

## INQUIRY INTO NSW TAXI INDUSTRY

**Name:** Ms Vivien Ward  
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Partially Confidential

18th January 2010

The Director  
Select Committee on the NSW Taxi Industry  
Legislative Council  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Sir / Madam

I am writing to this Inquiry into the Taxi Industry following **an accident with a taxi, and my experiences from that incident. The owner of the taxi told me that she had a fleet of 50 taxis.** One of the terms of reference for this enquiry is 'competition', and my dealings with this significant owner must show problems with the size of her operation.

At 10.10 am on the 7th March 2009 I was driving west along Fitzroy Street, Surry Hills, in the left lane. Taxi no T5746 made a sudden left turn from the right lane of Fitzroy Street into Bourke Street. There was no warning and the taxi crashed through the front of my car. The bumper bar was torn off on the driver's side of my car, and lights and panels on that side were damaged. There was never any question about the taxi driver's responsibility for the accident.

The owner, 'Maria' , rang me that afternoon and gave me the phone number and address of her taxi repair shop - and that was all she was to offer. Later I faxed two repair quotes to her. There was no reply. I rang and was told that **I was wasting her time, that I could send 10 quotes and she wouldn't even look at them.** I asked the police and was told that **I should not be forced to use her repairer.** (She had also told me that if I wasn't happy with repairs I could then go to the Department of Fair Trading.)

Of course, my GIO nominated repairer was expensive in his estimates. GIO also told me that any repairs not done by their repairer would not be covered by their insurance. So, for me, it was a very messy time that ended with my car being written off, which was not an outcome that I wanted or even expected.

**It was quite obvious that this owner was confident in knowing that she could just play the system her way.** I believe that taxis are required to carry insurance but don't have to access it, being reluctant to with the high premiums. But this accident was their fault. I must not be the only motorist to have been in this situation. **If this owner is a significant force in the Taxi Industry, having a large share of the Sydney taxi fleet, surely there should be better dealings with other motorists. Or maybe, more competition in ownership would make for a better industry.**

Yours sincerely

*V. Ward*

Vivien Ward