


**Halifax Regional Council**  
**May 2, 2006**

**TO:** Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:**   
for Councillor Stephen D. Adams, Chair, Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee

**DATE:** April 25, 2006

**SUBJECT:** Taxi Driver Safety - Update

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**INFORMATION REPORT**

**ORIGIN**

The Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee meeting of January 18, 2006 and a request from Councillor Andrew Younger dated January 10, 2006.

**BACKGROUND**

The newly formed Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee held its first meeting on Thursday, January 18, 2006. The first priority item on the agenda was the issue of taxi driver safety. This issue has been the main focus at each of the four meetings held to date ( January 18, February 9, March 10 and April 13). The Committee is nearing the stage where recommendations to Regional Council will be forthcoming. The results of a survey, distributed to members of the taxi industry by the Halifax Association of County Zone Cab Drivers/Halifax International Airport Authority Taxi Drivers Committee and the Halifax Taxi Drivers Association, are to be compiled and presented at the May 11<sup>th</sup> meeting. A copy of the survey is attached as Attachment "A" to this report. It is expected that a recommendation(s) will come forward at the May meeting. A report outlining those recommendations will be forwarded to Regional Council as soon as possible.

## DISCUSSION

At the **January 18, 2006** meeting, the Committee agreed that staff (Mr. Kevin Hindle, Regional Coordinator, Taxi and Limousine Services) would research safety options, including any costs associated. Statistics regarding reduction in violent crimes/murders after implementation of shields/cameras were also requested. The Committee encouraged comment/suggestion from the taxi industry on this matter. It was requested that taxi drivers indicate whether they want safety equipment mandated or not. Councillor Younger's suggestion regarding the implementation of a \$.25 surcharge on the meter to assist with the cost of implementing safety devices in cabs was also to be considered. The Committee suggested that a Public Information Meeting be held so that all drivers/interested persons could hear the presentations and see the products. Mr. Hindle advised that the then Minister of Environment and Labour, The Honourable Kerry Morash's office, had been in contact with him offering their assistance in the matter of taxi driver safety.

At the **February 9, 2006** meeting, Mr. Kevin Hindle advised that on January 24, 2006 he met with a representative of Mr. Jim Leblanc's office (Director of Occupational Health and Safety for the Province of Nova Scotia). The province is reviewing the relationship of the various stakeholders in the taxi industry and how the driver is related to the other stakeholders (are the taxi drivers employees or self-employed, what about drivers who lease roof lights and what is the broker's role). The Committee suggested that driver safety training be required on an annual or every two year basis. Mr. Hindle clarified that although safety devices are not currently mandated in By-Law. T-108 there is nothing in the By-Law to prohibit a driver from using/installing whatever legal, safety device is necessary to ensure their safety. The Committee agreed to a meeting with Mr. Jerry Kozubal, Director, Transportation Boards and Secretary of the Taxicab Board for Winnipeg, Manitoba, in regard to taxi driver safety initiatives implemented by the City of Winnipeg.

A workshop was held on **Monday, March 6** to develop a workplan (short term/long term) for the Committee. Taxi driver safety was identified as a priority item. Suggestions raised at that meeting in regard to this issue were: improved driver education/training in regard to ensuring their own safety (for example, making regular deposits at the bank during a shift so there is not a lot of cash on hand), mandatory first aid kits in vehicles, other suggested items: fire extinguishers, emergency road kits as well as first aid/CPR training, mandatory Health & Safety training for all drivers.

At the **March 10, 2006** meeting, Mr. Kozubal was in attendance and provided detail on the initiatives undertaken by the Winnipeg, Manitoba Taxicab Board regarding driver safety. Mr. Vince Garnier, Provincial Manager for the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Labour, Occupational Health and Safety, was also in attendance and commended the Committee for their initiatives in regard to ensuring the safety of taxi drivers. He indicated that his department is offering assistance with educational brochures including assistance with the cost. Ms. Susan Bowers, A1 Advantage Systems, was also in attendance to provide a demonstration/information on the safety devices available such as the bubble shield, a full shield and cameras. The Committee was invited to view the installation/removal of the bubble shield in a vehicle at that time. Mr. Tom Stroud, installer of the shields, was also in attendance. Mr. Kevin Hindle circulated an information package

including a survey with information from thirteen jurisdictions across the country regarding safety systems that are in place (including statistics on reduction in violent/aggressive acts once safety devices had been implemented in the vehicles).

At the **April 13, 2006** meeting, Mr. Kevin Hindle provided information from suppliers regarding safety devices. Mr. Hari Boggs, Interim Vice-Chair for the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee advised that a survey has been circulated to members of the taxi industry (drivers/brokers/dispatchers). The Committee deferred further discussion on this matter until the results of the survey are compiled and presented to the Committee at the May 11<sup>th</sup> meeting. A copy of the survey is attached to this report as Attachment "A".

The next meeting of the Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee is scheduled for Thursday, May 11, 2006 from 2:00 - 5:00 pm in Conference Room "C", Keshen Goodman Library, 330 Lacewood Drive, Halifax.

### **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

**None.**

### **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN**

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

### **ALTERNATIVES**

**None.**

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Taxi Drivers Survey, Sponsored by the Halifax Association of County Zone Cab Drivers, Halifax International Airport Authority Taxi Drivers Committee and the Halifax Taxi Drivers Association.

Additional copies of this report, and information on its status, can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report prepared by: Chris Newson, Legislative Assistant, Taxi and Limousine Advisory Committee.

# Taxi Drivers Survey

Sponsored by:

**Halifax Association of County Zone Cab Drivers  
H.I.A.A. Taxi Drivers Committee  
Halifax Taxi Drivers Association**

In the near future, HRM council will be discussing taxi driver safety. There is a possibility that HRM will choose the option of making mandatory (ie. forcing) all drivers to install surveillance cameras or protective shields, or both. We feel that the consensus of the drivers of HRM should be the determining factor in this debate. This survey is meant to find that consensus.

## RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk Values:    Low = 1  
                      Medium low = 2.5  
                      Medium = 5  
                      Medium high = 7.5  
                      High = 10

When and where do you work? Using the above chart, put the number in the boxes that applies to your driving schedule. Then, add these numbers and divide by the number of boxes you filled in.

- HRM - Night only (High risk)
- HRM - Day only (Medium risk)
- HRM - Some days & nights (Medium high risk)
- Hfx. International Airport (Low risk)
- Cruise ships (Low risk)
- Prearranged (Low Risk)
- Other

My risk assessment value is ( \_\_\_\_\_ )

1. Should taxi companies be required to train their dispatchers in responding to emergency situations?  YES  NO  UNDECIDED

2. Should surveillance cameras be mandatory?  YES  NO  UNDECIDED

3. Should protective shields be mandatory?  YES  NO  UNDECIDED

4. If "YES" to either of the above, do you require financial assistance to purchase and install safety equipment?

Check one only:  NO HELP  SOME HELP  REQUIRE FULL ASSISTANCE

5. To pay for safety equipment, would you agree to adding an extra surcharge on the meter?  YES  NO  UNDECIDED

For accuracy and security, please check one of the following:

Are you an owner /driver?

Are you a driver only?

Which zone do you work in?

Halifax  Dartmouth  County  Airport

Roof Light Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Please Print): \_\_\_\_\_

### **Optional**

If you would like to receive information or surveys like this in the future, or if you would like to receive information about your association, please complete the following:

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_