

MAYOR OF LONDON

Elly Baker AM

Chair of the London Assembly Transport Committee
[by email]
c/o Eleanor.haigh@london.gov.uk and
Hannah.barlow@london.gov.uk

Our ref: MGLA171025-6567

Your ref: Delays in processing taxi and private hire licences

Date: 07 November 2025

Dear Elly,

Thank you for your recent letter outlining the Committee's concerns regarding the licensing of taxi and private hire drivers. I fully recognise the importance of an efficient and responsive licensing service to ensure drivers can continue working without unnecessary disruption.

Please be assured that both the Mayor and I take this matter extremely seriously. We have been working closely with Transport for London (TfL) to ensure that urgent and sustained action is being taken to resolve the backlog in both renewal and new licence applications. We continue to receive regular updates from TfL on the progress being made.

I understand that TfL has been providing the Committee with regular detailed updates on its work, and I hope these have been helpful. Most recently, I am aware that TfL has:

- Published a [Taxi and Private Hire Notice](#) to inform drivers of its progress and ongoing efforts to improve licensing processes;
- Utilised data insights to quickly identify when missing information—such as DBS checks—becomes available from third parties, enabling faster processing;
- Carried out an initial assessment of all new private hire driver applications
- Continued to respond to all email enquiries well within its 10-working day target.

There is a current spike in live renewal applications. This stems from a cyclical effect linked to the three-year licence term, following a surge in applications in 2013 due to the rise of app-based services, and again post-pandemic as services reopened. As a result, many licence expiry dates have clustered, leading to a temporary increase in renewal volumes. The volume of renewals TfL is seeing during this peak period is much larger than in 2022, as a result of a significant number of applicants who were newly licensed in 2022 following the pandemic who are now due for renewal. TfL had planned for this and is actively managing the demand.

TfL has made significant progress since the delays first started occurring due to the cyber incident and the introduction of the new licensing system. However, TfL has not yet returned to processing applications and renewals in its usual way, which would mean it was handling all parts of the renewal and application process it has control over within 10-working days in every single case. Given the challenges TfL has experienced, along with the added peak in renewals referenced above, it is continuing to prioritise renewal applications by expiry date, rather than prioritising by when renewal applications have been received. I support this approach and it ensures that where possible, existing drivers' licences do not expire.

It is also important to note that there will always be some licensees with expired licences awaiting renewal. This figure naturally fluctuates as applications are received and processed, and often reflects cases where TfL is waiting on outstanding information from drivers. These may include missing documentation, test results, or third-party checks. Furthermore, some drivers may have intentionally allowed their licence to lapse for a range of personal or professional reasons, and may

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now be deciding to renew it. While statistics may not always capture these nuances, I am reassured that, where TfL has all the necessary information, it is processing applications swiftly and, as mentioned above, it is ensuring it prioritises processing those renewal applications which are close to expiry.

TfL also continue to process applications from new applicants and in September, it met the milestone of carrying out an initial assessment for all new applications. Applicants who met the mandatory criteria have been notified so they can book their SERU, ELR and Topographical driver assessments.

I would be happy to meet with you to discuss these matters further. Please feel free to contact my office to arrange a suitable date. However, I hope this response provides the Committee with the reassurance it seeks and I know TfL has also committed to keeping you and the Assembly updated on these matters until it returns to processing applications and renewals in its usual way.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Seb Dance". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly informal style.

Seb Dance

Deputy Mayor for Transport