

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mrs Lambley to the Minister for Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics:

Review of Taxi Industry

In November 2017 the Public Accounts Committee released the *Inquiry into Taxi Licensing and Subleasing Report* (“the Report”).

The Report outlined eleven recommendations, which the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics responded to, as set out below.

1. Of the eleven recommendations, how many of these have been implemented to date?

At the time of report release, Government carefully considered all recommendations and put in place measures to address the concerns of the Public Accounts Committee in respect to each of these recommendations.

The Department’s Response to Recommendation 4 stated measures would be implemented to prevent subleasing, including legislative changes and that a Bailment Agreement framework would be implemented in order to combat the issue of subleasing.

2. Please advise on the progress of legislative changes towards the goal of preventing subleasing?

Legislative changes to address the issue of subleasing are scheduled to be included in the proposed Transport Legislation (Commercial Passenger Vehicle) Amendment Bill, which is proposed be considered by Government in the second half of 2021.

The Department’s Response to Recommendation 1 and 11 stated that a further review of the industry would be undertaken in early 2020. In light of the COVID-19 impact across all sectors, this review was postponed.

3. Please advise on the status of the Bailment Agreement framework?

The Department has conducted extensive consultation with industry on bailment agreements, including separate taxi driver and operator workshops. Feedback received from this consultation has highlighted the need to include agent agreements in the package and while this has increased the timeframes for this project, it is anticipated that measures may be introduced during 2021 pending outcomes of the CPV review.

The Department's Response to Recommendation 7 stated that extensive consultation would be undertaken with stakeholders of the taxi industry, in an effort to improve transparency and accountability.

4. Please advise how often these "industry forums" are undertaken?

Industry forums are typically undertaken four times per year.

There are three established forums which traditionally meet quarterly, however in 2019, members of the Darwin CPV Forum requested this be amended to twice yearly.

Department established forums include:

- Central Australian CPV Forum (covers southern region of NT);
- Top End CPV Forum (covers northern region of NT); and
- Accessible Point to Point Transport Working Group (covers all of NT and addresses issues relating to wheelchair accessible CPVs).

5. Please advise when the last forum was undertaken?

The last forum (the Accessible Point to Point Transport Working Group Forum) occurred on 10 March 2020. No further meetings were held during 2020, due to health concerns around the COVID-19 pandemic.

Forums are set to recommence this quarter.

6. Please advise which stakeholders have been consulted regarding matter of transparency and accountability?

The Department oversees the various industry forums, actively participates in stakeholder groups overseen by other agencies and engages with industry peak bodies and networks as required. All Department policy is available online and includes information to assist industry in understanding their obligations. Information is disseminated to industry through the various forum representatives and networks.

7. Please advise on the status of this review?

i. Has this gone to tender?

Quotation responses for the Consultancy for the Commercial Passenger Review closed on 28 September 2020.

ii. Has a contractor been awarded this tender?

A contractor for this consultancy was selected in January 2021.

iii. If so, who was awarded the tender?

The successful contractor for this consultancy is Fivenines Consulting Pty Ltd.

iv. When will this review be concluded?

The review is expected to take about four months to complete, with recommendations provided to Government mid-2021.

v. When will the review be made available to the public?

To ensure probity, Government will consider review findings prior to releasing outcomes.

8. Please advise what industry consultation will be included in the upcoming industry review?

i. Will individual license holders be included in the consultation process?

Yes.

ii. Will the Alice Springs Taxis Association be consulted in this review?

Yes.