

## ***London's roads face triple whammy in 2016***

Congestion on London's roads scaled new heights in 2015 with drivers losing more than 250 hours a year stuck in traffic<sup>1</sup> due to a triple whammy of an increasing number of delivery vans operating in peak times, a boom in roadworks and a dramatic increase in the number of Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs) on London's roads. The Licensed Taxi Drivers Association (LTDA) is now calling on Government to let the Mayor do something about it by limiting the number of PHVs.

These three issues are all contributing to unsustainable levels of congestion in the capital, which if left unchecked could have significant ramifications for London's residents and its economy. At present London's drivers spend at least 250 hours stuck in traffic and this is set to increase to 299 hours in 2030 – the equivalent of 40 working days a year. Congestion is costing London £5.4 billion a year: the equivalent of £2,765 per household.<sup>2</sup>

In an effort to address this, the Licensed Taxi Drivers Association (LTDA) is calling for Government to give Transport for London (TfL) the power to cap the number of Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs) in London. This is central to the LTDA's *Better for London* campaign, with the idea of cap having been endorsed by current Mayor Boris Johnson MP, Mayoral candidates Caroline Pidgeon AM and Zac Goldsmith MP and a number of other MPs.

Steve McNamara, General Secretary of the LTDA, said: "*London is becoming more and more congested and it is high time that the Government and TfL take action to address this. The Government giving TfL the power to cap the number of PHVs on our street is the simplest way to do this – Londoners are well served by minicabs, taxis and other forms of public transport and this huge growth is wholly unnecessary and simply leads to roads being clogged and further polluting London's air.*"

Caroline Pidgeon AM, Liberal Democrat candidate for London Mayor, said: "*Anyone who uses London's roads cannot have failed to notice the increase in congestion over the past four years. London needs a Mayor who is not afraid to tackle that congestion. Whether it be helping companies organise deliveries better, limiting the number of private hire licences issued or making walking and cycling more attractive.*"

Business representatives are also calling for change. Sue Terpilowski OBE, London Policy Chairman at the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB), said: "*We support the Mayor and TfL having the power to review the total number of PHVs licensed in the capital and set a cap. Congestion in London damages the competitiveness of businesses of our great city and with levels well above the pre-congestion charging figures of 2003, the Mayor and his successor must act now to ensure essential business journeys can be made more reliably.*

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<sup>1</sup> INRIX for the CEBR, 'The Economic Impact of Congestion in the UK and London: 2013-2030 (2014). <http://inrix.com/press/traffic-congestion-to-cost-the-uk-economy-more-than-300-billion-over-the-next-16-years/>

<sup>2</sup> INRIX for the CEBR

*The FSB also calls for the improved co-ordination of roadworks and diversions, especially where they cross borough boundaries."*

- Ends -

### **About congestion in London**

- The number of private hire vehicles (PHVs) on London's streets has now reached record levels, surpassing 93,000 in December 2015 according to the Mayor of London. With PHV licenses being issued at a rate of 600 per week this year the number could reach more than 124,000 by the end of 2016.
- At the same time the vast number of road maintenance works across London's road network is causing further delays and limiting route options for drivers. Over the last year, there have been 1,005 hours of planned disruption caused by roadworks – over three times as much as was caused in 2013. Unplanned disruption has also ballooned – the 2,663 additional hours Londoners sat in traffic last year more than double the 2013 figure.<sup>3</sup>
- Congestion has been further exacerbated by the significant growth in the number of delivery vans operating in the city. On average over 2015 7,300 entered the capital every hour during the morning rush hour – a figure which is only going to increase in the coming years.<sup>4</sup> This rise has been driven largely by internet shopping, with the Mayor of London's office suggesting that by 2031 this will have contributed to a 20% increase in white van traffic in London. Latest Department for Transport data shows that the number of delivery vehicles (light goods and heavy goods) registered in London and the South East has increased by over 12% over the last decade.

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<sup>3</sup> Figures from the London DataStore, 2015 figures (1,005 planned, 2,663 unplanned\_ compare with 2013 figures of 305 and 1,634 respectively).

<sup>4</sup> To 9,000 within the next 16 years, according to the DVLA (cited in *The Times*, September 2015: <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/public/cyclesafety/article4544830.ece>)