



Media Release
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Keeping the Perspective

The NSW Taxi Council today called for perspective in the media coverage about female passengers catching taxis, saying a sensational approach does not give justice to the serious nature of the accusations.

“Taxis remain the safest mode of public transport – especially for women late at night. While we are talking about a relatively low level of complaints out of the 170-million passenger journeys completed in Sydney each year, even one is too many,” said Mr Howard Harrison, CEO of the NSW Taxi Council.

Mr Harrison said there were two points to remember:

1. The figures available to the NSW Taxi Council do not appear to correlate with the figures quoted by The Daily Telegraph, however, even one allegation is too many.
2. Taxis remain the safest mode of transport – even the disputed figures from Telegraph indicate 74 complaints out of 170-million passenger journeys.

“In my 44 years in the Taxi Industry, I regret to say that the allegations of inappropriate behaviour go both ways. I have heard about female passengers offering favours in exchange for a free ride, and I have heard accusations that drivers have taken advantage of drunken women,” said Mr Harrison.

“None of this is acceptable, and one party does not have a monopoly on honesty. In our society there is a presumption of innocence until proven guilty.

“The NSW Government, as regulator of our Industry, and all authorised Taxi Networks take complaints very seriously. Complaints to their hotline are treated responsibly and fairly and every complaint is investigated and networks and drivers are held accountable.

“The most unfortunate situation is when the driver says one thing and the passenger another – there is often no resolution to this which will satisfy both parties. In that sense we are no different to accusations made elsewhere in society.”

Mr Harrison said female passengers should:

1. Always ring authorised networks.
2. Always make a note of the Taxi Number before getting into the taxi, rather than waiting until the end of the journey.
3. Always sit in the back of the taxi even during daylight hours.
4. Always take a receipt from the EFTPOS system when you pay – that way you have a record of the journey in case you wish to follow up.
5. Any complaints of this nature should be made to the NSW Government’s Complaints Hotline on **1800 648 478** and the police.

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