



Taxi plan tackles weekend queues

By ANDREW POTTS

LENGTHY weekend waits for taxis could soon be a thing of the past.

Queensland Transport and Regent Taxis are in talks to put more vehicles on Gold Coast roads to meet growing demand during busy periods.

"We are working on a peak demand management plan," said Regent Taxis chief Martin O'Riordan.

"It would involve having extra vehicles available at certain times of the week."

Some initiatives will begin before Christmas and up to 25 new cars could come on line as part of the plan.

"Saturday night is the busiest of the week, but during the rest of the week the work peters out so it makes it difficult to have the rest of the vehicles sitting around, doing nothing," he said.

"It would make things easier and meet the demand when needed rather than flooding the coast with unused taxis."

A Queensland Transport spokesperson said taxi companies



ON QUEUE... the long weekend wait for taxis.

find it challenging to meet demand on Friday and Saturday nights.

"The booking companies develop these plans, indicating times throughout the week and special events where additional taxis will be needed to meet expected increased demand and each plan includes the number of extra vehicles required for these identified times," he said.

"On the Gold Coast, Queensland Transport and Regent Taxis have been undertaking a trial

where Regent uses its substitute vehicles during peak periods identified in its plan and this process will be formalised with the issuing of peak demand management plan (PDMP) permits in 2009."

One taxi driver, who did not want to be identified because of a Regent-imposed media ban, said there was some merit in the plan.

"We don't object to weekend licences to assist with the volume," he said.

"However, they should only allow owner-drivers to do it."

Division 7 councillor Susie Douglas said she supported the proposal.

"It is good to see Regent Taxis are responding to the needs of the Gold Coast," she said.

"Everyone wants to use taxis at the moment and obviously we want to discourage people from using their cars after a night out."

Surfers Paradise Chamber of Commerce president Laura Younger said the plan would be a positive thing for the area's party precinct.

"It would be particularly good late at night, because there is no doubt if people can get transport easily, they are less likely to drive their vehicles."