

Nash's Numbers

by Alan Nash (A095)

On a recent Complaints committee meeting, the defendant was asked if he read "Call Sign", he replied, "Only Nash's Numbers". This months article is slightly different, albeit of more importance than many of my other articles, and this is the "Complaints Procedure". We have all seen messages and threats about being "put on complaint", but what actually happens, so for those who only read this page, read on and please heed the warnings. Ignorance is no excuse.

All complaints are brought to issue by ODRTS, but they originate from a customer, a fellow driver, the Control, or the complaints officer. The current complaints officer (C.O.) is Tom Whitbread.

How a complaint is handled. - If a customer, driver or the control believes a driver has broken the rules, a complaint is raised with the CO, who investigates the misdemeanour and can either a) not proceed any further, b) give a warning, c) a reprimand, d) a severe reprimand or e) refer the complaint to the complaints committee. The CO receives about 40 complaints a month of which only 3 or 4 go to the complaints committee. For those who think that the BoM have not driven a cab for years so how do they know how the day to day problems incurred by drivers, the complaints committee is made up of 3 drivers, who decide the outcome and sentence, which could be a) no case to answer, b) 1 to 4 weeks suspension or c) expulsion from the circuit. A B.o.M. member will chair the meeting and the CO will give formal evidence of the complaint, but it's the three drivers randomly picked from a pool of some 30 to 50 volunteer drivers make the decisions. If you think this is wrong then volunteer yourself. If you already have a conviction then you cannot sit on a complaints committee (nor can you stand for election to the Board). Having sat on 3 meetings hearing some 20-25 cases, of these only 3 drivers found not guilty, and at least 5 expelled. The responsibility on the committee is not taken lightly and expelling a colleague is taken very seriously, but having listened to evidence, the majority who are expelled are those drivers consistently stealing, yes stealing, work from other drivers. As an example a gang of 3 drivers were sharing a regular job that was fixed price at several hundred pounds for their own exclusivity, with no other driver getting a chance. I am sure you would like a chance at a job like that and I bet you are pleased those drivers are no longer with us.

When you read the outcome of the complaints committee in Call Sign, you may find some inconsistency in the punishment, the reason is that the committee look at the evidence and if found guilty, then and only then, are they told of any previous convictions. If they have, then the next punishment **MUST** be greater than the previous, even though it may be minor. So anyone who has had a 4-week suspension, then the next complaint upheld will mean expulsion. There is an appeals procedure. This is held within 5 working days and heard by one BoM member (but not the one who chaired the original meeting) and the Chairman. Their decision is then binding. They can uphold, reduce or **increase** the punishment. Note that subscriptions are still payable whilst on suspension.

Our current Data Terminal stores a lot of information. It may be big brother to some, but a blessing for the majority of rule abiding drivers. Remember, cheating one ride with excess run-in or changing the final fare could lose a large account, and that will affect everyone.

What is logged – A trace can be put on a driver and using the GPS can track it's constant whereabouts, but this is rare. But what is logged on every journey, which is enough to know if *fiddling* is going on as follows- "Book In", "Arrival", "POB" "Clear Job" buttons all log the time, location and meter reading. On pre-booked jobs the time, location and meter are also logged at the pre booked time. Now knowing this how many of you with hand on heart can say on any one shift that YOU could NOT be put on complaint? A major error a lot of drivers do is put their meter on straight away on pre-booked jobs. A pre-booked 21:00 job from E14C offered at 20:50 will result in a £5.30 run in. If you are caught, and you say this is the first time it ever happened, remember all your previous data is logged.

Well now for some numbers, I will reprint the run-in times for those pre-booked jobs, so that don't find yourself on the wrong side of Tom.

Max. time <u>OR</u> Max. distance	Tariff 1	Tariff 2	Tariff 3
Run-in £3.80	T1 6m:16 sec or 1.08 miles	T2 5m:04 sec or 0.87 miles	T3 4m:05 sec or 0.7 miles
Run-in £3.40	T1 5m:00 sec or 0.86 miles	T2 4m:03 sec or 0.7 miles	T3 3m:16 sec or 0.56 miles

What's on at ExCel. Due to the number of events this month, the titles have been omitted.

Date	Type	No. of events	Date	Type	No. of events
01 Sep 04 - 05 Sep 04	Public	1	14 Sep 04 - 15 Sep 04	Trade	1
01 Sep 04 - 03 Sep 04	Trade	2	17 Sep 04 - 19 Sep 04	Trade	2
05 Sep 04 - 06 Sep 04	Trade	2	18 Sep 04 - 18 Sep 04	Public	1
06 Sep 04 - 08 Sep 04	Trade	1	21 Sep 04 - 23 Sep 04	Trade	2
08 Sep 04 - 09 Sep 04	Trade	1	28 Sep 04 - 29 Sep 04	Trade	1

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