

The value in seeing taxi associations: a lens for a new narrative about the taxi industry in
transport planning

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I declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is being submitted to the Degree of Bachelor of Urban and Regional Planning with Honours to the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination to any other University.



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Abstract

This research report develops a case study of the local and long distance Tembisa-Pretoria Taxi Association (TEPTA), in the context of the dearth of specific transport planning research on taxi associations and the shortfalls of planning knowledge on the taxi industry in general.

Data collected from qualitative unstructured interviews with key members of the association build up a picture of nature and operation of this taxi association and its four facets: as a small business collective, as the local level of organisation of the taxi industry, as a collection of routes and as a community custodian.

These observations are then used to question and challenge the existing way we as transport planners see taxis and associations, and its gaps, such as the omission of the highly regulated and recorded nature of the taxi industry. It explores the implications these challenges have for the transport planning profession in South Africa.

To Zonke Mkhomazi for showing me a way,
my supervisor Neil Klug and my mother for helping me walk it
And the Executive Committee of TEPTA for their time and knowledge

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Nomenclature

TEPTA – Tembisa-Pretoria Taxi Association

SANTACO – South African National Taxi Council

NTA – National Taxi Alliance

SABTA – South African Black Taxi Association (A mother body)

FELDTA- A mother body

TOPICA- A mother body

NAFTO- A mother body

SALTA - A mother body

NDULDTA- A mother body

TOP 6- A mother body

LTA- A mother body

FANTO- A mother body

Top 11 Group- A small business collective within TEPTA

MMC – Member of Municipal council – a local level government position

MEC – Member of Executive Council – a provincial level government position

ACSA – Airports Company South Africa

UIF – Unemployment Insurance Fund

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Introduction

This research has three key goals. The first of these is to investigate a detailed case study of the Tembisa Pretoria taxi association (TEPTA) to begin to develop a more nuanced and context rich understanding of the taxi industry at this level of organization. The second goal is to unpack the existing perceptions of city governance and transport planning held by members of this association. The third aim of this report is to describe the opportunities and implications of taxi associations for city and transport planners.

These three aspects are each a component of answering the research question of what a taxi association is and how transport planners can work with a taxi association. This is crucial groundwork, which must be conducted in order to build a context and framework for understanding what taxi associations mean as organizations and their connections to city, citizen and planner.

The second part of the research question is answered in two phases. The first is from the direct data gathered through unstructured interviews with TEPTA members. This data is intended to build a picture of the perceptions and attitudes towards the municipal governance structures that are held by the TEPTA members. This information gives insight into the current dynamics and relationships between city and association as well as shaping the ways in which planners could be able to interact and work with associations as key transport stakeholders. Finally the broader implications both of the case study and the potential avenues of interaction between the taxi industry and the planning profession are considered from the perspectives of current industry professionals.

The literature review documents and categorizes the current academic knowledge of taxi associations according to the themes various writers have engaged them through, directly or peripherally. Further it explores the characteristics of the kinds of knowledge available on associations and the weaknesses and strengths of these kinds of knowledge. Finally the review argues that there are consequences associated with, or perhaps stemming from some characteristics of the available knowledge types. Specifically this argument is made in terms of the current context of transport planning in South Africa, and the ways in which this paradigm must be changed, in line with new understandings of transport planning as a discipline in itself and as a facet of the planning profession. The review argues that the kind of knowledge presented in this research report is useful to this emerging paradigm and actually supports its emergence.

Chapter 1: Literature Review

Introduction

This literature review discusses writing on the characteristics of taxi associations and the relationship between these associations and the city (and city transport planners). It also briefly explores an alternate view of the scope and skills pertinent to transport planning. Within each theme the existing literature is reviewed for insights, shortfalls and relevance to the conceptual and practical reality of taxi associations and their engagement with city governance.

The key themes of the literature review break taxi associations and the taxi industry into three main types of phenomenon and engage with the work written within each theme: taxis and taxi associations as providers of mass transit, as social phenomena, and as economic players who negotiate with the city.

The following have been identified as key texts that inform these different themes:

1. *Rethinking the formalisation of the minibus-taxi industry in South Africa*, a Master's thesis in Engineering for the University of Pretoria, by L. Fourie in 2003
2. *Routes, ranks and rebels: feuding in the taxi revolution*, an article in Journal of Southern African Studies, by M. Khosa in 1992
3. *Minibus taxi drivers are they all 'children born from the same mother?'* a doctoral dissertation by G. Sauti for Social Anthropology for the University of Johannesburg, published in 2008.
4. *An exploration into the conflicting Interests and Rationalities on the Rea Vaya BRT*, an Honours Dissertation for Urban and Regional Planning, University of the Witwatersrand, by Z. Sibiyi in 2009
5. *The lurch towards formalisation: Lessons from the implementation of BRT in Johannesburg, South Africa*, a journal article in Research in Transportation Economics, by C. Venter in 2013
6. *Negotiating the deal to enable the first Rea Vaya bus operating company: Agreements, Experience and Lessons*, a paper presented at the 30th Southern African transport conference, by C. McCaul and S. Ntuli, in 2011
7. *The Implications of Informality on Governmentality: The case of Johannesburg in the context of Sub-Saharan urbanization* by Gotz, H. and Simone, A., 2009

Taxis and taxi associations as providers of mass transport

This section discusses the technical writing about various aspects of the taxi industry as a transport phenomenon and provides specific statistics and details about its role and function. It also explores the following key text:

1. *Rethinking the formalization of the minibus-taxi industry in South Africa*, a Master's thesis in Engineering for the University of Pretoria, by L. Fourie in 2003

According to the 2013 Travel Survey for the City of Johannesburg (CoJ, 2013), 47% of the survey population live 1-5 minutes walking time away from the nearest taxi stop and 80% live within 15 minutes walking time from a stop. By contrast 31% live 1-5 minutes walking distance and 54% live within 15 minutes walking distance from the nearest bus stop (CoJ, 2013). 15% live within 15 minutes of the nearest train station (CoJ, 2013). This demonstrates that for most of the sample population, taxis are the most accessible form of mass transport.

Bar walking, taxis are the mode by which the largest percentage of the sample population accesses the following services: Shops, ATMs/Banks, Medical services, Postal Services, Welfare, Police, Municipal offices and tribal authorities (CoJ, 2013). The next most widely used mode of transport is private cars, but it is worth noting that the travel survey found that 64% of households surveyed do not own a car (CoJ, 2013).

Of the public transport types surveyed (Train, Bus, School Bus and Minibus Taxi) Minibus taxis accounted for 73% of all public transport trips taken by the survey population (Bus: 9%, Train 9%, School Bus: 9%), with the percentage increasing to 92% and 97% in Alexandra and Diepsloot respectively, dropping as low as 54% and 50% in Ennerdale/Orange Farm and the Ontdekkers Corridor respectively (CoJ, 2013). In no area surveyed did minibus taxis account for less than half of all public transport trips taken (CoJ, 2013). Additionally, the lowest percentage of the population surveyed in an area that use public transport was 34% (CoJ, 2013), which implies that even in the areas least reliant on public transport, it is still used by over a third of the people moving in that area. Minibus taxis are by far the dominant means by which people access public transport. The study here counts them as public transport, whereas elsewhere in this report they are referred to as mass transport. This distinction is to acknowledge the fact that unlike train, bus and school bus, the taxi industry is not subsidised or otherwise supported by government. These figures alone should highlight the crucial importance of the taxi industry both for everyday mobility in the city of Johannesburg, and for any comprehensive transport planning affecting the city. Despite this clear statistical dominance, the research that analyses taxis as means of mass transport tends to have the following problems: it attempts to homogenize and make general

statements about the entirety of the industry, regardless of differences in its manifestation in different parts of the country, it is also context-blind, assumes that government can or should be or is in a position of control over all aspects of the industry, and makes use mostly of secondary data, with little fieldwork.

While various pieces of academic writing exist that use the concept of a homogenous taxi industry that is independent and unaffected by local and sub-local context and contingency (CoJ 2013, Govender, 2014, Lomme, 2008, Dugard and Sekhonyane, 2004), Fourie's 2003 master's thesis has been chosen as a key text to exemplify an extreme end-point of understanding from this flawed foundation. The thesis is a technical document concerned with improving the efficiency of the taxi industry as a means of mass transport and a profit-generating sector (Fourie 2003). The work achieves this by creating a simplified model of the taxi industry and applying technical measures, techniques and methods to this model in order to identify the industry's greatest inefficiencies. To resolve these, the thesis proposes a series of government actions. Firstly, the link between this thesis and the assumptions of a homogenous and context-blind taxi industry needs to be demonstrated. The following important omissions in the thesis indicate that Fourie does not demonstrate even a basic awareness of the structural organization of the taxi-industry: the lack of differentiation between the roles of driver and owner and how these roles can be played by a single person or a vast network of interconnected individuals (Sauti, 2008), the lack of mention of a taxi association, the lack of mention of national bodies of taxi-regulation structures like SANTACO (Sibiya 2009). Some of these omissions can be attributed to the fact that the thesis was written in the early 2000's and so did not have access to much of the writing that deals in-depth with the specific structures of the taxi industry (Sibiya, 2009, Sauti, 2008, Venter, 2013 and others), but work such as Dugard (2001) and Khosa (1992, 1994) were already available. It is tempting to merely dismiss this work then, as a poorly researched piece that privileged an easy to model idea of the industry over the industry's more complex reality. However, this review argues that this sort of modelling is not just poor research. A flat and homogenized understanding of the taxi industry invites this sort of model, which ignores context and contingency. This review then sees the work as a symptom of a flawed academic understanding and for that reason, takes it very seriously.

This is because the other assumption, echoed in earlier works such as Dugard (2001) and Dugard and Sekhonyane (2004) is that the taxi industry operates identically all over South Africa, and is thus entirely independent of the geographical, social, economic and historical contexts in which its physical operations are situated. Even assuming that this claim holds true for isolated taxi industry operations, it is made implicitly, and therefore defended neither through argument, nor through reference to existing academic research. The government

actions proposed in this thesis are based on these unacknowledged assumptions, and must therefore be treated with some caution. Khosa (1992) reminds us that different facets and factions within the taxi industry will have different attitudes to rules and regulations, and thus are likely to behave differently in the face of the increased government regulation that Fourie's thesis ultimately calls for. This means that the model of taxi operations derived from a homogenous understanding of the industry is unlikely to have any logical relationship with reality. This essay argues then, that especially from a transport planning perspective, there is strong potential for this fallacy not only to render government actions based on it ineffective, but also for it to cause harm by failing to predict a differentiated reaction to government interventions.

Once the existence of a local level of organization is acknowledged, it becomes harder to conceptualize a taxi industry that is not physically operating in various localities. This report argues that by acknowledging the existence of associations, the mental model of the taxi industry is removed from the abstract and placed in real space. Further, a working knowledge of the nuances, specificities, similarities and differences between individual taxi associations locate the taxi industry within the range of contexts and contingencies that it actually occupies. These contexts and contingencies are what give rise to local differentiation. Finally, the acknowledgement of difference in character and detail between associations facilitates the logical leap to the expectation that different associations may respond differently to government intervention, as was substantiated by the City of Johannesburg's BRT process (Sibiya 2009, Venter 2013, McCaul, and Ntuli 2011). This knowledge of different taxi associations and what makes them different from each other builds a logical barrier to the production of homogenizing and generic research like Fourie's (2003).

Quality information that discourages an overly technical approach to transport planning (which would favour the facts that are easy to model over the facts that are true) is useful in producing well-founded research. Such research can ground strong government and planning decisions. This new knowledge also allows the transport-planning field in South Africa to respond to international calls for a changed disciplinary approach, which is discussed in the final section of this chapter.

Taxis and taxi associations as social phenomena

This section discusses general background literature on and around the taxi industry, as well as the following texts identified as key for this literature review:

1. *Routes, ranks and rebels: feuding in the taxi revolution*, an article in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, by M. Khosa in 1992
2. *Minibus taxi drivers are they all 'children born from the same mother?'* a doctoral dissertation by G. Sauti in *Social Anthropology* for the University of Johannesburg, published in 2008.

The key shortfalls of the research that deals with taxis as social phenomena are that there is a limited volume of this research; associations are always treated incidentally, if at all, the research tends to be context blind, much of it is dated and all of it is conducted by non-planners and so fails to take into account planning concerns.

There appear to be two ways that research has been conducted on the taxi industry to date: research from outside and research from within. Most of the literature that engaged meaningfully with the taxi industry as a social entity or a phenomenon (Dugard (2001), Dugard and Sekhonyane (2004), Khosa (1994, 1992), does so from outside. Even if primary research was conducted, as in Dugard (2001)'s pieces it targets only the most visible aspect of the industry, the drivers. It then uses this single facet of the industry to support the articulated theory of the researcher, rather than as the substrate on which to build theories of the industry's functioning. So, the views of drivers appear in these pieces more as points of validation, rather than as pieces of data that are analysed academically in their own right. When primary interviews are used, the context and contingency of the drivers are often omitted, such as what routes they drive, whether they own the taxis they drive, what their relationship to their employer is, and critically, what association the taxi owner that they drive for belongs to. This builds the picture of the taxi industry as an undifferentiated homogenous whole, with any driver, regardless of circumstance, being able to become a mouthpiece for truths about the entire industry. Even where (Dugard (2001) and Dugard and Sekhonyane (2004) focus on the internal structures of the industry, the analysis does not acknowledge that the nature and character of each of these structures (local associations or the then extant, larger, mother bodies) is distinct, and influenced by its context and contingency, which Khosa proposes in his 1992 piece. Dugard (2001) extends this perception of homogeneity of the taxi industry so far as to claim that in-depth research on a specific taxi community conflict in the Western Cape, heavily influenced by local context and contingency, can be used to extrapolate trends and models of the evolution of taxi-violence for the entire country. This has problematic implications for how planning and city governance structures interact with this industry.

Khosa, writing in 1994 also treats the taxi industry as an undifferentiated whole, mainly represented by the then dominant South African Black Taxi Association, a mother body now

no longer in existence without an analysis of the power and political dynamics in the relations between this association and the vast and complex community he is using it to represent. Although the division between taxi drivers and owners as proletariat and bourgeoisie respectively may have expressed an important truth about the exploitation and potential exploitation between worker and owner, it is nevertheless artificial and imposed from the outside. Further research is required to determine whether or not the associations significantly curb exploitation, although according to Sauti (2008) and the findings of this report, which is one of their roles.

However, Khosa's earlier work (1992), while still taking the perspective of an outsider, gives a useful understanding of structural forces within the taxi industry that cause differentiation at every level of organization. His proposal is that there are two types of taxi industries that share routes and ranks: one that has an interest in abiding by rules and regulations, and one that has an interest in breaking rules and flouting regulations. This is a key logic step in proposing the idea substantiated by Sauti (2008) that both contextual and organizational factors could cause different associations to behave differently from each other. This idea is that for every group of drivers, owners and, critically, for associations who have an interest in obeying rules, there will be a group that has an interest in breaking them. This is a crucial tool for explaining some of the varied behaviours of associations reported in negotiations with the city (Sibiya 2009, McCaul and Ntuli, 2011, Venter 2013). It also lends weight to the validity of the question of the research as to what transport planners can learn from case studies of taxi associations and their perceptions, as it implies that the current homogenous, flattened understanding of associations as a unit and the taxi industry as whole (the understanding applied by both Fourie 2003 and Govender 2014) may be neither true nor useful.

In contrast to these, Gloria Sauti's (2008) master's research report takes a very different stance on both the conceptualization of the taxi industry and the appropriate method for studying it. Because of the social anthropological school within which the research is conducted, the researcher is an intimate part of the environment that she is researching, and engages with different levels and aspects of the industry, rather than gathering data about it at arm's length, or from secondary sources. Through in depth interviews arranged through formal channels she not only acknowledges and respects the organizational structure of the taxi industry in the specific area she focuses on, but reveals and explores much of the organizational functioning of the different structures. This is by far the most detailed and current research on the actual character and practices of a single taxi association. This review argues that this comes from the research method applied, as well as the rigor of the researcher in locating her research subjects (taxi drivers) in their full and complete context

and contingency. This method of interviewing to collect data and the method of writing it up in an almost narrative style have been very helpful to me as a reader, and have been useful in designing my own research. This method of research finds utility in studying things as they are currently functioning. It does not avoid engagement with local manifestations of the industry itself. This dissertation provides a context for understanding what a taxi association can be, by investigating in depth what the Randfontein Taxi Association at the time was. It provides useful background for making sense of the actions and statements of association representatives and members that are reported in the in-depth discussions of association negotiation processes that will appear later in this chapter (Sibiya 2009, McCaul and Ntuli, 2011, Venter 2013).

The interactions between the taxi industry and the City of Johannesburg

This section discusses the taxi industry's local manifestations as associations primarily in the context of the conflict over the Bus Rapid Transit system that the City of Johannesburg has been implementing in the inner city with planned routes that should serve the entirety of the metropolis.

The final four key texts discussed are:

1. *An exploration into the conflicting Interests and Rationalities on the Rea Vaya BRT*, an Honours Dissertation for Urban and Regional Planning, University of the Witwatersrand, by Z. Sibiya in 2009
2. *The lurch towards formalisation: Lessons from the implementation of BRT in Johannesburg, South Africa*, a journal article in Research in Transportation Economics, by C. Venter in 2013
3. *Negotiating the deal to enable the first Rea Vaya bus operating company: Agreements, Experience and Lessons*, a paper presented at the 30th Southern African transport conference, by C. McCaul and S. Ntuli, in 2011
4. *The Implications of Informality on Governmentality: The case of Johannesburg in the context of Sub-Saharan urbanization* by Gotz, H. and Simone, A., 2009

The first very useful thing that all of this research does, is acknowledge that the taxi industry practically manifests at a local level. Thus actually interacting with the taxi industry does pragmatically boil down to interacting with its local manifestation: the taxi association. This body of literature also has more nuance and context sensitivity, but views the interactions through a high transactive lens and focuses only on the single case of the City of Johannesburg Bus Rapid Transit negotiations. However, it expounds the immediate practical utility of knowledge about, and research into the specificities of individual taxi associations

within the geographical area where a transport (or indeed any other) planning intervention is to take place. It does this by casting associations in the role of direct stakeholders in the transport planning process, whose buy-in is fundamental to the success of large-scale public transport interventions in South African cities.

There seems to be an emergent understanding of planning that acknowledges the limits of government resources as well as the capacities of citizens and other stakeholders (Nielsen, 2011). This understanding dwells in the realm of the partial, the compromise and the acknowledgement of multiple kinds of sites of power (Nielsen, 2011). The negotiation rather than dictation process that currently defines the BRT programme in the City of Johannesburg (Sibiya, 2009, Venter, 2013, McCaul and Ntuli, 2011) stands as an example of this new planning thought. Thus, to tie the value of engaging taxi associations to the ability of the government to control and regulate them is out-dated at best. Further, to neglect the progress that can (and indeed, has) been made by negotiation with the 'some' or 'most' of the associations that are amenable to government processes, because there exist taxi associations that are not amenable to government processes is to abandon reality for utopia. Given the precarious nature of some of that progress (Venter, 2013), not to engage wholeheartedly with whatever facets of the taxi-industry are currently amenable to city and planning engagement is possibly to lose any chance of any engagement in future. Thus the on-going negotiation and implementation of the joint City of Johannesburg and taxi association BRT programme represents a key site of academic interest and discussion as it represents a turning-point both within the taxi industry (Venter, 2013), and the broader city governance strategy.

In this context the role of the taxi association, and its situation in the broader scheme of industry organisational structures, is most clearly examined and its relevance noted. The context for this examination is the engagement between city officials and taxi owners and associations over the formation of a taxi-industry supported Bus Rapid Transit programme for the City of Johannesburg. The city officials conducted a long and gruelling process in which legitimately recognised authority figures within the taxi industry as it manifests in the city of Johannesburg were sought, so that negotiations would have the power to bind individual drivers to the agreements reached (Sibiya, 2009). Given this context, it is important to understand the association's relation to broader industry structures.

The taxi association is the smallest unit of organisation, within a complex terrain of larger hierarchies and parallels. The national structure has two parallel organisations, the South African National Taxi Council and the National Taxi Alliance, which Sibiya describes as distinct organisations with some animosity to each other (Sibiya, 2009). From the literature it

can be seen that SANTACO has a longer history and a somewhat friendlier relationship with government (Venter 2013). Despite this, there was still opposition from SANTACO itself to the BRT (Sibiya, 2009), so while it is useful to know what camp the part of the industry in question belongs to, this does not consistently predict the membership's actions. This supports the idea that national bodies are an inefficient level to interact with in order to change the behaviour of members at a local, spatial level.

Sibiya claims that the approaches, ideologies and managerial styles of each camp are different. This is likely to affect a range of their organisational behaviours, as well as their relationship with and feelings towards government. That said, as in the example of the BRT given above, taxi operators that Sibiya interviewed in 2009 (Sibiya, 2009), claim that certain crucial strategic decisions can end up being made according to individual agendas and disregarding industry affiliations. This again reinforces the idea of the need to engage at a direct, local level in order to influence local level actions. Sibiya later argues that the position on strategic matters, such as the BRT can be determined by the feelings on that matter of the individual chairperson of the relevant association (Sibiya, 2009). Depending on the personality of the chairperson and their understanding of authority, discussion and debate can be stifled.

Sibiya does not differentiate between the jurisdictions of different levels of taxi organisations. That is, she reports, national level bodies seem to be able to act on local issues (Sibiya, 2009). The process and justification for this seems, at least from the NTA (National Taxi Alliance, in Sibiya 2009), to be because the people in charge of both national and local structures were the same. Participant 2 is an excellent example of an individual playing multiple leadership roles. There is also disagreement within camps, as in the case of local operators disagreeing with a decision taken by SANTACO (Sibiya 2009). Drivers are also a complicated and sometimes peripheral group who can be mobilised (Sibiya 2009).

The idea of legitimate representation that will have enduring local support is a very complex one. This report argues that a way around this problem could be more knowledge and interaction with the local associations themselves, who occupy territory or are located in the spaces in which development or interventions are planned. This seems to have been confirmed by comments from Participant 2. This makes them crucial stakeholders in spatial developments and changes to or impacting the route network registered to that association. Thus the argument is that understanding the structure, characteristics and territories of different taxi associations is of interest to the transport planning community in the Gauteng City Region.

In addition to the relevance of taxi associations as spatial stakeholders of their route-network, there is also the changing context of the taxi industry as a mode of mass transport. Venter (2013), in 'The lurch towards formalization: Lessons from the implementation of BRT in Johannesburg, South Africa' discusses the same negotiation process between the taxi industry and the BRT that Sibiya engages with, but from a later perspective when the process is appearing more likely to be lastingly successful. However, this article is focused on the taxi industry as an industry, rather than as a social phenomenon. Venter (2013) uses theories on the growth and life cycle stages of industries to make the argument that the primary push by certain parts of the taxi industry towards formalization comes from within the industry itself rather than because of the government incentives in the BRT program. However, the most crucial insight from this article is that the success and the slow, fragmentary transformation process are, at this stage, very precarious. This is precisely because, Venter (2013) argues, the motivation for the move towards transformation is for economic safety or economic gain of parts of the taxi industry. If those expectations of safety and gain are not met, Venter (2013), continues, the entire process is put in serious jeopardy. This means that the success of the transformation and relationship with government is dependent on the economic success of the Rea Vaya BRT program, which, Venter (2013) notes, is threatened by the following uncertainties: whether or not operating costs can be lowered by capturing the economies of scale that dedicated infrastructure and efficient labour practices bring; whether or not the current taxi market can be expanded to include new customers, currently those predominantly traveling by private car; whether or not tensions within the taxi industry between groups with various levels of support and antagonism towards the BRT may reach a point where they threaten the projects continued operation.

In relation to this last challenge, of the Rea Vaya being undermined by taxi organizations that do not buy into it, Sibiya argues that the planner does have a role in negotiations between the state and the taxi industry. Healey (1991) claims that there is a mediation role that can be carried out by planners in their incarnation as 'Intermediators'. This mediation could be between different factions within the industry, or, as is more likely, between members of the industry and the state, and has the potential to be instrumental in supporting the City of Johannesburg's integrated public transport initiative.

Sibiya, (2009) and Venter (2013) further contextualise the currently changing landscape as the industry builds into a fragile and precarious relationship with the government around new forms of transport. This can be interpreted as giving a sense of timeliness to the research in terms of ways in which planners can support urban governance by acting as Healey's (1991) 'Intermediator' between state and taxi industry.

This kind of city governance acknowledgement of taxi organisations has happened previously in isolated pockets. Gotz and Simone, 2009, discuss the project-based approach of an organ of governance in the City of Johannesburg: The Inner City Office, to the building of the Park Central Taxi Rank. The key facet of this writing is not the description of a successful example of a successful negotiation with various taxi associations as early as 1998, but instead is the broader implications of this project for how the city engages with informality more generally. This review argues that the actions and interactions between the city and taxi associations regarding the BRT project, have not been in existence (indeed they are a process in progress and very much dynamic currently) for long enough to have the same analysis conducted on them. They are the subject of writing that is more concerned with description than with implication and representation, and does not have the intellectual space and time to link the events with broader themes and trends in the city. However, the events of 1998 (the construction of the Park Central Taxi Rank) have had this intellectual time and space, and have been analysed as a metaphor and a departure point for examining the city's relationship with a specific kind (highly organised and rigid (Gotz, Simone 2009)) of informal organisation. The main findings of this paper indicate that city governance must evolve in nature and in its understanding of power and authority structures within existing informal spaces (Gotz, Simone 2009). It is not merely a case of repeating strategies for formal governance, but on a different scale or coded in different language. A new means of understanding and engaging with existing structures, identities and ways of being and making decisions in urban spaces must be constructed. A form of city governance that uses this understanding and engagement as a base must be employed for the effective governance of informal urban spaces and systems (Gotz, Simone 2009). This supports the notion that increasing an understanding of taxi associations and how they work, especially in terms of how their relationship with the city is constructed, may be of significant benefit to planners generally. Transport planners specifically engaging with the informal nature of many South African urban structures, systems and spaces, may also find these ideas useful. Thus research and discussion around taxi associations may be linked to broader discussions on what planners term informality and how local government can and should deal with it.

The changing roles of a transport planner

In her chapter 'Debates in Planning Thought', Patsy Healey (1991) identifies five archetypes, or role-models of planning at the time: the urban development manager, primarily concerned with producing and managing good urban space; the public bureaucrat who performs tasks assigned by politicians; the policy analyst studying policy and political systems, the social reformer who seeks to effect social change, and the fifth, who is the primary subject of this section: the planner intermediary.

The planner intermediary seeks to use social learning, human behaviour and various other social theories and techniques to achieve solutions desirable to all conflicting parties in matters of space use, shaping and governance. Although Healey (1991) notes that this position is complex and objective standards for its effectiveness and accountability are often obfuscated by the individual planners' own values and perceptions, she does label it as one of the cornerstones of planning practice and a role that is a valid part of the planning discipline.

This facet of the planning profession would seem out of place in a research study primarily looking at transport planners, who are often associated with the archetypical 'Rational Comprehensive' expert, concerned only with objective, technical matters (Kane, Del Mistro, 2003). This is, in part, because systems of human mobility (road networks, bus systems, bicycle lanes) have traditionally been dictated by objective speed and safety constraints determined by the physicals of road engineering (Kane, Del Mistro, 2003). Currently South African transport planning is dominated by these physical constraints, excluding consideration of context, contingency and the varied needs of the road user (Beukes, Vanderschuren, Zuidgeest, 2011). However, these historical concerns are by no means the only foci of the contemporary transport planning field, or even the ascendant or critical ones (Beukes, Vanderschuren, Zuidgeest, 2011).

There is evidence in the last decade and a half of a change in understanding of transport planning. While still a highly technical field, it is no longer limited to, or indeed adequately equipped by a purely technical view of the world. Kane and Del Mistro (2003) argue that transport planning is an increasingly complex and political process, and requires an entirely different skill-set to supplement that of the technical experts. This is because transport network planning is no longer only constrained by or responsive only to the technical and physical limits of speed, safety and construction techniques, but also must engage with the social and political constraints of budget, citizen needs, demands and mobility patterns (Kane, Del Mistro, 2003). Coping with negotiated, shifting and socially constructed values like citizen support for new construction projects, as well as the need for such projects to be seen as politically utile in order to be funded, requires skills and understandings of politico-social forces and geography that are more in line with Healey's concept of a planner as Intermediator than a traditionally understood transport planner. In addition to the political realms of the city governance structures that all modern planning projects are subject to, the realm of transport planning is intimately connected with management of stakeholders in the transport project proposed. This upsurge in public participation is becoming a central part of transport planning in the United States and United Kingdom (Bickerstaff, Walker, 2005). This means that investigation into a major stakeholder in transport in cities along lines that would

be useful to the planner as intermediary, and require investigation into relationship between the city and stakeholders, as well as the nature and operation of stakeholders and their perceptions. Projects like these are as needed for the future of transport planning as investigations into the technical aspects of road and rail systems (Bickerstaff, Walker, 2005). In South African cities, taxi associations represent such stakeholders as this chapter has shown and as will be explicitly demonstrated by this report's conceptual frameworks below. The South African context also lends weight to the urgency of moving away from viewing transport planning as a purely technical discipline. Porter, in her 2007 and 2008 works, emphasizes the need to look beyond purely technical solutions for transport in sub Saharan Africa, suggesting that this need may be even more pressing here than in more developed contexts.

As an example of the utility of including the intermediary role in the conceptualization of the transport planner, this report offers the recent BRT project. During the complex and political negotiations described between the City of Johannesburg and various taxi associations, the negotiators needed a broad range of social and personal skills, as well as a nuanced understanding of socio-economic and other contexts, (Sibiya, 2009, McCaul, Ntuli, 2011, Venter 2013). This report argues that this skill set is at least partially encompassed by the role of Healey's (1991) 'intermediator'. Thus, in the changing era of transport planning, both researchers (Sibiya, 2009, McCaul, Ntuli, 2011, Venter 2013) and theorists (Bickerstaff, Walker, 2005, Porter, 2007, 2008) are calling for a kind of transport planner who is more than a 'Rational Comprehensive' expert (Bickerstaff, Walker, 2005). This essay identifies such a planner, or city official as a transport planning 'intermediator' (Healey 1991). It is with reference to this emergent role that this research will investigate what transport planners can learn from understanding the taxi industry in a way not limited by homogenizing abstract models without context or locality.

Chapter 2: Conceptual Framework and Research Methodology

Research question

What is a taxi association and how can transport planners work with one?

The answer to this question is sought from direct research into what a taxi association is, and what its members know and think about the city (and therefore city transport planners).

This is also an investigation aimed at gathering information that facilitates interaction between transport planners (as well as other city planners) and taxi associations (as a key stakeholder in the transport planning process).

This is an investigation from the perspective of only one side of the proposed engagement, that of the association, rather than that of the transport planner. This is an intentional skewing, choosing the voice of one party over the desire to seek a balanced summary. In an honours report a meaningfully balanced perspective would be impossible given constraints on time and space. Rather than attempting a superficial balance, I have chosen to conduct a thorough and substantial case study of one side only. This research aims to demonstrate some of the possibilities, knowledges and opportunities that taxi associations offer planners. The exclusion of the voice of transport planners in this research is sustained by the nature of the research question. It does not seek to determine what knowledge, connections and powers held by taxi associations would be useful to transport planners. This would presuppose an investigation into the needs and responsibilities of transport planners in South African cities, and the assumption that those needs and responsibilities are both homogenous across the profession and geography of the country, and static in time. Instead, this question seeks to uncover what resources a single taxi association has, and what its attitudes and perceptions towards and of the city currently are. These attitudes and perceptions are important as the taxi industry, especially at an association level is a key, sometimes the key, stakeholder in city transport projects such as Rea Vaya BRT projects. Investigating the perceptions of transport planning and city transport planners held by taxi association members will provide information that may enable transport planners to engage more effectively with taxi associations as key transport stakeholders. Investigating the character and operation of the case-study association is a natural prerequisite to answering the research question. It also adds to the body of knowledge of taxi associations in general, which is important to transport planning as taxis account for a significant proportion of all mobility in the city of Johannesburg and Gauteng city region (GCRO, 2014).

Sub-questions

1. What is a taxi association?
2. What are the characteristics and operation of this (TEPTA) taxi association?
3. What are some of the perceptions of the taxi association members towards the city governance structures (Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality)?
4. What are some of the perceptions of the taxi association members towards the transport planning profession?
5. Are there opportunities for transport planners to facilitate better stakeholder engagement with taxi associations that can be gathered from these perceptions?
6. Are there opportunities for transport planners to expand the current knowledge body supporting transport planning that can be observed from these perceptions?

The questions can be grouped into two main categories: the practical knowledge of what a taxi association is and how it operates, which is currently absent from the literature except as an aside (Sauti, 2008, Sibiyi 2009), and the more abstract questions that deal with the perceptions of the relationship between planners (often representing the city) and taxi associations.

Questions 1 and 2 are primarily aimed at establishing some parameters of understanding around the organisational unit of the taxi association and understanding how context and contingency shape specific associations differences from the generic concept.

Question 3 and 4 examine the understanding of and feelings toward the city governance and transport planning structures held by the taxi association members.

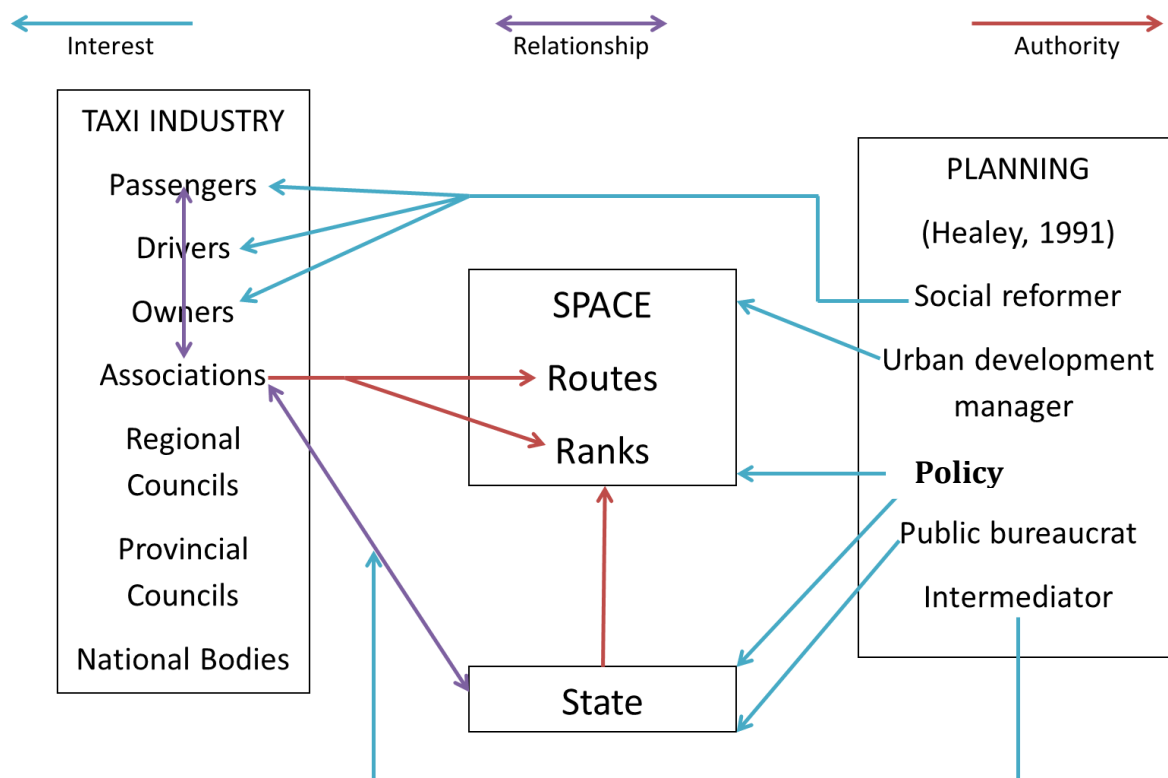
Question 5 explores whether or not there are opportunities for transport planners to better carry out the functions of planning in which taxi associations are stakeholder. In the case that there are not opportunities for better stakeholder engagement, the characteristics of the blocks to this improved engagement can then be analysed. If even this is not possible, the need for further research along this line established.

Question 6 explores the possibility of knowledge sharing between taxi associations and transport planners and city governors. If there is no possibility for this knowledge to be shared, then the reasons preventing it can be explored. If it appears that there is no knowledge that the taxi association or its members possess that is useful to the field of transport planning, then the option of sharing knowledge that the transport planning profession possesses, which does directly affect taxi operations can be explored. This knowledge is likely to be useful to taxi associations as there is an inherent interconnectedness between planners, the city and the taxi associations. This interconnectedness is explained below.

Whatever information is uncovered about what a taxi association is and how its members view the city and the transport planning profession, regardless of its content, serves to unflatten and contextualise the understanding of taxi associations in the transport planning field. This is useful in producing nuanced conversations about the taxi industry and how city governance structures do, should, and can interact with it. It is also important in terms of expanding the pool of data around taxis associations to allow better research and modelling of them to inform proposed government policy. This may help prevent research that leads to problematic conclusions about good and possible government action regarding the taxi industry, such as was written by Fourie in 2003.

Conceptual framework

Figure 1: Relationships between the taxi industry and planning

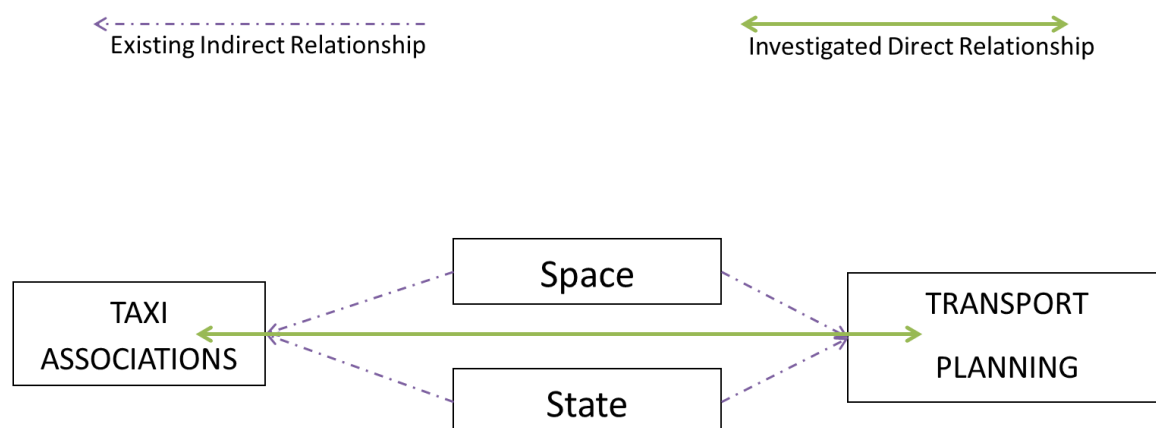


The above conceptual framework maps out the interests, relationships and authorities of the taxi Industry, focused on taxi associations, planners and the state. This is an attempt to ground the understanding of taxi associations in the context of shared authority over and relationships with space and the state respectively. From this map of the status quo, the links, by virtue of shared interest and authority with planners, begin to become apparent. There is a direct relationship between associations and drivers, owners and passengers. These are part of the group of regular citizens needing mobility, who are the traditional focus of the social reformer. Associations also have direct ownership and authority over ranks and

routes (spaces), and thus are indirectly related to urban managers because both have jurisdiction of portions of the spatial realm. Additionally there is often a direct relationship between the state in the form of the city governance, and associations that is of interest to planners like policy specialists and intermediators. Other state and taxi industry relationships exist, but the focus here is on the direct links between state institutions and taxi associations. This model shows how all faces of planning as described by Patsy Healey in 1991, have shared interests with some aspect of the Taxi Association.

This research will focus on transport planners as a planning subset, so the links (both indirect, which in this case means those based on shared interests, relationships and authority, in the manner of the framework mapped above, as well as the direct engagement which is a sub question in the research) mediated through space and the state, have been shown below.

Figure 2: Relationships between taxi associations and transport planning



Research method overview

The research questions were answered using qualitative interviews to explore the case of the Tembisa-Pretoria taxi association. This method is suitable because the information needed to answer the question is subjective, context-laden and of a rich, descriptive nature, which makes it suited to qualitative techniques (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, Lee, 1992; Cresswell, 2003). This was expected to provide information about what can be learned from engaging with a taxi association (what knowledge the institution has, what processes it follows, what its membership consists of, where exactly its routes are and others) that would be beneficial to planners working in the jurisdiction of a taxi association, or to the state seeking to engage the taxi industry as a provider of mass transport. It was also expected that this research method of unstructured, in-depth interviews over a period of time will begin to build up a narrative of some of the characteristics of the Tembisa-Pretoria taxi association and the perceptions of its members regarding the city. The research done on TEPTA can be

treated as a case study. The association is a specific entity with membership that is relatively fixed and clearly distinct from other groups of people associated with taxis (users, city officials, members of other associations) which makes it sufficiently bounded to be considered a 'case' (Henning, Van Rensburg, Smit, 2004).

The method of analysis, as described by Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004) relies purely on transcribed interviews, with no need for a pre-existing coding framework for the raw data. Indeed Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit argue that in order to better engage with 'messy reality' codes and categories used in data analysis must be derived from the data itself post-transcription in order to have relevance and meaning. Thus, the interview guides for the unstructured interviews, while employing a specific theme per interview, do not need to conform to a coding or organisational system as this will be generated from the data in the analysis of it.

Qualitative content analysis

The coding and categorisation approach of qualitative content analysis was used for finding and organising the basic factual information sought about the nature and operations of taxi associations. This is the kind of information needed to address the gap in the literature, where insider accounts of what a taxi association is and how it exists in the world are limited to incidental mentions (Sauti 2008, Sibiya, 2009). This would be the process employed to seek the raw information from which to construct arguments that would answer research sub questions. Although the drawback of this analysis method is that it can result in a naïve, thin description of a complex and messy reality, which ignores how that information is shaped and changed by the context and specificity of the individuals from whom it is gathered (Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit, 2004), in this instance it is an appropriate method. This is for two reasons. The first is that there is currently no way (and more pertinently, no way within the scope of this research report) to access this information in a form that is not shaped by the context and specificity of the individuals. Even shaped and changed information is preferable to no information at all, or information that is limited and incidental such as Sauti's 2008 work. The second reason that the findings produced by applying this analytical tool to the data are useful is in the ways that they may act as a catalyst to re-shape the conversation in planning research about taxi associations and thus highlight new avenues of research that will eventually produce more and better data.

Feedback of findings to industry

In addition to the main case study detailed below, a feedback session of findings to planners working on an appropriate project in industry will be conducted. The planning professionals

(Participants 3 and 4) will be asked if the results of the research were useful to them and if so, in what ways. This will help to show the relevance or not of this avenue of research to planners and other built environment professionals in the field. The feedback session will be unstructured and adhere to all ethical considerations detailed for the longer interviews for the case study detailed in the Main Research section below.

Qualitative interviews

The research method used to gather data to answer the research question will be a series of in-depth, unstructured, qualitative interviews with members of the Tembisa Pretoria Taxi Association (TEPTA). This data will then be analysed as a case study.

TEPTA is a local and long distance taxi association operating in Ekurhuleni, with a dedicated rank and headquarters in Tembisa:

Figure 3: TEPTA headquarters in spatial context



Images: Google Earth 2016

The association is currently engaged in negotiations with the municipality over the local BRT programme, called Harambee. This could provide a useful parallel example to the City of Johannesburg BRT experience and distil key lessons for the future Corridors of Freedom initiatives undertaken in the City of Johannesburg.

Currently the primary informant is a member of TEPTA with eighteen years' experience serving on the association executive committee. He has introduced me to the association president, who also serves on the regional and provincial taxi councils. These two interviewees have agreed to the interview schedule.

Each interview will consist of five different themes, each covered in its own, dedicated session of one hour. Each interviewee will be interviewed on each of the five themes. The themes are: your story, the association history, present and future, and an optional interview

to deal with matters of interest arising from previous interviews. Each theme has a separate, hour-long interview, and the intention is to schedule each of the two participant's interviews of the same theme on the same day.

1. Orientation Meeting: To explain the purpose of research, provide the guiding framework below (or a version thereof that has been modified by experience in the field), and indicate the time requirements of participation, being (ideally) three administrative meetings of thirty minutes, and five substantive interviews of one hour. To set up a period in which the interviewee can decide if they are interested in participating and give their consent, or must decline within (generally within one week).
2. Feedback: Provision of draft submission for comments.
3. Final Debrief: provision of printed copy of thesis and thank-you letter

Substantive framework

1. Interview 1 – Your Story - Personal Context Interview

The purpose of this interview, as well as to build context for my understanding of the world in which the taxi industry emerged from and operates within, is to unpack the context and story of each participant. This will help to determine and clarify not only the positions within and history in terms of TEPTA, but will also generate data to establish and clarify a set of discursive and narrative markers (Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit, 2004) for each speaker to help create an analytical framework for further interviews. It will also be important for establishing trust and understanding between myself and the participants and for setting a tone for further interviews.

2. Interview 2- The association's history – origins of the association according to the participant

The purpose of this interview is a kind of triangulation that attempts to understand the coherence (and therefore degree of subjectivity) of what should be a singular and fixed story. This interview also provides facts and builds understanding about the taxi association by linking it to its history and context through the eyes of two different members. Finally, from this interview on, the presence or absence of the city (representing transport planners) in the narrative of the members about TEPTA will start to give an indication of the members' perception of the strength and importance of the relationship between the association and the city.

3. Interview 3 - The association's present – The operation and function of the association according to the participant

This interview is about explicit and implicit fact-finding. Firstly explicit facts about the current operation and management of the association are very useful as this knowledge is not available through the literature. Secondly, implicitly several things are demonstrated through this question such as: differentiation between members roles in the association, hierarchy of functions and how the understanding of the association's operation as an abstract concept is congruent (or not) with the personal descriptions of roles within the association provided by the first interview. This is also the first interview in which there are planned explicit questions about the relationship between the city and the organisation.

4. Interview 4- The Association's future – desired and Feared futures for the association according to the participant

This interview is expected to reveal more about the association's attitudes towards the Harambee BRT system currently under construction and involving TEPTA and the Ekurhuleni municipality. It will indicate also to what degree the individual participants identify their future with that of the taxi association, which may provide some insight into the relations within a taxi organisation of the members to the abstract concept of the organisation as a whole.

5. Interview 5 – Issues arising – Optional Interview to pursue an important issue further

This interview provides an opportunity to explore an unexpected theme or concept that emerges in the course of the preceding interviews or to complete a conversation that was cut short because of time constraints in one of the other interviews. Examples of the question guides used are listed in Appendix 2 on page 91.

Ethical considerations

In addition to an application to the ethics committee, two kinds of ethical considerations have been integrated into this research proposal: Support and Discretion

Given that the interviewees do not form part of a vulnerable population, but taking cognisance of the fact that sensitive information may come up in the unstructured interview process, the following ethical considerations are proposed in addition to the standard ethics forms.

1. Supporting Frameworks for distressing content: This means the provision of relevant contact numbers within the university to allow the interviewees to access support for processing distressing content that may come up as part of the interview process.
2. Discretion: Because I am working within a hierarchical organization that may have experienced violence, there is a strong need not to jeopardize the well-being of the participants making public information that they are not comfortable being accessible to other members of the association. All interviewees will be anonymous, but this does not always guarantee a protection of identity. To this end, I will make participants aware that they can ask to speak off record, which means turning off the recording device. This is essential for ensuring that the research does not have a negative impact on the participants in ways that my limited knowledge of the political and social norms and structures within the association will prevent me from anticipating.

Chapter 3: Context

Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality

This section deals with the municipal context within which TEPTA operates and exists. It is important to understand something of the nature of the municipality (both in its community and governmental realities) in order to have a reasonable framework to articulate the perceptions of the association members that are to follow.

From the municipal integrated development plan for 2016-2018 (City of Ekurhuleni, 2015), Ekurhuleni has an even balance of gender in the population and the largest number being between the ages of 15 and 34, with the second largest age group being 0-4 years. Both the population and number of households are growing. The pressing needs for the municipality stem mainly from this population growth, in terms of service delivery shortages, ageing infrastructure and the need for more space and housing. In addition to this is the problem of unemployment and aligning the skills acquired by the youth to those that are going to grow the local economy and create jobs. This is the overview presented by the city governance structures of the municipality.

The focus of municipal management as contained in the medium term planning framework of the IDP is around an improved municipality to live and work in (create employment, improve public services, unite communities etc.) as well as to promote a good, nationally and provincially integrated local governance system that promotes community participation. These are some of the stated values of the municipality. These values and the dedicated chapter in the IDP on public participation imply an attitude of openness and support of community input on the part of the city. One of the key flagship projects of the city, the Integrated Rapid Public Transport Network, impacts directly on taxi associations, with the potential to engage associations as both citizens affected by the project and stakeholders with a business and livelihood interest.

Harambee

The Harambee Bus Rapid Transit system is a route of passenger buses making use of dedicated stops and lanes that will cover 7 routes and be implemented in 5 phases across the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality (Tshoba, 2014). This bus system is similar in principle to the Rea Vaya project of the City of Johannesburg, but subject to some key differences. The first of these is the fact that the buses used are low, rather than the high-floored buses used in Johannesburg. This has significant implications for embarking and disembarking as well as for stops and stations. The first phase to be implemented will span

55 km and link Tembisa and Kempton Park to Vosloorus in the south and OR Tambo international airport to the north (Sirivadidurage, White, Mott Macdonald, 2012). Part of this phase includes Route 2, which is currently under construction and was due to begin operation in July of this year (2016)(Tshoba, 2014). Route 2 Tembisa-Chloorkop-Kempton Park connects Tembisa to the city centre of Kempton Park and as such has intimate connections with the Tembisa Pretoria Taxi Association's region of operations. The Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality has adopted a similar approach to that of the negotiations eventually adopted by the City of Johannesburg with taxi associations affected by the Rea Vaya (Venter, 2013) (Sibiya, 2008) (McCaul and Ntuli, 2011). This means that the central field of interaction between the taxi association and the city is expected to be the Harambee BRT project.

1. First impressions of Harambee

On the informal tour of the route I conducted on 22-04-2016, the first impressions of the Harambee project are those of a transport system poised on the brink of successful operation. This is because of the following observations:

1. Dedicated branded buses in existence, currently being parked in a dedicated yard visible from the route.
2. Several simply designed, fully constructed stations
3. Several other stations in various stages of construction simultaneously (according to participant 1, who was acting as tour guide, this was because each stage of the route had been assigned to a different contractor, and so work could progress on different sections simultaneously).
4. Good construction management principles shown in the pavement that had been constructed away from the building to keep pedestrians out of the road, where some of the construction was taking place and provide them with a pleasant alternative walking-space.
5. The pride and excitement with which participant 1 viewed the Harambee, especially its focus on serving the Tembisa area

These impressions are subjective and do not indicate facts or information beyond a surface level, but they did form a part of my initial understanding of the transport landscape of Ekurhuleni.

How context affected TEPTA's operations

Several circumstances during the research period affected both TEPTA and the way I conducted my research. I have discussed these in the following section, as well as what I learned and how I responded to them. I have split these circumstances into two kinds: events that took place in the broader context of the community in which TEPTA operates and events endemic to the everyday operation of TEPTA.

The contextual factors affected the research schedule in three ways. Firstly they reduced the participants' free time, as other activities such as municipal meetings had higher priority to my participants and thus limited the times for scheduling meetings and displaced meetings already scheduled. Secondly, these events made the participants schedules even more uncertain and subject to sudden change, which made it much harder to schedule interviews or to rely on promised meetings. Thirdly, these events forced me as a researcher to try and predict impacts on the participants, and adapt my schedule to so that the participants were not negatively affected by the research undertaking in the changed circumstances post – event. These contextual events fundamentally changed how I as a researcher approached this project, by affecting the actions of participants directly, and indirectly causing me to change my actions in order not to detriment participants.

1. Events in the broader context

1.1. Harambee Pilot

From the beginning of the period that I had ethics clearance to seek interviews in, there were intense demands on the time of the TEPTA executive committee members who would form my participant group. This came from the Ekurhuleni municipality trying to launch a Harambee pilot project at the end of August 2016, which relied on TEPTA's involvement, according to Participants 1 and 2. This pilot project has meant that the municipality regularly scheduled meetings with little or no notice, with the intention (according to participant 1) of sharing updated data as quickly and efficiently as possible. Participant 1 has also mentioned during the administration meeting that the municipality sometimes prefers to fly members of TEPTA to other cities for meetings. The reason he gives for this is to facilitate increased focus and concentration.

1.2. Government Elections

The local government elections were decided on the 3rd of August 2016. This seems to have affected and involved TEPTA and one of my participants who also sits on local and regional taxi committees. I am not sure about the details of the involvement as I have not yet

been able to schedule a meeting with this participant in which it could be discussed. However, from the small pieces of information gathered as part of the attempted interview rescheduling process it would appear that either a local political party or the incumbent ANC municipal government made use of certain taxi services around the local election. It is not currently clear whether these services were from TEPTA itself, or one of the other associations that this participant serves through his position on local or regional committees. Subsequently there was a complication with the remunerations from the body he referred to as government to those whose services had been made use of. It is not clear at this time whether Participant 2 was responsible for paying owners, drivers or associations directly or what exactly his role in facilitating the payment was. My participant was in meetings over this issue Monday 8 August 2016 through the Thursday 12 August 2016 before he told me that the money had cleared. From the way he described the issue to me, it seemed as though he was playing a broker or mediator role between government (the client) and the taxi industry (the service provider) and that he was meeting with the members of the taxi industry who were awaiting remuneration.

2 .Events endemic to everyday operation

2.1 Breakdowns

Participant 1 had one of the taxis he owned experience an unexpected breakdown. To repair the taxi he had to source parts and workmanship all over the Gauteng city region. This meant his time was constrained and his schedule dependant on mechanics and other factors over which he had no control. It was impossible to schedule interviews with him while he had to attend to this problem.

2.2 Deaths

Participant 1 also had to interrupt the repairs he was organising to his taxi to arrange funeral proceedings for a driver affiliated with the association (not one of his drivers) who had passed away. This meant that not only did he not have control of his time during this process, but I was also constrained in being able to contact him. He answered one of the routine calls in such a way that I realised that I was interrupting something sensitive.

2.3 Opportunities

Participant 1 had to reschedule planned interviews to investigate and take up a special that Toyota Fourways was running on the sale of new combis, on behalf of the entire association.

Other things that affected the research schedule

University ethics clearance took far more time than was expected to be granted. The planned schedule had ethics clearance by the latest the start of June, and a data collection window from the start of June to the end of August. These three months were needed for the data collection for two reasons. Firstly, in order to address the wide range of required themes the interview process itself was lengthy (15 hours of interviews across 15 separate interviews). Secondly there were intense demands on the time of the TEPTA executive committee members who would form my participant group.

The late ethics clearance (granted only on the 19th of July 2016) reduced the length of the data collection window from three months to a month and a half.

Researcher responses

1. Late Ethics clearance

This meant that I had to reduce the time and content scope of the research programme to have a realistic chance of completing the research within the reduced time. I did this in two ways. Firstly, I discarded the fifth optional interview that was requested as a space to address unexpected issues that emerged from previous interviews. This reduced the scope of the research, as well as its responsiveness to unplanned insights made in the field, but did not prevent the research from being able to answer the research question. Secondly I reduced the length of the remaining four interviews from one hour to forty-five minutes, and scheduled two separate interviews with a fifteen-minute break between for each meeting with each participant. This reduced the number of meetings required from four to two, while keeping the requested length of the meetings the same. This allows for less time for reflection between the interviews, which might reduce the insight or effectiveness of the questions of the following interview, and allow me less time to adapt my technique based on previous experience. This loss to the richness of the research is offset by the ease of continuing themes across interviews in each meeting. The effects of fatigue on researcher and participant are still somewhat mitigated by the fifteen-minute break between.

Attempting to secure an interview

Table 1 in Annex 1 on page 85 lists the attempts to set up an interview with both Participants 1 and 2. This spans the 31 Separate phone calls made before the first successful interview scheduled. Participant 1 was my original contact, with whom I have a better, closer relationship. His portfolio differs from that of participant 2, who occupies a more senior position in the TEPTA executive committee. This goes some way towards explaining why

only Participant 2 responded to the payment issue from government, as he plays a fundamentally different association role from participant 1.

What that table shows are the changes in my patterns of scheduling as a researcher, as well as the change and scope of factors dominating both participants time. In order to contextualise the information below the following is relevant. Participant 1 has stated his reasons as wanting to help me progress with my education, to help me pass well. Participant 2 has stated that he has an interest in seeing the research completed and wants a copy of it because he believes it will be useful to the association. So, while it is very possible that the repeated inability of the participants to schedule a meeting could be due to them assigning a low priority to the research, this is not intuitive from their stated support, or their continued willingness to try and reschedule for a later time. Secondly, there has been a dramatic reduction in availability and increase in workload for both participants since the initial contact meetings I had with both of them at the end of June, prior to ethics clearance.

Another aspect of the daily schedules of both participants shown in Table 1 is the level of uncertainty about the duration of tasks. Instead of being able to confirm a date when they would be free, both participants routinely gave me times at which I could call and check whether the task they were currently busy with was finished yet. Very often I was told when I called either of them that they had been sure that they would have been free by now, but circumstances had changed. This is interesting especially in the implications for the kinds of time planning that are then rendered false or useless to both participants.

Interpretation of the process

1. Contextual embeddedness

The contextual embeddedness of this taxi association is demonstrated in two ways. Firstly through the immediate and direct impact of events that, to an outside researcher, have little or no logical connection to the association. I could not have predicted that TEPTA's schedule or running would be impacted by the local election, or the internal financial administration of the municipal government. Secondly, the contextual embeddedness of TEPTA is shown by Participant 2's connection to events and associations beyond the geographical or relational bounds of TEPTA, through his role in the local and regional taxi industry. This indicates that events that a researcher would have no expectation of or reason to believe were connected to the association had real effects on the day-to-day activities of association members and staff.

This interaction also demonstrates the role of taxi association members as mediators between service providers and clients. At this stage I am not sure if this role is specific to participant 2 as he sits on various other committees in addition to being the head of TEPTA. However, this role of a taxi association member as mediator hints at a more complex organisational role played by associations. This is also an example of, at least on the level of analysis that the scant facts currently support, a taxi association member acting as a government liaison on behalf of individuals within the taxi industry.

2. Personal and professional identities

In the actions of participant 1, what is interesting is that the first task (fixing the broken taxi), is a task that the participant is responding to in his personal capacity as a taxi owner, whereas the second (the funeral arrangements for a driver) is something that is association business. Both tasks seemed to be given equal priority. At least I got no sense that the work of repair the broken taxi was any less legitimate or part of the job of the participant, even though it was a private task rather than an association task. Although there are other possible interpretations of the significance of this, it would be interesting to find out what the participants' see as 'association work' and 'private work' and if they see themselves as 'association employees' first or 'taxi owners' first or if this is even a meaningful distinction.

3. Hurry up and wait nature of the industry

These two duties are both connected with the realities of driving in Johannesburg, and have the characteristics of being completely unpredictable, needing an immediate resolution and have complex sub-tasks associated with them. There are numerous tasks that have to be attended to immediately, necessitating the suspension of other activities, that cannot be expected or planned for but must be resolved quickly. This means that strict control of time or scheduling is impossible, and fluidity and adaptation are more useful business attributes than consistency and punctuality.

4. Implications for planners

Contextual embeddedness makes it hard to make concrete plans for an engagement process with the association, and impossible to fix a time frame within which meaningful engagement is assured. The fluid and dynamic responses of the association and its members to context appears to be a facet of the routine operation of taxi associations. This is crucial knowledge for a researcher or planner trying to engage the association as a key transport stakeholder, to be armed with in designing her programme or schedule.

This example of legitimate representation demonstrated in participant 2's actions lends weight to the call made in the literature review for further research into the association level as a logical and practical organisational level for interacting with the taxi industry as a whole.

5. Implications for researchers

This also lends weight to the questioning and critique of models discussed in the literature review that divorce a particular association from its context and contingency. Local events that had no obvious relevance to the taxi industry functionally dominated and restructured the schedule of the president of the organisation for a full week. From this it is possible to infer that there is a strong connection between the organisation and its context, which is not immediately apparent or predictable to an outside researcher. These connections, which play a crucial role in fully understanding the organisation's day-to-day function, would be excluded from a model that did not pay close attention to the context and contingency of the association.

6. Implications for all professionals seeking to secure interviews

The processes followed to schedule the interviews have considerable consequences for a researcher or planner, who is bound by schedule and times, and needs to engage with a taxi association. Firstly, the local context must be known and short-term events noted, like local elections, as well as long term processes, such as the Harambee BRT project. These things can affect the overall levels of availability of taxi association officials. Secondly, it is important to understand and engage the relative priority that the participants assign to the research meetings or interviews. Even if there is willingness to engage in the process that is likely to be subordinate to other processes that involve legal obligations, generating revenue and supporting friends and family. Thirdly, the lack of fixed schedules or reliable time estimates in the day-to-day activities of the participants must be taken into account. This produces delays and affects the planning of the participation or research programme that the participants are powerless to stop or affect, regardless of their willingness to help with the research. Fourthly the relationship between the researcher and the participant is crucial to the ability of the researcher to persist in asking for interviews, but needs to be maintained in specific ways. Not only through the obvious channels of respecting participants' choice of priorities and their time, but also through building in safe-guards so that the action of the researcher seeking interviews does not detriment the participant. For example, the need arose for me to ask participant 1 not to answer my calls if he was busy, as I unknowingly interrupted funeral proceedings/ arrangements for the driver who passed away.

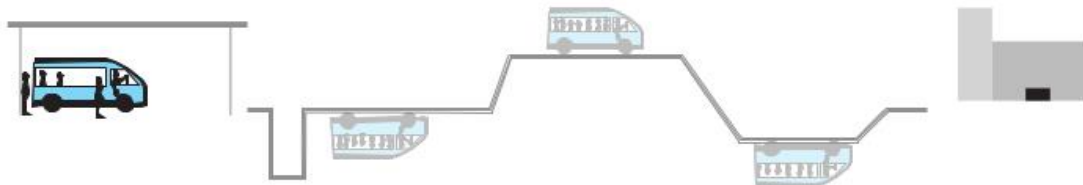
Chapter 4 – Findings

What is a Taxi Association and How do we Work with One?

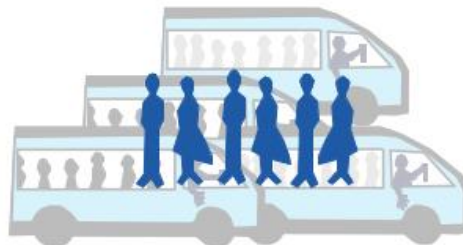
In brief, a taxi association is four things: the local level of organisation of the taxi industry,



a set of routes along which specific vehicles operate to transport passengers,



a collective of small business owners,



and a custodian of its internal communities and the community it serves and operates in.



To work with one means going through the proper channels, following existing protocol and being willing to work to the schedule of the taxi industry itself.



Figure 4: Graphical summary of the facets of a taxi association

Introduction

In order to answer the research question, this report uses the results of four qualitative interviews conducted with two members of the Tembisa-Pretoria Taxi Association to construct a working model of what a taxi association is as well as the channels through which planners and other built environment professionals could engage with one.

The model drawn from the content of these interviews is summarised here: a generic taxi association has four key facets that are deeply embedded in and affected by the context within which the association operates and the routes that it operates on. This means that associations are as varied and specific as the contexts and routes that shape them. This is an observation supported by the participants and clarified into variations of association details such as operation practices and earning potential. However, differences in spatial location and route are not the only cause of variation between associations. Factors like size of membership also dictate differences in association behaviour. So while this model may capture broad aspects of the nature of taxi associations, any particular taxi association is likely to present modifications of these facets influenced by its context, size and routes.

The data from which this model is constructed is drawn from the case study of an association belonging to the national body SANTACO. While it has been implied by participants that the statements made are also applicable to associations under the NTA, this has not been verified by this report. However, SANTACO affiliated associations make up the vast majority of the industry, with the NTA only recognised by government in Gauteng according to Participant 2.

The model is that a taxi association is fundamentally four things: the most devolved (local) level of formal organisation of the taxi industry, a collection of governmentally recognised and registered routes along which specific taxis may operate to transport passengers, a collective of small business owners and a key stakeholder in and custodian of the association's internal communities and the community it serves and operates in.

The formal nature and wider organisational structure of the national industry and the place of associations in it dictates the formal channels for establishing a working relationship between built environment professionals and associations. In order to establish a quality working relationship, built environment professionals would be well served by an understanding of both the routine daily practices of association members and operators in general, as well as the relationships between associations and other organisations.

Taxi associations as small business collectives

Buying a combi to use as a taxi and registering it with the Department of Transport is to become the owner (the word used by the participants was taxi ‘operators’) of a small business. In order to receive a permit from the Department of Transport, an operator has to present the letter of recommendation they will have received upon joining a taxi association. This means two things: Firstly, that every member of a taxi association is a small business owner, hence an association is a small business collective, and second, that the association structure is a necessary enabler of small business creation.

The recommendation letter (which is a fully official document bearing the association’s letterhead and the chairperson’s signature) is more than a legal pre-requisite for a taxi permit. It can assist with procuring a combi from certain dealerships and in securing credit or other finance plans. The recommendation letter is both a gateway and a jump-start into the taxi industry for the small business owner.

According to my participants, most operators start out with a single combi that they drive themselves. Saving up the money to buy and then pay this combi off is hard, Participant 1 notes. Both he and Participant 2 had something of an accelerated start in this regard, with Participant 1 being able to put down his severance pay for the combi and Participant 2 being able to use his salary from his full-time employment to speed up paying off the total. It took them both about two years before they could begin to expand their businesses, but Participant 1 reports that the average duration is closer to four years.

At the point of acquiring a second combi, hiring a driver becomes a necessity. The association, particularly through its training officer, attempts to educate its members about the labour law applicable to a small business, including things like Unemployment Insurance Fund payments, sector mandated minimum wages and hiring and firing policies. While the execution of these is the sole mandate of each small business owner, much in the same way that they are responsible for paying their own tax, the association appears to provide support, education and checking to ensure that the members can and do employ their drivers legally, respecting their constitutional rights. According to Participant 1 in his capacity as training officer, this is partly because it is the right thing to do, and respects the democratic transition of the country, and partly to avoid drivers taking members to the labour court. The association will sometimes, dependant on the case, provide support in court for a member. This role of support for the business-management and employee-management aspects of owning a taxi mark associations as support structures for these kinds of small businesses.

As the number of vehicles owned by a member increases, so do running costs, not just in terms of the maintenance and fuel for the combis themselves, but in terms of fees owed to the association. While association revenue generation practices differ, (some owning vehicles to cover running costs, some charging affiliation fees where the amount and collection period is determined by the earning potential of the routes), those that charge fees all do so per vehicle rather than per operator. The average for the industry seems to be that operators own three combis each, while in TEPTA most operators own four.

Both associations and the regional councils they fall under interface with local and national government on behalf of the business owners. This can be in terms of bringing problems faced by operators to the attention of local government, in terms of collective bargaining on industry-wide issues such as rank ownership and maintenance, or negotiation on behalf of operators in government projects such as the BRT system. Thus associations are powerful and active industry stakeholders, willing to engage governmental structures.

Finally, associations can give rise to smaller and more focused business collectives, as in the Top 11 Group, within TEPTA that Participant 1 describes. This group serves to streamline financial management and pool the financial resources of its membership, which is composed exclusively of TEPTA members and currently has between 22 and 23 members. Membership has grown from a starting number of between 16 and 18 to current levels and is still open to new memberships upon request. The group has a joint account with Nedbank in the names of Participant 1 and 2, into which each member of the group deposits an amount every Monday. This gives the group a considerable monthly income.

The Top 11 Group has a special arrangement with Nedbank that when funds in the joint account reach a certain level the group is contacted by the bank with a plan of how many combis they have the means to purchase. If they wish to make the purchase, that sum of money is transferred to a separate account for the specific transaction. This allows the group to benefit by buying vehicles in bulk, which they seem to only do from Toyota Fourways, which might imply a special relationship between this dealer and the group. The fund also seems to pay for a group insurance scheme and pays each member an amount in December for their personal use. As signatories of the account, Participants 1 and 2 are accountable to the other members of the group for spending.

Introducing Participant 1

Participant 1 is currently the training officer of TEPTA and operator of five combis. His story gives insight into the internal workings of the association, the day-to-day activities, worries,

hopes and weariness's of an operator and more basic details of the taxi industry from the perspective of an operator.

He worked between 1980 and 1990 as a truck driver for the company Smith Kline Beechams until it relocated to Cape Town. After six months of struggling to find a job he invested the remainder of his severance pay into buying a combi and entered the taxi industry. This decision was cognisant of the risks of the industry and the myriad personal responsibilities of the operator for the vehicle. He chose to join TEPTA (three years after its inception in 1987) because of friends in the association who helped him with the necessary paperwork and administration and generally made his experience of being a new member in the association pleasant and easy. The association was at that time chaired by its founder (or the individual named as its primary founder by Participant 1), Mr Ngwetjane.

Within two years he had earned enough to buy a second combi and somewhere in this period he hired his first driver. The work was hard and demanding at this stage, but Participant 1 had just gotten married and the increased personal expenses motivated him to carry on driving a combi himself, rather than hiring a second driver, so that he could save money faster in order to buy a third combi which would help offset the increased expenses. This trend of increasing personal expenses and expanding his fleet to meet them was to continue as his children moved through levels of schooling and the cost of living increased. He was able to purchase an additional combi about every two to three years, so by 1998 he had a fleet of five.

Between about 2001 and 2002 Participant 1 made the decision to stop driving his own taxi, and have the entire fleet operated by drivers he employed. He notes that when he was younger he would enjoy driving the long distances and the working the long hours, but as he got older he felt he no longer had the strength to actively participate in this aspect of the business.

His every day activities are divided between the work required as an operator to keep his fleet running, meetings for the Top 11 group, meetings as part of TEPTA's executive committee and the duties of the training officer.

As a taxi operator, during the interview period Participant 1 had to deal with two unexpected breakdowns of his vehicles. This required immediate and complex action. Not only did parts and labour have to be procured to get the vehicles up and running, but very specific parts and labour that struck a balance between cost and quality. In order to find these parts and labour participant 1 had to travel all over the Gauteng city region. He procured parts from

Randfontein and Krugersdorp, as well as the Johannesburg CBD and labour from a mechanic in Melville. Often these trips allowed him to save significant amounts of money, such as acquiring a particular part for R10 000.000 instead of the R12 500.00 it sells for at other establishments. This did force him to abandon previously scheduled commitments and added a good deal of uncertainty to his time management, such as when he was waiting for mechanics to complete tasks and did not know how long that would take. Participant 1 also noted the long drives to destinations were strenuous and tiring.

He drew on a specific and carefully accrued body of knowledge on where the cheapest and best parts and labour are available and the quickest and best ways to get there. This was demonstrated by his discussions about his niece, who has just inherited his older brother's taxi business, following his brother's retirement to Nelspruit. He noted with concern that she did not know how to navigate anywhere outside of Kempton Park, where she stays, and that meant that she was lacking essential skills and knowledge for effective taxi operation. He identified it as his role as her uncle to share his knowledge of where to go for parts with her, and to have her drive with him on his trips as a way of teaching her how to get there.

In terms of the work conducted for the Top 11 group, Participant 1 has a dedicated day of the week for meeting with the other members, which is clear of other business. There is also a weekly meeting between all the associations in the Greater Ekurhuleni Taxi Council area that participant 1 attends as a member of TEPTA's executive committee.

During the interview period there was a special held on combis at an establishment in Hammanskraal, which the participant had to abandon his previous scheduling in order to investigate to see if it would be useful to TEPTA as a whole.

As training officer, Participant 1 has a wide range of duties that go from managing the relationships within the association and between members and the drivers that they employ, to translating government proposals into language and ideas that members of the association can understand in order for them to make informed decisions. A current project of Participant 1 is ensuring that all drivers are registered with their employers for the Unemployment Insurance Fund, and that other labour laws are being upheld by the association's members.

Participant 1 also has two dedicated weekdays in which the drivers currently employed by members of the association come to him with grievances. He notes that the scope of problems is wide and varied and that he often feels exhausted by the sheer volume of them. He must also respond to urgent matters such as deaths of drivers.

In addition to these roles, the training officer also forms part of the team who deals with grievances between members or members and drivers internally. This is central to Participant 1's aspirations for the association, that it must behave as a family and protect its members from outside influence. His job is also to build links with the community as part of the association's outreach, as well as a programme to change the image the community holds of the taxi industry as violent and aggressive.

Participant 1 is looking forward to a more relaxed future for several reasons. First of all he will have less personal expenses next year as both of his children will have finished with their tertiary educations. Secondly he fully endorses and welcomes the Harambee BRT project and is looking forward to selling some of his combis and buying shares in it, as this will allow him more time at home to relax. He will retain some of his combis in order to offset the cash flow differential between the shares, which will pay out only at the end of the financial year, and the daily income from his taxis that he is used to. He worries for the impact the BRT will have on the association's future, with a particular focus on the problem mentioned above of the difference in cash flows between being an active operator and a shareholder in the BRT company. Ideally he would like to retire from the taxi industry in five or ten years, and stay at home and make money from investments rather than running a small business. He does not think he will be able to pass his taxi business on to his children and is rather considering selling his permit.

He notes the poor economy of the country and the high unemployment rate and the fact that he is not making as much money with his taxi business as he used to.

Driver and operator relations

A taxi operator is an all-rounder who is responsible for every aspect of the small business that a taxi is. They must be aware of maintenance and repair needs, cost-effective procurement practices, registrations and permits, tax, appropriate employment practices and sometimes drive their own combis themselves.

TEPTA's membership consists of owners of taxis who employ drivers for some or all of their vehicles. The taxi drivers are not considered members of the association, but strictly employees of the members. However, the association does concern itself with drivers in a number of ways. Participant 1, as the association's training officer notes that his duties involve making sure that the laws of the country are adhered to in the hiring, firing and employment of the drivers by members of the association.

Participant 2 notes that the issue of driver pay, specifically of sectorally determined minimum wages is another area where the association concerns itself with drivers. . This is because the minimum wage, reported by Participant 2 as R 4000 per month is sectorally determined; but the sector is not identical in its earning capacity. Different routes generate more or less income depending on the nature of the route and the amount of vehicles servicing that route. The amount of vehicle permits for a specific route is determined by the department of monitoring and licensing in the Department of Transport. Some routes do not earn enough for the taxi operator to be able to meet the minimum wage requirements of R4000 and still run a viable business. This leads to operators not hiring drivers along those routes and not being able to expand their business or create further jobs. Participant 2 indicated that the taxi industry as a whole is attempting to engage government on this issue.

The relationship between owners and drivers is not however always limited to that of the conceptually imagined employer/employee interaction. The relationship between driver and operator can often span decades (as in the case of Participant 1 and at least one of his drivers) and have a component of deep trust and support. Operators can sometimes assist their drivers in 'promotion' into the association, presumably by supporting the driver in acquiring their own combi. Even if the driver remains an employee of the operator, they still enjoy significant support. One of participant 1's drivers with whom he has a long relationship of trust was ill for several weeks, and of their own volition members of TEPTA collected money for him to visit the doctor (and indicated that he should spend the remainder on a nice meal for him and his wife). When asked in the interview if this sort of behaviour wasn't more usually reserved for family members, participant 1 explained that he wanted his association to behave more like a family, helping each other against challenges and threats posed by people outside the association. This feeds directly into the facet of associations as custodians of the internal community of drivers and operators. Accordingly, the association also plays a dispute resolution role when the relationship between drivers and operators breaks down. Participant 1 notes that this sort of resolution work falls under his purview as the training officer, with assistance from the Grievance Officer and the Discipline Committee. He also notes a high success rate of internal dispute resolution, with little recourse to higher institutions like the courts. In addition to that, there is a strong awareness of and respect for the constitutional rights of drivers in participant 1's discourse, which could be indicative of a respect both for drives and the laws of South Africa.

The association also plays an interesting role in terms of driver behaviour. Both participants explained that they could understand the factors that cause drivers to behave recklessly, such as congestion or the urgent needs of passengers for timeous arrival, but that they did

not condone it. Participant 2 explained especially that the association does not condone it and will not offer support to drivers caught committing a traffic offense because of the risk to human life that comes with that action. Participant 1 created the impression that unless the association is involved through an external complainant, the responsibility for the actions of the driver lies with the member who employs them. This is also the impression that Saudi (2008) created in her description of a disciplinary procedure at the Randfontein Taxi Association.

Finally, despite the fact that drivers are not employed directly by the association, the training officer has a day dedicated to making himself available to hear and understand their problems and attempt to resolve them. Participant 1 notes that these problems are numerous as there are between 60 and 80 drivers he is responsible for, and that they vary in complexity. He gave the following example of a problem that was easy to resolve: During the interview process, a driver passed away and Participant 1 was responsible for organising the funeral. Following this the drivers as a collective requested that he approach Hollard Insurance to secure a funeral policy for them. He was in discussion with the drivers about the appropriate premium by the end of the interview time. So there is an element of support and care for the drivers as a group, extended by the association.

Taxi associations as the local level of organisation of the taxi industry

All taxis that drive with a legal permit from the Department of Transport are owned by an operator who is a member of a taxi association. Thus, the association is the first level of organisation of individuals who own small businesses (taxis) in this industry.

The association has a dedicated contact person (perhaps the chairperson, or public relations officer) whose contact details are reportedly registered with the department of licensing and monitoring within the Department of Transport. Thus the association level is a registered point of contact with government. The association also elects specific representatives from its membership. The executive committee has eight positions: chairperson, deputy chairperson, secretary, treasurer, public relations officer, grievance officer, training officer, discipline committee (who appears to be a single person referred to as the DC) and sometimes a ninth, the deputy secretary if the association is a large one. Elections happen democratically and terms of office are limited to four years.

Associations have defined spatial routes (areas of operation) and rights to use specific ranks granted by the Department of Transport and the municipality respectively, and so are unique spatial entities in that sense. This spatial link or identity of the route means that associations

vary in size and their income is dependent on both the route they operate on and the number of permits to serve that route that have been granted. In this sense they are local by virtue of being shaped by the local context they operate in. Size ranges from the government-mandated minimum of thirty members, to associations that are over a thousand members strong, with fleets of over three thousand vehicles in operation, according to Participant 2.

Each association falls under the authority of a Regional Taxi Council, which has a defined geographical area (such as Greater Ekurhuleni) and seems to be rough equivalent of the level of municipal government. Regional Taxi Councils interface regularly with the appropriate municipal authorities.

Regional Councils in turn fall under provincial bodies, who also answer to national management. Although the levels of authority appear discrete, there is a key embeddedness in the system of organisation. Individuals can and do (such as in the case of Participant 2) hold multiple roles at multiple levels, weaving the different bodies together intimately. These individuals also own their own taxis to support their livelihoods and are thus still well connected with the working conditions in their local industry.

Introducing Participant 2

Participant 2 began working in the taxi industry part time, in 1987, driving his combi over weekends, while he had a full time job during the week. He chose TEPTA to join (at the inception of the association, so he experienced first-hand the founding of the route and the challenges faced by the fledgling body) as it was a new route; risky but not over-served by operators.

Participant 2 was a first-hand observer of the 1980-1990 era of the taxi industry in which both massive internal shifts (from being organised into competing mother bodies to being organised under either the SANTACO or NTA national leadership) and a drastically changed relationship with government (from operating as a 'pirate' organisation without permits until receiving a license in 1992).

He was also an active participant in TEPTA's strategic and ultimately successful out competition of the Tembisa-Pretoria rail link, and the capturing of a portion of that commuter market. He succeeded the founder of TEPTA as the association's chairperson, a capacity he has served multiple terms in. He is also currently the chairperson of the regional level taxi association structure: the Greater Ekurhuleni Regional Taxi Council. Simultaneously, he serves as the Business and Marketing Officer for the Gauteng Provincial Taxi Council. All of

these positions are under the SANTACO national leadership; although the NTA is also active in Ekurhuleni. This penetration of and connectedness to various levels of taxi industry leadership, combined with the fact that he still owns his own combis and thus is not alienated from the practical working context, gives Participant 2 a unique and valuable perspective on the industry as a whole. He has been using this perspective to provide key insights into the Harambee BRT negotiations with the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality.

The nested leadership roles mean that his greatest challenge in his day-to-day work is having sufficient time. He deals with this by delegating tasks, usually to his deputy, secretary or treasurer at association level and his deputy or secretary at regional level. He notes however, that sometimes duties come up that cannot effectively be delegated, and for those he must cancel other scheduled activities, and allow sufficient time for unexpected complications in their resolution. This gives an important insight into the factors influencing his time and how hard it can be to schedule meetings or interviews with him.

He is also one of the primary interfaces between the industry and local government, which means that he has a good long-standing relationship with the municipality, is aware of his position as a key local stakeholder and has a clear idea of what leadership skills and practical action on the part of local and provincial government is needed to work well with the taxi industry

His hopes for the working relationship between the taxi industry and the new mayor of Ekurhuleni are high. He notes that, prior to the elections, the mayor (then candidate) introduced himself to the industry and held a meeting.

Participant 2's hopes for the association are in terms of professionalising it until it runs like a standard business, paying dividends to members and being financially secure and sound enough to assist members so that they do not go into debt. He expresses the strong wish not to see another one of his members have a vehicle repossessed.

Historical context of the taxi industry (reported by Participants 1 and 2)

Prior to 1990, the South African government was not closely involved in the internal regulation and organising of the taxi industry. The internal structure was topped by 9 groupings of associations called mother bodies. These were: SABTA, TOPICA, NAFTO, SALTA, NDULDTA, TOP 6, FELDTA, LTA and FANTO. These mother bodies supported and protected their member associations, and conflicts between associations were often resolved on the basis of which mother body was larger and more powerful. For example, the clash over routes between TEPTA and a rival Pretoria-based association was only resolved

fully when TEPTA left its previous mother body (SABTA) which was waning in influence in the region and joined a more powerful one (FELDTA). These mother bodies were the highest level of organisation within the taxi industry.

In 1990 the government began a formalisation and democratisation programme in the industry that started with ensuring that internal association elections were inspected for democratic legitimacy. The end goal of this process was the establishment of a single national taxi council that would replace the mother bodies and act as an interface for government. In order to secure appropriate industry buy in for this council, legal and other professionals were supplied by the government to draw up a national constitution that was universally acceptable and elect representatives to serve on this council at an elective conference in Durban in 1990. At the end of the elective conference, due to the outcome of the elections, three mother bodies (TOP 6, NDULDTA and TOPICA) rejected the process. The others supported the process and allowed their member associations to be incorporated into the South African National Taxi Council (SANTACO). The mother bodies who rejected the council formed the parallel national leadership body the National Taxi Alliance (NTA). This was at the time rejected by government.

Shortly after the elective conference another mother body (FELDTA) decided to move from SANTACO to the NTA. This however was not recognised by all its members and caused a split within the mother body, with some associations choosing to remain with the SANTACO FELDTA, and others breaking away to form another iteration of FELDTA under the NTA. TEPTA was one of the associations that elected to remain within the SANTACO FELDTA.

SANTACO and the NTA currently do not have a good relationship at a national level. SANTACO is perceived by the NTA to be a sell-out to the government, willing to let the government act to destroy or control the industry, while the NTA resists. This means that the two national leadership bodies often have differing attitudes to participation in government transport projects such as the BRT. Participant 2 reports that this split between the NTA and SANTACO was a key cause of the violence that plagued the Johannesburg BRT negotiations. The two leadership bodies are not equal in size and range, with the NTA being much smaller and limited geographically to having a significant presence in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga. It is only recognised by local governments in Gauteng. While at a national level there are fundamental divisions between the leadership groups, in Ekurhuleni enough common ground has been established between SANTACO and the NTA that there is a joint committee participating in the Harambee BRT negotiations. This common ground was partly established by SANTACO's attendance of a strike, which eroded the NTA

Parallel Leadership Structures in the Taxi Industry and the Historical Basis for the Split

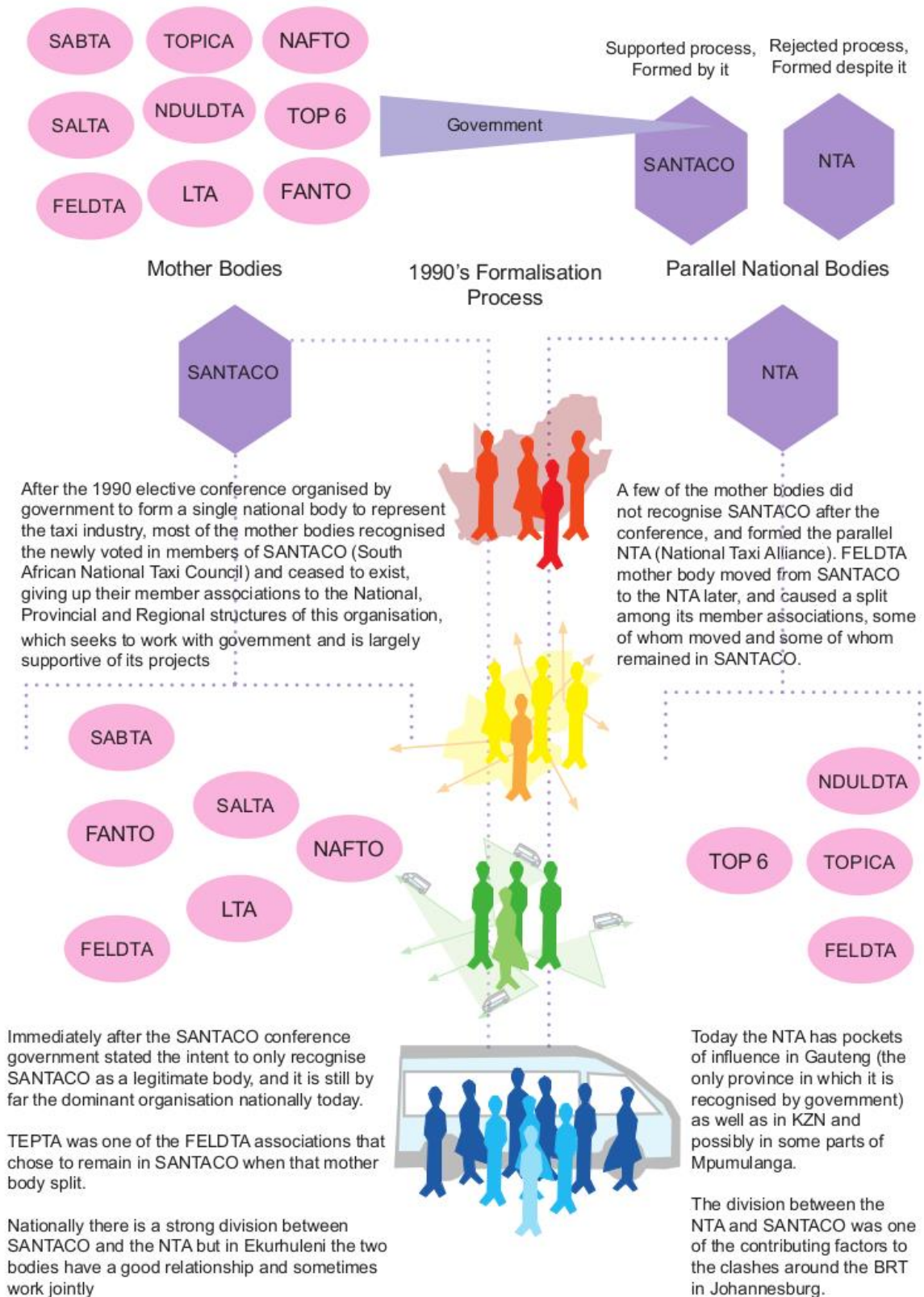


Figure 5: Graphical summary of the parallel leadership structures

perception of SANTACO as being the darling of the government, willing to take instruction.

The mother bodies no longer exist as such, having been replaced by the structures under either SANTACO or the NTA. However this was not an immediate transition as TEPTA moved from being a SABTA association to FELDTA in order to deal with the threat of the Pretoria association wanting to claim their routes, as late as 1993.

Prior to the 1990 elective conference, the region in which Tembisa is located fell under the purview of the Region 17 Regional Council of SABTA. Around 1987 or 1988, violent clashes between associations were rife in the areas surrounding Tembisa. Fears of this violence spreading prompted the then chairman, Mr Mkwanzu to investigate the state of the industry and its routes within the township. At that stage there was no organisation, and while discrete associations existed, there was overlap and sharing of space and routes. Mr Mkwanzu constructed and implemented a system of divisions of space, to transform the free-for-all into specific and singular routes that did not cross or interact with each other. These separated routes are still in use today. Both Participant 1 and 2 report that this separation not only prevented the spread of inter-association violence in the SABTA era, but laid foundations for a good and non-competitive relationship between the different associations that still exists today.

Taxi associations as routes

Taxi associations are differentiated from each other primarily by the areas they operate in. These areas are defined by the routes that are licensed to the associations by the Department of Transport. The properties of the routes also directly influence the profitability and organisational practices of the association. For these reasons, associations are, in a very real way, routes.

A route, rather than being a pre-set combination of streets, like a bus route, is a specific departure and destination point. The departure point is often a rank at which that association has ranking rights. Ranks are constructed by and property of the municipality responsible for the area. This means that only the municipality has jurisdiction over rank cleaning and maintenance. Despite this, the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan municipality took a very long time to put cleaning contracts for the ranks out to tender, and when the tender went out, there was an intervention by the Great Ekurhuleni Regional Taxi Council in order to protect the jobs of the existing informal cleaners. There are also outstanding negotiations between the Regional Council and the Municipality regarding a rank replacement fee that was collected from the associations using the various ranks.

Each rank may be used by multiple associations; provided they have been granted the ranking rights by the municipality and each association may use multiple ranks. Each association using the rank will have their own queue marshals, who organise passengers for that association, and are employees of that association. Even if multiple associations depart from the same rank, each route is unique and operated on only by one association. There are no shared routes. This is to avoid conflict and clashes between associations.

The procedure for the licensing of each route to only one taxi association is sometimes corrupted by officials within the Department of Transport. Participant 2 describes the form of this corruption as the creation of a route that is essentially parallel to an existing route with only trivial differences.

This situation results in two associations essentially having legitimate documentation to use the same route, which precipitates violent clashes. Participant 2 notes that the process eventually ends in the high court, but this is usually after violence and destruction of property. The high court finds that the correct legal process has not been followed and revokes one of the association's rights to the route. However, the officials responsible are subjected only to internal disciplinary processes. The Regional Council on which Participant 2 serves has long been negotiating for a more transparent discipline process.

Taxi associations' communication and business strategies

TEPTA was founded as a parallel transport route to the railway linking Tembisa and Pretoria. As such it makes for an interesting example of how the taxi industry can use its innate attributes to compete, in this case successfully, with other modes of transport. Central to establishing new routes is also the ability to communicate efficiently and effectively with the passengers who form the customer base. TEPTA's inception is also an interesting example of these communication strategies as communicating the existence of a Tembisa-Pretoria route was complex and counter-intuitive because of the presence of the railway.

TEPTA's founders aimed to first target a very specific passenger group. This was passengers who would normally take the train from Tembisa to Pretoria Station in order to catch a train that departed from Pretoria to Polokwane (then Pietersburg). Because there were only a certain number of trains that left for Pietersburg, there was time pressure on these passengers to make their connection. Observing that sometimes the train to Pretoria would leave Tembisa late, experience breakdowns or sometimes not stop in Tembisa at all, TEPTA's founders attempted to capture this passenger market by providing them the reliability that the rail system was not providing.

In order to establish this customer base, it was first necessary to make passengers aware of the existence of the route. The departure point (where the rank would eventually be built) was close to the Tembisa train station and operators would attract the attention of train passengers by shouting from the pavement. It was hard at first as using a taxi for trips that had previously been only by train was counter-intuitive, but after a year the route was well known and well used.

The next challenge in communication to potential passengers was to develop a hand-signal that would immediately communicate the destination. The hand-signal serves as rapid, non-verbal communication. The sign used in Tembisa to indicate a Pretoria destination is the index finger raised straight up. Beyond the hand signal, association stickers displayed in the back windows of combis indicate the association to which the taxi belongs. Because the identity of the association is intrinsically linked with the main route, this communicates clearly to passengers that this combi will visit a rank at which this or other combis belonging to this association will depart for the final destination, in this case, Pretoria. TEPTA has the practice of not charging for trips to the rank, but only for the intended trip, the connection to the final destination.

A branch of the Zionist Christian Church opened in Marabastad, creating a new destination that a dedicated group of worshipers (some living in Tembisa) would need regular transport to at specific times. A group of these worshippers, unhappy with travelling on the train to Pretoria Station and then having to take a taxi, approached TEPTA for direct transport to the church. As there were sufficient numbers of passengers to fill taxis, TEPTA complied, creating a dedicated service to meet the specific need. A similar service was started when, post 1994, a large hawkers' market opened in Marabastad. Instead of being approached by passengers, TEPTA identified that there would be a need to transport people living in Tembisa directly to the market and then home again with their purchases. This ability to respond to unpredictable opportunities is an advantage that the taxi industry has over other modes of mass transit like trains and buses

Taxi associations as community custodians

Both Participant 1 and 2 spoke directly or indirectly about a duty of care to the three community groupings that taxi associations are connected to. These groupings are: the internal association community of members and drivers, the community of passengers transported by the association and the community residing in the local area that the association operates in. This support manifests in different ways, both explicitly intentional and seemingly naturally occurring as a result of the way the industry is run.

Both operators and the drivers they employ are supported by TEPTA. This is intentional, as apparent from the language that ranged from 'helping one another' to 'part of a community' to 'being a family' used by Participant 1 in describing the organisation and how it works, and also from Participant 2's statement that his dream for the association is to see it powerful enough to protect its members from debt. This support is also illustrated in the described institutional practices such as internal dispute resolution, legal support, and support in sound employment practices (such as registration for and payment of UIF).

In addition to these established institutional practices there are the spontaneously triggered actions in response to unexpected events. Participant 1's establishment of a funeral plan with Hollard Insurance for the drivers is an example of the association using its institutional resources (the time and labour of the training officer) to meet an unplanned for need.

Beyond the internal community, associations also meet the needs of the community of passengers they transport. Participant 2 notes that often compromises are made regarding waiving of fares for travellers who cannot afford transport or require other assistance.

There is an awareness of circumstance and need in this industry and it is accommodated in a way that no other commercial or public mass transit system can. He mentions an industry ethos of supporting and protecting vulnerable passengers that he attributes to the idea that 'taxi people' see their responsibility as a passenger's trip from start to finish. Participant 2 illustrates this with the example of a married female passenger who became stranded without resources in Johannesburg, while trying to meet up with her husband. Participant 2 lists the three most pressing concerns for the passenger as a meal for that day, a safe place to sleep and finally, long distance transport back home to her family. He points out that no government institution has the facilities to provide these things to this passenger, nor the financial flexibility because of their internal procurement procedures to provide her with money to meet these needs herself. He continues that the taxi association responsible provided the meal and accommodation and raised money amongst the membership in order to send her safely home. This he attributes to an ethos within the industry.

In a way that neither participant claimed as an intentional project, associations, through ranks and headquarters are significant local employers of people from the direct community, and communities at a distance. This is through the employment of queue-marshals, night security and cleaning staff for the ranks and administrative and ground staff for headquarters

Ranks also serve as a space for supporting livelihoods through hawkers who sell wares to passengers and drivers and car-washers, some of whom travel great distances to earn an

income washing combis.

Finally, there is an explicit outreach aspect of some taxi associations, such as TEPTA. This manifests in the organisations willingness to avail itself and its resources to support local initiatives. The example cited of this by Participant 2 was the donation of four combis and drivers to support the Tembisa Fun Walk, organised by the local tourism department. This is an explicit sacrifice of revenue-generation in return for no reward. Participant 2 also noted that most members of taxi associations live in the areas in which they operate as businessmen in, giving them a vested interest in and knowledge of the needs and views of community, as they themselves form a part of it.

Participant 1 notes that his duties as training officer of TEPTA include seeking out needy members of the Tembisa community, from under-resourced schools, to families that have had an unexpected death and cannot afford a funeral. These groups are then offered TEPTA support in terms of donations. The motivation behind this task in terms of the association mandate is to shift the community perception of 'taxi people' as violent and aggressive, and reinvent the image of the association as a community support structure.

Taxi associations and the other organisations they work with

The association is absolutely not in a vacuum. There are strong connections between other bodies internal and external to the industry. Sometimes these relationships are a one-way exercise of influence or transaction, in other instance, the relationship allows for transformation and changes in behaviour of both parties.

The most key relationship to understand is that between the association and the relevant Regional Taxi Council that it belongs to. This is because many other relationships that the taxi association would otherwise have with government are mediated through the Regional Council. The council –association relationship has here been modelled in two ways. The Council has the authority to enforce regulation (or act as an authority figure to resolve disputes within a taxi council) and receives affiliation of membership funds from the associations in order to cover its own costs. However, associations also have the ability to bring grievances and problems to the attention of the regional council who will then champion the causes with local government or escalate the problems higher up the industry leadership chain. This is drawing from the case where the chairman of the association studied was also the chairman of the regional council, so is likely an outlier and may not be indicative of the general relationship.

The regional council appears, possibly due to the similarity of the spatial jurisdictions

involved, to be the main interface for local government as a whole with the taxi industry. This is drawing from the tendency of both participants to make verbal distinctions between a somewhat nebulous entity they called 'government' (which seemed to be restricted to government at a local and provincial level) and specific government intuitions such as the Department of Transport and Department of Labour. Interaction with government on broad projects like the BRT or the previous push from the taxi industry for high occupancy vehicle lanes seems to reside at the Regional Council level. This includes long-running negotiations with the municipality over issues such as the maintenance of ranks. This seems to imply a procedure of escalation, where the relationship between the association and the regional council allows certain issues to be funnelled to regional level and addressed there as part of a distinctly two-way interaction between the council and 'government'.

In addition to this escalation of issues, Participant 2 as the regional council chairman is well aware of what he perceives as the power and social capital of the taxi industry. He notes that the industry is a key local stakeholder in issues and should be treated by the municipality and broader government as such. He also notes that the taxi industry is key to keeping the economy of the country functioning and does have the ability to halt economic activity seriously through strikes. Based on this, he is somewhat confused and unhappy with the municipal and government tendency to treat the taxi industry as supplicants, or even employees (in the same way that subsidized government buses like PUTCO or Johannesburg's METRO BUS are treated). The taxi industry is currently unsubsidised (although Participant 2 does not understand why this is the case given the industry's strategic importance) although the negotiation around structures that would enable government subsidies for the taxi industry is on-going. Given this, Participant 2 maintains that what is often perceived as industry arrogance is simply an attitude of treating government in the same manner as they are treating the industry. Thus if the relationship is founded on disrespect and carelessness, this is the attitude that participant 2 maintains the taxi industry will adopt with government.

He also notes that for a successful relationship with the taxi industry, two things are required. Firstly regular face-to-face meetings between industry representatives (presumably at a Regional Council level) and municipal leadership (in the case he described he was specifically asking for one meeting every three months with the mayor of Ekurhuleni). If these meetings are neglected or cancelled or if communication is reduced to emails from leadership's administration staff, this is not acceptable to the taxi industry and the relationship will not be productive or friendly. Participant 2 bases his optimism for the future relationship with the municipality on one such meeting organised between the industry and

Taxi Associations and the Organisations they work with

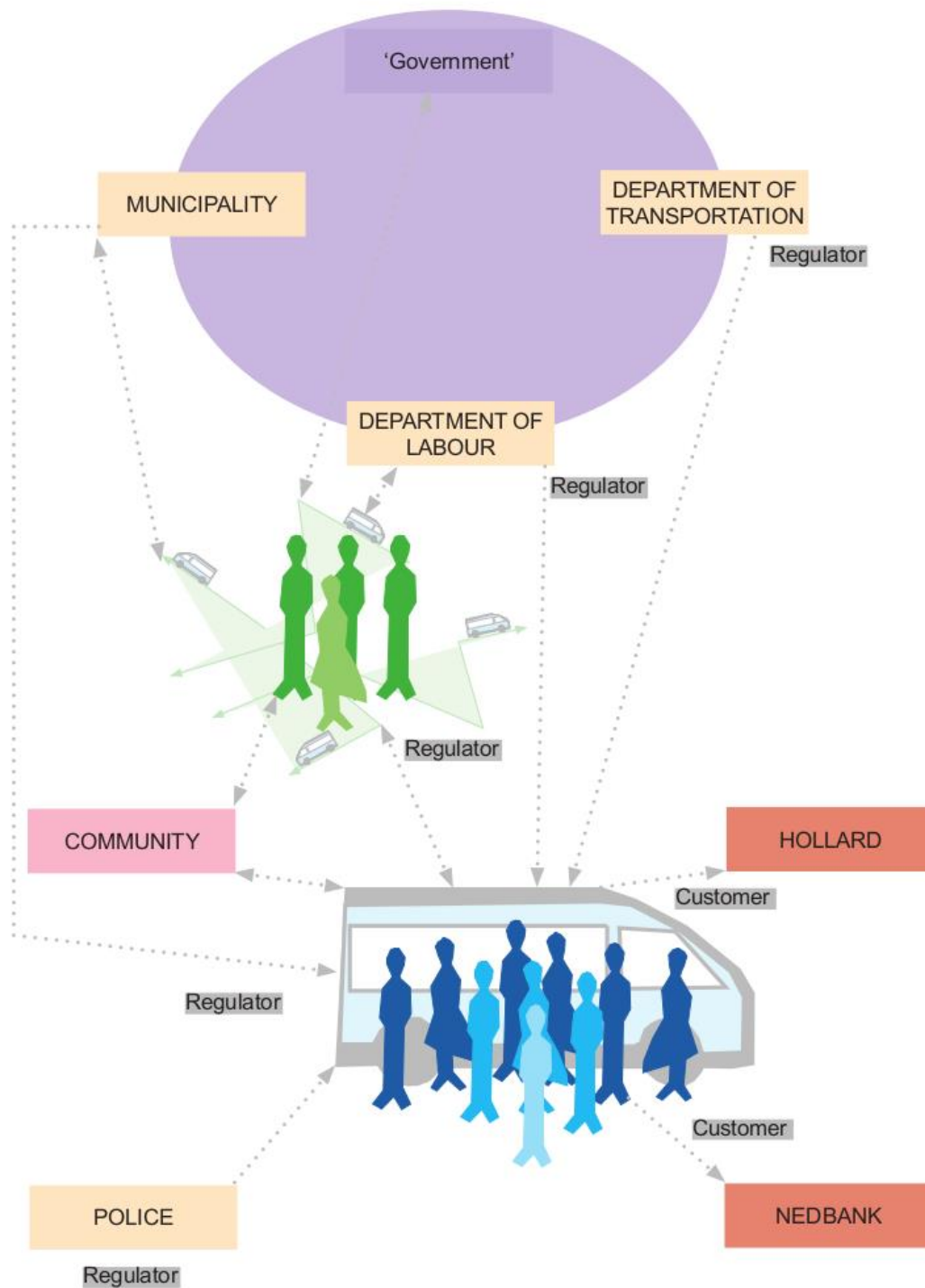


Figure 6: Relationship web between associations and others

the then mayoral candidate, now mayor, where issues could be discussed and resolved.

Secondly Participant 2 notes that much of the relationship between industry and government is determined by the attitudes towards the taxi industry held by Members of Executive and Municipal Councils (MECs and MMCs) in transport. He notes that there is a strong provincial variation in how government interacts with the taxi industry, with the Western Cape, Limpopo and KwaZulu Natal having a much better relationship. Either the regional or provincial structures of the taxi industry have attempted to bring this up with the current MEC, exhorting him to approach his colleagues to understand their approach; however nothing has come of it. Participant 2 identifies the current MEC as not really having a passion for the taxi industry and attributes problems faced by the industry, such as unsustainably long waits for permits, to this fact.

He also notes that there are personal qualities of an MMC that can make it easier or harder for the taxi industry to maintain a good relationship with government. He describes the personal quality of an MMC that poses the biggest problem to the industry as 'hardness'. If an MMC is 'hard' (which from the context is likely to mean authoritarian, unwilling to listen or engage as well as disrespectful towards the industry) the industry cannot work with him. In a previous instance of this, Participant 2 notes that an MMC in Ekurhuleni became impossible to work with and that an industry representative (possibly the participant himself) raised this with the mayor. The perception of Participant 2 is that this resulted in the MMC being assigned a different portfolio to work with. There is then at least the strong perception held by Participant 2 that the taxi industry holds a great deal of political power in its relationship with local government.

In terms of the association level, specific government departments as well as the municipality act as direct regulators of the association. The Department of Transport regulates permits and routes, the Department of Labour regulates conditions of employment and the municipality governs ranks and ranking rights. The quality of the direct relationship between these bodies and the association seems, based on comments by both participants, to be largely affected by how much bureaucratic complication an association incurs and how well they obey regulations. Larger problems, such as the difficulties of upholding a sector-wide minimum wage for drivers, given the drastic fluctuation of the earning potential of routes, are addressed at the regional council, rather than the association level.

In addition to the one-way relationships with the regulating bodies (including the police), associations, or sub-groups like the Top 11 Group (see Section 1) act as direct customers to private enterprises such as Hollard (for driver insurance), and Nedbank (for Top 11 finance).

TEPTA's future and challenges

Participant 1 introduces and substantiates the idea that being a taxi operator is a profession that very much relies on constant energy and time inputs, and that certain aspects of it, like driving, are very much a young man's game. He also illustrates that over time, operators tend to want more peace and relaxation and this coupled with the reduction in expenses when children become independent, will mean members sell or pass their business on and go into retirement. It is also possible to become a silent member of the association, and still own combis, but delegate the more active aspects of operation as well as association decision making to a proxy. TEPTA has at least seven of these silent operators, who are mostly pensioners.

This means that an aging membership changes the resources that the association has to run with, as members' behaviour changes as they get older. It is in this context that Participant 2's worries about the aging membership seem to be grounded. In order for the association to continue running, a core of experienced and knowledgeable young members is needed, who are not present within the association now. Participant 2 worries that the programme of youth development the he is currently designing will be implemented too late to address the problem. Both participants also noted fundamental changes in the industry at large. These changes reflect the fact that the running costs of the industry have risen dramatically (in line with the costs of living) from parts to petrol. The industry also makes less money, partly because people can afford to travel less due to the increased cost of living, partly because congestion and development have increased the turn-around time of trips and so reduced the total amount of trips possible and finally because the industry has grown larger with the promotion of drivers and new operators entering it and so what profits are available are spread over a larger pool. The combination of these three facts means that taxi operation is a far less lucrative profession than it was when either participant entered it. The industry simply does not make as much money as it used to, to the point where the survival of existing operators is threatened.

The BRT presents both a crucial opportunity and a strong challenge to the association's future. On the one hand it offers the industry transformation that Participant 2 identifies as much needed. Because of its structure and implementation it should bypass the current practices of official corruption around routes. It should also be able to bypass the problems of congestion by having dedicated lanes, and by its presence should hopefully reduce the number of cars on the road. This kind of innovation and transformation is noted by participant 2 as crucial to the meaningful survival of the industry.

On the other hand the BRT represents a challenge. Its presence will reduce taxi income as there will be fewer passengers available to transport. For members who plan on buying shares, the cash flow becomes a problem. The industry is used to daily income from vehicles, which, Participant 1 notes, makes monthly accounts easy to pay. Shares will only pay out yearly, at the end of the financial year, which greatly complicates monthly payments. Participant 1 then intends to keep some of his taxis in order to compensate for the cash flow problems and ensure he has some income available in the interim before the shares he is planning to buy pay out. He welcomes the opportunity to be less hands on that this project offers him, despite knowing the BRT will reduce his income.

Finally, a challenge that is present in the entire industry, and compounds TEPTA's problem with aging members, is the way female operators are treated within the industry. Female operators tend to be susceptible to bullying and other poor treatment by their male drivers. Many of the small number of young members that TEPTA has are women, and so this problem is felt even more keenly by the association. The industry as a whole is attempting to find ways towards a solution for this problem, but specific plans have not yet been made.

Taxi associations and the BRT

The Harambee Bus Rapid Transit system that the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality has been working on implementing since 2004 or 2002 (according to Participant 1) is a project that rests on association cooperation.

Accordingly, the project has been negotiated and discussed in high levels of detail with both the local associations (TEPTA being one of them) and the Regional Taxi Council. There is a joint committee of negotiators representing the interests of the taxi industry, composed of affiliates of both parallel national leadership structures: SANTACO and the NTA. As an example of the kind of engagement, Participant 2 explained that, operators had noticed that construction work on stations and lanes had fallen significantly behind schedule in several instances. The committee then took this observation to the municipality. This then spurred re- negotiations of the service level agreements between the municipality and the industry for the BRT operation, based on the changed completion dates and phasing proposals.

Participation happened at a number of levels, not only within the negotiation of details. The municipality sponsored trips to see other BRT systems in action for key players in the negotiation process. Participant 1 (as well as Participant 2) was taken on trips to Cape Town and Durban to view the South African BRT examples. Participant 2 visited Bogota in Columbia to see the effect the seminal BRT system had on that city. He gained a great

respect for both the BRT project and co-ordinated mass public transport, in terms of the efficiency and equality effects they had on Bogota

As training officer Participant 1 had the task of introducing and explaining the BRT project to ordinary members. He reports that initially there was a strong wariness of the project. This he attributes to the historical relationship between the government and the taxi industry that has been characterised by antagonism, oppression and moves to increase restriction and control. The persistence of the wariness he also attributes to the fact that there is a significant proportion of membership who have no schooling or formal education. He notes that these members tend to cling to out-dated ideas and that their minds are very hard to change on major issues. However, with persistence, explanation, persuasion and often literal translation from the English spoken by the municipality to the languages of operators, Participant 1 feels that he has managed to convince all the TEPTA members of the BRT project's value. Participant 1 reported that most of the members of the Top 11 Group (the small business collective which he heads up with Participant 2 composed of taxi operators within TEPTA who all own four or more vehicles) were strongly interested in participating in this project as shareholders and investors.

Finally, the project has personal significance for both members, although in different ways. Participant 2 was concerned largely with the effects this new kind of taxi business would have on the industry. He sees the fixed routes and single company control of the BRT as a way to avoid the current problems with corruption in the Department of Transport that ends up with two associations assigned the same route and the ensuing violence. He also notes that, in a different form, the BRT does answer the industry's persistent requests to the municipality for dedicated high occupancy vehicle lanes to deal with the effects of congestion. He notes that if he could have initiated such transformation within TEPTA alone, he would have. Indeed the association is looking at buying its own long-distance bus (entirely separately from the BRT project) to run along one of the long distance routes it has rights to. This seems to be an example of the idea of industry transformation replicating itself internally within the association.

Participant 1 focuses more on the individual and pragmatic implications of the BRT. It will change his cash flow dramatically, as his shares will pay out annually, at the end of the financial year, whereas owning taxis provides a daily income. Despite this, the passive income stream that will allow him to sell some of his combis and relax more, means that he still welcomes the initiative.

How to begin working with a taxi association

The details of establishing a relationship between the built environment professional and the specific members and leaders of each taxi association will be different for each research interaction. Some associations may be more or less receptive to certain kinds of approaches, or approaches at all, and researchers will need to be sensible, observant and respectful in their interactions.

It is beyond the scope of this research report to provide a guide even to building a relationship with TEPTA the association that was the focus of the research. However, building a relationship is not even possible without first establishing contact with the relevant associations.

In some instances, with the larger and more prominent associations, the planner or researcher will have a good idea of who those relevant associations are and where they are based. However, some areas will be served by multiple routes and therefore may be the jurisdiction of multiple associations, who are not immediately visible or obvious.

For example, TEPTA, has the rights to multiple routes with destinations in Pretoria, despite not being a Pretoria-based association. So, for a researcher looking at sites in Pretoria, the association would either be easy to miss, or to mistake as the association with the primary local influence for the areas its routes terminate at. In other instances, the associations on the ground may be invisible or inaccessible to the researcher, and attempting to track down the relevant individuals through in-situ field work may have safety implications.

Finally the factionalism reported by participant 2 in the larger associations may make it difficult to verify and isolate legitimate (used here to mean in the eyes of the majority of the association membership) authority structures and figures.

There is an alternate method of establishing contact with associations that addresses these problems. Each association is a formal body governed by rules and regulations that include the registration of the routes, contact person and physical address of the association with the department of monitoring and licensing within the Department of Transport. According to Participant 2 this information is available upon request (and an explanation of the reasons for requesting the information) from the department of monitoring and licensing. Once a complete list of the associations and their contact details can be obtained, it is possible to then find out which Regional Council or Councils each association falls under, and then to get the contact details of the Regional Councils from the Department of Transport.

Participant 2 explains that the Regional Council will then facilitate the interaction between the built environment professionals and the appropriate taxi associations, in a similar manner to the process of establishing a new route to new development. He notes further that if taxi associations are following protocol correctly, when approached by the researcher or planner, they should anyway direct the researcher or planner to the Regional Council to facilitate the interaction.

It should be the case, but has not been tested that both SANTACO and NTA affiliated associations are equally accessible through this method.

Conclusion

Most of the findings in this research report point to the potential benefits for planners and researchers in understanding and accessing what a taxi association is.

Looking at taxi associations as small business collectives gives a greater insight into the nature of the members who make up the industry and into the economic and social (as an employer) role that associations, and indeed the industry in general, play.

Examining taxi associations as the local level of organisation provides insight and clarity into the internal regulatory structures of the industry as a whole. Understanding this facet also clarifies the specifics of the spatial relationship between industry regulatory structures and the areas that they serve and govern. Finally it unpacks some of the history of the industry that has given rise to the parallel leadership structures of SANTACO and NTA and provides the conceptual tools needed for beginning to understand these organisations' relationships with each other, local government and planning and development projects.

Studying taxi associations as routes embeds these organisations into both a spatial, geographical context, and a complex organised framework of government regulation and data capturing. Much is recorded by the Department of Transport about how many taxis belonging to what associations operate between what destinations in the city and where the ranks, routes and headquarters of associations are located.

Looking at taxi associations in the wider community context frames the association as both a community stakeholder and a lever for community development. It also locates the association and the regional body in the web of relationships with government and other organisations. Finally it explores a narrative of 'taxi people' as playing a role of social custodianship towards passengers and vulnerable members of the community.

This report also gives a brief and straightforward description of the method recommended by

the participants for establishing a relationship with taxi associations.

Thus this chapter of the report presents and organises the data gathered into an exploration of the different facets of a taxi association and how a professional from the built environment could begin to establish a relationship with or contact an association.

The implications of these findings for planning and research will be explored in the following chapter.

Chapter 5 – Results

Summary of findings

A taxi association is simultaneously four things: a small business collective, the local (most devolved and accessible) level of organisation within the taxi industry, a collection of specific and regulated departure and arrival points called routes, and a stakeholder within and custodian of the community within which it operates.

Understanding the nature of taxi operators as small business owners, and the concomitant face of taxi associations as small business collectives is useful to the researcher or planner in various ways. Firstly, it gives insight into the day-to-day activities, priorities, pressures and goals of any specific operator. This is key in designing a participation programme to engage operators as stakeholders in transport and planning projects that affect the areas where they live and work. This knowledge gives insight into the problem of accessing operator voices (scheduling challenges and priority challenges). It also makes accessible to policy-makers and project designers, an aspect of a taxi operators nature, that of a small business owner, that may be helpful in engaging with them, and in securing their support or buy in for projects such as the BRT.

However, given the negotiation and mediating role that the association already plays (as well as the regional council) in matters of government and other organisation liaison, the change in understanding regarding taxi operators themselves is more likely to only be applicable to improving conceptual models.

In practical application, understanding the strategic level of intervention that associations provide in their aspect of small business collectives is more useful. Associations translate projects for the understanding of operators, and negotiate between the needs and desires of operators and the project teams (in the case of the Harambee BRT project run by the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality). This means that they can provide a direct channel to the operators for researchers and planners, as well as being able to negotiate on behalf of the operators for a mutually- beneficial intervention. This legitimate representation (while it may not guarantee the views and behaviour of each operator, let alone each driver) is a key component of meaningful negotiation and participation between the taxi industry and local government or other developers acting in the transport sector or the local area.

Additionally the knowledge that associations have a mandate to respond to drivers' grievances and problems provides researchers and planners with access to this group that otherwise does not have clearly identifiable and accessible representation. This is potentially

useful as source of data about mobility in the city region, the lived experience of past projects and interventions and a key user perspective about the road network. It also provides a mechanism for indirect participation (using the association as translator and messenger) of drivers in projects or research. This has its risks, as bias or mistranslation or outright dishonesty on the part of the association relaying the information would be hard to detect or eliminate, but it would provide at least some kind of facilitated access to this group which is otherwise often closed to planners and researchers.

Finally, understanding that taxi operators move within a world of legal constraints, employment practices and standards, in the same way as other formal small business owners opens the discourse on taxis and taxi associations. This perspective makes space for other important insights, such as the role that taxi operators play as employers in the local economy, taxpayers, and wealth creators. It also invites further research into the kind of support role that associations may play in the development and expansion of small businesses.

Taxi associations are the most devolved form of organisation recognised both internally within the industry and by government organisations like the Department of Transport. They are also discrete entities with fixed memberships: an operator cannot belong to more than one association simultaneously and each legally operating vehicle is registered as being part of the fleet of one association. They also have a fixed spatial territory bound by routes and ranks. They are also supported by and answerable to the high organisational structures of Regional and Provincial Taxi Councils, as well as national leadership regardless of whether they are SANTACO or NTA affiliates.

There are several reasons why this information is important for planners and researchers. In terms of understanding taxi associations as neighbourhood-level organisational structures, this makes apparent a truth that the industry itself is well aware of (as explained by Participant 2): a taxi association is a powerful stakeholder in both transport and planning projects that affect the area it is based and operates in. This is easiest to conceptualise in terms of taxi associations as small business collectives and as the local/neighbourhood level of industry organisation. Including the voices of a neighbourhood small business collective based in and servicing a particular area in decisions about the area is intuitive. Likewise with including the local branch of a national industry that is present in the affected area (and indeed a significant employer there, see section 4). Taxi associations include both of these things in their nature, and the industry is aware of this role its associations and people play. This awareness is useful to planners and researchers wanting to engage at the local/neighbourhood level.

Understanding that taxi associations are the spatially fixed, visible aspect of the industry that is also the lowest level of elected representation makes them a useful first contact point for professionals needing to engage the industry itself. Drivers and vehicles are a crucial part of the lived experience and practical functioning of areas, and represent not only a stakeholder as described above, but an important source of data about that area. Unlike other players in the neighbourhood, such as hawkers or residents or other small business owners, taxi operators that are operating legally all have specific, accessible, elected representatives. The statement of accessible is not here meant to imply that all associations are friendly towards researchers or planners or easy or safe for the planner to build a relationship with, but simply that there will be a government recognised contact person for that association. This person has at least a theoretical mandate to speak for and co-ordinate the association interactions with built environment professionals and to facilitate access for research purposes with its members.

This is not to imply that the contact person (or even any of the executive committee) of the association have an obligation to or interest in accurately reflecting the views and desires of their membership. Those views and desires are unlikely to be homogenous, especially in the larger (1000 members plus) associations, that Participant 2 points out are prone to factionalizing. However, the association is a recognised body within government bureaucracy with established and expected channels for engagement and interaction with planners

Understanding the relationship between taxi associations and the routes they operate, as well as the characteristics of and regulation around those routes may be useful to professionals within the build environment.

Firstly, understanding that each association is a spatially fixed entity, with a territory regulated by its routes and ranks, changes the current general understanding of what the organisation is and how it functions in the fabric of the city. Given the association's spatial element, its role as a stakeholder in more than just transport becomes more obvious. Additionally, it becomes easier to understand an association as a contextual entity, affected by the areas it operates and ranks in.

It is important to realise that the identity of associations (at least in Ekurhuleni) is linked deeply both in the association's history and the minds of the passengers, to its area of operation, and often more specifically to its main destinations. For this reason the hand sign to flag down a passing TEPTA taxi is also the hand sign for travelling to Pretoria.

Knowing that each major destination is likely to be served only by one association, licensed and regulated by bodies both internal and external to the taxi industry, makes communicating with the relevant industry stakeholders a possible task. Understanding and mapping the existing system of spatial organisation within the taxi industry is useful to planners and researchers as it unlocks the local nature of associations. This means that associations can be regarded (and possibly approached) as repositories of practical local knowledge on movement.

There are also important lessons to be learnt from the regulatory framework. Mismanagement on the part of government is clearly related to violence in the taxi industry. For planners and researchers concerned with mitigating this violence or helping the industry grow and prosper, the understanding of the role a route plays in a taxi association is crucial. The spatial organisation of the industry, how routes and the territories that they define are chosen, established and evolve could also provide insight into the evolution and transformation of cities more generally.

For planners and researchers in the transport field, understanding how competitive routes like the main routes of TEPTA evolve, thrive and decline is important for two reasons. Firstly it gives insight into both the strategies and the strengths of the taxi industry. This industry is a key component of how mobility happens in most South African cities and understanding how it operates and what it does well is a key step towards working and planning for better city transport systems.

Secondly, understanding the markets and needs that the taxi industry is adapting to meet clarifies what other modes of mass transit cannot do. Understanding the gaps and failings of the existing transport infrastructure through what the taxi industry responds to, is useful. Because the gap between service user and service provider is much smaller in the taxi industry, customers can more easily express their needs directly, as in the case of the ZCC worshippers approaching TEPTA.

The first thing about this facet of the taxi industry that planners and researchers may find useful is the unique relationship between the association and the community that it serves and that surrounds its routes, ranks and headquarters. While this relationship is likely to vary in strength and quality from area to area and depend heavily on the character of each association, it is still likely that there will be a relationship. This is a key lever that might provide the built environment professional with a specific kind of access into parts of the community that may be harder to access without the facilitation of the association. So associations can be seen as routes into a community or area, as well as sources of information about the community and area. It is important to be aware that being linked to an

association may affect the relationships and potential relationships between the researcher and participants, positively or negatively depending on how different parts of the community view that particular association.

There is also a narrative of taxi people as social custodians that has been presented in the interviews with TEPTA. This runs counter to the common perceptions around the taxi industry of self-interest, violence, volatility and exploitation. While this is not the only mention of this ethos of care-taking of passengers and vulnerable members of the community (see Saudi 2008), this has not been the focus of a dedicated study, so its extent and veracity still needs to be investigated.

Associations sit within a web of complex relations with other organisations, both in the private and public sectors. This is useful in building a more nuanced, context-aware understanding of what an association is and the space it occupies. It also provides at least a potential lever for built environment professionals to access and (in the case of TEPTA, possibly because of TEPTA's embeddedness in the regional taxi council) influence facets of local government. Taxi associations seem to have a relationship with local government and local government officials that may be stronger in certain instances (such as is the case presented by Participant 2 of his relationship with the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality) than those attainable or held currently by built environment professionals. Thus this relationship should always be investigated as either a potential resource or stumbling block for projects in the area.

The challenges and plans for the future of TEPTA, articulated by the participants are possibly the most crucial ideas and opportunities for planners and researchers to engage with. The challenges that constrain and threaten the taxi industry are sometimes (as in the case of congestion) the same challenges that constrain and threaten the transport and human settlement portfolio as a whole. The fact that associations are aware of and seeking to overcome these challenges makes them potential allies and supporters of planning projects. These problems are also a good starting point for establishing association buy-in for planning and development projects. The effects of congestion on the taxi industry have played a big role in incentivising support for the BRT project within TEPTA.

The BRT project in Ekurhuleni may serve as a useful case study for a different model of interaction between local government and the taxi industry than was presented by the Rea Vaya in Johannesburg. The two-way interaction and involvement of the industry from the design phase of the project may have contributed to the distinct kind of support and involvement described by both participants. This report recommends this unfolding process

as a key area for further research, especially in light of Johannesburg's expanding Corridors of Freedom project.

Utility of the findings to industry professionals

The interim findings were presented to built environment and planning professionals with the Airports Company of South Africa, who are at the project design phase of a transport master plan for the ORT International airport in Ekurhuleni. This planning project has a focus on integrating taxis in passenger and staff transport to and from the airport. The first stages of establishing contact with the taxi industry had begun at the time of presentation. The industry professionals (Participants 3 and 4) noted that they had found the presentation useful to the proposed project in the following ways.

The first fact of interest was high levels of organisation and regulation of the taxi industry, down to the records of the association affiliation and routes that each vehicle operating with a license uses. This concept of a regulated and controlled industry, about which much information is known and, according to participant 2 accessible to the public, was in contrast with ACSA's initial understanding of the industry. Knowing how much information is available, and can be accessed about the numbers, routes, organisation bodies within the taxi industry changes the techniques and approaches available to a planner seeking to integrate the existing taxi industry into a transport plan for a specific area. Participants 3 and 4 indicated surprise that this information existed and could be accessed, despite being involved in a project that seeks to do just that. This would seem to show that the simple fact of the association level relationship with the department of licensing and monitoring as a regulator is information that is not currently available to professionals in the industry that it would be relevant to.

Secondly, Participants 3 and 4 explained that they were not aware of the parallel leadership structure of the NTA at all, despite it being active in Ekurhuleni. Because SANTACO is a far more prominent organisation, with an internet presence and easily traceable contact numbers, this project had only involved SANTACO as a representative of the taxi industry. Participants 3 and 4 noted that they would begin attempting to make contact with the NTA representatives for Ekurhuleni, in order to avoid accidentally precipitating a conflict by not engaging both leadership structures. This argues for the value and importance for built environment professionals of knowing that both leadership structures exist, especially in the light of the difference in visibility and accessibility of the organisations.

It is not currently clear, although Participant 2 stated that the NTA is recognised by government in Gauteng, whether the NTA affiliated associations have the same relationship

as the SANTACO affiliated associations with the department of licensing and monitoring. Thus it is still unclear if information about those taxi associations would be accessible in the same way. This is potential point of useful future research with relevance to ongoing transport projects in Gauteng.

The third concept that Participants 3 and 4 noted contrasted strongly with their experience and expectations was the role of social custodian played by the taxi industry. Participant 4 expressed surprise at learning of the TEPTA training officer's mandate in terms of image management and changing community perceptions of the taxi industry. He was surprised that the association was aware of or cared about how the community perceived them, and at the techniques employed to change it.

In the discussions after the presentation both participants seemed to see an increased scope for the project and new directions in which it could be expanded and include more participation with taxi operators. Their view of the industry had been updated and changed by the presentation. It is my opinion that a major contributor to this change and expansion was the understanding the taxi industry as a collection of individuals and organisations who had an interest in maintaining and uplifting the community they operated in and could be contacted negotiated and interacted with.

I argue that this information can and should be available to planners and researchers as well as other professionals with the need to interact with the taxi industry. This is because it offers the opportunity for shifts in perception of the taxi industry that open avenues to interact with these key stakeholders in the transport system and reveal levers to act on the areas they operate within. More research as to how typical the findings here presented are of other associations, how constant over time and the effect they could have on municipal and planning relations with the taxi industry can only serve to better equip us as transport planners and researchers in meeting the daunting transport challenges that face today's South African cities.

Some of these challenges, as noted by participant 2, include the effects of development on traffic flow, the environmental and health implications of the over-reliance on cars, the economic implications of long travel times to and from work, the social effects of areas of the city underserved by public transport and the ever increasing congestion. Participant 2 called on my generation of young researchers and built environment professionals to undertake the necessary investigation and innovation to combat these urban transport problems. He undertook to, personally and as chair of the TEPTA association, work with researchers and students to provide data and access to the industry to begin the process of understanding and resolving these problems. These insights and potential alliances are an

example of what research on and a relationship with taxi associations can provide the planning profession.

Locating the findings within the literature and current planning landscape

These findings offer a new point of engagement and understanding with the taxi industry that is not the subject of any other dedicated research. More than that, the process of conducting the research has shown that, in the instance of the current leadership of TEPTA a relationship between a researcher and individuals within the taxi association can be built and might stand as the starting point for further meaningful engagement between the association and the transport planning profession.

This builds on the existing literature in the following ways:

Firstly, this research report has suggested the existence of a complex spatial distribution at association level of the routes and areas that this industry serves. Concomitant with this is the spatial variation that influences even details such as revenue generation behaviours of different associations. This validates the questions raised in the literature review on the applicability of research such as Fourie's 2003 master's thesis that models the industry as a homogenous whole isolated from its immediate spatial context.

Additionally, the evidence of the government response to the industry that is not homogenous or national is provided by the discussion by participant 2 of the variations in response to the taxi industry between MMC's of different municipalities and MEC's of different provinces. This would imply that technical research seeking to optimise and balance the industry and its interactions with government might be missing crucial information by not engaging with the reported reality of spatially differentiated and heterogeneous government relationships with the taxi industry.

This is also key for locally targeted transport initiatives, which seek to respond to the characteristics of the areas they serve, such as the City of Johannesburg's Corridors of Freedom Project. Each area's taxi associations may then be a distinct body with distinct organisational behaviours that can both give insight into, and possibly access to the communities they serve. Additionally, given the understanding that associations are shaped by as well as shape the areas they operate in, the potential value in treating them as local stakeholders should be considered by researchers, transport planners and other built environment professionals.

This local and community embeddedness, hinted at in Sauti's 2008 work on taxi drivers, means that the literature that currently engages with the taxi industry as a social

phenomenon, such as Dugard (2001), Dugard and Sekhonyane (2004), Khosa (1994, 1992), but ignores context, may be of limited value in describing any particular manifestation of the industry. This is because each local facet of the industry (each association) cannot be isolated (or even researched effectively, see Chapter 3) without some understanding of the context and contingency within which it operates. This report implies that case studies of specific taxi industries, such as conducted here and by Sauti in 2008, may be more useful in understanding and engaging specific associations (i.e. in understanding how the taxi industry presents in a specific area of interest) than research that deals with the industry as a homogenous whole.

This report has also proposed a method of engagement (via the appropriate regional council) that may make gathering of primary data on the taxi industry and perspectives from the taxi industry easier. This could be a way of offsetting the tendency of the research that focuses on the taxi industry as a social phenomenon, to be limited to viewing the taxi industry as a well-removed outside observer.

The research seems to lend weight to the idea that aspects of social custodianship and internal accountability that Sauti wrote about being present in the Randfontein Taxi Association may be a more prevalent characteristic of the taxi industry in general. This is useful as it provides an alternate narrative of the nature of the industry to the commonly accepted views of it as largely violent and profit driven.

This research has also confirmed Sibiya's 2009 suggestions that the taxi industry is organised and complex, with many players, layers of authority and internal conflicts. It expands her map of the industry structure and history, and goes some way to explaining the rifts between associations that she observed in her analysis of the Rea Vaya negotiations.

It also lends weight to the observations made by Venter as well as by McCaul and Ntuli (2013, 2011) that there are parts of the industry welcoming transformation and government programmes supporting taxi industry formalisation. This is a crucial point of departure for discussion and debate regarding the roles of city, planner and taxi industry in shaping a new transport future for the Gauteng City Region.

Finally, it supports the suggestion that solutions to seemingly impossible challenges can be created through iterative dialogue between parties with opposing views that Gotz, and Simone, 2009 noted. Participant 2's comments about the main requirement for a good relationship between local government and taxi associations being honest face to face discussion and resolution of issues on both sides, implies a kind of local governance that is

flexible, responsive to specific situations and needs, and opening to challenge and discussion.

Participant 2 demonstrated his awareness of the power of the taxi industry as a stakeholder in cities (both as a significant local presence and in the casual mention of the industry's ability to bring the economy to its knees through widespread strikes). He also demonstrated his frustration at local government's (and the transport planning professionals associated with government) lack of recognition of this fact. In the context of the debates around the shifting role of the transport planner, in terms of her recognition of and engagement with stakeholders, this is highly relevant.

It is so relevant because the research by Kane and Del Mistro in 2003 argues for the importance of the inclusion of stakeholders as part of a revised transport-planning mandate. This is to acknowledge that transport problems, especially in the often challenging and fluid contexts of global southern cities, are not technical problems isolated from people. In the case of South Africa Beukes, Vanderschuren, Zuidgeest, in 2011 note that this change has not yet permeated local transport planning, which operates in isolation from context and contingency.

This group of people, taxi associations, are aware of their importance and power in planning processes and aware of how intimately they are connected to mobility in the areas they operate in. Further, various cities have begun to rely on the taxi industry's support and buy in, through transport projects like the BRT systems, which form the spine of wider planning interventions such as the City of Johannesburg's Corridors of Freedom Project. This means this awareness of importance and power held by the taxi industry is not only grounded in the negative economic repercussions of strikes, but also in the positive action of negotiation and transformation that city government requires of the industry as part of these transport projects.

The challenges outlined by participants as threatening the long-term future of the industry such as congestion and rising running costs are the same challenges for the health of transport systems in cities in general. Transforming the mandate of the transport planner to be more conscious of stakeholder participation, along the lines of Kane and Del Mistro's (2003) suggestions, allows planners to acknowledge what taxi associations already know: their value as strategic stakeholders. This research has begun to uncover the understanding tools and practical strategies to allow built environment professionals to conceive of associations as local stakeholders, and engage with them.

Chapter 6 Conclusions

This research had three key goals: to give a detailed case study of how TEPTA works as a taxi association, to unpack the ways in which taxi association members and leadership think about local governance and to understand what these answers can mean for transport planning.

Chapter 4 answered comprehensively the first two aims of the research, as well as the research questions (explored below), while Chapter 5 interpreted and placed these answers in context, partially answering the third aim.

Unlike the existing literature that deals with associations: Sauti (2008), this work has focused on in-depth discussions of the specific workings, as well as perceptions, hopes and fears of associations and their membership with two members of the executive committee.

However, it is not enough to look at merely what gaps in the existing body of knowledge this research could fill. The facts gathered have more importance than just the data they contain: they also indicate things about how the existing understandings of the taxi industry fail, the potential for a changed approach for transport planning and tantalising hints of messier, more accurate urban realities than current industry models support. Answering the research questions has uncovered new questions for the broader planning profession, new avenues for transport research and new worlds for planners to engage and explore. The research answers and the themes they then speak to are developed here:

1. What is a taxi association?

A taxi association is simultaneously four things: a small business collective, the local (most devolved and accessible) level of organisation within the taxi industry, a collection of specific and regulated departure and arrival points called routes, and a stakeholder within and custodian of the community within which it operates.

This direct and specific answer was not something I expected the research to provide. While it does only focus on limited facets of what an association is and can be it provides lenses on the organisation that I did not find in either the literature or in the generally accepted understandings of the taxi industry.

The facet of taxis associations as small business collectives, which implies that each taxi is a small business itself, was particularly surprising. In hindsight, this becomes a very intuitive concept, but not one which was I was expecting. Although there is a significant body of literature on the economic aspects of the taxi industry (particularly on its history as a black-

owned sector (Khosa, 1992,1994) it tends to deal with the industry as a whole, rather than the components that make it up (each taxi as a small business). Because of this it tends towards language associated with larger enterprises and more traditionally understood economic sectors, and does not fully interrogate what it means for the taxi industry to be a sector composed purely of small businesses and small business collectives.

Also the understanding that associations are fixed spatial entities with unique routes and areas of operation (which in combination could be considered a territory) means there is potential for including them differently in planning theory and area studies. This fact provides a basis for investigating taxi associations as spatial as well as transport phenomena, and for investigating the link between local context and local mobility needs and supply. I expected the spatial aspect of associations (in that associations are physically present in the city and must therefore interact with city space) to be addressed in the literature, but could find no documents that explore associations or any other manifestation of the taxi industry through this lens.

Finally, as hinted at in Sauti (2008), there appears to be a schism in commonly accepted perceptions of the values, attitudes and ways that the taxi industry interacts with communities and the current reality. The narrative of taxi people as community and passenger custodians ran counter to both what I found in every piece of research (bar Sauti) as well as in the expectations of the industry professionals I presented my findings to (participants 3 and 4). This is interesting in terms of how perceptions and narratives about this industry are founded and perpetuated. However, and perhaps more urgently, updating the understanding of the role that associations like TEPTA have chosen for themselves as community custodians, means engaging with an entirely different local stakeholder as transport planners and researchers. Instead of being limited to a stumbling block or a threat to projects and developments, taxi associations can be recast as local allies (albeit ones who are not fully understood and still potentially volatile) in understanding and improving areas.

This then demonstrates the importance of the knowledge gap found in the key text that deals with taxis as a means of mass transport (Fourie 2003). The fact that these studies leave out taxi associations as a concept allows them to also ignore other key characteristics of the taxi industry. It negates the strong local (spatial) connection between each association turning the industry into a less real, contextualised entity and more of an abstract model. This invites the application of abstract thinking to the industry, with its tendencies towards simplification, optimisation and control. It makes it easy to forget, or willingly ignore the fact that the industry is a collection of individual business owners, a group of people and not a passive logic problem waiting for the ministrations of a skilled supervisor. It also implies that we as

transport planners and researchers know more than we do, indeed more than we can know, about the industry as whole, and tempts us to ignore the unfamiliar and what it can teach us.

This failure of understanding of the facets of an association makes it easier for the transport planner to put themselves into the role of the rational comprehensive authority figure. This is no longer the only, or even the desirable planning role (Kane, Del Mistro, 2003). If an association is acknowledged at all, or better, acknowledged as a collection of individual people, then it is possible to see the need for transforming the rational comprehensive technician into Healey's (1991) planning intermediary. It casts the taxi industry as faces to be addressed, not a problem to be solved.

2. What are the characteristics and operation of this (TEPTA) taxi association?

The characteristics of TEPTA are a sense of community embeddedness and responsiveness, a loose relationship with time and scheduling, a complex web of relations with government as well as other organisations and an organisation driven by the strong leadership and actions of individuals such as participants 1 and 2.

The operation of TEPTA consists of the support and regulation of its members (taxi operators) in their daily activities including their interfaces with government (permits to operate on routes) their ranking needs (ranking rights and employment of queue marshals and rank security) their relationship with the drivers they employee and also in growing their small businesses.

Two things were surprising about this answer in the context of the available literature. Firstly, the basic internal organisation of a taxi association is very simple (that drivers are employees of operators and operators form the membership basis of the association), and its links to higher levels of industry organisation and regulatory bodies like the Department of Transport, straightforward. Finding this information was simply a matter of asking the leadership of TEPTA. This means that I would have expected such uncomplicated and accessible facts about a major component of the South African mass transport landscape to be common knowledge to transport planners and other built environment professionals. However it appears nowhere in the literature, and is not even hinted at. This gap in understanding and research is something that may have potential to shed light on underlying deficiencies in the way transport in South Africa is conceptualised and studied. It questions why planners and researchers have not yet recorded such basic information about the practicalities of the taxi industry.

Secondly, it was very difficult to obtain from the literature a document exploring just the basic statistical presence of taxis in the Gauteng city region, or facts like how many taxis operate, where ranks and routes are located and what associations are present in the region. This is not because this information is not known to local and national government, as municipalities grant ranking rights directly, and each taxi that operates legally, is registered along with its routes and association affiliation, with the Department of Transport. This information is crucial to understanding how people move around Gauteng cities, as well as the current functioning of the taxi industry itself. I was very surprised that this information exists on record, but nowhere in literature is it made mention of or made accessible to transport planners and other built environment professionals. If there is this very useful database in existence but not known about, are there other governmental resources that would benefit the planning profession, that are currently inaccessible because we don't know where to look?

In the broader context understanding the taxi association as a formal, regulated and entirely self-sufficient organisation which pursues agendas, makes decisions and supports communities means that the agency that the taxi industry possesses cannot be ignored. It is not an animal whose behaviour is driven by instinct that must be inferred by an outside expert. The democratically elected leadership have decision-making processes that are explicable and accessible. While the functional truth of a situation may not be directly communicated to a researcher, members of the association executive committee can be asked directly about how things are within the taxi industry and why this is so. Armed with this understanding of the leadership structure and functioning of an association, a researcher is no longer limited to proposing hypotheses based on second hand data, and supporting this with decontextualized sound-bites from drivers. This speaks directly to the problem of research from the outside that has been discussed around the literature dealing with the taxi industry as a social phenomenon, such as Khosa (1992, 1994), Dugard (2001) and Dugard and Sekhonyane (2004).

Further, acknowledging this agency present within the industry reminds us that we are transport planners, with the ability to gather knowledge, insight, perception and preference from people, not transport engineers, limited to inferring physical constants from mute concrete and silent steel.

3. What are some of the perceptions of the taxi association members towards the city governance structures (Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality)?

Some of the perceptions of city governance structures both within the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality and broader than it, that have been articulated primarily by participant 2 are as follows:

1. The taxi industry is a powerful and important stakeholder both in the transport sphere and in its role in local areas where planning and development take place.
2. This role as a stakeholder is underestimated by government and the power and impact of the industry (especially in terms of the economic role it plays in transporting workers) are ignored.
3. The government-held perception of the taxi industry as rude or demanding is due to a lack of government perspective, the government not regarding the industry as a partner rather than an employee and stems from the industry returning the style and manner of treatment that they initially receive from government.
4. The relationship between the local or provincial industry and the corresponding local or provincial government is largely dependent on the personality, perceptions of and attitudes towards the taxi industry on the part of the relevant government officials.
5. The characteristics that make for a good relationship between local government and an association include, but are likely not limited to: the willingness to attend meetings with association spokespeople, respect for the taxi industry and a willingness to engage in challenging dialogue with associations and industry.
6. Participant 2 has identified the mayor of Ekurhuleni elected in 2016 as having most of these qualities and hopes for a good relationship with local government because of this.

The strong awareness of and desire for engagement with the structures of local government was surprising. I had expected an industry resentful of government, given the long history of over-regulation and oppressive policies, wanting to have as little official contact as possible. The desire for and action towards building a good relationship present in both taxi associations and regional councils is not hinted at in the literature at all. The literature often presents the taxi industry as a sector almost in isolation and neglects the complex web of relations it has with government and private organisations.

This desire for municipal and provincial government engagement, although possibly stronger in SANTACO affiliated associations like TEPTA, is key lever for transport planners in manoeuvring between associations and authorities as key local stakeholders.

The existing literature around the BRT negotiations (Sibiya, 2009, Venter 2013, McCaul and Ntuli 2011) is by far the most nuanced and complex representation of the lived reality of the taxi industry. This is no accident. In direct engagement and negotiation with taxi

associations, planners and researches are forced to depart the most from the existing abstracted understandings of the industry. This is a doorway to a world of specifics, partial-glimpses, convoluted relationships and small truths that transcends what we currently know about the industry and how it operates. In these direct engagements with associations around city transport projects, planners are being offered the chance to exchange tailored theory for chaotic facts. This is a leap we need to make, as transport professionals in the global south. The Rea Vaya project was halted by violence and failed relationships when conducted from the current theories of the taxi industry (Sibiya 2009) and only with the City of Johannesburg's willingness to learn new ways of engaging associations could it proceed (Venter 2003).

We need to understand the chaotic facts (and the places where facts are beyond our grasp, or insufficient for communicating meaning) of taxi associations, because we need to work with them in order to achieve most major city transport goals, such as Johannesburg's Corridors of Freedom project. They are our colleagues and allies in such projects, and have resources and relationships of their own that we cannot afford to ignore in fighting for a desirable transport future.

4. What are some of the perceptions of the taxi association members towards the transport planning profession?
5. Are there opportunities for transport planners to facilitate better stakeholder engagement with taxi associations that can be gathered from these perceptions?

The intention was to have direct discussions regarding the participant's views on the planning profession and the ways in which the participants would most prefer the planning profession to engage them. However, this was not possible, partly due to time and scope constraints and partly due to the fact that there is no current meaningful engagement between transport planners and the association studied. There is no existing mental model of how planners engage associations that could be improved upon.

However, participant 2 did display an awareness of and interest in key transport planning problems such as urban congestion, the need for non-motorised transport and the implications of development on mobility. Further he noted that young professionals in the built environment like myself must innovate and creatively problem-solve urgently in order to address these issues. He also pledged his support and the support of his association, to students of planning at the University of the Witwatersrand conducting research on these or related problems.

Additionally the research has uncovered the method of contacting and engaging associations (through their Regional Taxi Councils, via the department of licensing and monitoring within the Department of Transport), that is in line with industry protocols and that the participants recommended. This method of contact is not represented in the literature and may offer an opportunity for facilitating better stakeholder engagement with this local face of the taxi industry.

Approaching taxi associations through the channels they have developed, regulate and would prefer implies a fundamental shift in the understanding of the association's power. They are not municipal employees to be instructed on efficient behaviour, nor are they resourceless supplicants dependant on the city or city transport planners for their existence. This is not always reflected in the way participant 2 reports associations being treated and certainly does not reflect in most of the literature regarding the taxi industry. However, from the data gathered in this research, this appears to be a more accurate statement of reality.

If associations are to be contacted through the appropriate internal channels, there is a level of respect afforded. . Additionally, the blinkers of familiarity are removed and the transport planner is forced from the start of the interaction to acknowledge the difference between this engagement and the world of operations in which she is an expert with no need to learn.

6. Are there opportunities for transport planners to expand the current knowledge body supporting transport planning that can be observed from these perceptions?

Firstly the research has exposed definite schisms in the reality of the taxi industry represented by the literature and that described by the participants. It has also highlighted gaps and omissions regarding the basic operations, of the taxi industry in general, that industry professionals (participants 3 and 4) felt changed the scope of how they were able to engage the industry.

This research has uncovered a level of record and regulation by the Department of Transport of taxi industry numbers, routes, locations and association details. This may represent a significant untapped resource of new knowledge about the taxi industry that should be accessible to planners and researchers in transport and the built environment.

It also hints at a systemic failure of planning thought and literature to serve the needs of good municipal governance. This data should be available to and informing transport planning decision makers. The fact that there is no mention of such an archive in the literature around the taxi industry, nor applied guides to its use in planning procedures means that such a resource is wasted. More than that however, it means that a specific

narrative of informality (and therefore unimportance) can continue uninterrupted when it is patently untrue. The taxi industry is largely perceived as informal, even in literature such as Gotz and Simone (2009) who fight for its inclusion in municipal planning projects. The reality is that it is an incredibly regulated and documented industry with the details of each business owner's vehicle, rank and specific area of operation being known to the Department of Transport. It is also strictly controlled, with the numbers of permits issued for each route at the sole discretion of the relevant department officials. It is highly internally organised, with each operator having to belong to an association, with its own constitution and elected leadership that in turn belongs to a regional council, provincial council and finally a national body.

The availability of this data and the presence of these structures should influence the way this industry is studied and engaged with, but there is no evidence of this in the literature.

Perhaps the label of informality is being used as a smokescreen to hide the lack of engagement by planners and researchers with the internal structures and relations of sectors like the taxi industry that have an uncomfortable narrative associated with them. More than simply including concepts associated with informality in city planning rationales, such as called for by Gotz and Simone (2009), the effects of the label informal on how planners think about sectors or groups needs to be interrogated. The case of the drastic misrepresentation of the taxi industry as disorganised and unregulated could be used as a point of departure for questioning the utility of boxing the unfamiliar or intimidating under the label of informality rather than attempting to engage its substance.

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APPENDIX 1

TABLE 1: Logs of unsuccessful scheduling phone calls with Participants 1 and 2

Call No.	Date	Participant	Result	Reason	Notes
31(21)	Thursday 8/18/2016 09:30	Participant 1	He will call me when he is free and in Johannesburg	He has to travel to Krugersdorp today and so might be able to meet me in Johannesburg	This interview took place.
30(20)	Wednesday 8/17/2016 12:00	Participant 1	Scheduled meeting for 13:00 Thursday – call to confirm at 9 am	He thinks he is almost finished with his taxi	Could hear the sounds of what I think was a repair shop
29(19)	Wednesday 8/17/2016 09:30	Participant 1	Phone back at 12	busy	(loud, could hear he was in a busy place)
28(18)	Monday 8/15/2016 17:00	Participant 1	Postponed to Wednesday		For my own scheduling I chose to postpone by 1 day
27(17)	Monday 8/15/2016 13:00	Participant 1	No	Driver (not his) passed away unexpectedly and he had to make arrangements	
26(16)	Monday 8/15/2016	Participant 1	Phone back in 15 minutes		I elected to call back at

	09:30				midday as participant seemed uncomfortable
25(15)	Monday 8/15/2016 09:00	Participant 1	Phone back in 20 minutes		
24(14)	Sunday 8/14/2016 13:00	Participant 1	Cancelled meeting	Football Game	Was willing to give a short interview but begrudgingly
23(9)	Friday 8/12/2016 13:00	Participant 2	No – phone again Friday next week	Money only arrived today	He is in Joburg as he is on the phone to me, getting ready to pay people
22(13)	Friday 8/12/2016 12:00	Participant 1	No	Fixing the broken down taxi	Scheduled for Sunday 14:00 in the flame diner
21(12)	Friday 8/12/2016 09:00	Participant 1	Maybe – call back at 12	Not sure if car would be fixed but trying to make a plan	Wanted to co-ordinate with when I was meeting P2 Also only got home last night at 7:30
20(11)	Thursday 8/11/2016 13:00	Participant 1	No – call back tomorrow at 9 to see	Driving to Melville and Krugersdorp to secure car parts	
19(8)	Thursday 8/11/2016 13:00	Participant 2	No	Payment to taxi industry members re	Money only cleared today

				government use of their services around elections	
18(10)	Thursday 8/11/2016 09:00	Participant 1	No – call back at 1 to see	Driving to Randfontein to source parts due to a breakdown	Indicated unlikely at 1, I asked for my records
17(7)	Wednesday 8/10/2016 18:30	Participant 2	Not likely tomorrow – call at 13:00 to see though	Payment to taxi industry members re government use of their services around elections	Trying to schedule for tomorrow
16(6)	Wednesday 8/10/2016 13:00	Participant 2	Phone Off	Payment to taxi industry members re government use of their services around elections	
15(9)	Wednesday 8/10/2016 09:00	Participant 1	No	Breakdown requiring attention	
	8/9/2016	Public Holiday			
14(6)	8/8/2016 18:00	Participant 2	Not likely on Wednesday – call at 13:00 to see	Payment to taxi industry members re government use of their	Trying to schedule for Wednesday

				services around elections	
13(5)	8/8/2016 16:00	Participant 2	Phone off	Payment to taxi industry members re government use of their services around elections	
12(4)	8/8/2016 14:00	Participant 2	Phone off	Payment to taxi industry members re government use of their services around elections	
11(3)	8/8/2016 09:00	Participant 2	No – call back at 14:00 to see	Payment to taxi industry members re government use of their services around elections	
10(8)	8/8/2016 09:00	Participant 1	No – try again on Wednesday morning	Busy	I can't remember if a reason was specified
9(7)	Friday 8/5/2016 12:00	Participant 1	No –apologies	Busy	This was a pre-set meeting that I drove out to and called 10

					minutes prior to from the meeting location
8(2)	Thursday 8/4/2016 15:00	Participant 2	No time tomorrow –try again next week	Meetings with municipality	Scheduling call to set up something for the Friday (had previously been indicated to me that Fridays were less busy)
7(1)	Thursday 8/4/2016 11:30	Participant 2	No –call back at 15:00 to see	Meetings with municipality	This was a call trying to schedule for another day
6(6)	Thursday 8/4/2016 11:30	Participant 1	Yes-confirmed for Friday		Scheduling call to confirm for Friday
5(5)	Sunday 7/31/2016 13:30	Participant 1	Yes – I'm on my way		Admin meeting confirmation at the Flame Diner- this was the call when I arrived
4(4)	Sunday 7/31/2016 12:30	Participant 1	Yes – come now		Requesting a short admin meeting at the Flame Diner
3(3)	Thursday 7/28/2016 13:30	Participant 1	I couldn't make that day because of car		

			trouble		
2(2)	Wednesday 7/27/2016 12:00	Participant 1	Tentative Schedule for tomorrow		
1(1)	Wednesday 7/27/2016 08:30	Participant 1	He and his friends and family are fine		Call to check in post tornado

APPENDIX 2

Substantive Interview Question Guide Examples

These guides are meant to indicate the focus and intent of the researcher rather than the actual questions that will be used on the day of the interview.

Interview 1 – Your Story

How old were you when you started working in the taxi industry

What was your first job?

Did you like it?

How long did you work in that position?

Why did you move?

When did you join this association?

Why?

How was it being new in the association?

What is your current position in the association?

What are some of the challenges that you experience working in that position?

How do you overcome these challenges?

What do you enjoy most about your work?

What do you enjoy least about your work?

Interview 2- The Association's History

How did this association begin in this area?

Who started it?

Are they still involved with it today?

What were some of the problems with starting the association?

How did it overcome these challenges?

How did it establish a relationship with other associations in the area?

What were its first routes?

How were these routes decided upon?

What were some of the challenges in starting to use these routes?

How did you sort out those problems?

Interview 3- The Association's Present

Who runs the association?

How is leadership of the association decided upon?

What are the different official roles within the association?

What are the responsibilities of the association?

How does it meet these responsibilities?

What are the biggest challenges facing the association?

What are the plans for overcoming those challenges?

What are the greatest successes of the association?

What are the current relations between the association and the city?

What are the current relations between the association and other associations?

Are there currently tensions within the association?

How does the association engage with the area around it?

Interview 4- The Association's Future

What are the future plans for the association?

What are the fears about what the future holds for the association?

What are the hopes about what the future holds for the association?

What do you, personally, hope for the association in the future?

What do you, personally, hope for yourself in the future?

Interview 5 – Issues Arising

This is an optional interview to be used if there is a particularly interesting or important issue that has been raised in the last 4 interviews.

APPENDIX 3

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET FOR HONOURS RESEARCH REPORT

Good day

I am Abigail Godsell, an honours student in Urban and Regional Planning at the University of the Witwatersrand and completing my honours research report in 2016.

This research is on what transport planners could learn from taxi associations, the wider taxi industry and includes a focus on the Tembisa-Pretoria Taxi Association (TEPTA) as a case study. The case study's aim is to tell the story of this association's past, present and potential futures through the eyes (and personal stories) of some of its members. This is to help transport planners better understand what a taxi association is and does, to understand what they can learn from associations and if a direct relationship with associations and the industry in general would enable them to plan transport systems better. The benefits of this research will be more understanding in the Gauteng planning field, about taxi associations and the role they play in transport and transport planning in Gauteng.

I would like to invite you to participate in this research because of your involvement with TEPTA, and/or the taxi industry.

I am requesting a total of 1 hour of your time, for an interview in English, that I will conduct and audio record, in a suitable location, and scheduled at times and on dates best for you, in the period from the beginning of June 2016, until the beginning of September 2016. This is a significant amount of your time and, as a student researcher, I will not be able to reimburse you for it. I would very much welcome your participation and your specific knowledge, but it is only if you choose to do so. You can choose not to participate with no consequences, no penalties and no loss of benefits.

Your name will not be recorded anywhere except in my research journal, which is password protected. You can ask me to stop the recording device at any time if you do not want the things you are saying on the record. I will not refer to anything 'off-the-record' in any part of my research, so if there is sensitive information, we can make a plan to include it carefully.

The recorded information will be confidential (only accessible by me, and yourself) until I, or my research assistant (one of my sisters) writes down what was said. Then I will bring you the write-up so that you can check that you are happy with the information in it. You can also take out anything that you do not want to be public at this stage. Finally I will bring a draft of the final report so that you can check that I am reporting our interviews accurately. I ask that you take out anything that you do not want being publically known, as even if I do not write your name anywhere, people may be able to figure out your identity from the things said.

Because the interviews are unstructured, distressing information may come up in them. At any stage, you can ask to speak off-record (the audio-recording device being turned off) or stop the question, conversation or even the entire interview with no consequence or penalty. You can also contact me, my supervisor, or the university counselling division if things discussed make you feel distressed. You can withdraw from the research at any time, for any reason, with no consequence or penalty.

The final research report will be available publically, in the library of the University of the Witwatersrand and on the World Wide Web. If you would like to request a summary of the research for yourself I will happily provide this.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have about this invitation to participate; all contact details are on the back of this sheet.

Kind Regards, Abigail Godsell

Abigail Godsell (researcher): email – 464496@students.wits.ac.za

Neil Klug (Supervisor): email – Neil.Klug@wits.ac.za

Telephone number: 0117177729

Counselling and Careers Development Unit of the University of the Witwatersrand:

Telephone: 011 717 9140

Or 011 717 9132

Email: info.ccd@wits.ac.za

APPENDIX 4

Consent and Ethical Clearance



SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

PROTOCOL NUMBER: SOAP68/24/06/2016

PROJECT TITLE: What can Transport Planners learn from direct engagement with Taxi Associations?

INVESTIGATOR/S: Abigail Godsell (Student No. 464496)

SCHOOL: Architecture and Planning

DEGREE PROGRAMME: BSc Honours Urban and Regional Planning

DATE CONSIDERED: 18 July 2016

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE: APPROVED

EXPIRY DATE: 18 July 2017

CHAIRPERSON

(Professor Daniel Irurah)

DATE: 18.07.2016

cc: Supervisor/s: Neil Klug

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATORS

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee.

Signature

Date 19-07-2016

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To whom it may concern

I ABIGAIL GODSEW has been given permission to make a study on taxi operations in Tembisa Ekurhuleni. The main focus is the BRT Project which is currently underway whereby taxi operators shall be transformed into bus operators

We are, therefore, pleased to allow her studies with our taxi association and also looking forward in assisting her in all her endeavors

Thinking you in advance

Yours faithfully

Chairperson Mr. M. P. Mashego

Striving for better service



Signature:

Chairman: M.P. Mashego, Vice Chairman: J.f. Sewela, Secretary: G.J. Mnguni, Treasure: M.J. Ubisi,
Training Officer: J.R. Mkhomazi, PRO: G.J Nonyane, Grievance: D.A. Zulu, D.C: M.P. Sithole