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## 147 tickets issued in Union Station taxi investigation

### 3 drivers must also face city's licensing tribunal

Dec 05, 2008 04:30 AM

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**SHABNAM JANET JANANI**  
 STAFF REPORTER

A city investigation of Union Station taxi drivers has led to 147 tickets being issued to an unspecified number of people.

Three taxi drivers must also appear before the Toronto Licensing Tribunal early next year, where they could have their licences revoked, suspended or become subject to strict conditions.

The investigation was launched nearly a year ago, in January 2008, following complaints about taxi drivers at Union Station.

The infractions include aggressive and illegal soliciting of cab fares, refusal to accept the first fare, the operation of unlicensed drivers and taxis, and the poor condition of vehicles that serve the area.

"The investigation proved to be highly successful as we have seen a substantial decrease in these types of behaviour in the area," said Gus Michaels, manager of Investigation Services, Licensing Enforcement Unit.

Michaels added the "behaviour exhibited by a small percentage of drivers during this investigation does not reflect the quality of service provided by the majority of Toronto's taxicab industry drivers,"

Approximately 15 city bylaw enforcement officers and Union Station security officers were involved in the project.

Scott Dudman, who has been a street performer for more than a year at the corner of Bay and Front Sts. said a "a more in-depth investigation should be done."

"As a witness, I have seen people are getting more and more frustrated with the taxicabs at the stand here," Dudman said.

"There is too much fighting. And as far as helping elderly people is concerned, drivers are less likely to get out of their cab to assist elderly passengers get into the vehicle. I have seen the drivers not even attempt to open their doors for disabled people," he added.



TARA WALTON/TORONTO STAR

A disgruntled taxi driver yells at another driver who has cut the taxi stand line in front of Union Station on Dec. 4, 2008. A city probe of cab drivers at the site uncovered numerous infractions, including aggressive and illegal soliciting.






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**Desperate gig**

These drivers are typically grown men, often with foreign credentials and a family to support, scratching out a bare living against fierce and rude competitors. The nature of cab driving does not always put road etiquette or even safety foremost.

Submitted by JonasOfToronto at 6:38 PM Friday, December 05 2008

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**Dump the bad taxi drivers**

Some taxi drivers have no right to be driving a taxi. They are real creeps and the city should take their Taxi licences away. If they want them back, they should wait five years before applying for them again. Maybe by then, they will have reformed and if they have, they can be trusted to drive a taxi again.

Submitted by Dahn Batchelor at 4:35 PM Friday, December 05 2008

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**Gross**

I take a cab from union station at least twice a week. I can't even count the number of times I've been refused a cab service because I didn't agree to pay the "set fare" they had to Roncesvalles of \$50... when it generally costs \$20 or less. I've had many drivers attempt to solicit sex from me, ask me personal sexual questions, and attempt to force me to sit in the front seat of the cab. This has happened to me numerous times, however only when I take a cab at Union. I've hailed cabs in other parts of the city and have never been so disrespected. I am a 24 year old professional woman and don't feel like I should have to put up with this sort of nonsense in order to get home at the end of the week.

Submitted by k8 at 12:32 PM Friday, December 05 2008

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**When are the fares going to drop??**

Remember when gas was a dollar plus? We raised fares twice and they refused to honour one of the two GST cuts.

Submitted by Darren in TO at 11:08 AM Friday, December 05 2008

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**why no commissionaire's booth?**

Just wondering why there is no train station staff to organize the taxis, as at airports and many stations around the world. Union Station is the first point of arrival for many travellers, and the current snarl of disorderly cabs is not what anyone wants to see on arrival.

Submitted by lisarr at 8:54 AM Friday, December 05 2008

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**Long time in coming**

My 81 year-old mother was stuck downtown after a concert one night last Christmas season, she missed the last GO train. It was the night of that big snowstorm just before Christmas. Several taxi driver refused to take her to Scarborough. Finally one took her and he was rewarded with an extra large tip. The ones that refused her should lose their licence. It was inexcusable what they did.

Submitted by Toolman at 8:28 AM Friday, December 05 2008

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**Taxi drivers**

Why do Union Station ... Go to Warden Subway Station and see the same thing. They park along the kiss and ride drop off and create a huge traffic backlog onto St Clair during rush hour every night.

Submitted by Transit Rider at 7:16 AM Friday, December 05 2008

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