
Matthew W. Daus, Commissioner/Chair**Press Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****June 6, 2008****TAXI AND LIMOUSINE COMMISSION HEARING
LOOP PILOT PROJECT IS UNDERWAY**

The New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) is pleased to announce that a pilot program to test the functionality and public acceptance of Induction Loop Systems is now underway. This pilot project constitutes the technology's first taxicab testing program in the nation.

Induction Loop technology, which is in common use in many public buildings and attractions in Europe, as well as in an increasing number of such locations in the United States, is a device that transmits sound directly to hearing aids equipped with a "T-coil" or to cochlear implants. Rather than simply amplifying ambient sound as hearing aids do, the Induction Loop broadcasts the specifically isolated sound directly to an equipped individual. In creating the framework for this pilot program, the TLC worked closely with advocates for people with hearing loss, the Mayor's Office for Persons with Disabilities (MOPD), and MOPD Commissioner Matthew Sapolin.

The pilot program authorized by the TLC allows each participating manufacturer of the devices to install and test them in up to 15 vehicles each for a period of one year, at which time the program will be evaluated for specific criteria set forth in the "Statement of Outline for Pilot Program to Test Induction Loop Technology in Medallion Taxicabs" (http://www.nyc.gov/html/tlc/downloads/pdf/outline_for_pilot_program.pdf). At present, one manufacturer is participating (AssistiveAudio) and six vehicles are equipped, with more expected shortly.

Said TLC Commissioner/Chairman Matthew W. Daus, "The TLC has always welcomed the testing of new technologies that can in any tangible way improve service for the people who use taxicabs and for-hire vehicles. It is always exciting to be the first regulator in the nation to do something new and innovative, but testing induction loop technology is particularly meaningful for us in light of the passion of those who have advocated for its use."

"The city is committed to improving transportation options for all citizens, and this program illustrates one way in which we can do so for people who are hard of hearing," said Matthew Sapolin, Commissioner of the Mayor's Office for People With Disabilities. "The TLC, through partnerships with my office, disabled constituents and the taxi industry, has been and continues to be a creative force in identifying ways to address the varying needs of the diverse population that utilize taxis in the city."

Said Janice Schacter, Chair of the Hearing Access Program, a national advocacy program for people with hearing loss, "It is wonderful that New York City taxis participating in this project are the first in the country to be accessible to people with hearing loss. My daughter can feel confident that she can hear clearly if a driver in a participating cab asks her a question."