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We're on the web
www.ltcoa.co.uk

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2014

Season's greetings and good wishes to all our members, your families and your staff.
 Thank you for your support we look forward to working with you and for you throughout the coming years.

FROM YOUR DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT & ADMINISTRATION



When it comes to arguing with the likes of TfL and the airports what you need is facts. In fact, what you really need is the figures. But, nobody has the figures. You would think in this digital age it would be easy and the data would be readily available—it isn't!

One of my roles has been to make representation to various committees, another has been to battle against a tidal wave of long held beliefs and misapprehensions. Each time I hear the old myths I fight back with the figures on gas emission levels, telemetry and our daily frustrations trying to do our jobs—bringing revenue into London. We have an image problem; one that has been compounded by too many years of poor

representation and lackluster publicity. Without real data it is difficult to get our message heard.

"Private Hire coaches are worth over £300 million per year to London's economy" - this is the figure that we all use. It is over ten years old and results from a survey carried out by TfL on a couple of days in the school holidays.

We need real data and real information: in the coming months I will be coming to you (and nagging you) for this data. Recently I asked for your pcn hot spots. An interesting result was that with the exception of the Natural History Museum each company has a different list—so when I present information to TCAP I will need a lot more information to back up my arguments. An interesting spin off from that exercise was to discover that two companies were having the same problems at the same hotel—they have now joined forces and are fighting together and winning this particular pcn headache.

Heathrow's Red Days seem a distant memory, but they will be back. I have pushed the Landside Team to refine the system to avoid seeing an empty West Ramp on Red Days, rather they recognize that they only need 'Red' for a few hours not the full day. The truth is Red Days were based on guess work—they will be able to refine the systems if we can give them information about the transfers that we have planned each day.

TfL's Tourist Coaches Action Plan really promises the be a light at the end of the tunnel—at long last TfL have recognized that something has to be done to permit us to set down and pick up without fear of fines. I have already promised them our full support.

On the social side if you missed the Autumn Tour to Poland and the Members' Supper you missed some great events. Both were great fun and a good opportunity to get to know fellow operators.

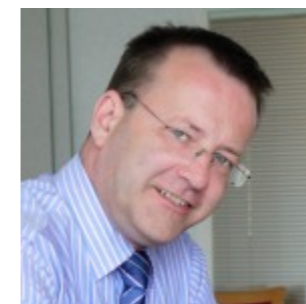
Thank you all for your support, I look forward to working with you in 2014.



Special Points of Interest:

- Visit our website www.ltcoa.co.uk
- Join us on facebook
- Providing effective support for operators in their efforts to provide a first class service to all London's visitors

FROM YOUR CHAIRMAN



Welcome to you all and to our first newsletter. 2013 has been a very busy year. It seems that operating coaches in London has never offered so many challenges.

This year in particular we seem to have had so many consultations and initiatives from TfL and Government:

if our voices are to be heard we need to attend these meetings and often present lengthy arguments to committees and steering groups. I can assure you that your Committee has worked very hard making sure that our case is being heard and that more and more I believe that our problems are being understood.

This newsletter and our new website offers you the chance to keep up to date with all the committees and arguments a chance to share your own thoughts.

This year our quarterly

Members' Meetings have seen some interesting and fun presentations. I urge you all to put the dates for 2014 into your diaries and then make every effort to attend.

It only remains for me to thank you all for your support, to wish you and your families the compliments of the season and a successful, profitable and pcn free new year.



MEMBERS' MEETINGS

This year we have had a varied and interesting range of presentations

March: Our AGM and very much a business meeting. An opportunity for members to meet Sue Reynolds our new Director of Development and Administration. Sue set out her views on her role and the future for the Association. She told us that a website was being developed and encouraged members to engage with the Association

via the new site and other social media.

June: Ten Top Tips to get you to a Public Inquiry—Squire Saunders Solicitors offered a sideways look at the workings of the Traffic Commissioners and ways to avoid their company.

September: Tourist Coaches Action Plan—TfL gave us advanced notice of this important initiative which was formally launched in

October. It is clear that over the coming years this plan will offer much to make our lives easier.

November: Euro 6—The team from Scania GB and a coach gave a really clear and informative presentation on the new emission standards, and the ways in which they are achieving these levels. We also discovered more of the features available on their coaches and the services they have to offer.

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THE AIRPORTS

At a meeting with the Landside Team at Heathrow my list of complaints was a long one. I was surprised to find them receptive and willing to help.

Too often our customers struggle to find the right place to go, they cannot see the coach and have no idea of how to find a Coach Marshall. Now, it is great to see way-finding signs in the arrival halls to help our groups. There is still more to be done. But Heathrow know this and are continuing to work with us.

Red Days—what a shock to

see that first notification that for 4 months we were to be banned from West Ramp until after our flights had landed. Having already established links with the Landside team it was then easy to arrange a meeting and achieve a more reasonable accommodation. During these meetings we have been able to look at overflow parking arrangements for the busiest days. It has been refreshing to hear them take on board details of particular problems members have had and to work towards satisfactory solutions.

Gatwick have accepted the needs for improvements to the Driver facilities and to date have improved chairs and WC's.

Please remember:

T1 departures has an 18ton gross vehicle weight limit—if you are in a larger vehicle drop at arrivals, customers can then use the lift.

If you use vouchers they must now be stamped with your company details.

Heathrow contact travel_services@heathrow.com.



“World Class Coach Facilities for a World Class City”

MAYOR OF LONDON'S STRATEGIES

The Mayor of London's Roads Task Force

This Task Force was set up to design strategies for the development, design and management of the road network. Please see the Members Area of our website to see our presentation to this body.

Air Quality and the Ultra Low Emission Zone

This series of meetings is looking at ways of implementing the Mayor's vision for 2020 which includes dramatic reductions in the level of air pollution. We need to be aware that while plans have not been finalized it is very likely that the current congestion zone will become the ULEZ and that for buses and coaches only Euro 6 vehicles will be permitted to enter. It is possible that larger, more polluting vehicles will be subject to larger

charges. This group has to date only had a first meeting. I will keep you posted.

London Coach Station Strategy.

Victoria Coach Station is long overdue for a facelift. But be aware the owners of the land are currently investigating other options for the use of the land. National Express' lease runs out in less than 20 years.

CPT COMMITTEES

On behalf of the Association I attend a variety of meetings:

- Coach Commission,
- Coach Parking,
- London & South East
- various ad hoc groups

I feel it is important that we keep nagging and ensuring our needs stay on the top of CPT's agenda. And that we keep working with the CPT encouraging them to make

sure that they never forget the needs of coach operators for sensible set down and pick up arrangements that do not require drivers to be playing hide and seek with traffic officers or cameras.

Attending meetings with Heathrow, Gatwick, TfL and other organizations our arguments are far more powerful when the two organizations are seen to be working together.

Looking to the future it is clear that the coaching industry will be called upon to provide TfL, Heathrow and others with large amounts of information if we do not work together to collect this we will give these organizations the opportunity to set their own agenda and not quite provide us with the support that we so urgently need.



TOURIST COACHES ACTION PLAN

For us this promises to be one of the most positive and important developments of 2013.....and it's not often you will hear me say good things about TfL.

Large parts of this plan have been developed from the work of the Mayor's Roads Task Force earlier in the year. The introduction recognizes the 'important role coaches play in the transport system as well as in the economy and tourist trade in London'.

For us I feel confident that this Action Plan is going to deliver real results. 'It sets out clearly achievable actions over the next five years that will ensure: better access to tourist coaches; more flexible/smarter use of stopping and parking space; improved perception of coaches and a more robust approach to discussing the challenges and opportunities for coaches in the Capital.'

The implementation of this plan is going to involve a great deal of hard work.

Firstly, with TfL, we will need to identify and prioritize those locations that are most in need of set down facilities and then look at ways in which the roads can accommodate our requirements along with those of all of London's other road users.

Importantly the plan includes regular checks to see that plans are being actioned and that progress is being made.

I have promised the TCAP team our full support.

AUTUMN TOUR: POLAND

Affectionately known as the LTCOA walking tour. We certainly walked some miles—however not enough to expend all the calories we consumed when we were not walking. If you were not there you missed a great visit.

We started in Krakow—what a beautiful place, certainly now on my list of places to visit again. Our first afternoon included a visit to the salt mines now a stun-

ning tourist destination.

Our second day included a visit to Auschwitz Birkenau a tour which moved us all

The Volvo factory in Wraclaw gave us an insight into the Volvo manufacturing process as well as an introduction to the technologies being used to achieve Euro 6 emission levels.

Our final evening promised a Gala Dinner, the evening and its entertainments more than

lived up to expectations.

Following a city tour by vintage tram we made our way home.

My sincere thanks to Volvo for their very generous sponsorship of this tour. They treated us like royalty.



MEMBERS' SUPPER

It is always hard to resist the offer of Buy one Get One Free, and so it was with our recent Members' Supper.

Forty one of us visited the Bluebird Restaurant in the King's Road for this annual event. A great opportunity to meet fellow operators and enjoy a relaxing evening.

We started with a welcome drink then moved to the gallery room for a lovely supper—the white onion soup was delicious!

Our evenings entertainment was Daz and Chave (a Chaz and Dave Tribute Band) the brave hit the dance floor while others sat tapping their feet, singing along and having a chat.

A great night—my only regret—Monday night is not a good night to go out, you're wrecked for the rest of the week. In 2014 our Members' Supper will be held on a better night.

If any members have suggestions for venues for next year's visits please let me know.

