

PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE: 8 March 2016

Report of the Head of Regulatory Services

**APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL FOR THE FITTING OF ROOF MOUNTED
DUAL SIDED LCD ADVERTISING ON TX4 HACKNEY CARRIAGES
VEHICLES.**

1. Background

- 1.1 An application has been made by Eyetease Limited for approval to fit roof mounted dual sided LCD advertising screens to TX4 Hackney Carriage vehicles. The Eyetease iTaxitop system is already approved for use in London by Transport for London.
- 1.2 The Committee approved a similar application from Open Taxi Tops Ltd at its meeting of 3 March 2015.
- 1.3 This report is to provide details of the application to enable the application to be considered by Committee.

2. Details.

- 2.1 The roof sign system is approved for use by Transport for London and is approved in 56 countries
- 2.2 The company has stated that the roof signs will be securely affixed to the vehicles roof struts on TX4 hackney carriages. The system is powered by the headroom power from the vehicle battery backed up by solar panels and an internal power storage system. The system continuously monitors vehicle battery health and will shut down if for any reason the vehicle has a poor battery performance.
- 2.3 The iTaxitop system has undergone the following testing and certification for use in the UK:
 - Distraction testing
 - Structural Engineering Assessment
 - IP 65 testing (ingress protection)
 - Environmental and temperature testing
 - Accelerated durability and Pave testing
 - E-marking (tested and manufactured in accordance with relevant EC directives)
 - Conformity of Production

- EMC testing (tests electromagnetic compatibility)
- 2.4 To support their application the company have stated that the roof light system could provide the following benefits:
- A revenue stream for taxi drivers and / or taxi fleet owners
 - local businesses would be utilised to fit the technology to vehicles (new revenue for local businesses)
 - There is the ability to utilise the technology to send local council / government messages (e.g. litter campaign)
 - Ability to utilise the technology to send important public messages (e.g. train station closed for engineering works)
 - Ability to promote local events and charities
 - The technology is 'greener' than traditional vinyl advertising (zero non-recyclable waste)

3. **Considerations**

- 3.1 At present all licensed vehicles are identifiable by an exterior licence plate issued by the Authority that must be displayed together with plate signs on the interior of the vehicle. The driver is also required to wear a numbered photo-identity badge and display a copy in the vehicle. The vehicle is also required by motoring law to display a registration plate. In addition to this, Hackney Carriages are immediately recognisable as are clearly marked as black with a white bonnet or all black in the case of vehicles which meet the Metropolitan Police Conditions of Fitness. All licensed drivers are vetted in respect of their criminal convictions and medically examined to ensure they are fit and proper persons.
- 3.2 In considering the appropriateness of the use of advertising equipment the Committee should consider the safety of the product and its suitability within a vehicle used for hire and reward and in particular may consider:
- Acceptability of the medium by fare paying passengers
 - Whether the medium will cause confusion in distinguishing between Hackney Carriage and private hire vehicles.
 - Whether such adverts will confuse passengers by distracting from the licence plate numbers displayed
 - Type, size and design of the equipment
 - Secure mounting and safety of the equipment
 - The safe storage of any necessary controls, and any implications of this storage e.g. reduction of luggage compartment
 - Effects on the suitability and comfort of the seating arrangement
- 3.3 The current Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licence Condition in respect of roof top advertising states:

“External advertising in the form of illuminated roof signs affixed to the vehicle in an approved manner is approved subject to the advertisement being approved by the Authority, in writing, prior to its use.”

4. Consultation

The trade consultation procedure was undertaken in accordance with the consultation procedure on any policy matters. The draft reports intended for consideration were made available at the licensing offices for any interested party to provide written submissions.

5. Achievability

This report contains no equality personnel or property implications.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 As indicated in the Report, the Authority already permits the display of illuminated roof signs on hackney carriages.
- 6.2 Under Section 47 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 the Council may impose such conditions upon hackney carriage licences as it may consider reasonably necessary.
- 6.3 In particular the Council may require any hackney carriage licensed by it to be of such design or appearance or bear such distinguishing marks as shall clearly identify it as a hackney carriage.

7. Financial Implications.

- 7.1 This report does not result directly in any additional financial implications.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1 It is recommended that:
 - a) The Committee determine the application made by Eyetease Limited in respect of the iTaxitop roof top illuminated signs on TX4 hackney carriage vehicles.
 - b) The Head of Regulatory Services is authorised on behalf of the City of Cardiff Council to approve roof top advertising signs for use on hackney carriage vehicles.

Dave Holland
HEAD OF REGULATORY SERVICES

This report has been prepared in accordance with procedures approved by Corporate Managers.

Background Papers: None

