



Department
for Transport

From the Secretary of State
The Rt Hon Mark Harper MP

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To: Robbie Moore MP

27 April 2023

Dear Robbie,

Commencement of the remainder of the Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Safeguarding and Road Safety) Act 2022

I am writing to inform you about the commencement of the remaining provisions of the Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Safeguarding and Road Safety) Act 2022 (“the Act”) as I know it is a piece of legislation you had a keen interest in during its passage through Parliament, speaking at the Second and Third Reading of the Bill in the House of Commons.

Firstly, I wanted to thank you for your support of this important legislation. I know this is an area which you are passionate about and I am glad we have been able to implement this vital improvement to safety for passengers. Without the support of members like yourself, we would not have been able to deliver this.

The Act applies in England and requires better information sharing between taxi and private hire vehicle licensing authorities to ensure only fit and proper drivers remain in the sector. As you will know, Peter Gibson MP sponsored its passage through the House of Commons and named it ‘Sian’s Law’ after Sian O’Callaghan who was murdered by a private hire vehicle driver in 2011. I met with Sian’s family on Wednesday 19 April, where we agreed that this Act will serve as a positive legacy for Sian, protecting the travelling public for years to come.

Part of the Act came into force on 31 May 2022, requiring licensing authorities to report safeguarding and road safety concerns about drivers licensed by other authorities to the licensing authority that issued the driver’s licence. Licensing authorities that receive a report of safeguarding or road safety concerns about a driver it has licensed must then consider whether to suspend or revoke the driver’s licence.

The remaining provisions of the Act will come into effect from today require taxi and private hire vehicle licensing authorities in England to use a licensing information database to record refusals, suspensions and revocations of taxi and private hire vehicle driver licences relating to safeguarding and road safety concerns. The Act enables me, as the Secretary of State for Transport, to either provide the database or to designate a person to do so.


My department has reached an agreement with the National Anti-Fraud Network to provide the database, and I have designated the National Anti-Fraud Network as the database provider under the Act. The National Anti-Fraud Network's database, the National Register for Revocations, Refusals and Suspensions (NR3S), has been in use successfully for several years. Over 70% of licensing authorities in England were already using the NR3S to vet their taxi and private hire vehicle driver licence applicants.

The National Anti-Fraud Network will grant access to the NR3S to all the relevant taxi and private hire vehicle licensing bodies in the UK. As part of our agreement with the National Anti-Fraud Network, the Department for Transport is covering the cost of administering this vital safeguarding database.

Conclusion

By requiring the use of the NR3S across England, we will ensure that licensing authorities have more of the information they need to make the correct decisions to effectively regulate the taxi and private hire vehicle trades. Ultimately, this change will help protect passengers, and the reputations of the majority of drivers, from those who are unfit to hold a licence.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Harper', with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

The Rt Hon Mark Harper MP

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT