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Halifax Regional Council  
March 18, 2003  
6:00 p.m.

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

**SUBMITTED BY:** Ron Cooper  
Ron Cooper, Vice Chairperson, Taxi and Limousine Committee

**DATE:** March 03, 2003

**SUBJECT:** By-Law T-123 - Respecting Licensing Of Large Vehicles As Taxis

**ORIGIN**

Meeting Of Taxi and Limousine Committee held February 17, 2003.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Regional Council approve in principle By-Law T-123 attached as Appendix "A" to this report and direct staff to arrange for its formal introduction for First Reading.

**BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:**

A submission made to the Taxi and Limousine Committee by Committee member, Bob Richards is attached as Appendix "A".

At the meeting of February 17, 2003, the item was open to the industry for discussion and the following submissions were made:

**Mr. Frank Horwill**

Mr. Horwill addressed the Committee making the following points:

2. He did not understand why this provision was not in By-law. Mr. Horwill recalled that this matter had been dealt with a number of years ago, but obviously had not been transferred to this By-law.
3. Vans are also a problem. When vans are parked on taxi stands they are often not identified as a taxi by prospective passengers. Some of these vans can hold seven passengers.

**Mr. Ed Flewwelling**

Mr. Flewwelling made the following comments:

4. Under the Motor Vehicle Act all seatbelts in a vehicle must be utilized if there are sufficient persons in the vehicle to use those seatbelts.
5. Mr. Flewwelling urged the Committee to bring this matter to Council as quickly as possible.

**ALTERNATIVES**

Council could defeat approval in principle of the amendments. This would permit limousines to be licensed as taxis as long as they met the minimum standards for taxis set out in the By-law. The owner of the vehicle would have to decide between operating as a taxi or a limousine because under the By-law, the vehicle could not be licensed as both. Obtaining a taxi license, of course, would be subject to the limitation in the number of licenses issued in Halifax and Dartmouth.

**BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

None

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES/BUSINESS PLAN**

None

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix "A" - By-Law T-123

Appendix "B" - Submission by Bob Richards

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: Wayne Anstey, Q.C. - 490-4229.

**Appendix "A"**

**HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY  
BY-LAW NUMBER T-123**

**Respecting The Licensing Of Large Vehicles As Taxis**

BE IT ENACTED by the Council of the Halifax Regional Municipality that By-law T-108, the Halifax Regional Municipality Taxi and Limousine be amended as follows:

1. Section 12 of said By-law T-108 is amended by adding immediately following subsection (1) thereof, the following subsection:

(1A) Notwithstanding subsection (1), no stretch vehicle or custom designed or altered vehicle capable of transporting more than five passengers, excluding the driver, but not including accessible taxis, mini vans or station wagons shall be licensed as a taxi pursuant to this By-law.

(1B) Any vehicle to which subsection (1A) applies, which has been licensed as a taxi pursuant to this By-law, may continue to be so licensed provided it continues to comply with all other provisions of the by-law.

February 17, 2003

APPENDIX B

Taxi and Limousine Committee  
Halifax Regional Municipality

During my year of absence from the Taxi and Limousine Committee, an Amendment was made to By-Law T-108, whereas no vehicle may be licensed as both a taxi and a limousine at the same time. However, this does not prevent an elite stretch limousine from being licensed as a taxi cab.

Some limousines are not obvious in contrast to taxies but it is very difficult for a taxi to compete in style, seating capacity, and comfort of a high-class limousine. It is also very difficult for a non-elite limousine to compete with an elite style stretch limousine operating under a taxi license.

A taxi operates on \$2.50 initial charge and ten cents for each additional one/twentieth of a mile. A limousine's minimum hourly rate is \$57.50. One could easily see the disadvantage to the limousine industry as well as to the taxi industry. Here are a few examples:

At the Halifax International Airport, there is a limousine waiting line as well as a taxi waiting line. At the Port of Halifax, cruise ships arriving have the convenience of a limousine waiting line along with a taxi waiting line.

Whether you are operating a limousine in the limousine industry or a taxi in the taxi industry, you can understand the concerns these lines raise among owners and drivers of both industries.

Unlike limousines, taxies operating within the HRM have common taxi stands as well as Hotel Standard stands. Although there are a great number of taxies operating within the HRM, there is a limited number of common stands and hotel stands which they can operate from. The taxi inspector can certainly verify this. The size of some of these stretch vehicles is certainly a concern given the limited parking.

Taxi cabs fulfill vital transportation needs for the elderly along with the disabled, especially in terms of easier access in to and out of the vehicles, whereas these particular customers would find maneuvering in and out of most elite stretch limousines very difficult to say the least.

Schools, day cares and hospitals rely on taxies to transport children unaccompanied by adults. A driver operating a taxi cab would find it easier to supervise and enforce the safety of his passengers than would the driver of a stretch limousine who may be separated from the children by a partition or even a greater distance physically.

On the subject of partitions, these stretch vehicles sometimes offer alcoholic beverages to customers during their drive. Allowing this practice is further complicating the taxi industry. A few of these stretch vehicles could delay dispatching of calls to the taxi cabs while the dispatcher

spends the time to locate and dispatch the elite stretch vehicle.

In the past, using wheel base size and exterior dimensions in determining a vehicles capacity have been proven ineffective. The real issue here is the number of passengers that can be seated in a particular vehicle. Keep in mind - not only Lincolns, Cadillacs and Pontiacs are stretch limousines, but there are also a lot of smaller stretch vehicles with a high seating capacity such as Mercedes, Chryslers and Audis to name a few.

Most taxi drivers as well as taxi companies think of safety first when it comes to seating arrangements and that is to say that every passenger would have a seat belt available to them.

In closing, I would ask for the Committee's support on this matter. Bear in mind, there are no limitations on limousine owner's licenses, driver's licenses, and neither are there any zone restrictions. And, actually, limousine licenses are easier to obtain for the whole HRM than any taxi license in any one of the three taxi zones.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bob Richards". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Bob Richards

Taxi and Limousine Committee  
Halifax Regional Municipality