Beat: Business

London cabbies join rank against Uber

Claim is that Uber operated unlawfully

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DRD Partnership / **Robbie Merritt -** London cabbies are coming together to build a group legal action against Uber.

London cabbies are coming together to build a group legal action against Uber. Joining forces with litigation specialist RGL Management and law firm Mishcon de Reya, the group is working to commence proceedings by no later than Q1 2022.

The basis of the claim is that Uber operated unlawfully by breaching the Private Hire Vehicles (London) Act 1998 from June 2012 until March 2018. Uber permitted drivers to accept bookings directly when they were not licensed to do so.

Uber´s failure to adhere to the relevant statutory framework caused loss of earnings to licensed black cab drivers, who continued to operate lawfully and were subject to strict legislative and regulatory rules and requirements throughout.

An extensive marketing campaign "" "Black Cabs vs Uber 2021"? ("BULit21"?) "" funded by RGL, is now underway.

Any licensed green or yellow badge cab driver operating in the London area between June 2012 and March 2018 is eligible to join the group. RGL calculates up to 30,000 drivers are so eligible and that for a full-time driver operating throughout this period, a claim against Uber could be worth in the region of £25,000 or more.

All drivers who believe they may be eligible should visit https://bulit21.com/ for more information and how to register.

Garry White, a cabbie since 1987, has signed up and commented:

"Uber´s blatant abuse of their technology platform, allowing Uber drivers to benefit from effectively being hailed in the street, undermined our drivers´ livelihoods, and caused direct financial harm. It was just not right. With the support of RGL, we are rapidly building a large group of cab drivers so that we can finally take on Uber, bring its unlawful conduct to book and win fair compensation. London cabbies are highly qualified workers. We have to abide by strict regulations to accept fares. Why shouldn´t Uber?"?

Brenda Bartlett, a retired cab driver of over 30 years, and former Master of the Worshipful Company of Hackney Carriage Drivers, said:

"?Cabbies saw their average earnings drop significantly because of Uber´s actions and I´m pleased to be part of the BULit21 campaign, which represents the best chance for London cabbies to recover their losses with no financial risk. Working alongside RGL and a leading law firm, the strategy is to have the numbers of drivers and put in place the financial clout to fight toe-to-toe with Uber. I urge all affected drivers to join the group as soon as possible."?
There is no joining fee for cabbies, and as of today, c.4,000 cabbies have signed up and RGL is processing a further c.5,200 registrations.

Dale Forwood, a cab driver for 8 years, said:

"I am telling all my fellow cab drivers to sign up so that we can build this group action and make it successful. I know how many of them feel outraged and let down by what has happened. All of us spent years doing "¨The Knowledge´ to get our licence. Now we are having to do double hours to earn what we used to before Uber were effectively given a licence to unlawfully take our work. It´s soul destroying and completely unfair."?

RGL, which is currently in court on behalf of hundreds of small businesses bringing a claim against Clydesdale and National Australia Bank, is working with law firm Mishcon de Reya to support the BULit21 group.

James Hayward, CEO, RGL Management, said:

“We´re working to bringing an action against Uber that will be by cabbies for cabbies. As well as building the book of claimant cab drivers, the structure to be put in place will be such that there is no cost until success is achieved and no risk. With RGL´s and the lawyers´ combined experience, we will ensure the BULit21 group is fully supported. Uber knowingly and unlawfully allowed its drivers to accept bookings direct via the app when they were not licensed to do so. It is very clear.“

RGL is a specialist litigation company. It initiates, builds and prosecutes large, complex, multi-party commercial actions, typically against banks and large corporates on behalf of SME and individual claimants.

RGL is led by an experienced team with professional backgrounds in investment banking, litigation, insolvency and business management.

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