



The City of New York  
Department of Investigation

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Release #69-2010  
[nyc.gov/html/doi](http://nyc.gov/html/doi)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2010**

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### **REMARKS OF DOI COMMISSIONER ROSE GILL HEARN ON TAXI DRIVERS CHARGED WITH FRAUD**

This case started as so many cases do – with an alert citizen who notices something amiss and reports it – in this case a metered fare that was higher than usual. The Taxi & Limousine Commission (“TLC”) identified the driver, saw he charged an inappropriate rate, and continued to probe using technology installed two years ago, finding numerous other drivers with a similar pattern of charging the out-of-town rate for trips within the City. When the TLC alerted DOI, we focused on the most egregious cases and worked with the Manhattan District Attorney’s Office to hold those violators accountable. As a result, District Attorney Vance has brought felony and misdemeanor charges against 59 drivers who are accused of having wrongfully activated the double-fare rate on a minimum of 300 trips.

These indictments and criminal complaints are a testament to the powerful combination of data mining and investigative work by the team of agency partners represented here today. Investigators sifted through the voluminous data from taxi meters revealing the unscrupulous drivers, who it is now alleged, deliberately and repeatedly overcharged the public.

This criminal conduct struck a raw nerve with the public because a trip in a yellow taxicab is a quintessential New York experience for visitors to the City, and a needed means of transportation for many New Yorkers. Most people view the rates as high enough, to be fraudulently overcharged on top of that is outrageous. The public has a right to expect integrity and safety when taking a taxi. It is now the end of the road for those drivers who exploited unsuspecting victims.

I thank District Attorney Cyrus Vance Jr., and TLC Commissioner David Yassky for their commitment to this important investigation and I commend the hard-working prosecutors, Adam Kaufmann, Chief of the Investigation Division, Jayme Naberezny the Inspector General at DOI for TLC, all of the DOI investigators and TLC staff who worked diligently and tirelessly to reach this milestone.

Indictments and criminal complaints are accusations. Defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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