- 15.8 Further suggestions for improving taxis were:
- More driver training;
 - Black taxi London cabs best;
 - People carriers give easier egress;
 - I haven't used any for a good while;
 - Stop dithering over change so you round up the fare to get away;
 - Drivers trained in first aid;
 - Got injured when got into the taxi;
 - Rarely used;
 - That local taxi firms provide wheelchair access in Kirk Midao; and
 - Why should there be £3 added before the start of the journey?.

Predicted Use of Improved Taxi Service

- 15.9 To complete the survey, respondents were asked how frequently they would be likely to travel by taxi in future, if services were improved. The results are shown in Table 15.3.

Table 15.3 Expected Use of Improved Services

Trip Frequency	Wheelchair		Non Wheelchair		All	
	Freq	cum % (of 31 responses given)	Freq	cum % (of 94 responses given)	Freq	cum % (of 125 responses given)
5+ times per week	0	0.0	3	3.2	3	2.4
1 - 4 times per week	6	19.4	19	23.4	25	22.4
Once per fortnight	5	35.5	12	36.2	17	36.0
Once per month	1	38.7	5	41.5	6	40.8
Less often	0	38.7	3	44.7	3	43.2
Less than once per month	11	74.2	42	89.4	53	85.6
Never	8	100.0	10	100.0	18	100.0
No Response	8	-	20	-	28	-
Total	39	-	114	-	153	-

Source: TPI cum % = Cumulative Percentage * = percentage of Total

- 15.10 In comparison to the existing situation (see Table 14.1), 19.4% of wheelchair users and 23.4% of non-wheelchair users would travel at least once per week, an additional 7.6% of non wheelchair users and 8.7% of wheelchair users.
- 15.11 If the responses are converted to average weekly trips per person, an overall value of 0.7 trips per week is predicted, representing an average increase of 0.3 trips per week from the existing level. The average for wheelchair users would be 0.6, an increase of 0.3 from the existing level, whilst that for non wheelchair users would be 0.7, or an increase of 0.3 trips per week.

16.0 RADIO BASE OBSERVATIONS

- 16.1 A series of radio base observations were undertaken at three operators namely, Telecabs, A1 and Taxicabs. The observations were undertaken to assess the demands on their businesses.
- 16.2 All three operators were observed on Thursday 21st. September 2006 from 7am to 3am and Saturday 23rd. September 2006 from 11am to 3am.
- 16.3 The results of the radio base observations are shown in Appendix C.
- 16.4 Based on both the extremely minimal amount of total bookings not serviced, and the fact that not once were the phones taken off the hook, Appendix C demonstrates that there is no significant unmet demand in the radio base operator market.

17.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

17.1 On the basis of the analyses conducted we conclude that there does **not** exist a significant unmet demand for Ply for Hire Taxis across the Isle of Man at this time.

Recommendations

17.2 Based on our analyses, Isle of Man Government has the discretion to either:

- i) maintain the limit at 223 licences;
- ii) issue that number of Ply for Hire Taxi licences as it sees fit; or
- iii) remove the limit on Ply for Hire Taxis.

17.3 In line with both the Mobility Impaired User Survey, we recommend that consideration should be given to further Wheelchair Accessible/Disabled Access Ply for Hire Taxi provision.

17.4 Introducing a programme of specialist driver training in, and an understanding of, disability awareness is also recommended.

17.5 The anticipated useful life of the current survey is three years, provided there are no significant changes in demographics, development and lifestyle on the Island and we would recommend another survey during 2009.

Appendix A

Rank Observation Programme

Appendix B

Responses from Consultations

Appendix C

Radio Base Observations