

Martin Seymour
Taxi Licensing Department
Hove Town Hall



Dear Martin

The taxi licensing department contacted the trade on October 17 2019 regarding the following matter:

“PHV Roof Signs

It is proposed that the current mandatory requirement for PHV to have roof signs is changed to a voluntary at the proprietor's or their operator's discretion.

Private Hire Roof Signs were introduced approximately 30 years ago to Private Hire Vehicle's equality with Hackney Carriages vehicles to advertise a telephone number and allow customers to recognise their operator's vehicle arriving to pick them up. With the arrival of app based booking systems where customers receive details of the vehicle and driver this has become less relevant.

Since the introduction of the Council's livery exemption a significant number of proprietors consider such a roof sign to be an unnecessary burden. There is also a belief that a roof sign may cause confusion to the public into thinking that the vehicle gives the appearance of a licensed hackney carriage taxi for hire especially where the roof sign is illuminated.

Proprietors that continue to have a roof sign on their vehicle must continue with the current specifications and numbering or lettering on the sign to match their. (sic)

The HCO regularly receives complaints from licensed drivers reporting incidents of vehicles without roof signs which involve a disproportionate amount of officer time in enforcing licensing conditions.

If you have any comments on the proposal please reply to this email or send your comments to the Hackney Carriage Office, Hove Town Hall, Norton Road, Hove, BN3 3BQ by the 30th November 2019.”

Under the 'Brighton & Hove Taxi Trade Forum Association' the trade reps met on Wednesday November 6 2019 to primarily discuss this matter.

The trade reps attending were: Sudanese Taxi Forum - United Taxi Driver Association - City Cabs - Radio Cabs – Streamline - iDB&H - Unite - GMB

Conclusion of meeting:

Private Hire Roof Signs

The trade reps concluded that the displaying of PHV roof signs made these vehicles stand out as being locally licensed as opposed to all of the hundreds of out of town cars that are not licensed by the council that predominantly work here under Uber who do not have conditions to display such roof signs.

It was also concluded that it is the council's responsibility to ensure that all licensed vehicles and drivers adhere to all conditions of licensing.

This means that the trade does not support any change in the existing conditions of licensing and expects all licensed private hire vehicles to display the required roof sign unless where a PHV is working under the 'Conditions of Licensing' Section 145 of the Conditions 'Exemption from Display of Plate'

Andrew Peters
Secretary
GMB Brighton & Hove Taxi Section

On behalf of the Brighton & Hove Taxi Trade Forum Association