



Department
for Transport

Stephen Fidler OBE FCIHT
Director: Local Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

29 October 2020

Head of Taxi & Private Hire
Vehicle Licensing

Dear colleague,

TAXI & PHV LICENSING – USE OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENCE REVOCATIONS AND REFUSALS (NR3)

On behalf of the Department for Transport, I would like to thank you and your teams for your continued hard work during the Coronavirus pandemic.

As you will be aware, in July this year the Government published the Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards to licensing authorities aimed at safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The Statutory Standards set-out a range of robust measures to protect taxi and private hire vehicle passengers including the use of the National Register of Taxi and Private Hire Licence Revocations and Refusals (NR3).

The National Anti-Fraud Network (NAFN) was commissioned by the Local Government Association (LGA) to develop NR3 to ensure there was a practicable way for licensing authorities to check if an applicant has had a licensed revoked or refused elsewhere. Without this sharing of vital intelligence about an applicant's past behaviour, an individual might be able to get a new licence in another area: something that undermines public safety and confidence in the licensing regime.

NR3 was launched in 2018, and 23 percent of licensing authorities in England are currently actively using it. We commend those licensing authorities who have recognised the importance of information sharing to drive out those who endanger the safety of passengers and undermine the reputation of the vast majority of hardworking, honest drivers.

Authorities that are not sharing relevant and necessary information risk facilitating the few dishonest individuals in the sector that fail to disclose any previous licensing history they might have. We ask those that have not signed up or started to use NR3 to do so as soon as possible as the effectiveness of the database depends on all licensing authorities using it. Ministers will also be engaging with council leaders on this matter to ask them to make sure that their licensing teams are using NR3 to ensure the sharing of vital information to help protect taxi and PHV passengers.

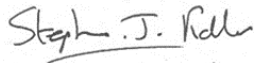
The vast majority of authorities are already members of NAFN so there will be no additional cost to use this service. For those authorities who are not members, annual membership costs £1,050. However, membership of NAFN also entitles you to access their other data intelligence services. To discuss membership, you can contact NAFN via email on general@nafn.gov.uk or call 0161 342 3480.

A copy of the LGA guidance for local authorities which was developed jointly with the Information Commissioner's Office is attached which covers steps that authorities need to take to start using the register in a way that complies with data protection requirements. We are working with the LGA, NAFN and the Information Commissioners' Office to try and identify what potential blockers there may be to authorities using NR3 and would be keen to hear from you if there are particular issues (Taxis@dft.gov.uk).

Licensing authorities are under a statutory duty to ensure that only those that are 'fit and proper' hold a driver's licence, NR3 is a key tool to ensuring this is the case. Thank you to those who have already begun using NR3 to help protect the public, and I urge other authorities to sign up and start using it as a matter of urgency.

I am copying this to LGA colleagues who have been working with us and I know they would be happy to discuss and offer support if helpful.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen J. Fidler". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Stephen Fidler

Cc: Sally Burlington, Head of Policy (People), Local Government Association