

U B E R

UBER HQ

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Dear Senator Franken:

Uber welcomes the opportunity to respond to your letter of November 19, 2014. We care deeply about the privacy of the information we hold about our riders, and we recognize that the success of our business depends on maintaining their trust and satisfaction. Uber has always had a strong culture of protecting rider information, and Uber prohibits employees from accessing rider personal information except for legitimate business purposes.

Uber has experienced rapid growth in a few short years, expanding from just a handful of cities in 2012, to our current presence in 52 nations and nearly every major market in the United States. Relatedly, the growth in the number of our employees is on a similar curve. One year ago, our company had only 400 employees; today, we are five times that size. This growth naturally has required that we document our strong culture of protecting rider information more formally now. Over the past year, we have implemented additional written internal policies governing the use, protection, and security of rider information. These policies add to our existing strong privacy practices.

I want to take this opportunity to briefly describe to you some of these privacy practices. Uber collects basic information from riders—information necessary to provide the service. Uber describes this information in our user Privacy Policy, available on its website and in the app (<https://www.uber.com/legal/usa/privacy>). Uber provides most of the data we collect from a rider to the rider in his or her account, including the rider's trip information and history. As these are Uber's transaction records—core business records—they are maintained as long as a rider has an account. If a rider cancels his or her account, the records will be retained until the account is settled and there is no longer a business need to retain them.

Uber also describes in our Privacy Policy the instances in which we disclose rider information, including pursuant to service provider agreements and valid law enforcement requests. We also describe in our Privacy Policy what we do with the information collected. It is neither unusual nor unexpected for a

business to use the data of its customers as necessary to provide the service, to improve the service, and to run the business. Also like other businesses, Uber has internal tools that its employees use to do business—everything from licensed software to database management systems.

In your letter, you suggest that an Uber executive indicated a willingness to use Uber account information of journalists to discredit them. If Uber were to engage in any such misuse of journalists' account information, we agree that it would be a gross invasion of privacy, and a violation of our commitment to our users. Thankfully, that is not the case. Uber publicly apologized for Emil Michael's ill-considered comments about his frustration with reporters, which do not reflect company policies or practices.

Your letter also references articles in which a reporter suggested that an Uber employee improperly "tracked" her and accessed her account. Uber employee Josh Mohrer twice accessed the reporter's account while in the process of responding to communications from her. First, she told him by email that she had not received automatic Uber notifications telling her that her ride was arriving (which would also tell her what base the driver was from); he simply pulled up the notifications in her account and sent them to her by reply email, just as he would if he had heard from any other rider that he or she was not receiving notifications and wanted help. Second, on another occasion, the reporter was on her way to the New York Uber office to talk with Mr. Mohrer about an article she was writing. She emailed him that she was on her way "via Uber." She was 30 minutes late, and Mr. Mohrer wanted to meet her in the lobby to escort her to the meeting location, so he pulled up her trip to see her arrival time, and when she arrived, he was open with her that he had done so. Although Mr. Mohrer believed he had a legitimate purpose for looking at the reporter's location to determine when she was arriving at the office for their meeting, Uber regarded his judgment in this instance to be poor and disciplined him accordingly.

Press articles about Mr. Michael's comments, followed by the reporter's statements, led to further press articles that continued to generate misperceptions about how Uber employees treat the personal data of Uber riders. One of the tools that Uber employees use for legitimate purposes has also drawn attention in the press. The tool is a real-time aerial view of the movement of cars on the Uber platform. Referred to in the press as "God

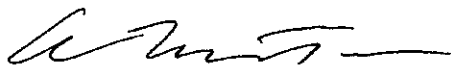
View” (an early internal early name for the first version of the tool), this tool is essential to Uber’s operations teams, which are responsible for numerous real-time tasks to keep the service up and running properly. These tasks include observing whether cars are clustered in one section of town and too sparsely represented in other areas of town in order to help with balancing supply and demand. If there are rides being requested in an area of town with too few vehicles, Uber can send messages to drivers letting them know that there are potential riders in that area. A real-time view of trips is also critical to providing a quick response in the event of a rider or driver letting us know of a safety concern.

This tool is now made available only to employees working in operations or other areas, like fraud prevention, where it is necessary to have a real-time view of trips. Because this tool also has a compelling visual display of our business in a city, it has sometimes been shown to third parties. In these instances, employees are required to use a “presentation” view, which has been available for about a year now and makes rider personal data inaccessible.

As stated at the outset, Uber has a long-standing and continuing commitment to rider privacy. For example, Uber recently engaged Harriet Pearson and her colleagues at Hogan Lovells to conduct an in-depth review and assessment of our existing data privacy program and recommend any needed enhancements so that Uber can ensure that we are a leader in the area of privacy and data protection.

We thank you for the opportunity to respond to your questions and provide more information about our privacy practices. We trust that this has assisted in clarifying the questions raised by press articles.

Best Regards,



Katherine M. Tassi
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