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EDITORIAL

This month, in Tacsai Magazine we look at the recent decision of the city of London to allow Uber operate, and its potential ramifications for the taxi industry here. Earlier this year Uber lobbied the Irish government strongly and though they were rebuffed, there are lingering fears that a new Minister of Transport may bend to their will.

Uber spent time and money in capturing the streets of London and if they see reward in Dublin and Cork and Galway there may be little or no sating them.

As many as one in four foreign national taxi drivers stopped at recent illegal immigration checkpoints are suspected of having entered into sham marriages, Gardaí believe.

During an operation in May, established to coincide with an Ed Sheeran concert in Phoenix Park, Dublin, some 110 drivers were stopped.

Of those, 26 are believed to have paid to marry a woman from Europe they had never met so they could secure the right to reside and work in the Republic, according to Gardaí.

All of the men are from outside the EU and Gardaí have already revoked the immigration status they had secured when they married European women in the Republic.

Meanwhile, Motorists may be taxed on the distance they drive rather than paying excise on fuel at petrol station pumps, under plans proposed by senior officials.

The government is considering numerous schemes to ensure the overall tax take from motoring does not drop significantly as a result of moves to lower emission vehicles.

The Department of Finance has outlined a series of options on how to ensure the exchequer does not lose out, such as a fixed charge on the purchase of every car, no matter how low its emissions levels are.

So it seems that their drive to move the public towards Hybrid and Electric cars has hurt the government pocket and they'll be damned if they let the general public and the taxi industry make any financial gains.

Last but certainly not least for this edition, September 18th will see this year's Dublin Taxidriver's Special Children's Day Out and the organisers have promised this will be the best one yet. They are calling out for more drivers to get involved though, so don't hesitate to get in touch.

On a final, personal note. It's been a pleasure to edit this magazine for the taxi industry over the last four and a half years but the time has come, with other work commitments, to move on and hand the reins of Tacsai over to a new pair of hands. I've thoroughly enjoyed working with all our contributors and I hope to have helped bring to light as many of the issues which are important to you as possible.

I wish you all and the staff here at Tacsai continued success and many more years of work together.

Safe travels and kind regards,
Stephen Young, Editor

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LONDON DECISION SPARKS UBER FEARS HERE

While Irish Independent tech editor backs public's growing calls in online editorial, saying "what we have just isn't fit for purpose"

In a move that has worried some in the taxi industry here, London has granted Uber a license to operate in the city.

Uber has previously been resisted by the Irish government with Minister Shane Ross pushing back on the company's heavy lobbying here earlier this year.

But with authorities in the English capital bowing under heavy pressure from the billion dollar app giants, there is understandable worry on this side of the Irish Sea.

There are some, however, who would seem to welcome any such a move to open up our market to the ride-sharing app.

Adrian Weckler, writing for the Irish Independent, said: "Maybe it's time to look again at an Uber-style taxi system.

"Last week, London agreed to give Uber a licence. It means quicker pickups at a lower cost.

"In Ireland, the company can't operate a similar system. But how long will that last?

"Dublin badly needs something that works more efficiently than our present setup. In particular, the country's capital - which is in the midst of an economic boom - needs a system that can respond to predictable surges in demand.

"At present, what we have just isn't fit for purpose.

"In Dublin, it is now the norm for a business person to wait 45 minutes or an hour for a taxi. If it rains - unlikely in Ireland, I know - it's even worse.

"Anyone reading this who has attended a conference or business event in the capital in recent months will know what I'm talking about. It's often a lottery for overseas business travellers as to whether they will get a taxi back to the airport in time.

"This isn't the fault of individual taxi drivers, or even the companies. The legal system governing taxis simply isn't keeping up with the needs of the rest of society.

"Last week, I spent some time in Seattle, a city that is booming in a similar way to Dublin.

"The West Coast city has many pluses and minuses. But even without a New York or London style metro service, it's always possible to get somewhere within 30 minutes.

"This is because the city, like many American cities, has fessed up to the realisation that it is not going to lay down substantial public transport systems. But because it also doesn't want everyone reaching to buy their own car, it allows for hire systems such as Uber and Lyft.

"These companies are essentially comprised of private-hire vehicles. From a macro planning perspective, the result is that young people, as well as business people, can travel quickly to almost anywhere else in the city for under \$10 or \$15.

"This makes it far more affordable than taxi cabs. But critically, it is also superb at responding to spikes and troughs in demand. During bad weather or a large event, for example, more drivers are encouraged to respond to demand through fares being raised.

"For me as a user, it's a minor pain to have to pay \$9 instead of \$7 to get to where I need to go. But it's worth it to know I'm guaranteed to get a lift within 15 or 20 minutes.

"Dublin faces a similar problem to Seattle. At this point, we need to accept that we're not going to invest substantially in public transport systems to meet our growing population.

"This is regrettable, but at least it's clear.

"Yes, we have buses and a small handful of light rail routes



(serving a few narrow slivers of the city). I'm an avid user of this infrastructure whenever possible, especially the bus (which is arguably the most efficient form of public transport available).

"But when travelling to other places in the city for work-related purposes, I'll almost always plan to walk. This isn't because I'm any kind of fitness fanatic, but because it's usually quicker and always more reliable than any other option available, unless it's to an office near the 10pc of the city covered by light rail. In other words, I know for sure where I'll be within 30 or 40 minutes, instead of wondering whether my taxi will turn up within that time.

"This doesn't mean that Uber's exact model is necessarily the answer.

"The taxi industry's objections to Uber-style services are not without warrant. In particular, there have been problems with safety in Uber both in the US and in Europe.

"But it should not be outside the ability of regulators and legislators to come up with more robust safety systems.

"There is also the issue of job security and wages. The kind of competition that an Uber-style service would bring would put pressure on the upper end of a taxi driver's earnings.

"As such, representatives of the industry have every right - and even a duty - to protect their livelihoods.

"But some of these arguments were the same ones

used more than a decade ago when taxi services were liberalised. Younger readers may not recall it, but the 1990s saw a protected system where taxi plates could be bought and sold for €100,000 because they were rare, controlled assets.

"Because of this, it was normal to wait one or two hours for a taxi during busy times. It was disastrous and unsustainable.

"At the time of liberalisation, taxi drivers blocked the streets in protest. Ultimately, though, the Government had to act. It had to balance the (legitimate) claims of individual taxi drivers with the needs of the rest of society.

"To be fair, it's arguably not quite as bad now as it was then. But it's considerably worse than a few years ago. The maddening aspect of it is that the difficulties are for entirely logical and predictable reasons - economic growth.

"Given that we clearly do not intend to meet that need with proportionately increased public transportation, we probably should start thinking about an alternative method.

"That means a new tech platform that's fundamentally different from the old Hailo-style ceilings our current taxi system limits itself to.

"It means acting before a new generation of young workers come to the conclusion that their parents formed years ago - that the only way to get guaranteed flexible transportation around the city is to drive yourself into work every day.



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Paul Panetta of Ready Cabs Limited (*Dublin*)

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Baljinder Singh of Eagle Cabs Limited (*Dublin*)

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Geraldine Sweetman – Multi-Vehicle License Owner (*Dublin*)

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Chris Okeke – Taxi Driver (*Galway*)

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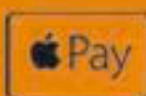
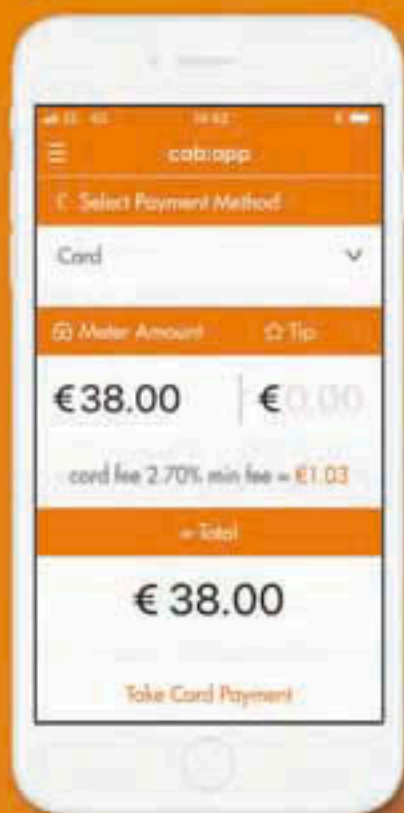
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ONE IN FOUR FOREIGN NATIONAL TAXI DRIVERS SUSPECTED OF SHAM MARRIAGES

Massive crackdown by Gardaí reveals shocking stats

As many as one in four foreign national taxi drivers stopped at recent illegal immigration checkpoints are suspected of having entered into sham marriages, Gardaí believe.

During an operation in May, established to coincide with an Ed Sheeran concert in Phoenix Park, Dublin, some 110 drivers were stopped.

Of those, 26 are believed to have paid to marry a woman from Europe they had never met so they could secure the right to reside and work in the Republic, according to Gardaí.

All of the men are from outside the EU and Gardaí have already revoked the immigration status they had secured when they married European women in the Republic.

The men are now appealing that revocation and are permitted to remain in Ireland until their appeals are completed.

Garda sources said there was concern within the force that such a high percentage of no-EU drivers stopped at three checkpoints during a one-hour operation were suspected of cheating the immigration system.

One man, from India, was about to attend a special citizenship ceremony but that has now been deferred on suspicion his marriage is a sham.

Garda sources said the decision to target taxi drivers specifically so their immigration status could be scrutinised was made after unusual patterns were detected in new Public Service Vehicle (PSV) applications.

"We noticed a big increase in the number of men from outside the EU applying and it wasn't clear why this was happening," said one officer.

Another source said 58 new applications for PSV licences were lodged with the carriage office in January, 40 of which came from men outside the EU. He described this as "way outside the norm".

The same officer said the increases had been a feature

for around 18 months. And when some of the applicants' immigration histories were checked it emerged they had previously tried to secure status in Europe.

It was then decided to target the Ed Sheeran concert on May 18th at three locations close to the park because gardaí knew they could check a lot of taxis very quickly at the same locations before news of the checkpoint locations spread and drivers began avoiding the area.

The checkpoints were led the Garda National Immigration Bureau and also involved the Garda Carriage Office, Garda National Roads Policing Unit, the National Transport Authority as the taxi regulator, UK Common Travel Liaison Officers and Department of Social Protection.

Some of the drivers were found to be fraudulently claiming social welfare though working. In some cases, on-the-spot fines were issued to other for various breaches of PSV regulations.

However, it was the suspected involvement of a quarter of the drivers in sham marriages that caused gardaí most concern.

Sham marriages are marriages of convenience, normally between a man from outside the EU and a woman from a member state. The so-called brides are usually from Eastern Europe and are paid a fee to marry the men, who secure the right to reside and work in Ireland through their marriage. The Garda's Operation Vantage has been established with a view to cracking down on the problem.

The Irish Taxi Drivers Federation has expressed surprise at the high rate of arrests during an illegal immigration crackdown.

It has emerged gardaí targeted cab drivers in May after noticing an unusual pattern in applications for public service vehicles.

Out of 110 stopped, around a quarter were suspected of being married to a European woman they'd never met for



the purposes of living here.

The federation's president Joe Heron says it's difficult to get a taxi license.

"I was very much surprised and what really surprises me is there were so many non-nationals able to get PSV drivers licences," he said.

"They must have been in the country for a considerable length of time before they were even stopped.

"The geography part of the test, the knowledge of the area in which you're working, it should take you a considerable length [of time] to know the city to pass it [the test for a PSV licence].

"The first thing you do is apply at your local garda station and they put you through a vetting process. I don't know why these things didn't come up at that stage, about how these people are in the country.

"You will have to sit two parts of an exam.

"One is an industry knowledge part of the exam. The other is the area knowledge for whatever area you want to drive a taxi in.

"If you take Dublin, lots of people who were born and reared in Dublin have failed the exam."

Meanwhile, a total of 27 taxi drivers are under investigation as a result of a multi-agency crackdown involving the immigration bureau.

The operation, codenamed Vantage, followed an analysis of new and existing applicants for public service vehicle (PSV) licences.

It identified a huge increase in the number of applications for licences from non-EU nationals over the past 18 months.

The study showed, in particular, a disproportionate rise in applications from Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi nationals. This led to the Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB) focusing on the validity of their immigration status and examining their past.

The figures showed there had been 70 applications for taxi licences by nationals from those three countries in 2016.

But the number jumped dramatically to 290 in 2017, more than all of the applications made the previous year.

Last January, the Garda carriage office reported that 40 out of 58 new applications were from non-EU nationals.

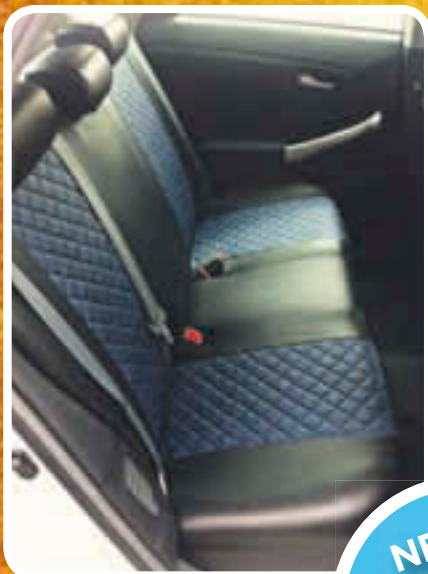
Following further inquiries by gardaí, it was decided to set up multi-agency checkpoints with GNIB backed up by multi-agency personnel including the Department of Social Protection. Three locations were selected for the checkpoints, at St John's Road, inbound and outbound, and Military Road, all close to Heuston Station, on the night of the Ed Sheeran concert in the Phoenix Park in Dublin.

A senior Garda officer said: "The purpose of the checkpoints was to identify and detect any criminal offences and/or breaches of relevant legislation and immigration controls, being committed by public service vehicle licence holders.

"It was suspected there were a number of people operating as illegal taxi drivers and individuals committing offences contrary to road traffic legislation," the officer added.

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TAXI DRIVERS FACING HIGHER TAXES

Government considering numerous schemes to ensure the overall tax take from motoring does not drop significantly as a result of moves to lower emission vehicles while only seven drive take up electric vehicle grant.

Motorists may be taxed on the distance they drive rather than paying excise on fuel at petrol station pumps, under plans proposed by senior officials.

The Government is considering numerous schemes to ensure the overall tax take from motoring does not drop significantly as a result of moves to lower emission vehicles.

The Department of Finance has outlined a series of options on how to ensure the exchequer does not lose out, such as a fixed charge on the purchase of every car, no matter how low its emissions levels are.

Recent policy has been designed to encourage motorists to purchase lower emission vehicles, which are subject to lower vehicle registration taxes (VRT) and annual motor tax.

However, officials now warn that, although lower emissions will still be incentivised, the move towards such vehicles, particular electric-powered cars, will “severely challenge the revenue” accrued by the exchequer through VRT, excise and motor tax.

A similar proposal to tax motorists on the distance they drive was mooted when the VRT scheme changed a decade ago but it is understood a predicted backlash from TDs in rural and commuter belt counties stopped the proposal from advancing.

Taoiseach Leo Varadkar has already indicated that carbon taxes will rise in the October budget, saying the State will have to “grasp the nettle” to reach its climate-change commitments.

A report on environmental taxes from the Department of Finance outlines a number of longer-term proposals to ensure motoring still generates taxes for the State.

The most significant is a mooted change from relying on excise at the pumps to taxes based on how much people travel on the State’s roads.

“In relation to replacing fuel excise duties the possibilities of shifting taxes to road usage should be considered in the context of the uptake of EVs [electric vehicles] or ‘super low’ emission vehicles,” the document says.

Although it does not go into further detail, the idea of charging for road usage based on distance travelled has been proposed at EU level and is already in place for trucks in a number of member states.

A move away from relying on excise levied on diesel and petrol is not the only change proposed by the department.

The VRT system could be reformed too, officials argue. A new system could, for example, apply a fixed charge of 2.5 per cent of the purchase price of a car, as calculated by the Revenue Commissioner, as well as variable charges.

A minimum rate of VRT of 10 per cent on the value of a car would also apply to ensure that cars with the lowest emissions still pay a certain level of tax, ensuring that income to the State remains stable.

“The purpose of a fixed-charge component and the minimum rate would be to protect the exchequer from losses due to very low emitting CO2 cars,” officials say. It would still “broadly mirror the current regime insofar as rates is concerned”.

Overall, environmental taxes in Ireland are projected to yield €3.55 billion this year. Excise rates on petrol and diesel have remained unchanged since 2012, with 58.7 cent excise and a 4.6 carbon charge on a litre of petrol. The corresponding rates for diesel are 47.9 cent and 5.3 cent.

The Department of Finance tax strategy papers, which include the study of environment tax, says there is a “strong environmental rationale” for eliminating this gap.

Meanwhile, Minister Shane Ross’s scheme to persuade taxi drivers to switch to electric cars has been dismissed as a failure as newly disclosed figures show just seven drivers have taken up the grant since it began.

There are more than 20,000 taxis in Ireland.

The Minister for Transport announced in February €500,000 funding to jump-start the electrification of the country’s taxi fleet and said it would play “a significant role” in making Ireland “cleaner and greener”.

But figures released from the National Transport Agency (NTA) show just €43,000 of the money – less than 10 per cent – has been allocated.



In total, there have been 92 applications for the grants of up to €7,000 towards the cost of switching away from petrol and diesel.

Seven grants have been awarded to date, from among 34 provisional offers.

Vinny Kearns, chief executive of Xpert Taxis and former vice president of the National Taxi Drivers Union, said the scheme “unfortunately has failed”.

“I am an advocate of electric vehicles, I think they are the way forward, but the scheme needs to be better incentivised,” he said.

“The Minister could change the take -up straight away if he issued 500 new licences for electric vehicles.

“He could achieve more in one month than we have in the last 10 years.

“We are so far behind the eight-ball here as a country on electric vehicles – we are the second-worst adaptors to it in Europe.”

Mr Kearns, who sat on the Taoiseach’s Taxi Forum, the National Taxi Advisory Council and EU transport committees, said under the current scheme he would have to take a car, which has already been paid for, off the road to make way for an electric car.

His company fleet has 560 taxis. Two of them are electric.

“If Shane Ross said taxi companies could apply for 30 new electric vehicle licences, I’d get 30 electric vehicles tomorrow morning,” he said.

Mr Kearns said hybrid cars, which are run on electric as well as petrol or diesel but are not covered by the grant scheme, are more attractive to drivers at present.

“Range anxiety remains a problem with electric vehicles,” he said.

“They say they have a range of between 200km and 250 km on a charge, but if you are sitting in a rank, the heater and radio on or travelling at speed on the motorway or to the airport, it reduces.

“Hybrid vehicles mean you don’t have to worry about that. If you run out of charge there will be a back-up. They also have a better range of vehicles and bigger vehicles.”

A “total lack” of charging points is another issue, but he accepted a lack of education among taxi drivers about electric vehicles was also standing in the way of any significant switch away from petrol and diesel.

Of the 34 provisional offers of grants, 17 were in Dublin, five were in Cork, two in Galway, two in Kildare and one each in Cavan, Leitrim, Limerick, Louth, Sligo, Wicklow, Mayo and Meath.

Of the 12 rejected applications, three were because of incomplete applications, six applicants had no tax clearance and three were refused because they had been prosecuted within the last two years.

A Department of Transport spokesman said take-up of the grant scheme was “initially slow” but that the pace “is currently accelerating, with more electric vehicles sold in the first half of 2018 than in all of 2017”.

“This is a trend that we hope to see continue as electric vehicles strongly contribute towards the national ambition that all new passenger cars sold in Ireland from 2030 onwards will be zero emission-capable vehicles.”

Other incentives for switching to electric include up to €5,000 VRT relief, €3,800 from the Sustainable Energy Authority towards vehicle purchase price, up to €600 towards the installation of a domestic home charger and up to 75 per cent discount on tolls and free on-street charging.



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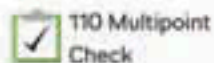
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The event has always been a jewel in the crown of the industry's year and this year will be no different, in fact it's likely to be bigger and better than ever.

Tacsaí Magazine recently spoke to Paul Matthews, Spokesman for the event, and he said: "The drivers will pick up the children and their carers from their schools, care homes and private homes and bring them to Parnell Square.

"The Garda Band and DJ will be on hand to entertain them while waiting on the convoy to move off at midday. They will get their goodie bags and t-shirts. The Blue Crew from Q102 will be face painting. Carrolls Irish Gifts and mytaxi will have goodies for everybody. The Lord Mayor will be on hand to see the convoy off along with some other VIPs.

"Paddy Drac is celebrating his 50th DTSCO and he is looking forward to his big anniversary.

"At midday we parade down O Connell St led by the Garda Band. Q102s Blue Crew, Viking Splash Tours and Dublin Fire Brigade will be joining the convoy.

"Pigsback.com will be sponsoring the Best Dressed Taxi. So we are looking for the drivers to make a big effort to add some colour to the convoy.

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"We would appeal to drivers to get involved in what has become a highlight of the taxi year.

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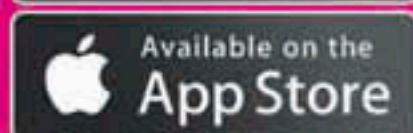
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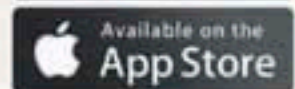


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BARTON SUGGESTS FIVE-YEAR IRISH LICENSE RULE

Tacsaí hear from the DTA

Recently Tacsaí Magazine spoke to the DTA's Tommy Barton regarding the recent news about sham marriages.

As many as one in four foreign national taxi drivers stopped at recent illegal immigration checkpoints are suspected of having entered into sham marriages, Gardaí believe.

During an operation in May, established to coincide with an Ed Sheeran concert in Phoenix Park, Dublin, some 110 drivers were stopped.

Tommy said: "After the most shocking article in the Irish Times in relation to fraudulent drivers in the Irish taxi industry the National Transport Authority really needs to start thinking outside of the box there is way too many incidents of illegal drivers driving taxis.

"The incidents of illegal drivers have been going back many many, years. I remember talking to taxi drivers up in the airport and when the regulators came up to the airport the Kesh would be half full.

"And it was nearly straight through the Kesh because illegal drivers would have got phone calls from friends to say stay away so it's not surprising to me to hear of the illegal drivers stopped at the check point at Heuston Station at the Ed Sheeran concert and let's remember these drivers are caught in the space of one hour.

"You have to ask the question; 13,000 taxis in Dublin and in one hour the Garda got so many illegal drivers, it is my personal opinion and also some of my taxi colleagues that we need to have a mandatory five-year holder of an Irish licence before you can even apply for a Public Service Vehicle licence.

"The reason for this is because not only if you hold a valid Irish drivers licence that licence can be checked each year and also where the holder of the licence resides in the state it will give you also information about penalty points, endorsements, traffic fines...

"It's imperative that this happens now because of what happening in the Industry at this present time. It will be far safer for the passenger the public and the industry if the person holding the licence has five years



of experience driving in Dublin or any other part of the country and for the Garda I believe the vetting procedure would be a lot more stringent a lot more transparent and straightforward that the holder of the licence has proof of his/her identity and also previous insurance certificates.

"I welcome the checkpoints. It's very healthy for the industry when illegal drivers are caught. We need far more enforcement officers and Garda on a permanent basis specifically tasked to eradicate this serious problem."

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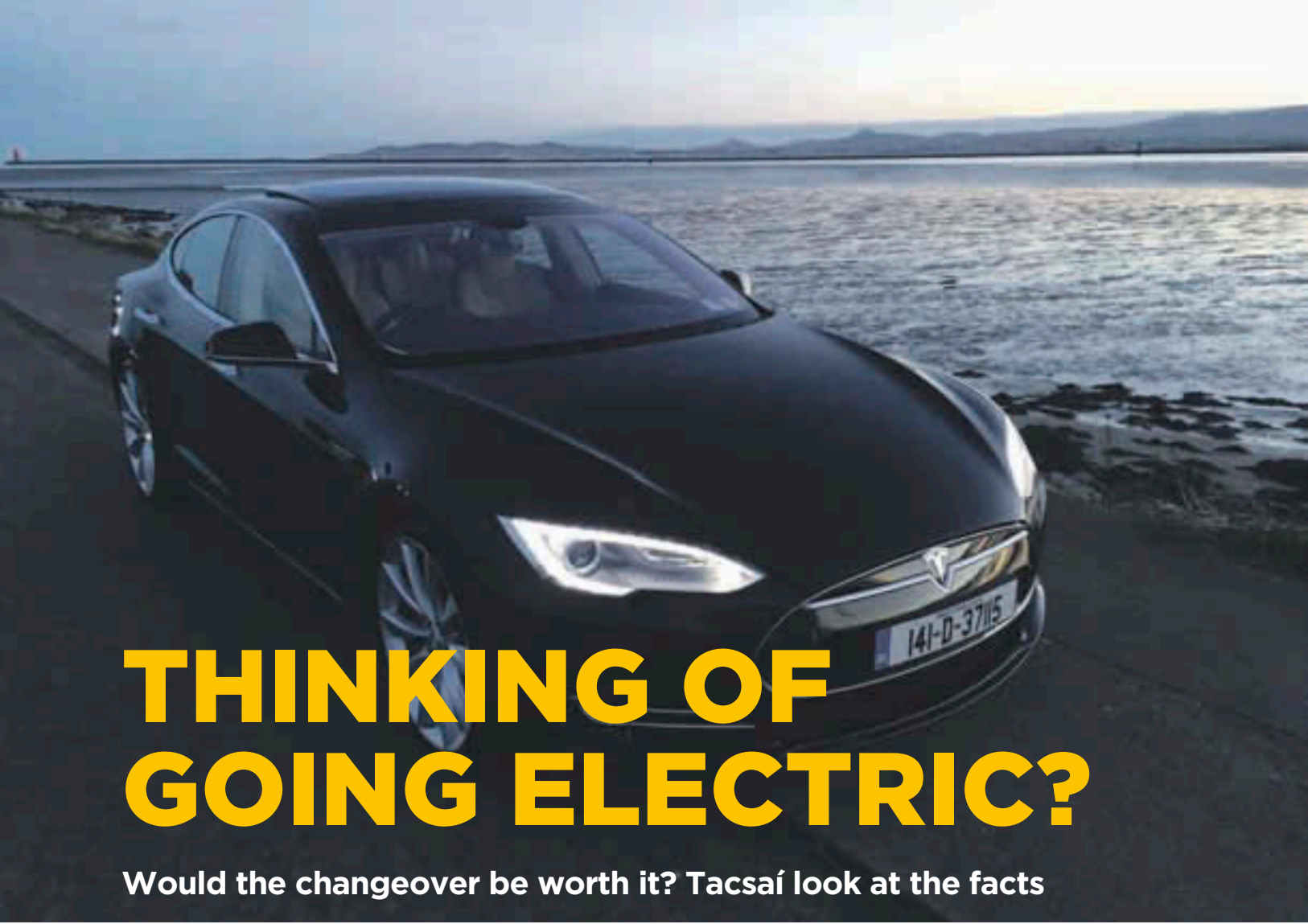
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THINKING OF GOING ELECTRIC?

Would the changeover be worth it? Tacsáí look at the facts

Plastic bags, microbeads and disposable coffee cups have all faced criticism in recent years, but none have faced quite as much vitriol as gas-guzzling, polluting, petrol and diesel vehicles.

Enter electric and hybrid cars – the sustainable future of the motor industry. Not only are they clean and green (modern electric cars produce zero tailpipe emissions), they've had a makeover. Electric vehicles have evolved into high-spec, sophisticated machines.

Luxury car manufacturers like Tesla have played a huge part in boosting the appeal of electric vehicles, with sleek designs and semi-automated features making its cars exciting to own and drive. People are interested – more than 4 million people Googled Tesla last year.

Other luxury brands such as BMW, Porsche and Jaguar all boast stylish electric models of their own, but there's an ever-increasing range of affordable, chic versions on the market such as the Nissan Leaf and Renault Zoe.

With their green credentials and increasingly stylish designs, why then do plug-in vehicles only make up 2.2 per cent of new car sales in Ireland?

Infrastructure plays a part. Range anxiety (fear of running out of power before you reach a charging point) is a huge turn-off for drivers and, of course, they are expensive.

Add to this the myths surrounding electric vehicles – that they are slow to drive, expensive to charge and difficult to repair – and you can see why some motorists and particularly taxi drivers are reluctant to switch.

Modern electric vehicles are challenging these misconceptions. The Tesla Model S is one of the fastest-

accelerating cars ever made and can travel for up to 383 miles on a single charge.

What, then, of the other concerns? Are they more expensive to run, insure and repair?

“Yes and no,” electric car expert, Andreas Mavroudis, says. “Electric vehicles can be more expensive at point of purchase and can be slightly more expensive to insure. This is because, currently, they cost more to repair when something goes wrong.

“As more consumers go electric, however, the cost of manufacturing and repairing these vehicles will fall – which will make the cost of buying and insuring them fall too.”

Consumers shouldn't be put off, he adds, as the cheaper cost of running an electric vehicle can, in some cases, offset the expense. Indeed, it can cost as little as 4.20 euro to fully charge an electric vehicle at home.

Most experts agree that the future of mobility is electric.

“It's not a question of if, but when, electric vehicles will become the norm,” predicts Mavroudis. “This will be driven by government legislation and incentives, car manufacturers and, eventually, the adoption of autonomous vehicles.”

Car manufacturers are almost there. Volvo, GM and Jaguar Land Rover have all announced plans to electrify their lines by the early 2020s.

Significantly, electric vehicles have become almost synonymous now with the self-driving cars in development – cementing their place in motor industry future.

“Ultimately, the exciting automated features of modern electric cars, paired with an eventual reduction in cost, will be what tempts people to use them,” Mavroudis adds.

ENNIS DRIVER SAYS HE WILL NOT BE INTIMIDATED BY ATTACKERS

An Ennis-based taxi driver who was set upon by four members of the same family and stabbed six times by a then 17-year-old male in a dispute over a fare said that he will not be intimidated by any of them.

At Ennis Circuit Court, Abi Ohiku, in his victim impact statement, recalled how James Sherlock and three of his sons set upon him in June of last year in a dispute over a taxi-fare in an Ennis housing estate.

In his victim impact statement, Mr Ohiku said to them: "What kind of human beings are you to bring such inhumane treatment on me?"

The youngest Sherlock involved in the incident, Jordan Sherlock now 18, but 17 at the time, stabbed Mr Ohiku six times with a pen knife near his former home at Dromard, Ennis on June 9, 2017.

Garda Noelle Bergin told the court that Jordan Sherlock has no previous convictions but did first come to the attention of Garda in 2009 - Mr Sherlock would have been nine at the time.

Mr Ohiku wept in court as CCTV footage of the attack was shown and cried again when Det Garda Damien O'Connor read out his victim impact statement.

In the case, the three other Sherlocks involved in the incident, James Sherlock (49), Declan Sherlock (23) and Damien Sherlock (26) all formerly of Dromard, Ennis have amassed a combined total of 155 previous convictions.

Damien Sherlock has 110 previous convictions with Declan Sherlock having 24 and James Sherlock having 21 previous convictions.

Garda Noelle Bergin described James Sherlock as "an aggressive male when dealing with Garda". Garda Bergin said that widower, Mr Sherlock has since relocated his family to Co Leitrim.

In his victim impact statement, Mr Ohiku said that he thinks "about my blood that was gushing from the six stab

wounds that you have inflicted upon me every day and I have not been able to erase that from my head and mind".

Mr Ohiku said: "The 9th of June is a day I will remember for a long time- the beating and stabbing that you inflicted on me in the attack that night has left me with a huge physical and psychological problems."

He added: "I wish to state that I will not be intimidated by any of you and I am determined to make a full physical and psychological recovery from the incident and move on with my life."

Det O'Connor told the court that Mr Ohiku had a dispute with Damien Sherlock over a fare after dropping him to his home and Mr Ohiku gave chase when Mr Sherlock fled from his taxi outside Mr Sherlock's former home at Dromard Ennis.

CCTV footage shows Mr Ohiku apprehending Mr Sherlock when chasing him down a cul de sac but then shows chilling footage of other members of the Sherlock family converging on Mr Ohiku where a struggle ensues.

Det O'Connor said that a young girl had alerted James Sherlock that a man had taken hold of one of his sons.

The footage shows Jordan Sherlock stab Mr Ohiku six times before James Sherlock trips him up. The footage also shows Declan Sherlock strike Mr Ohiku in the face with his fist.

Jordan Sherlock has pleaded guilty to assault causing harm of Mr Ohiku and possession of a knife while the three other Sherlocks pleaded guilty to affray on the same date.

Judge Keys has adjourned sentencing to October. James Sherlock and Jordan Sherlock have been remanded on bail while Damien Sherlock and Declan Sherlock remain in custody.



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DRIVERS WARN AGAINST UBER

Irish taxi drivers are warning against allowing Uber into the market, as the firm fights to get its license back in the UK.



A judge in London has decided to make it “fit and proper”. Uber – an app which enables users to book cars using their smartphones – was not issued with an operating licence in the UK capital after its current deal expired on September 30 last year, with Transport for London saying the app was “not fit and proper” to operate in the capital.

Joe Herron - President of the Taxi Driver’s Federation here - says Uber is not safe enough for Ireland.

“They’re using private cars to do public service vehicle work. That’s the way it works,” said Mr Herron.

“Taxis are highly regulated and are subject to inspection at all times and subject to being interviewed by inspectors from the National Transport Authority.”

The London mayor is seeking powers to limit the number of Uber drivers operating in the capital, blaming a surge in private hire drivers for the city’s increasing congestion and pollution.

Sadiq Khan said a cap on new licences was an urgent and necessary step. But unlike New York, which announced a cap last week, he is unable to impose restrictions.

Khan urged the government to grant him powers to limit the “unsustainable rise” in drivers to “enable Londoners, like New Yorkers, to breathe better air and live in a less congested city”.

An Uber spokesperson said: “Uber is committed to helping address congestion and air pollution and we strongly support

the Mayor’s ultra-low emission zone.

“Already more than half of the miles travelled with Uber are in hybrid or electric vehicles. By competing with private cars, getting more people into fewer vehicles and investing in our clean air plan, we can be a part of solution in London.”

Meanwhile, Irish taxi app Lynk is apparently looking to recruit as many as 250 drivers in the greater Dublin area.

A story in the Irish Independent says the move comes as it continues its expansion, with the creation of a fast delivery service.

It’s launching the new service, Lynk Delivers, in the coming weeks.

The 250 jobs are on offer for people who have access to their own vehicle, valid insurance and are in possession of a full driving licence and smartphone.

“We have been rapidly growing our business and technology for the past few years and as such have spotted a niche gap in the market around delivery services,” said Lynk CEO Noel Ebbs.

“We’ll be announcing all the details around this new Lynk service when it launches in the coming weeks, but first we want to recruit new drivers.

“We’re starting in the corporate sector, and while we will be moving into other sectors for sure, we don’t see ourselves as moving into anyone else’s space.”

“I wouldn’t particularly say we are rivalling Deliveroo,” he added.

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ROE LOOKS FOR RESOLUTION TO INSURANCE HIKES

NTAC Chairman calls on authorities to end the grievous premiums.

Tony Roe of the National Transport Assembly Committee has spoken to a number of drivers recently who have been forced out of the industry due to excessive hikes in their insurance premiums. He said: “Drivers are facing chaos over the exaggerated increases – some, over 300%. Taxi drivers are leaving the industry now in droves and drivers of the wheelchair accessible taxis are being particularly hit as they are being priced out of the market, some being quoted as much as €18,000 a year, which equates to no insurance as it is just too unrealistic

“Taxi drivers’ requirements must be listened to. We have been on to the current Minister for Transport, Shane Ross, and we would like him to act as I asked him at the meeting – to act effectively and efficiently.

“We have contacted many insurance companies on this issue and thankfully there are now new companies coming into the industry which we welcome. The Tacsai Magazine advertised one such new company on page 8 of the last issue.

“Now, claims by drivers are being blamed for excessive hikes in insurance premiums, yet insurance companies’ profits are up on previous years and drivers on as much as a 60% no claims bonus are being fleeced with hikes that are excessive. This rip-off mentality must stop.

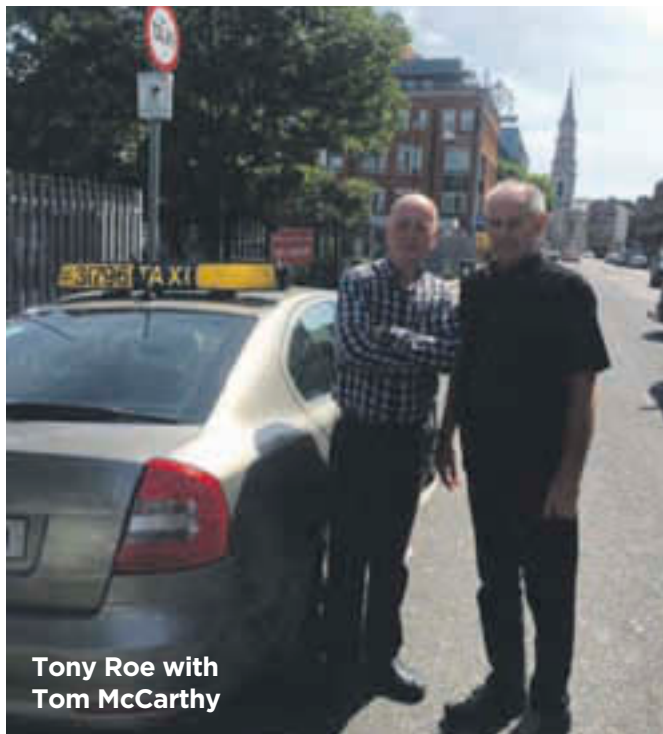
“We’re calling on the Minister to investigate and look into the allegations of a cartel operating in the insurance industry as all companies seem to be singing off the same hymn sheet when it comes to taxi insurance.

“We don’t need temporary solutions to permanent problems. We need penalties against these companies and these would act as a deterrent like in other countries, such as in England.

“We’ve been talking to English taxi drivers and they’re driving the new, state-of-the-art e-taxi which replaces the FX FORD and the average insurance is around 700 quid a year!

“So the insurance here is leaving drivers with massive overheads and core values must be looked at. Our elected deputies in the Dáil must be hear us and act on this issue. These are relevant problems and they must be tackled at source

“80% of insurance claims are for whiplash, most of these can’t even be confirmed and it’s grossly unfair to pin the brunt of this blame on drivers in the taxi industry who have



Tony Roe with Tom McCarthy

60% no claims bonuses. And all the while, drivers are forced out of work due to these huge premiums and yet the government keeps issuing new licenses – this could affect standards and quality and possibly safety.

“Drivers must be given the tools to do the job and not just be seen as a source of raising revenue – so the problem of insurance and the vehicle age limit must be looked at. We brought this up at the meeting also, but the Minister and the government and also the National Transport Authority seem to be dragging their feet on insurance. The NTA are quick to talk about quality and are quick to issue fines for fire extinguishers and plasters in their kits and yet not contribute to help driver standards, other than to help take money off them for fines.

“All over Europe, England, Spain, Germany etc, all taxis are exempt from VRT, unlike Ireland. The government doesn’t help taxi drivers, they are not doing enough here and must act for the common good. So we put these issues to the Minister. They’re huge problems, not just for the drivers but the drivers’ families too and must be addressed sooner rather than later.”

NTA RELEASE THEIR LATEST ROUND OF STATS



**Yes. They're back.
The NTA stats.**

One smoking taxi driver and a taxi that had “an offensive smell” with “tatty” seats are just two of the 629 complaints received by the National Transport Authority (NTA) concerning taxis in the first six months of this year.

Overall, according to the authority, the number of complaints lodged with the NTA against taxi drivers between January and the end of June surged by 28% to 629 from the 492 complaints received for the corresponding period last year. The sharpest rise concerned fare matters where the number of complaints increased by 45% going from 168 to 244.

The NTA received the same amount of complaints - 244 - concerning driver behaviour in the first six months.

An additional 19 complaints were received in respect of vehicle condition with 120 complaints received in relation to hiring matters and two over identification.

One female passenger complained about a taxi driver over the interaction with him when paying an €8.80 fare along with a 70c tip with 5 20c coins and the rest in 2c coins and 1c coins.

Another passenger in February complained to the NTA that “this was the dirtiest taxi I’ve ever had the displeasure of sitting in. It looked like it had never been cleaned”.

In response, the NTA issued a fixed payment notice to the driver for failing to comply with vehicle standards - fixed payment notices generally range from €40 to €80 depending on the nature of the breach.

In another case in February, a passenger complained to the NTA that the “condition of the taxi was unacceptable for a public service vehicle, offensive smell within the taxi requiring us to wind the windows down, car was old and seats were tatty”.

In that instance, no case was proceeded with as there was no evidence of any offence. The NTA reported that the vehicle had undergone licence renewal inspection shortly after complaint.

In another case, a passenger complained that “the taxi was unfit for business due to the strong level of odour” and as a result the NTA issued advice to the licence holder concerning vehicle cleanliness.

In March, a passenger complained that a driver was smoking in the vehicle and the complaint was referred under the Public Health (Tobacco) Act.

In April, a passenger complained that a taxi was “filthy and sounded very rattely”.

The case was not proceeded with as there was no response from the complainant when contacted and the vehicle was no longer being operated by the driver.

Another passenger in May pointed out that his daughter is a wheelchair user and the taxi-driver didn’t put a seat-belt on her.

The father pointed out that “when this brought to the attention of the driver he argued that she didn’t need one. No journey taken”.

In response the NTA issued a Fixed Payment Notice to the driver for failing to comply with vehicle standards.



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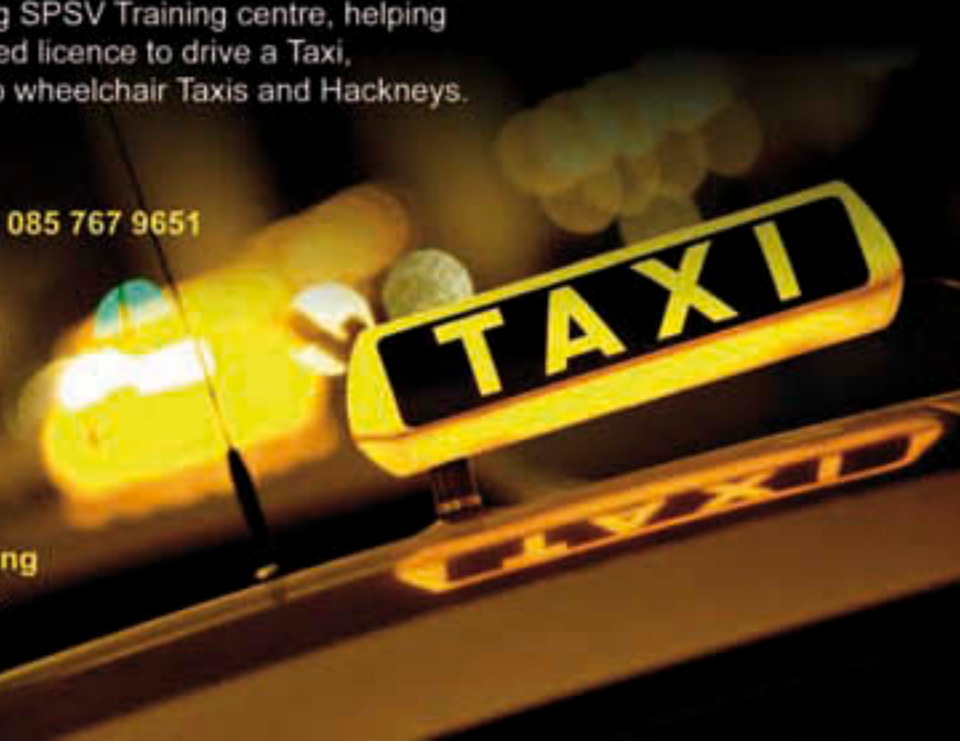
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NEW MYTAXI PARTNERSHIP WITH MEDIMEE TO OFFER DRIVERS LIFE-SAVING MEDICAL EMERGENCY TRAINING AND ACCESS TO ONLINE MEDICAL PLATFORM

A new mytaxi partnership with MediMee to offer drivers life-saving medical emergency training and access to online medical platform.

Nearly 25% of mytaxi drivers in Ireland have been the first responder in a medical emergency, with over a quarter of those having to administer first-aid or cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) while waiting for an ambulance to arrive, a new survey by mytaxi has revealed.

The survey also found that 1 in 5 mytaxi drivers have had a passenger experience a medical emergency in their taxi, with as many as 9% of these related to serious heart attacks or severe breathing problems. Nearly a third of mytaxi drivers have also been booked as an alternative to an ambulance, while over 42% have transported a woman in labour to the hospital - with two of the drivers saying they witnessed a woman giving birth in the back of their taxi, the survey showed.

The findings were revealed to mark the launch of a new innovative partnership between mytaxi and award winning online medical platform MediMee, following frequent requests from mytaxi drivers looking for medical guidance to help them as first responders.

The new initiative offers industry-backed training and a supporting app to help mytaxi drivers deal with medical emergencies, and has already seen 40 drivers provided with guidance on how to tackle choking, strokes, effective CPR and how to use an automated external defibrillator (AED). These drivers have additionally been equipped with the MediMee app which supports effective medical-information management and also helps drivers look after their own health and wellbeing.

In this respect, the mytaxi survey also found that 30% of drivers have experienced a personal medical emergency themselves at some point. The MediMee app will help



empower healthcare professionals such as first responders and emergency services the ability to gain access to life-saving information quickly and efficiently.

Speaking at the launch, Bernard Nolan, Co-Founder and CEO of MediMee, said: "Our partnership with mytaxi and the training provided will give drivers the vital knowledge and confidence to act decisively in a medical emergency. Sudden, unexpected health issues such as heart attacks and cardiac arrests are unfortunately everyday occurrences for the Irish public. When CPR is required in a medical emergency, if performed as soon as possible it can double if not triple a person's chances of survival*."

"While taxi drivers of course can never replace fully-qualified medics in these situations, we strongly believe this initiative has the potential to equip drivers with industry-backed training and skills that can allow them to positively contribute to public health. We strongly encourage drivers across Ireland to talk to mytaxi about getting involved – as it may just help them save a passenger's life someday."

Joseph Burke, a driver with mytaxi who attended the first workshop, said: "The MediMee introductory training gave me a real grounding in first-aid and how to tackle the typical medical emergencies faced by so many people in Ireland on a daily basis. It supported real

understanding for me in the basics around first-aid, CPR, use of a defibrillator and how to deal with choking, severe bleeding and stroke emergencies. I would strongly urge my colleagues to also get involved, as it is very reassuring to now have the basic medical knowledge and skills to tackle a medical emergency with some confidence."

Fiona Brady, mytaxi Head of Operations, said: "We understand our drivers encounter all sorts of challenging experiences in their day-to-day work - and from our survey and our conversations with them it is clear taxi drivers are highly likely to experience passenger medical emergencies at some point in their careers. mytaxi wants to help drivers develop the tools and skills to act fast and deliver critical and often life-saving first-aid to passengers in emergency medical situations so we are delighted to be launching this partnership with MediMee."

Candidates are encouraged to visit ie.mytaxi.com/medimee for further details on how they can participate.

The survey by mytaxi involved 341 respondents and was undertaken in June 2018.

**source – Chief Medical Officer Dr Ui May Tan*



CORK POP-UP DRIVER CENTRE

mytaxi have opened a brand new pop-up Driver Centre in Cork city located in Northpoint Business Park. It's open for business Monday to Friday from 10am to 2pm.

To mark the launch of the brand new Driver Centre, Cork drivers took part in certified CPR training and were fully equipped with the MediMee app. This initiative has added another 20+ drivers to the streets who can positively contribute to public health.

Find out more about the new Cork pop-up Driver Centre at: www.mytaxi.com/cork



SPSV TRAINING - 26 YEARS AND GOING STRONG

Tacsaí hear from Ron Duffy

Tacsaí recently spoke to Ron Duffy to hear about SPSV training, who are celebrated their 25th birthday last year. There has been a myriad of changes in the industry in the last few years and SPSV Training are the only people to help you find your way along.

Ron said: "We are Dublin's only quality approved Taxi Training Group and have trained for twenty years for the Carriage Office Test since opening in 1992. Now that it has passed on to new a type of test, we have had to move on with the times and have brought our training programme completely up to date over the last five years.

"What this means is any person who may be thinking of becoming a Taxi Driver or Chauffeur Driver; you will need to do this test and pass it first before you can drive any small public or private vehicle.

"The present failure rate for this test is 95% over all for first time applicants. We are lucky to have such a good quality training programme and we have kept up to date each month to help people pass this test. Our pass rate is 90% for first timers and to back it up we offer a free day mid-week to anyone who has done our course and failed. The extra day must taken within one month of test they failed. T&Cs apply.

"Our training takes place every two weeks on Tuesdays

and Wednesdays. We open at 9am and start 9.30am to 3.30pm each day in The Grand Canal Hotel, in Grand Canal St Upper Dublin 4. (Day Regulations and day two Area Knowledge) study pack and maps are included in these courses, parking is available on each day at a very special rate.

"We also run a one-day special intensive course once a month on Saturday mid month this one day special runs from 9am to 6.30/7pm this day course includes lunch and parking for the day and a study pack and maps, please call the telephone numbers below for free help and information if you intend to enter the SPSV Business, jobs are available.

"And for people who are long term unemployed please contact their Local Employment Services in your area who may be able to help fund you with their approval this is up to their decision not ours, please ask them to contact Ron at 086 608 7478. Our success has been achieved by a combination of factors, in providing you with the necessary skills and knowledge.

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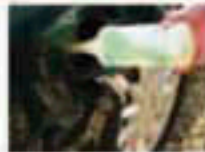
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Taxi Management approaches And Effectiveness in Business Performance

By Derry Coughlan of the Cork Taximens' Association

“Transport policy is at the crossroads,” says the European Commission’s latest green paper on transport. It is becoming more serious almost by the day, and transport policy makers and scientists face great challenges in finding ways to deal with them. Density of population has a major effect on public transport demand. Housing Density is perhaps the most important factor, followed by the degree of concentration of workplace, shops and entertainment. The two are in any case correlated to a large extent, often also with the age of the City. The change to one-way systems and pedestrian precinct was a major upset to the taxi hiring and taxi dispatch in recent times, reduced its independence and its routing has caused delays and a ‘break-down’ in business opportunities for passenger transport operators. Transport functions as a system, whose interrelated elements are the vehicles, ways and terminals. Passenger support and fare charges with scheduling of taxi ranks and order stations play a central role in the process of relating customer demand to the supply of human and physical resources, etc.

The unnecessary introduction of one-way street systems in towns and cities, have not alone caused traffic congestion, but reduced bus speeds and inflated the taxi fares, with noticeable delays and shortage in taxi supply to the public, while a merit of contra-flow street way taxi and bus corridors is the efficiency that are largely self-enforcing. Taxi distribution in Ireland must be supported by proper facilities, workplace rules, public marketing policies, financial support, organizing for quality, taxi road pricing, accommodation for taxis in public places, telephonic advanced booking orders/ supplier control arrangements under licence trade-off between the intending passengers and the transport supplier, etc. It is an admitted fact, that the laws now in force for the good order of Small Public Service Vehicles in public hire, are of very little, if of any service, as the public will not trouble themselves to lodge complaints and attend the Carriage Offices to

establish them, hence arises the dirty state of some of these vehicles, their want of repair and almost total inattention to either what the hirer is paying for or the convenience of the travelling public.

There have been calls from within the industry for better work, function and performance regulation. One must ask why self-discipline doesn’t work now when everything is licensed, but being the only trade where the operative is fined, victimized and suspended without pay, therefore your Driving Licence must not be involved with your job licence, your PSV drivers license should carry offences and instructions on your operative contract. Many of the Road Traffic Act offences should not apply in your workplace, you are not a ‘vehicle driver as such’ but a work operative conducting many functions while driving, all of which have a bearing on safety. What form of self-regulation is going to change matters? Understanding the requirements and operations of taxi drivers must be safeguarded and respected by our Authorities. Fines have been greatly increased, new offences have been created, new regulations introduced while case law has continued to be handed down in an almost constant flow!

Persuasiveness ruined the taxi framework in our cities, we must now seek alterations to our work and hiring legislation, for better taxi-driver education display and advice, otherwise you will only attract the ‘black-market’ encroachment from time to time! Changes must be made in standard size cars and wagons for licenced taxis suitable for public hire

and comfortable passenger travel (some vehicles out there are too small and too old) ridiculous scenes in our cities. Carriage law changes must be made, whereas four passengers and one child in arms can be carried in a four seater licence and two children under 12 years of age, are carried as ‘one person’, just like the olden days, to avoid family embarrassment and unnecessary costs.

Taxis must be allowed do u-turns, which should be their



privilege in reducing the fare costs for the hiring passengers-our marketing and goodwill policy. Use of the word 'TAXI' must be controlled, otherwise it is getting out of control, and what's happening doesn't support our industry. This must now come under the 'Powers of Road Transport Officers', and also the fraudulent use of motor vehicles posing as taxi drivers in crowd removal areas, must be brought to their attention also. The 'Baby Carriage Seat' must be banned in Taxis, not necessary, time wasting and dangerous delays in public places, with door opening and person performing, etc. New laws are needed for 'Fare Refusals without grounds', Driver dress-code, and clean vehicle interior (empty, fresh and hygienic). Smoking and eating cooked foods restrictions must be revised and enforced. Clean and well-prepared goods carriage compartment is a requirement by revised laws. The non-payment of 'taxi fares' and 'bilking' must be revised with penalties, incorporating the Garda Síochána and Road Transport Officers duty, in order to bring these culprits to the courts and stop taxi-drivers time being wasted on a busy night, etc.

The National Transport Authority in their powers in conjunction with our Statutory Transport Undertakings should have arranged with the banks for the supply of credit card transaction equipment under special terms for all taxi drivers, hence the print-out information on our meter receipts, must be improved, and state total recorded or/and total accumulated, due for payment as a fare, when adjusted in handwriting. This for legal purposes must hold a separate section on your meter printed receipt, paper print out for the customer as requested. Defects in receipt production effects the market place – your business methods are vital to the taxi image and trust- otherwise the law allows opposition encroachment so you must be aware at all times of what you can attract with your bad taxi management which is up to the drivers to keep the trade and custom in good proper order at all times. Company auditors were concerned about this taxi driver receipt worldwide, so they have now introduced company business credit card payments for many of the services requested by their Employees! We already have protested about the use of the word 'taxi', but we must now object to the word 'cab', used and giving false information on most vehicles over eight seats carriage throughout the country, thus if this is allowed to continue, it will set a precedent, and all public trust and custom will diminish, the impression that these operators give, is that they can do the work of a taxi driver (imaginary)!

The appointed administration doesn't meet its function, they don't know what a taxi is, and are only treating them as 'private cars. Employee rule prevails here, remember the 'Comic' they brought out on the 'glory trail' takeover, i.e. the Official Manual for Operating in the SPSV Industry! Politicians not being educated for their appointments, decided to bring in deregulation for easy entry, encourage

more taxi operators, without considering the present investors, and not checking the financial circumstances of the new entrants. Their method brought a shameful scene to the Irish taxi trade, why other organisations contributed to the downfall of this, once famous industry. Now self-employed taxi drivers also come under the Work Act 2005 and must comply with the same statutory requirements that apply to employers. We are always licenced as sole traders and the private limited company should never have been entertained, business models don't apply to passenger

Road transport available in public places which operate under maximum charges and fixed capacity carriage. Staying compliant fixed-charge offences appears to be extended and increased, but most of the taxi drivers are puzzled, because they don't get rules, conditions or offences with their licences that are issued to them. Nowadays they don't even have a fares card for passenger guidance and explanation purposes. The use of taxi rank directions for drivers is totally out of order and don't even make sense if tested in law, as they are international circulation orders for the operation of taxi ranks (rights of drivers and passengers etc.). From the official manual, the serious and misleading guidelines are put to the new entrants and with the help of the radio companies sticking their noses in, they had input into the stupid rules also, e.g. 'when does a taxi journey start', 'running your own business', 'standing out from the competition', 'advertising and promotion', 'two charges on the one journey', 'fouling taxi rank hiring', 'building up and promoting your business', why then penalties and fines?!

Conclusion is the Irish taxi industry has been sent down the wrong road. It is not fair to the public, who have always drove the taxi industry in good financial upkeep, whereas nowadays there is too much emphasis on the wheelchair carriage issue. It must be understood that these people can't support the industry.

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General Knowledge Questions

1. In the Christian calendar what is the Sunday prior to Easter called?
2. In which Irish county is the town of Buncrana?
3. Of which US city is Beverly Hills a suburb?
4. Who wrote the novel "Our Man in Havana"?
5. In which country is the city of Fez?
6. The Spanish football team RCD Espanyol plays it's home fixtures in which city?
7. In a game of snooker hoe many points are awarded for potting the black ball?
8. What is the SI unit of luminous intensity?
9. Into which body of water does the river Ganges flow?
10. Which organisation has the motto "Citius, Altius, Fortius" (Faster, Higher, Stronger)?
11. In computer terminology what is meant by the acronym DNS?
12. In which musical would you hear the song "Oh, What a Beautiful Morning"?
13. What is superhero Spiderman's real name?
14. Who succeeded Winston Churchill as British Prime Minister in 1955?



THE TACSAÍ MAGAZINE BUMPER QUIZ

15. What type of creature is an ocelot?
16. In a traditional Punch and Judy show, what is the dog's name?
17. The Apennines are a mountain range in which country?
18. What name is given to the central aisle of a church?
19. Who was the Roman God of wine?
20. Which animal's name literally means "River Horse"?

10. The Olympic Games.
11. Domain Name System.
12. Oklahoma!
13. Peter Parker.
14. Eden.
15. A Cat.
16. Toby.
17. Italy.
18. Nave.
19. Bacchus.
20. Hippopotamus.

11. Palm Sunday.
12. Donegal
13. Los Angeles.
14. Graham Greene.
15. Morocco.
16. Barcelona.
17. Seven.
18. Candela.
19. The Bay of Bengal.

ANSWERS

Knock Knock



During an impassioned sermon about death and final judgement, the pastor said forcefully, "Each member of this church is going to die and face judgement." Glancing down at the front pew, he noticed a man with a big smile on his face. The minister repeated his point louder. "Each member of this church is going to die and face judgement!" The man nodded and smiled even more. This really got the preacher wound up. He pounded the pulpit emphatically when he came to the ultimatum: "Each member of this church is going to die and face judgement!!!" Though everyone else in the congregation was looking sombre, the man in front continued to smile. Finally the preacher stepped off the platform, stood in front of the man and shouted, "I said each member of this church is going to die!" The man grinned from ear to ear. After the service was over, the preacher made a beeline for the man. "I don't get it," the preacher said in frustration. "Whenever I said, 'Each member of this church is going to die,' your smile got bigger. Why?" "I'm not a member of this church," the man replied

A guy spots a sign outside a house that reads "Talking Dog for Sale." Intrigued, he walks in. "So what have you done with your life?" he asks the dog. "I've led a very full life," says the dog. "I lived in the Alps rescuing avalanche victims. Then I served in Iraq. And now I spend my days reading to the residents of a retirement home." The guy is flabbergasted. He asks the dog's owner, "Why on earth would you want to get rid of an incredible dog like that?" The owner says, "Because he's a liar! He never did any of that!"

A completely inebriated man was stumbling down the street with one foot on the curb and one foot in the gutter. A Garda pulled up and said, "I've got to take you in bud. You're obviously drunk." The wasted man asked, "Officer, are ya absolutely sure I'm drunk?" "Yeah buddy, I'm sure," said the Garda. "Let's go." Breathing a sigh of relief, the wino said, "Thank goodness. I thought I was crippled."

A man walks into a bar and sits down. He asks the bartender, "Can I have a cigarette?" The bartender replies, "Sure, the cigarette machine is over there." So he walks over to the machine and as he is about to order a cigarette, the machine suddenly says, "Oi, you bloody idiot." The man says with surprise in his voice, "That's not very nice." He returns to his bar stool without a cigarette and asks the bartender for some peanuts. The bartender passes the man a bowl of peanuts and the man hears one of the peanuts speak, "Ooh, I like your hair." The man says to the bartender, "Hey, what's going on here? Your cigarette machine is insulting me and this peanut is coming on to me. Why's this?" The bartender replies, "Oh, that's because the machine is out of order and the peanuts are complementary."

A disciple went to his master and said, "I have served you faithfully for ten years. Now I have a wish: give me something to eat which will never end." His master said, "Here, have some chewing gum."

Fred: "Why do elephants wear red nail polish?"

Bob: "I don't know, why?"

Fred: "To hide in cherry trees."

Bob: "But I've never seen an elephant in a cherry tree."

Fred: "See, it works."



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