



## California Public Utilities Commission

505 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**PRESS RELEASE**

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### **CPUC INVESTIGATIONS IN Q1 2015 RESULT IN ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS AND FINES IMPOSED ON VARIOUS LIMOUSINES, SHUTTLES, AND BUS COMPANIES**

SAN FRANCISCO, June 9, 2015 – The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), in its ongoing commitment to consumer protection, recently took a number of steps to protect consumers from illegally operating passenger carriers.

During the first quarter of 2015, CPUC took the following enforcement actions against limousine, bus, and shuttle companies for violations of the Public Utilities Code and CPUC rules and regulations, including General Orders (GO) 115-F and 157-D.

#### **Criminal Filings - Update**

- **Rick Michael Apodaca an individual doing business as (dba) Platinum Luxury Limousine, Tustin (Unlicensed) OCSC Case # 14CM08789:** CPUC staff submitted a report requesting the Orange County District Attorney's Office file a misdemeanor complaint against the company for operating and advertising without CPUC authority. In October 2014, the Orange County District Attorney's Office filed a 3-count misdemeanor complaint in Central Orange County Superior Court for violations of PC 484(a)-488 Petty theft (one count), PU Code 5371 (one count), and PU Code 5414.5 (one count) operating and advertising without CPUC authority. A hearing was held on March 12, 2015, and the defendant pled not guilty.
- **Ernest Eugene Wright dba Wright Transportation, Huntington Beach (Unlicensed) OCSC Case # 15WM01101:** CPUC staff submitted a report requesting the Orange County District Attorney's Office file a misdemeanor complaint against the company for operating and advertising without CPUC authority. The Orange County District Attorney's Office filed six counts of PUC 5387(a)-5415.5 against Eugene Wright for his actions on six dates of violation. Mr. Wright pled guilty to six counts of operating a charter-party carrier without a permit, vehicle identification requirements, or accident liability requirements. He was sentenced to 3 years' probation, a \$1,000 fine, 40 hours of community service, and

restitution. Informal 3 years of probation will end on March 12, 2018.

- **Tres Estrellas De Oro, Huntington Park (Unlicensed) SDSC Case # SCD235498:** On July 21, 2011, CPUC staff and the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement (DLSE) Deputy Labor Commissioner conducted an unannounced audit of Tres Estrellas De Oro. DLSE issued a stop order and assessed a penalty of \$75,000 for failure to have workers' compensation insurance for 50 employees. CPUC staff subsequently filed a misdemeanor complaint against the company for operating without a CPUC charter-party authority. On November 21, 2014, the owners and directors of Tres Estrellas De Oro, Jose Guzman, Luis Guzman, Tania Galvan, and Sandra Cazares were indicted. A trial readiness conference is set for July 14, 2015.

### **Administrative Citation**

Fifteen companies were cited and fined a total of \$ 51,000 for one or more of these violations:

1. Advertised a revoked permit number.
2. Failed to enroll and/or pre-employment test drivers in a mandatory drug and alcohol program.
3. Failed to enroll drivers in DMV Pull Notice program.
4. General Order 157-D violation (failed to maintain a current equipment list, no sub-carrier agreement, or incomplete waybills).
5. Operated without a valid authority (suspended or unlicensed).
6. Operated vehicles that are not insured at the required minimum level of public liability and property damage insurance.
7. Failed to properly report gross revenue earned.
8. Failing to respond to consumer complaints.

Companies cited:

1. VIP Stars Limo Inc., Granada Hills (TCP 26727)
2. LPB Inc. dba Leon Limo Bus, Whittier (TCP 29616)
3. Conklin Motors Inc., dba Gold Coast Limousines, Santa Maria (TCP 5471)
4. Megan Franks dba Uncorked Tours (TCP 26854)
5. Genady Gershfang dba Budget Transportation and Limo, San Francisco (TCP 22195)
6. Figueras Enterprises, Inc. dba Eastshore Charter Lines, Oakland (TCP 11370)
7. Tyrus Rowland dba Rowland Transportation, Beaumont (TCP 31090)
8. MBZ Invt Inc. dba 1 Awesome Limo, Santa Ana (TCP 21054)
9. Fox Express LLC, Lynwood (PSC 21536)
10. Aloha Airporter and Shuttle Service Inc., dba Aloha Airporter and Shuttle Inc.
11. Aleksander Bezkodov. Db a Coastal Breeze Limousine, Sacramento (TCP 20641)
12. Allas Limousine Company LLC, Northridge (TCP 32267)
13. Theresa L. McWilliams and Ron Magleo dba The Mix Master Pro DJ and Limousine, Sacramento (TCP 10578)
14. King Limousine Service, Inc., Mission Viejo (TCP 20789). Case PSG 3912
15. Travel Connection Group Inc. dba Travel Connection, San Ysidro (TCP 34344)

## Phone Disconnections

As part of its ongoing efforts to clamp down on illegal transportation companies, the CPUC had telephone service shut off to Donna Jackson dba Napa Bee Driven, Napa (Unlicensed). The company advertised and offered transportation services on the internet without a permit. The advertisement listed one telephone number. Notwithstanding a CPUC staff Cease and Desist letter directing the company to immediately cease all unlawful advertisements and operations, the company continued to violate the law as evidenced by advertisements on the Internet. On January 30, 2015, CPUC staff obtained a Finding of Probable Cause signed by a Napa County Superior Court Judge. The Finding orders disconnection of telephone service to the telephone number advertised and used by the company to violate criminal laws in the State of California.

## Enforcement Actions at Los Angeles World Airport (LAWA):

Number of citations issued by LAWA police (unlicensed operations only)	66
Number of vehicles impounded	60

## Official Notices

Nine companies for one or more of these violations:

1. Engaged drivers prior to enrollment in the DMV pull notice and drug and alcohol programs.
2. Advertised and operated without authority (prior to issuance, expired, or suspended).
3. Conducted operations at an airport without holding an airport permit.
4. Engaged drivers without workers' compensation insurance on file and in effect.
5. Failed to include TCP authority number in advertisements.
6. Failed to update equipment list.
7. Incomplete or no waybills.
8. Knowingly and intentionally filed a false report that understates revenues and fees.

Company receiving notice:

1. Steven Smith, dba We Drive (TCP 23993)
2. Palmas Limousine Services, Wilmington (TCP Unlicensed)
3. Juan Manuel Giron, dba S-A-L-S-A Express, Winnetka (TCP 26992B)
4. United Business Connection Inc., dba United Business Connections Inc., South Pasadena (TCP 29814)
5. Don J Enterprises, dba DJL Transportation Service, South Pasadena (TCP 23035)

6. Karen Harrison, dba LeKay's Limousine Service, Compton (TCP Unlicensed)
7. Exotic Limousine Inc. dba Empire Limousine, West Sacramento (TCP 23078)
8. Lake View Montessori, LLC, San Mateo (TCP 34847)
9. Thomas Henry Martell dba Tom's Scenic Walking Tours and Muir Woods Tour, San Rafael (TCP 34752)

### **Refunds and Settlement Claims**

24-7 Ride, Tustin (TCP 25014) agreed to refund monies to consumers for service related complaints.

### **Cease and Desist Notices**

Twenty-five companies were issued a Cease and Desist notice for the violation of operating and/or advertising without a valid charter-party authority (unlicensed, suspended, revoked, denied, or expired).

Companies issued a Cease and Desist notice:

1. Her Majesty's Ride, Inc., Santa Ana (TCP 22829)
2. Vargastrans, Inc., Bell Gardens (TCP 25923)
3. Donna Jackson dba Napa Bee Driven, Napa (Unlicensed)
4. Maduke Takaendesa and Ticho Filmon, dba Awesome Limousine Service, San Diego (TCP 30822)
5. Pacific Pegasus International LLC, San Diego (TCP 30711)
6. Megan Franks dba Uncorked Tours, Escondido (TCP 26854)
7. Fox Express LLC, Lynwood (TCP 21536)
8. Jerry Wayne Kester dba Aurora Limousine Service, Stockton (TCP 19398)
9. King Limousine Service, Inc., Mission Viejo (TCP 20789)
10. Rolf Knudson dba Mammoth Shuttle, Mammoth Lakes (Unlicensed)
11. Megan Franks dba Uncorked Tours, Escondido (TCP 26854)
12. Artem Drabchuk dba Seattle Best Limo, Fresno (Unlicensed)
13. Cabanas Xpress LLC, El Monte (TCP 26634)
14. Ridelabs LLC dba Summon, San Francisco (TCP 33797)
15. Liberty Launch Inc., Orange (TCP 27722)
16. SA Transportation Services LLC, Manhattan Beach (TCP 26535)
17. Tyrus Tyrone Rowland dba Rowland Transportation, Beaumont (TCP 31090)
18. Carefree Natomas Limited Partnership dba Carefree Senior Living, Sacramento (Unlicensed)
19. Fox Express LLC, Lynwood (TCP 21536)
20. Fred Walker dba Luxury Limousine Service, Buellton (Unlicensed)
21. Steve Won dba All Star Limousine, Antioch (TCP 22722)
22. Jose Arturo Marquez, San Diego (TCP 13029)
23. Figueroa Mountain Brewing, LLC dba Figueroa Mountain Brewing, Co, Buellton (TCP none)

24. Red Carpet Tours LLC dba Red Carpet Tours, Woodland Hills (TCP 25672)
25. Dominique Prince dba It's your Limo, Redondo Beach (Unlicensed)

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