

**DEPUTY PREMIER**



**MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT & MINISTER FOR FINANCE**

**JOHN WATKINS MP**

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **SURVEY SHOWS SECURE TAXI RANKS ARE A HIT**

State Plan Priority S6: Increasing share of peak hour journeys on a safe and reliable public transport system

Tuesday 16 October 2007

Deputy Premier and Minister for Transport John Watkins today said that a recent survey of secure taxi rank users found Sydney's secure ranks were in the right locations, were effective in reducing security concerns, and were popular with passengers and drivers.

Mr Watkins said the locations of the ranks were carefully chosen by the NSW Government and the NSW Taxi Council to better match passengers with taxi drivers late at night. In choosing the location for secure taxi ranks, consideration is given to access and traffic flow, street lighting, patronage and waiting facilities.

"The survey of 300 secure rank users taken over the last weekend of August, shows we are on the right track and that we have an effective solution for passenger concerns at these locations," Mr Watkins said.

Mr Watkins said key survey findings included:

- 90% of users thought secure ranks were safer;
- 75% of users thought the risk of physical attack, verbal abuse, being robbed and anti-social behaviour on the streets were reduced by using secure ranks;
- 75% of users felt a secure rank increased their chance of getting a late night taxi;
- 70% of users waited less than 15 minutes on a secure rank for a cab;
- 40% of secure rank users use a secure rank at least once a week; and
- 80% of users of secure ranks were either satisfied or very satisfied with the service of the security staff in assisting them to obtain taxis in an orderly manner.

NSW Taxi Council CEO, Mr Howard Harrison said Secure Ranks were an Australian innovation which had proven to be very successful.

"Secure taxi ranks were first introduced in the Sydney CBD in 2001, as a model for matching drivers and passengers in a safer environment for late night travel.

"They have since been used as a model for ranks in New York City, and in December 2005 the NSW Government agreed to extend the ranks to appropriate suburban, regional and rural areas.

“This is another example of industry and government working together for the benefit of everyone,” Mr Harrison said.

“There are currently around 30 secure ranks operating, however I would be willing to consider further secure ranks if there is demand and the right locations are identified,” Mr Watkins said.

“The success of the Secure Rank Program has been a direct result of the Ministry of Transport, the Police, local councils and the NSW taxi industry working together to provide solutions for local transport issues,” Mr Watkins said.

Mr Watkins said ranks were currently located at Belgrave St Manly, The Steyne Hotel Manly, Aussie Rules Social Club Kings Cross, Kings Cross Railway Station entrance, Arden St Coogee, Penrith Railway Station, Boyle Street Sutherland, Cronulla Plaza, Park St Sydney CBD, Four Seasons Hotel Sydney CBD and Chifley Square Sydney CBD.

There is some variation in the exact hours of operation at secure ranks, based on local demands, but as a general rule of thumb they operate Friday and Saturday nights from about 10.30pm to 5am. Some specific ranks operate on major public holidays also.

Each secure rank is staffed by at least two security guards. The extra security provided by the guards makes waiting for a taxi late on a Friday or Saturday night a safer experience.

Three secure ranks are funded jointly by the NSW Government and the Taxi Council. The other 28 ranks are funded from the Taxi Advisory Committee Fund.

For the last financial year just over \$1 million was spent on secure ranks. On average, that's \$55,700 for one secure rank to operate for 12 months.

Mr Watkins said the lemma Government would continue to work with the taxi industry and the community to identify locations for new secure taxi ranks.

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