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Rush-hour Uber and Lyft driver strike was a flop in NYC

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Ride-hailing strike? What ride-hailing strike?

A driver strike that was [planned for the Wednesday morning rush hour](#) against ride-sharing services like Uber and Lyft appeared to be a flop in New York City, as cars appeared plentiful and surge pricing was scarce.

The New York Taxi Workers Alliance had hoped to get the participation of 10,000 drivers between 7 a.m. and 9 a.m. to protest drivers getting left out of Uber's planned initial public offering on Thursday, which is expected to value the company at \$90 billion.

But an Uber driver who picked up a Post reporter at 7:30 a.m. in Astoria, Queens, for a trip to Midtown Manhattan claimed he hadn't heard about the strike, and was unsure he would have participated if he had.

"If it made a difference, I would've done it," said the driver, whose Uber profile identified him as "Stiv." "But I don't know what would change for us, IPO or no IPO."

The driver even opened up his Lyft app to see if prices were surging, but told The Post that it seemed to be an ordinary morning.

New York organizers — who were joined by groups that staged strikes in Boston, Washington, DC, and Chicago on Wednesday morning, as well as Los Angeles and San Diego, Calif. — had claimed that protesters would be holding banners and leafleting at the Queens entrance of the 59th Street Bridge. But at 7:45 a.m., there was no discernible demonstration.

Bhairavi Desai, executive director of the New York Taxi Workers Alliance, suggested that subsidies from Uber were what kept surge pricing at bay for passengers.

"We saw surges for drivers on the Uber App because of the shortage and Uber had publicized it would cut rates for passengers. So if riders didn't see rates go up, that was part of Uber's plan," Desai said in a statement.

"We also could see the difference in traffic and the number of cars today and yesterday for example," Desai added. "We're not surprised Uber or Lyft would down play the effectiveness or numbers. We know the strike was a triumph and it's just the beginning."

A source close to Uber, however, denied this, claiming that the company saw a drop of only 500 drivers in New York City compared to the same time period last Wednesday.

"Trips with surge pricing were down in New York compared to last week" for both riders and drivers on Wednesday, the source close to Uber added.

Spokesmen for Uber and Lyft declined to comment.

Twitter traffic of the strike's hashtag, #UberLyftStrike, was low, with many users posting about the strike's low profile.

"So I was curious about the Uber and Lyft strike impact, it's surprisingly low!" one user posted. "Looks like many drivers have 'crossed the picket line.' Peak hour wait times are roughly normal on both platforms, only 10%-15% yellow cabs are vacant, the streets are still congested."

Former Taxi and Limousine Commissioner Matt Daus, who now works in transportation law, told The Post that the strike appeared to be “mostly symbolic.”

“It remains to be seen what will happen,” Daus said. “I think if they’re smart, they’ll listen to what the drivers have to say.”

Uber chief executive Dara Khosrowshahi, hired to help guide the company past a series of scandals and manage the IPO, has promised to treat drivers better. Uber is paying more than a million drivers about \$300 million in one-time bonuses, for instance, and has changed policies such as allowing riders to tip.

“Whether it’s being able to track your earnings or stronger insurance protections, we’ll continue working to improve the experience for and with drivers,” the company said.