

PRESS RELEASE FROM The Blue Lamp Trust



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Blue Lamp Trust makes first appearance at taxi show to promote benefits of driver assessments

A leading national provider of taxi driver assessments is making its first appearance at the Private Hire and Taxi Exhibition this year to advocate driver tests to make taxi travel safer for operators, drivers and passengers.

The Blue Lamp Trust has been running practical driving assessments for taxi licence applicants and existing taxi drivers since 2011. To date, its assessors have tested nearly 10,000 taxi drivers nationally for 106 licensing authorities.

The trust's business development manager David Watkins and senior driver assessor Graeme Pilling are manning a display at the MK Dons stadium in Milton Keynes on 9-10 May 2018 to explain the benefits of driving assessments and further driver training.

Mr Watkins said: "Our assessments improve safety but they also save time and money for everyone. Reducing the number of collisions and injuries reduces the associated costs of compensation claims and higher insurance premiums.

"Our assessments also prevent reputational damage to a taxi operator by cutting down on complaints by unhappy passengers."

He added: "The Blue Lamp Trust is committed to a fair, open and transparent assessment, reflecting the standards set by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency with the safety of the passengers and others as our top priority."

Better for operators

All members of the trust's nationwide network of assessors are approved by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) to "Fleet" level.

The Blue Lamp Trust has a very short waiting time for tests, aiming to complete all assessments between 5 to 15 working days after a booking.

The Trust also offers e-learning to prepare for an assessment, which is a more cost-effective option than on-road lessons.

Assessments and driver training help employers meet their duty of care while identifying gaps in their drivers' skills. The Trust also offers advanced training to upskill drivers for executive travel firms.

Trusted by licensing authorities

Licensing authorities have a duty to make taxi travel as safe as possible. For example, Transport for London is committed to eradicating deaths and serious injuries on the capital's roads and as part of its "Vision Zero" policy, the authority is considering introducing advanced driving and accessibility training tests for taxi and private hire drivers.

Since The Blue Lamp Trust started providing a taxi driver assessment service to one Unitary Authority in 2016 there has been a 37% drop in taxi-related incidents, with a 36% reduction in injuries.

The Blue Lamp Trust

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The Blue Lamp Trust maintains strict quality criteria and standards in its training and assessments that promote public safety. As such, it does not provide driving lessons before an assessment, to avoid any conflict of interest.

Assessments are at zero cost to the licensing authority and all money made by the Trust is used to promote and enhance community safety through its "Bobby" scheme.

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Notes to editors:

1. Come and talk to us at the Taxi Show

The Blue Lamp Trust will be at the Private Hire and Taxi Exhibition on 9 and 10 May 2018 at **stand number 58** in the MK Dons Arena in Milton Keynes, or find us online at WWW.bluelamptrust.org.uk

2. The Blue Lamp Trust has achieved the following since 2011:

- 9664 taxi assessments
- 6047 drivers trained in the classroom
- 3019 drivers trained on the road

3. Photograph: Blue Lamp Trust logo

4. Contact details.

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Background note: Blue Lamp Trust taxi assessments

Many local authorities require drivers to take a taxi driving assessment carried out by a DVSA Approved Assessor. The test will require a level of driving skill and ability associated with that of an experienced driver and a sound knowledge of the Highway Code.

The assessment takes into account issues specifically related to taxi driving, including road safety and passenger safety.

The assessment consists of a driving licence and eyesight check, theory questions followed by a 45-minute driving test over a range of roads and traffic conditions. The test includes two reversing manoeuvres and two to three safe stops. Candidates may also be required to perform an emergency stop.

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The overall standard of driving expected for a pass is much higher than that for a learner driver.

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