



## NEWS

## Elderly fight taxi driver

Kate Uebergang, HeraldSun

May 31, 2007 12:00am



ELDERLY pensioners have told a court how a taxi driver conned his way into their homes and stole money.

Edmond Afif, 56, tried to steal from nine people aged in their 80s and 90s who regularly used taxis, and reaped more than \$1600, police allege.

Kathleen Kelsen, 84, told Melbourne Magistrates' Court that a taxi driver knocked on her door last March and asked her to pay \$400, because someone had been ripping off the company with her taxi card.

Ms Kelsen gave evidence the man told her to come to her bank with him, where she withdrew cash and paid him.

"At the time I gave the man \$400, I believed I owed the taxi company that money to pay off a debt," Ms Kelsen said in a statement tendered to the court. "I didn't think till later that I couldn't have owed any money.

## MORE IN NEWS

 **Multimillion-dollar price tag for Swinburne's Hawthorn office**



**How to donate to Qld bushfire victims**



"I always pay at the time, usually a small amount, always less than \$5. So I should never owe any driver money."

Irene Meagher, 60, gave evidence that a taxi driver followed her to her bedroom, knocking on the door of her Pascoe Vale South home in March last year, asking to check her taxi card.

Ms Meagher later noticed \$50 or \$60 missing.

She told the court it was the driver's second visit. He had entered her house about 10 days earlier, fleeing when he saw she had visitors.

In a witness statement tendered to the court, she said that on the first visit, the taxi driver had asked to check her taxi card to confirm it was hers.

He followed her into the bedroom as she went to get her purse, but saw her relatives in the living room.

"The taxi driver just walked out of my house and left," Ms Meagher said.

Dorothy Bromley, 85, told the court she was a bit scared when a taxi driver walked into her Preston home uninvited in February last year asking to see her taxi card.

"I turned to get the card . . . (then) I thought, 'Oh, God, he's following me'," Ms Bromley said.

When the man saw Ms Bromley's daughter, who lives with her, he "tapped me on the shoulder and said, 'Don't worry about it', and he just left the house", she said.

Bank teller Jennifer Addis gave evidence she thought it was out of the ordinary when a regular customer asked to withdraw \$800 or \$900 one afternoon in October 2005.

Ms Addis told the court the elderly woman said that a taxi driver had come to her house and told her she owed his company money.

Ms Addis said she saw a taxi parked outside the bank, and another staff member noted the registration.

She said the bank did not give the woman the money.

Mr Afif, of Ivanhoe, is charged with 31 offences dating from 2004 to last year, including theft, aggravated burglary, and obtaining property by deception.

Magistrate Julian FitzGerald extended Mr Afif's bail. The preliminary hearing was due to continue today.

Menu

Read the Paper

Subscribe

Login

# l Sun

Originally published as [Elderly fight taxi](#)



NEWS

OPINION

BREAKING NEWS

LOCAL

VICTORIA

ED