



Monday 10 March 2014

Dear Member

CPT - THE INDUSTRY'S LEADING TRADE ASSOCIATION

I have been asked by a number of CPT members to respond to a letter which some of you may have received from the newly formed Bus and Coach Association. The letter criticises CPT and contains a number of inaccuracies which I should like to address.

With the continued and unrelenting support of some 1000 members, CPT's ability to bring the industry together has enabled us to build and maintain strong and effective working relationships with key industry stakeholders. We are a natural channel of communication with Government, Ministers, Local Authorities and other major bodies such as the European Commission. Our position as the industry's leading trade association also provides unrivalled access to those decision makers whose roles impact greatly on your businesses. We can influence the way the industry works, including its relationships with passengers and the general public, by a process of discussion and engagement, which generally leads to a consensus on the way forward.

CPT is widely acknowledged as the "voice" of the road passenger transport industry; a title we are extremely proud to hold, although it's not one which has been self-awarded. It is, however, a real positive for both CPT and its members that others see us in this way. We are also in the enviable position of being able to request and arrange meetings with senior political figures at short notice or during times of emergency.

Questions have been raised as to how CPT "with its 800 or so members" can be fully representative of the industry. In answer to this, we only represent our members' views (over 1000 of them), but this in itself equates to approximately 95% of all buses and 60% of all coaches

Confederation of Passenger Transport UK

Insert Regional Address and regional manager contact details here

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operated in the UK. So I am comfortable when I say that we are ideally placed to provide comment and representation for the UK's bus and coach industry. It has also been claimed that there are some 9000 active bus and coach operators in the UK. This is wholly incorrect and far from a true reflection of the current position of the market.

We continue to work hard through our national and regional structure to encourage more operators and suppliers to join, with a stronger membership further adding to CPT's position as the industry's leading trade association. I am confident that all the key and influential industry figureheads are involved with CPT, either holding posts on our Council and Committees which govern the Confederation's work and direction, or via their membership which clearly supports our work on behalf of the industry.

Community Transport/section 19 and 22

As I'm sure you are well aware, the issues surrounding section 19 and 22 permit holders have not gone away and continue to cause problems for operators - in some cases threatening their very existence. As our President stated in his January update and request for information, this is an extremely difficult and delicate lobbying exercise and one in which the vast majority of work is taking place privately behind the scenes.

CPT's involvement and action in this area has also been questioned by the Bus and Coach Association who claim to be "fighting back" and "getting even" in a bid to bring changes for the industry. We wish them well in what is a shared pursuit for a level playing field – something CPT continues to lobby for both in Brussels and Westminster – and we firmly believe that our tried and tested method of persuasion and diplomacy will ultimately deliver the best long term solution for the industry.

It is my understanding that a major cause of the frustration felt by the founder of the new body arises from the decision made by CPT members to not spend in the region of £100k pursuing legal action against the UK Government via the EU. While there was legal opinion that the UK Government may have been found to be breaching State Aid rules, it was by no means certain that this would be found to be the case. There was alternative legal opinion that the case may only result in relatively minor changes to Departmental Guidance.

Our coaching members – not the Secretariat – simply did not feel that this was the best use of member funds. The result of the case is awaited.

It is, of course, always easy to criticise perceived inaction from the sidelines of non-membership. The only real way to address this is to join and get your voice heard.

CPT working for you

CPT continues to work extremely hard for the industry and in particular small and medium sized operators. As your local CPT Manager, I am continually working for the good of members and it is often coach operators who are the most enthusiastic users of CPT's many membership benefits and services. Each Manager compiles a regular summary of the areas of work engaged in and this is presented to CPT Coach Commission on a quarterly basis. These reports are all available to members on the CPT website – www.cpt-uk.org – so logon and make sure you're up-to-date with the work we are carrying out on your behalf.

Other industry groups

CPT works with a broad range of long established industry groups (including LTCOA, CTC, NWCOA, COF) and recognises the importance of their respective roles in promoting the collective good of our industry. However, if we are to continue to make a significant impact on Government policy and its decision makers then we need a reputable, well-structured and appropriately resourced organisation. And in CPT you have this.

And finally

CPT has come a long way since the days of the Bus and Coach Council where its main focus was on lobbying and providing technical and operational assistance to members. We now have in place three national offices and a network of Managers ready to help by providing advice and assistance on the local and national issues currently affecting your businesses. Our range of 24/7 services continue to provide members with peace of mind, safe in the knowledge that a CPT official is always on hand for those 'it will never happen to us' situations.

Our Commercial Partners continue to deliver an important range of enhanced services at discounted rates for CPT members, and we are working on further services to be launched in due course.

A trade association exists for one reason, people like you - its members. We are here to represent, protect and offer assistance and advice that will help you to succeed in the most challenging of times.

Thank you for your support and we look forward to working with you in 2014.

Yours faithfully

Keith McNally
Regional Manager