

Responses to trade survey

As mentioned in the MLTDA response to the consultation, the MLTDA team consulted with drivers verbally when out and about to get members and non-members opinions of the draft tariff review policy. The MLTDA team commenced discussion in January due to the consultation starting at the busiest time of year for everyone.

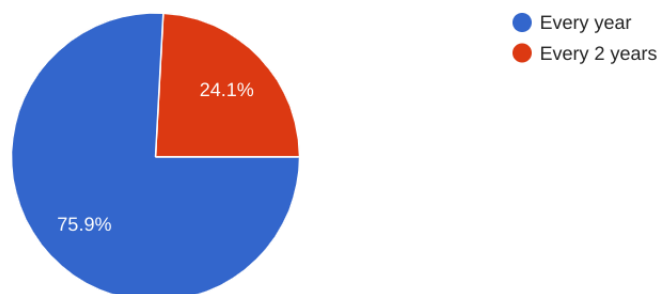
Following the many conversations had, it must be pointed out, that the majority of drivers assumed that, as this policy had been put together with discussion with the MLTDA as mentioned in your consultation covering email, that there was nothing to worry about and due to it landing in their inbox at the busiest time of year had dismissed it as not important or forgotten about it. However, from these many discussions it was highlighted that there were four points that were of concern. In order for the MLTDA to confidently put forward the points, it was decided to carry out a brief short survey to reach members that perhaps had not had the opportunity to speak to one of the team and as a quick show of hands.

On the 19th of January the tariff policy brief MLTDA survey was emailed to MLTDA members and the survey was closed on the 23rd. Frustratingly due to drivers not informing us of their new email addresses (all email addresses are updated in April on membership renewal) only 97 emails were successfully delivered however the response was positive with 58 individual responses.

How often should the tariff be reviewed?

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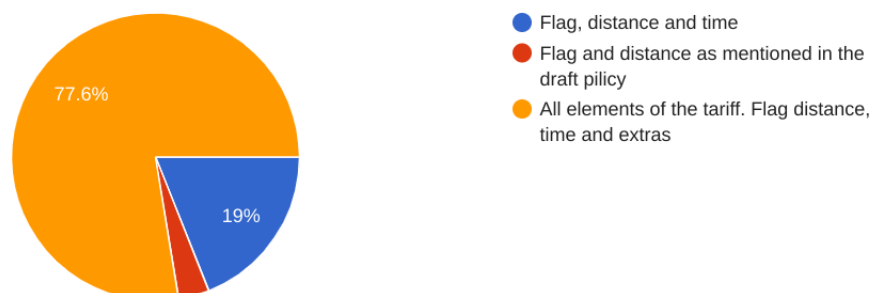
58 responses



What elements of the tariff should be included in the policy?

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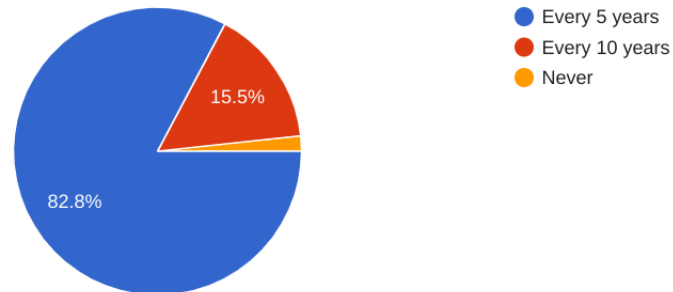
58 responses



The Medway taxi and private hire policy for example is refreshed and renewed every 5 years. If you think this policy should be kept under review and refreshed to make sure it is fit for purpose in the long term, how often should we ask for it to be reviewed

58 responses

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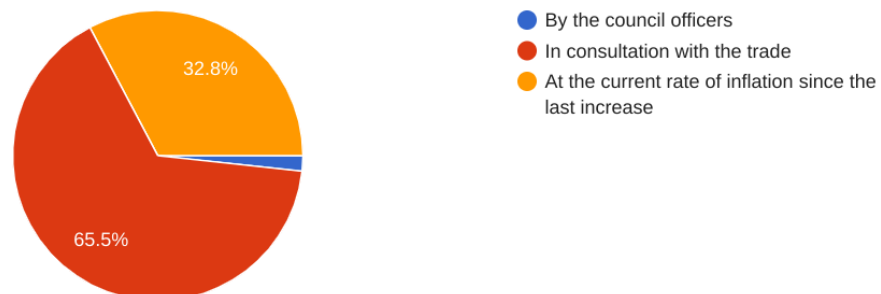
In previous tariff increases, the amount of any tariff increase has always been based with the industry's specific costs in mind.

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How do you want the amounts we are offered to consult upon to be put together, to ensure they reflect our costs?

Should they be put forward for consultation ;

58 responses



Please provide any other comments bellow and thank you for completin the survey.

8 responses

Needs to be yearly as our costs change daily.

All Medway taxi drivers should take cash and CARD payments

Get rid of uber

It's hard to make a living out of taxi at the moment, council making things harder will not help anyone. We have to go with the current inflation and keep up with it. Getting uber out of the town would have helped however the council isn't bothered about them at all anyways. Maybe let us dual license our cars so we can join uber (just a thought) as there are councils in different cities are doing that.

We must not get left behind. The job has been devalued enough since I started only 5 1/2 years ago. All of our costs will be increased more often than every two years.

I completely agree with all the points put forward by the MLTDA

Flag should probably be the same across all three tariffs and Easter Sunday dropped for not being a public holiday

Consultation Response from the Medway Licensed Taxi Drivers Association

Firstly, the MLTDA would like to pass on our appreciation and thanks to Mandy Francis for having an open and transparent relationship and approach with the MLTDA and the trade in drafting this policy. Including the MLTDA in the many hours of discussion along the way in previous drafts, has been very constructive. It has been noted by all involved that putting together a policy of this nature to review the Hackney Carriage tariff is no easy task.

The first time the MLTDA saw the published current version of the policy was when it went to the Licensing committee on the 9th of December 2024. The policy has changed vastly since it was discussed at length early last year by the MLTDA committee. The published draft policy has been cut back to the bones but not necessarily in a bad way. However, in its simplified format the draft policy does leave some issues that need to be highlighted and discussed, to either make an amendment on or to give clarification to ensure that no stone is left unturned.

The MLTDA have consulted with our members over the past weeks, verbally and by means of a quick online survey to get their opinions on the draft policy.

Below are 4 points for discussion:

1

The first point that must be noted is the frequency of review. The current draft states:

'The council will (unless determined otherwise by the licensing authority) review the tariff once every 2 years commencing 2026'

The MLTDA and our members strongly feel that this should be an annual review. Here is a couple of comments from drivers:

"Needs to be yearly as our costs change daily" and "All of our costs increase more often than 2 years"

In its current format the draft policy states that the next review would also be in 2026. 2 years since the previous increase and nearly 3 years since the start of the last review. We must also bear in mind that once a tariff consultation is commenced it can take several months (up to 6 months and on previous occasions up to 9 months) before it is implemented and can be used.

The MLTDA strongly agree that the tariff should be reviewed every year to ensure that if costs rise quickly and sharply similar to, for example, the cost of living crisis, that the trade has the mechanism through the tariff policy to act swiftly to compensate any rises in costs to each individual driver, and to give economic stability to the trade.

2

The second point we would like to raise is regarding the consultation methodology in the policy. In the example shown, consultees only have options A, B and C to vary the tariff.

In the introduction of the policy it states that there are three main elements which affect the fare. Flag, yardage and waiting time. These are the three main elements, but only the flag and yardage are shown as a consultation option and not the waiting time. There are also other elements in the tariff that will affect the fare that also should be considered in any consultation. For example:

Extras (the amount charged when multi seater vehicles carry more than 4 passengers)

Tariff 1, 2 or 3 the times and usage of these tariffs.

Soilage charge

As these are not listed in the consultation methodology what mechanisms are in place within the policy to allow the trade to amend them to ensure that they remain current and fit for purpose?

3

The question has been raised: who puts forward the amounts consulted upon in the council policy tariff review online survey? It was welcoming to hear during the licensing committee on the 9th of December that Mandy Francis stated that the amounts will be drawn up in consultation with the trade, however this is not mentioned within the draft policy. The MLTDA members would like to see amounts put forward either in consultation with the trade as mentioned or in line with the current level of inflation since the last increase or decrease to the tariff.

4

Lastly, the MLTDA feels that in order to ensure the tariff policy is to remain correct and fit for purpose in the long term, that the policy should be kept under a 5 year review similar to the Medway Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy. This sensible approach of a 5 yearly review of the policy will enable the trade and the licensing authority the opportunity to put forward any minor amendments if necessary.