



The Honourable Scott Emerson MP
Minister for Transport and Main Roads

Our ref: PET 10713

Your ref: Petitions

17 APR 2013

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to petition number 2078-13 lodged with the Legislative Assembly on 19 March 2013 about allowing taxi/commercial drivers more demerit points on the basis that they hold two licences.

Taxi and commercial drivers hold a single licence, just like all other licence holders. In Queensland, demerit points are accumulated against a person's traffic record. Once a certain number of demerit points are accumulated (12 for an open licence) the licence may be suspended or revoked. Regardless of profession or number of kilometres travelled, all licence holders have the same number of points.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) does not support allowing additional demerit points as this would undermine TMR's commitment to road safety. The proposal is at odds with the purpose of the current Driver Authorisation (DA) scheme and public expectations of professional drivers.

To drive a taxi in Queensland, an individual must hold both a valid driver licence and DA (the second "licence" for taxi drivers referred to in the petition) as the DA by itself does not authorise a person to drive. The purpose of the DA, as detailed in the *Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994*, is to maximise public confidence in public passenger services. Requiring DA ensures that drivers of public passenger vehicles are suitable persons having regard to the personal safety of passengers and the public.

All applicants for a taxi DA must hold a current Australian open driver licence or a restricted driver (work) licence of the appropriate class and have held a driver licence for a period of at least 3 years. DA applicants must also:

- provide documentary proof of an entitlement to work in Australia
- have a satisfactory driving and criminal history record
- have successfully completed the approved Queensland taxi driver training course
- have passed an English assessment administered by an approved assessor
- be medically fit to drive.

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TMR regards all passenger transport drivers, including taxi drivers, as professional drivers who should have full knowledge of their responsibilities in regard to the road rules and the safe carriage of passengers. If anything, a higher standard of driving and level of compliance with road rules is expected from professional drivers.

For the reasons set out above, TMR has no plans to increase the demerit point threshold for taxi/commercial drivers.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Emerson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Scott Emerson MP
Minister for Transport and Main Roads