

# Taxi Review 2024: Unbooked taxi fares and non-cash payment surcharge

## Submission received via email

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I am a WAV operator in victoria and make my living from taxis for last 15 years and is the only source of my income.

### 1. Regarding the unbooked fares

I assume the same should be deregulated all together. It is only creating confusion and hindering the taxi industry.

e.g There is a full house at MCG and uber prices are doomed up 3 times. Now everyone is looking for a taxi as they are the regulated fares. But taxis cannot look after so many people. In the newspaper we get a report cabbies let the public down. On a Monday afternoon it is very quite uber is discounting 30% and everyone is hiring an uber while a cabbie is waiting on a rank for his turn. So non flexibility of fares is killing the taxi industry. Public wants cheap options and let the industry fight for the same.

2. scanario no 2 A disable person is looking for ride. He/she has a taxi card but doe not have an account with uber. He is totally dependent upon taxi and if the regulated fares keep on going the way they are going right now that will mean disable clients will suffer the most.

In the booked and unbooked theory of safe transport victoria I only felt for old and disable persons who are getting the biggest hit. The second most effected person is a taxi driver who cannot make both ends meet even when there is enough work available.

Before deciding on booked and unbooked fares ESC should look into the job datas of ride share and taxis and get the percentage of old, fragile and disable people use of services. I will not be surprised if more that 99% of uber and other ride share are taken only by able bodied persons. So does it mean that regulation is only there for fit people while old person with disabilities will keep on sufferings from a regulated industry.

Though they same can be out of the view of ESC but had ESC ever thought what is a difference between a taxi and ride share vehicle and the answer is Safety camera, a taxi meter and cabcharge. Cabcharge yes a mptp card processing machine which every taxi in victoria should have. It is a govt created monopoly and that is a biggest restriction to limiting no. of taxis on the road as compared to ride share vehicles. Cancharge as a private company can formulate their policies in best interest of their business and share holders but victorian public especially old and disable people suffer from the same.

Anyway coming back to the original question should the unbooked fares should be regulated and if yes then how

Yes I feel it should always be regulated because any person going out should know what it may cost them to return home but on the same hand we cannot provide free hand to booked service providers to charge as much as they wish. If the booked fares are open in that scenario unbooked fares should also not be regulated. Let the Safe transport victoria take some responsibility of bringing level playing field by derogating cabcharge so that no of taxis can increase and there is competition in unbooked fares as well. We cannot operate the ball from ends that partial system is regulated and other is unregulated because that will not be fare competition.

I always feel transport industry should be more friendly to old, disable persons than to the businesses and able bodied persons only. Old and disable people cannot explore their world without a function point to point transport. They are our biggest customers and any policy which does not consider them as a main user will be discriminatory.

Lastly I want to bring into your notice of set price fares of taxi drivers for unbooked services. Can ESC provide us any evidence at any time in history when the same was unregulated. If they were regulated all the times then how taxi drivers can charge customer a set price on meter and the reason is again cabcharge company 13cabs. They allowed their drivers to set fare at wish and thus public was charged more than what they should be charged. But there was no action against 13cabs that tells about a nexus of big players with the regulator and workers and public both suffer.

Now coming to the second part i.e. cost of electronic transactions

1.5 to 2% is an industry standard for the same and it should not be more than that. In the old times technology was not very fast and mobile technology was too expensive. But now same is very

competitive and affordable. Yes if we need more information regarding a fare so that no cheating should happen then that cost has to be born by the operator. As a matter of fact cabcharge is already passing on that cost to operators. e.g as an independent taxi operator we have to pay \$90 plus GST to cabcharge. And if a car process more than 2000 dollars worth of transactions of credit/debit cards then they can get a refund of that fees. Here one thing to note is cabcharge get commission for processing MPTP payments but the same is not included in the total transaction amount for a refund.

So in nut shell victorian govt had created a monopoly business for cabcharge and they can get unlimited benefits without any liability. I jus wish if there is that free meal for every victorian.

Bringing processing fee down and opening u the processing to other players will bring necessary competition to the market place. ESC can chose anyway they like but the market forces are saying bringing the processing fee down and deregulating cabcharge monopolies will help reduce burden on the industry and will help every victorian.

Thanks in advance if you read through the same and I hope my feedback as a stack holder will be helpful to all.