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Industry Advisory

Taxi Cameras in British Columbia

Taxi drivers are vulnerable to attack, especially at night. The Passenger Transportation Board encourages taxi companies to adopt practices that make it safer to drive a taxicab in British Columbia.

A taxi camera program has been in place for 27 taxi companies in the Lower Mainland since June 2005. The Board recognizes that safety issues are not confined to the Lower Mainland, and is taking steps so other companies in British Columbia can use cameras as a tool to improve the safety of driving a taxi.

The Board is establishing a new policy that lets taxi companies outside the Lower Mainland decide whether or not to start a local taxi camera program. The new policy permits the use of taxi cameras when the public and local governments are given notice, and when minimum equipment standards and procedural requirements are followed. The new standards are designed to deter crimes against taxi drivers, help investigating police officers identify suspects and prosecute offenders, and establish safeguards that protect the privacy of passengers and drivers.

The new standards and requirements are set out in the Board rule: "Taxi Cameras Outside the Lower Mainland" at <http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/ptb/cameras.htm>. At this web location, the Board will maintain a list of taxi companies that operate taxi cameras. Taxi companies that fail to follow Board taxi camera requirements are subject to enforcement actions of the Registrar, Passenger Transportation Branch.

Within the next few months, the Board will direct the Registrar, Passenger Transportation Branch, to add a "taxi camera" term and condition to each taxicab licence in the province. The new term and condition will permit the installation and use of taxi cameras in vehicles when a licensee complies with applicable taxi camera rules and standards of the Board.

A letter about the upcoming change to the terms and conditions of taxi licences will be sent in advance to each taxi company. However, the new taxi camera rule is now in effect for all taxi companies outside the Lower Mainland, and licensees may start a local taxi camera program at any time when applicable Board standards and requirements are met. The new taxi camera rule and direction do not alter the taxi camera standards and requirements for Lower Mainland taxi companies.