

STATES OF JERSEY



PROSECUTION OF ILLEGAL TAXI SERVICES

**Lodged au Greffe on 18th February 2026
by Deputy C.D. Curtis of St. Helier Central
Earliest date for debate: 24th March 2026**

STATES GREFFE

PROPOSITION

THE STATES are asked to decide whether they are of opinion –

to request the Minister for Infrastructure to update the [Motor Traffic \(Jersey\) Law 1935](#) to allow for the prosecution of illegal taxi services, and to bring forward the necessary legislation before 31st March 2027 to give effect to this decision.

DEPUTY C.D. CURTIS OF ST. HELIER CENTRAL

REPORT

The illegal operation of offering lifts by unregulated, uninsured drivers in Jersey has grown to become a threat to the regulated taxi service and a potential risk to passengers and drivers, as well as a loss in revenue through untaxed earnings. One of the most popular current services is known as “Jersey Lifts”.

The wording of the Motor Traffic (Jersey) Law 1935 is inadequate for effective prosecution of the illegal lifts service. In her response to [WQ.386/2025](#) the Minister for Justice and Home affairs stated that –

“Members will be aware that the most recent investigation and prosecution of a driver allegedly offering lifts for reward resulted in an acquittal bringing into the question the adequacy of law and associated regulation.”

Jersey Lifts advertises a service on Facebook groups that is unregulated and requires no DBS checks for drivers. One group has approximately 14,000 members and another has approximately 28,000 members. Clearly, it’s not just a group of friends giving each other lifts and sharing the costs. There are regular drivers advertising their availability, occasionally stating their charges, which are most often arranged through Facebook messenger or in the car. For example, “Lift from town to First Tower £15” “Lift from Grande Marche to The Ambassador 7pm £10” It is not possible to get full data on an illegal operation but it could be assumed that there are people earning their living by operating as illegal taxis, and not paying any tax or social security on their earnings.

The main concern is that there could be an accident which is not covered by insurance, or an assault on a member of the public. Often members of the public using this service may be young, and especially vulnerable following a night out. In fact, this may have already happened, with people feeling unable to come forward.

During the last few months, I have met with the Jersey Taxi Drivers Association (JTDA) and other island taxi companies, and held discussions with the Chief of Police, an Advocate with special knowledge in this area, and with the Law Officers Department. There is a will to bring this matter under control. So far, possible amendment wording has included the following:

Add to the Motor Traffic (Jersey) Law 1935 part 3, 6 (3):

A person who advertises lifts in contravention of this article shall be guilty of an offence and is liable to a fine of level 3 on the standard scale

A person who offers payment for lifts in contravention of this article shall be guilty of an offence and is liable to a fine of level 2 on the standard scale

Or:

Add to the Motor Traffic (Jersey) Law 1935 part 3, 6 (3):

A person must not cause or permit to operating or facilitating a paid lift sharing service without authorization.

These are possible amendments to the law; it may also be advisable to create a new article to cover this type of offence rather than amending article 6 but I consider the wording is best formulated by policy officers and the minister.

The illegal lifts service is having an impact on the regulated taxi service. While the numbers of regulated drivers is up to full complement following Covid, there are more leaving than coming in. There are very few young people coming into the taxi industry with a lot of drivers now reaching retirement age. There is no longer a waiting list to get a taxi license. Taxi drivers must have their cars tested every year, and new entrants must have either an electric vehicle, a multi-seater, or a wheelchair accessible vehicle. New entrants must also work for a private hire company for 18 months. Furthermore, insurance is a high cost for operating a taxi with some paying as much as £1500. Drivers must have an enhanced DBS check every year and undertake medical and customer care tests at their own cost alongside the completion of disability awareness training. There is the cost of the meter, the radio, and disability associated equipment. The Jersey taxi industry accepts all these requirements because they ensure public safety. However, a young person who is interested in driving for a living may understandably be attracted to the idea of operating an unregulated taxi service through a platform such as Jersey Lifts, because although illegal, it is not prosecuted. That young driver will be putting themselves at risk, and as it is the fundamental responsibility of any Government is to protect citizens from harm, it is by extension the responsibility of this States Assembly to put this matter right.

Financial and staffing implications

If adopted, this proposition would require the time of the Law Drafter's Office to draft the necessary amendments to the Motor Traffic (Jersey) Law. This is anticipated to only require one Law Drafter and their respective salary. No further staffing or financial implications would arise. There may be further costs arising from additional prosecutions; however, this is not quantifiable at this stage

Children's Rights Impact Assessment

I consider that this proposition has no direct or indirect impact on children and that the duty to have due regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child does not arise. Accordingly, a Children's Rights Impact Assessment is not required under the Children (Convention Rights) (Jersey) Law 2022.