

## Press Release

### Commission for Taxi Regulation Publishes Action Plan for 2010-2011

**(May 24<sup>th</sup> 2010)** The Commission for Taxi Regulation today published its Action Plan for 2010-2011. The action plan outlines in detail the actions that form the programme of work for the Commission and will assist the Commission in meeting the objectives of its recently published 2010-2014 strategy statement.

The Action Plan sees the Commission moving from a period of major reform into a period of consolidation as the regulatory framework for the Small Public Service Vehicle (SPSV) industry, based on high qualitative entry and renewal standards, is now firmly established. Over the lifetime of the plan, the Commission will focus on building and improving these licensing and compliance systems and rolling out the new reform programme announced in October 2009.

The Commission will also be placing emphasis on stakeholder engagement, standards improvement and enhancing the accessibility of SPSV services to all consumers including the further integration of SPSV services within the wider transport network.

Kathleen Doyle, Commissioner for Taxi Regulation said, *“This is a different type of Action Plan. It is a step-by-step programme that details not only the roll out of further new initiatives, but also the actions necessary in consolidating and assessing the new framework of regulation and recently adopted reforms.*

*This plan is ambitious in its scale. We have set out a significant body of work and we look forward to working closely with all our stakeholders, particularly with industry members and consumers, in progressing these actions. As is always the case we look forward to working closely with professional, compliant, licence holders to ensure consumer expectations are consistently met and the value of the SPSV industry in Ireland is fully recognised at all levels.”*

Highlights of this Action Plan include;

- A review of the National Maximum Taxi Fare in 2010.
- Introduction of a fleet licence to bring greater transparency and accountability to multiple vehicle licence holders and the rental sector.
- Roll out of new driver ID for all SPSV drivers and new complimentary county ID on roof signs clearly indicating the licensed operating area for drivers of taxis.
- An online register of active vehicle, driver and dispatch operator licences.
- A new, consumer friendly website including enhanced consumer information such as an online fare estimator and a register of taxi ranks nationwide.
- Publication of Taxi Rank Planning Guidelines to encourage best practice in the planning and the standardisation of taxi ranks incorporating accessibility across Ireland.
- A review of the current compliance model to consider how best to use the resources at the Commission’s disposal.
- Following reforms announced last October; June 8<sup>th</sup> 2010 will see the introduction of a number of new regulations they include:
  - New SPSV licences will only be issued to wheelchair accessible vehicles
  - A new category of wheelchair accessible hackney will be introduced
  - Existing standard taxi licences may only be transferred one more time

- Any change of vehicle for existing standard taxi / hackney vehicle licence must meet the nine year age rule
- All SPSV's must undergo and pass an annual Licence Renewal Assessment<sup>1</sup> which incorporates an inspection of vehicle suitability upon renewal of their vehicle licence
- Transfer of ownership of a taxi licence must be to a vehicle that is under three years old

The last Action Plan for 2008-2009 set targets in a number of areas, in particular quality and skills, and culminated in the introduction of dispatch operator licensing, new vehicle standards and a new driver's skills development programme.

## **Ends**

### **Editors Notes**

The Minister for Transport established the Commission for Taxi Regulation as an Independent Public Body under Part 2 of the Taxi Regulation Act 2003 on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2004. The principal function of the Commission is the development and maintenance of a regulatory framework for the control and operation of small public service vehicles (SPSVs) and their drivers.

As of May 1<sup>st</sup> 2010 there are a total of 26,483 active SPSV Licences nationally. This includes 19,406 Taxis, 1,535 Wheelchair Accessible Taxis, 4,298 Hackneys and 1,244 Limousines.

A full copy of the Action Plan 2010-2011 is available for download at: [www.taxiregulator.ie](http://www.taxiregulator.ie)

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<sup>1</sup> This test looks at the overall cleanliness of a vehicle as well as the exterior condition and ensures the required safety equipment is onboard the vehicle.