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The Mobility Agency & TLC of the Future – IATR President Matt Daus Unveils New Initiatives in Prague at the World Road Congress

Mobility services and transportation agencies overseeing large operational networks and infrastructure are experiencing pronounced governance problems. They are consistently plagued by fractured and inconsistent regulation and oversight, silo mentality, lack of communication and collaboration, and failure to modernize organizationally. For example, recently on full display in the U.S. were the objections of the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency and the Los Angeles Department of Transportation to the California Public Utilities Commission's vote to authorize the expansion of robotaxi service statewide.[1] Like the state Transportation Network Company (TNC) laws that preempt local regulation of ride-hailing services, municipalities are often powerless to license, enforce, and/or regulate autonomous for-hire services operating on their streets.[2][3] However, municipalities have a stake in keeping their streets safe. The various levels of government that have an interest in regulating robotaxis are increasingly not on the same page. The disjointed relationship between state and local agencies has the potential to either help or hinder innovation, depending on the audience.

The International Association of Transportation Regulators (IATR) is a unique organization, in that its membership is incredibly diverse in terms of the type and scope of government agency members. As its President, I can state IATR may be the only organization whose membership includes those from multi-modal super agencies (*e.g.*, Transport for London and Singapore's Land Transport Authority), state departments of motor vehicles and departments of transportation, public utilities commissions, local police departments, consumer affairs agencies, and even county clerk offices. While diversity may be a strength when it allows agencies to learn from one another, too many cooks in the kitchen can be a weakness when administering programs along different political lines and silos of thought, purpose, and funding.

Waves of disruption are already happening in automation and electrification, the non-emergency medical transportation sector, taxi and TNC partnerships, and smart taximeter regulation. Government agencies must understand private sector needs in order to keep up. Government and transport agencies must also understand and work with each other toward common strategic mobility plans under more unified leadership. To this end, I am pleased to report that – at the IATR's 36th Annual Conference in Scottsdale, Arizona, I announced that the IATR would embark on a mission to make recommendations to modernize government administrative agencies that regulate the taxi, for-hire vehicle, and TNC industries, while addressing the mobility governance issue.

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[1] Whiting, Sam. *Robotaxi Problems Arise Following California PUC Vote*. https://www.govtech.com/fs/robotaxi-problems-arise-following-california-puc-vote
[2] Gross, Steve. *Transportation Network Companies: New Legislation Addresses Long-Standing Issues*. https://mrsc.org/stay-informed/mrsc-insight/july-2022/new-legislation-regulates-tncs
[3] Racabi, Gali. *State TNC and MC Legislation: Preemption and Employment Status of Drivers*. https://onlabor.org/state-tnc-and-mc-legislation-preemption-and-employment-status-of-drivers/#:~:text=The%20rapid%20spread%20of%20those,regulations%20from%20cities%20to%20states.

The IATR's **"Mobility Agency of the Future"** project will dovetail and coordinate with a related project being undertaken by our partners and colleagues at the ***World Road Association (known as "PIARC")***. Since 2020, the IATR and PIARC have been collaborating on preparing for existing and emerging technology disruption, and both groups are now working on separate but related projects involving the transport or road agency of the future. This topic is an outgrowth of prior work we have done concerning how transportation regulators are responding to disruptive technology.

Founded in 1909, PIARC is an international organization that promotes cooperation and knowledge sharing on all aspects of roads and road networks.[4] PIARC has more than 125 government members from around the world and more than 1,000 individual and corporate members, including companies, authorities, and organizations. The organization retains consultative status to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations and is a member of the International Road Federation (IRF) and the International Transport Forum (ITF). PIARC plays an important role in promoting sustainable and efficient road transport systems around the world. Its work helps to improve the safety, performance, and environmental impact of road networks. PIARC Technical Committees—that consist of distinguished engineers and experts appointed by member countries—produce reports on best practices and recommendations to assist decision makers, road engineers, and research engineers.[5]

The PIARC 2023 World Road Congress in Prague: The Transport Administration of the Future

More recently, I had the honor of making presentations at two panels at PIARC's 2023 World Road Congress in Prague. On October 3, 2023, PIARC announced a new project during a workshop exploring the "***Transport Administration of the Future***."[6] The workshop married PIARC's Technical Committee (TC) 1.1, Performance of Transport Administrations, as it relates to the vision of the "Transport Administration of the Future" with AASHTO's moonshot project on the development of a national transportation vision for the United States and the Transportation Research Board's research project on the impacts of disruptive technologies on the performance of transportation agencies. PIARC's new project will create a global perspective on the vision of the Transport Administration of the Future by inviting representatives from Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, and South America to share their perspectives and vision for the future of transport administrations. The goal of the project is to create a blueprint for transport administrations with respect to customer service and creating public value; transformational approaches to new technologies and business models; and addressing equity, diversity, and inclusiveness in the workforce of the future.

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[4] PIARC. *About* PIARC. https://www.piarc.org/en/PIARC-Association-Roads-and-Road-Transportation/PIARC-Who-are-we

[5] PIARC. *PIARC Technical* Committees. https://www.piarc.org/en/PIARC-Association-Roads-and-Road-Transportation/PIARC-Technical-Committees

[6] PIARC. *Workshop 05 - The Transport Administration of the Future.* https://pre-proceedings-prague2023.piarc.org/en/documents/Workshop-05-The-Transport-Administration-of-the-Future-13773

Members of Working Group 2 - The Role of Transport Agencies in Shaping Disruptive Technologies and Service Models, including Matt Daus (Front, Left); and Anne-Séverine Poupeleer, Working Group Co-Leader (Front, Center); Christos Xenophontos, Chair of Technical Committee 1.1 (Front, Right of Center); and Jonathan Spear, Working Group Co-Leader (Front, Second Right from Center).

I had the opportunity to speak on a panel during the Transport Administration of the Future workshop, which was moderated by **Victoria Sheehan**, *Executive Director of the Transportation Research Board*. Along with representatives from ERTICO, the International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association, PIARC, and the International Association of Public Transport (UITP), I discussed policy goals and issues that must be addressed in the future—such as access, climate change impacts, decarbonization, equity, and sustainability—and whether the existing organization structure will help meet those goals. In particular, I was able to speak about how the TC 1.1 report series *The Role of Transport Agencies in Shaping Disruptive Technologies and Service Models*—which the IATR worked on with PIARC—lays a foundation for this project, giving direction for a model administration of the future. Similarly, the IATR, with its focus mainly on taxi and for hire vehicle regulation, has already begun exploring the modernization of taxi administrations.

Matt Daus presenting at the World Road Congress in Prague, Czech Republic.

From Left: Jonathan Spear, Matt Daus, and Anne-Séverine Poupeleer.

On October 5, 2023, I presented as part of a group looking at emerging and disruptive technologies in the context of transport administration performance.[7] My co-presenters were **Anne-Séverine Poupeleer** (Agency for Roads and Traffic, Belgium) and **Jonathan Spear** (Atkins Acuity, United Kingdom), with **Christos Xenophontos** (Assistant Director of Administrative Services at the Rhode Island Department of Transportation), moderating. Together, we presented an overview of *The Role of Transport Agencies in Shaping Disruptive Technologies and Service Models* report series. Ms. Poupeleer gave an overview of the methods and outputs used in the reports, I spoke on the private sector perspectives from our 2021 roundtable conducted at IATR's 34th annual conference, and Mr. Spear finished with our overall conclusions and recommendations for future collaboration between the public and private transportation sectors.

This presentation was part of a larger technical session that looked at work accomplished by TC 1.1 during 2020–2023 on the following issues: 1) understanding how road and transportation administrations measure their customer experience and public value creation; 2) the role of transportation agencies in shaping disruptive technology and service models; and 3) the organization of staff and human resources.

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[7] PIARC. *Technical Session 1.1 - Performance of Transport Administrations*. https://pre-proceedings-prague2023.piarc.org/en/documents/Technical-Session-1.1-Performance-of-Transport-Administrations-13778

PIARC Reports: The Role of Transport Agencies in Shaping Disruptive Technologies and Service Models

PIARC's TC 1.1, which is chaired by Mr. Xenophontos,[8] focuses on identifying best practices for establishing a framework for measuring the efficiency and effectiveness of transport administrations. Between 2020 and 2023, IATR collaborated with TC 1.1 Working Group 2, co-chaired by Ms. Poupeleer and Mr. Spear, on an extended investigation of disruptive technologies and service models impacting the transportation industry—including connected, electric and autonomous vehicles, digital highways, new transit modes, micromobility and shared mobility platforms—and how regulators are responding to the related challenges and opportunities in policy, regulatory, and organizational terms. This PIARC investigation produced four reports under the title ***The Role of Transport Agencies in Shaping Disruptive Technologies and Service Models***.[9] **Patrick Mallejacq,** *Secretary General of PIARC,* and **Nazir Alli,** *President of PIARC's executive committee*, provided commendable support and inspiration for this project.

Source: PIARC

The first report outlines survey results of global transport organizations carried out between 2020 and 2021, which found transportation organizations are highly aware of disruptive and innovative technologies and service models, but they have mixed states of preparedness and adaptation to take on the challenges raised by these new technologies.[10] The second report outlines the discussion at a roundtable that was held at the 34th IATR Annual Conference in 2021 that brought together key private sector innovators who are shaping the future mobility ecosystem to get their perspectives on disruptive technologies and service models.[11]

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[8] PIARC. *1.1 Performance of Transport Administrations*. https://www.piarc.org/en/PIARC-Association-Roads-and-Road-Transportation/PIARC-Technical-Committees/Strategic-Theme-Road-Administration/Technical-Committee-Performance-Transport-Administrations

[9] TC 1.1 Working Group 2 is tasked with studying the role of transport agencies in shaping disruptive technologies and service models.

[10] PIARC. *The Role of Transport Agencies in Shaping Disruptive Technologies and Service Models – a PIARC Survey Report*. https://www.piarc.org/en/order-library/38409-en-TheRole%20of%20Transport%20Agencies%20in%20Shaping%20Disruptive%20Technologies%20and%20Service Models%20-%20Survey%20Report

[11] PIARC. *The Role of Transport Agencies in Shaping Disruptive Technologies and Service Models – A Private Sector Roundtable*. https://www.piarc.org/en/order-library/38420-en-

IATR collaborated with TC 1.1 to hold a private sector roundtable of key innovators shaping the future mobility ecosystem at the 34th IATR Annual Conference in 2021. The purpose of the roundtable was to gauge industry perspectives on disruptive technologies and service models shaping the transport sector. The roundtable consisted of top executives from mobility companies that included: automated and electric vehicle deployment; shared-use and public transit partnerships; smartphone e-hail applications; advanced and urban air mobility; micro-mobility; and mobility-as-a-services platforms. These roundtable participants came to two key conclusions. First, the private sector will lead transport technology development and delivery. Second, a clear regulatory environment and support from government is needed to set rules of deployment, policy objectives, and confidence for private investment.

The third report provides case studies of how road and transport organizations around the world have addressed technological change, implementation of new mobility approaches and innovation.[12] The fourth report consolidates the findings and recommendations from the investigation, and it concludes that transport agencies have four overarching roles in shaping disruptive technologies and service models: 1) policy maker and regulator; 2) researcher and developer; 3) end user, operator, and manager; and 4) convener, enabler, and integrator.[13] Transportation agencies approach these roles differently. There are leaders, early adopters, and those that choose to take a more conservative or even resistant approach to new technology.

IATR's Taxi Modernization Report & the TLC of the Future

At its annual training conference this year, the IATR unveiled its proposed taxi modernization principles and draft report, ***Modernizing Taxi Regulations: An Innovative Governance Framework for the Future***. This report draws from the international experience to set a framework to: streamline regulations; make the vehicle, driver, and company approval processes more efficient; and maximize regulatory flexibility and benefits to customers, operators, and drivers – all without compromising safeguards for health, safety, and consumer protections. The recommendations include allowing taxis to use e-hail and up-front fares, allow soft-meters where metered fares are necessary, ensuring driver eligibility criteria is relevant in the age of GPS, and making taxi companies responsible for driver credentialing. It is well past time that regulators look at taxi rules from the bottom up and remove those that are standing in the way of innovative that can support multi-modal mobility, sustainability, accessibility, and equity and partnerships. This report and other useful information are on the IATR website (www.iatr.global).

The%20Role%20of%20Transport%20Agencies%20in%20Shaping%20Disruptive%20Technologies%20and%20Service%20Models%20-%20A%20Private%20Sector%20Roundtable

[12] PIARC. *The Role of Transport Agencies in Shaping Disruptive Technologies and Service Models – A PIARC Case Study Summary*. https://www.piarc.org/en/order-library/38420-en- https://www.piarc.org/en/order-library/39417-en-The%20Role%20of%20Transport%20Agencies%20in%20Shaping%20DisruptiveTechnologies%20and%20Service%20Models%20-%20Case%20Study%20Summary%20Report

[13] PIARC. *The Role of Transport Agencies in Shaping Disruptive Technologies and Service Models – A High Impact Summary.* https://www.piarc.org/en/order-library/40713-en-The%20Role%20of%20TransportAgencies%20in%20Shaping%20Disruptive%20Technologies%20and%20Service%20Models%20%E2%80%93%20High%20ImpactSummary

https://tinyurl.com/d37jzvbr

During my State of the IATR address to the conference attendees, I announced that we are going to do a deep dive into a new extensive report on the taxi, for-hire vehicle, and TNC regulatory agency of the future, which will dovetail with the PIARC project. The agency of the future report will set forth the history and current status of the regulatory agencies structure and operations, and suggest a new framework to modernize regulation in a multi-modal and streamlined environment. Like past IATR reports, this report will review how agencies around the world are operating to determine best and accepted practices. The IATR will engage stakeholders on all sides of the equation—from regulators to the regulated industries and the users of these services—to create a vision for the future guided by the following principles:

- The taxi, limousine, for-hire vehicle, and TNC regulatory agency of the future is a dynamic and responsive organization that oversees the safety, efficiency, and sustainability of the industry:
  - The agency uses data-driven and evidence-based approaches to regulate the supply and demand, as well as the quality and accessibility of services;
  - The agency also fosters innovation and competition in the market, while ensuring fair and transparent practices for both drivers and passengers;
  - The agency collaborates with interested stakeholders, such as local governments, transport authorities, operators, trade associations, and consumers, to develop and implement policies and standards that benefit the public interest;
- The agency is accountable to the public and operates with integrity and professionalism.

- Current regulatory systems are often fragmented to regulate a single industry, with too many agencies having no uniform approach and conflicting priorities, authority, and missions.
- We need a unified paradigm and governance system that allows for a multi-modal innovative future. This includes increased coordination with other modes, and ensuring unified policy-making.

The regulatory agency of the future needs innovative solutions and ideas for exploration. To that end, the report will explore various topics including:

- **Enforcement:** Modernizing enforcement practices through technology, such as virtual inspections and automated enforcement inside and outside of the vehicle, which can more efficiently enforce regulations.
- **Licensing Policies & Processes:** Creating a more efficient and fair licensing system through policies—incentivizing accessible and fuel efficient vehicles, expediting licenses for drivers with jobs waiting—and processes, like remote licensing and online transactions.
- **Self-Regulation**: Implementing a system that is similar to the U.S. state TNC model and the U.S. Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Model oversight of motor carriers.
- **Governance Framework:** Setting the appropriate governance framework (state vs. local) and who regulates which aspects of the industry (*e.g.*, insurance requirements, driver licensing, vehicle standards).
- **Fees, Revenue & Fines:** Determining equitable and reasonable fees and fines.
- **Mobility Data:** Setting data sharing and use practices, including determining what data is necessary, data protection and transparency, and use of data for enforcement and other purposes.

Conclusion: The Time Has Arrived for the Agency of the Future!

The vision of a dynamic and responsive taxi regulatory agency is a tangible goal that can be realized through concerted efforts and innovative strategies. By emphasizing data-driven approaches and evidence-based policies, this agency will stand as a beacon of transparency and integrity, fostering a culture of fairness and collaboration among all stakeholders – drivers, regulators, and riders. The imperative for a unified paradigm and governance system, transcending the current fragmented regulatory landscape, becomes increasingly apparent. Embracing innovative solutions such as virtual inspections, automated enforcement, and streamlined licensing processes, the agency can exemplify the intersection of technology and public service. Such an agency will pave the way for a multi-modal future, ensuring the seamless integration of diverse transportation modes while upholding the highest standards of safety, accessibility, and sustainability. As we look ahead, the roadmap for the taxi regulatory agency of the future not only embodies the principles of adaptability and progress but also underscores its pivotal role in shaping a more resilient and inclusive transportation ecosystem.