

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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# **Penny Sharpe MLC**

## **Shadow Minister for Transport**

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### **SYDNEY TAXI NETWORK UNDER PRESSURE**

#### **BEREJKLIAN MUST ACT TO AVERT CHRISTMAS MAYHEM**

Sydney faces a mad scramble for cabs this Christmas thanks to the O'Farrell Government's failure to ease pressures on the industry and crackdown on rogue drivers charging ridiculous fares, Shadow Minister for Transport Penny Sharpe said today.

"Ask anyone in Sydney trying to flag a taxi at rush hour or get safely home at night – it's a jungle out there," Ms Sharpe said.

"The O'Farrell Government is doing nothing as Sydney's taxi network buckles under the strain. Complaints continue to pour into my office that there are not enough taxis when you need one, a lack of secure taxi ranks – and more recently, rogue taxi drivers touting for off-metre fares.

"According to television reports this evening – one taxi-driver even charged \$200 from the City to Silverwater.

"When demand for taxis grossly exceeds supply, there is inevitably potential for fares to be auctioned off to the highest bidder.

"Some of the greatest characters in Sydney can be found behind the wheel of a cab. Yet every industry has its rogue operators and the Government is not doing enough to crackdown on them.

"With just 20 Government inspectors run off their feet trying to look after the whole taxi fleet – what is Gladys Berejiklian doing to improve taxi services for passengers?

"November and December are traditionally the busiest months for taxi patronage – a time for office Christmas parties, end-of-year drinks and crowds of people hitting the shops. I am very worried Sydney faces a mad scramble for cabs – and the network won't be able to cope.

"Taxis are an essential part of the Transport system yet the Minister has placed them last on her list of priorities.

"The Parliamentary Secretary for Transport, John Ajaka, chaired an inquiry into the taxi industry last year. Yet Gladys Berejiklian recently admitted that she has not even been briefed by him.

"Minister, there are 44 days before Christmas. The clock is ticking. When are you going to act?"

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