

Fare Revision



Industry NEWS

When the Commission for Taxi Regulation introduced a new National Maximum Taxi Fare Structure and rate to apply across the entire country in September 2006, it committed to the industry to revise the fare on an ongoing basis, with a full revision scheduled to take place no later than 2008.

The Commission has now published a Consultation Document inviting submissions from all stakeholders, including both industry and consumers, as to whether a change to the current national maximum fare rate should now be considered.

The Commission believes that the introduction of a National Maximum Taxi Fare and single Taximeter Area has greatly enhanced the service provided to the public and been of benefit to the industry. It does, however, make sense to assess the individual aspects of the fare on a regular basis to take account of market conditions, economic changes and such like.

Whilst the Commission welcomes any views on the National Maximum Taxi Fare Structure, it is specifically seeking views on the following key items:

- » **Should the current National Maximum Taxi Fare increase/decrease/remain the same?**
- » **Should any increase/decrease be reflected in the initial charge only at both standard rates and premium rates?**
- » **In addition, should the current tariffs both at standard rates and premium rates increase/decrease/remain the same?**
- » **Should the booking charge increase/decrease/remain the same?**
- » **Should the fee for extra passengers increase/decrease/remain the same?**
- » **Should the soiling charge increase/decrease/remain the same?**

Once the Commission has received and reviewed all submissions and considered the advice of the Advisory Council on the matter, it will arrive at and make public a decision on the revision. This is likely to be in the third quarter of 2008.

A copy of the Consultation Paper has been issued to all licensed operators and key stakeholders. Additional copies can be requested by emailing commission@taxiregulator.ie or by calling the industry information line on 1890 347 347.

The Commission would encourage all members of the industry to make their views on this important consultation known to the Commission. Comments and submissions in relation to the Consultation Document should be clearly marked 'Response to Consultation Paper No. 5' and forwarded in writing, to the Commission by email to: commission@taxiregulator.ie or by post to 'Response to Consultation Paper No. 5', Commission for Taxi Regulation, 35 Fitzwilliam Square, Dublin 2.

Submissions should arrive no later than 5:00pm on Friday 13th June 2008.

The current fare structure is outlined in the table below.

TAXI	Maximum taxi fare standard rate		Maximum taxi fare premium rate		Extras Where relevant
	8.00h–20.00h		20.00h–8.00h & Sundays & public holidays		
	INITIAL CHARGE Includes 1km or 170 secs	€3.80 Fixed	INITIAL CHARGE Includes 1km or 170 secs	€4.10 Fixed	Booking fee €2.00
	TARIFF A Next 14km or 40 mins Up to €17.20	€0.95 per km or €0.34 per min	TARIFF A Next 14km or 40 mins Up to €21.70	€1.25 per km or €0.44 per min	Extra adults: second and additional passengers €1.00 each.
	TARIFF B Next 15km or 43 mins Up to €36.00	€1.25 per km or €0.44 per min	TARIFF B Next 15km or 43 mins Up to €43.50	€1.45 per km or €0.51 per min	Extra children under 12: 1 free 2 or 3 €1.00 4 or 5 €2.00 6 or 7 €3.00
	TARIFF C Over 30km or 86 mins Over €36.00	€1.63 per km or €0.58 per min	TARIFF C Over 30km or 86 mins Over €43.50	€1.63 per km or €0.58 per min	Road toll charges as incurred.
	Distance rate applies unless speed drops below 21 km/h when time rate applies.				Soiling charge €125.00

Dispatch Operators

The Commission believes that Dispatch Operators in Ireland are, and will continue to be, key in the provision of a first class service to the travelling public and we would like to thank those who registered with us before the 4th April deadline.

A licensing information pack will be sent to Dispatch Operators in the autumn and they will then have a number of months to prepare for the licensing process. We would ask that Operators begin working on the operating standards that we require for licensing, which are outlined below:

Operating Standards for Dispatch Operations:

- » *An efficient and accessible booking service*
- » *Complaints process in place*
- » *Provision of staff training*
- » *Up to date driver records and staff training records*
- » *Valid tax clearance certificate*

Dispatch Operators will be licensed when all standards have been achieved.

The Commission for Taxi Regulation will assist Operators with this process, so please contact us with any queries.



IF ANY DISPATCH OPERATOR HAS NOT REGISTERED WITH US FOR LICENSING PURPOSES, PLEASE DO SO IMMEDIATELY.

Toll Charges

Drivers are reminded that all road toll charges may be added to the fare at the end of the journey. When this is the case, the cost of the toll must be added by hand to the passenger's receipt.

New Requirements for Wheelchair Accessible Taxis

As outlined in 'Always Driving Forward' from the 1st July 2008 all wheelchair accessible licence holders must provide the Commission with contact details for their booking services.

The contact details can be either the Dispatch Operator to which the licence holder is affiliated, or their own personal contact details for booking, or both if the service is provided personally and through a Dispatch Operator. These contact details will be made available on www.taxiregulator.ie for access to those who wish to avail of a wheelchair accessible service.

Wheelchair accessible vehicle licence holders are required to give priority booking to those who require a wheelchair accessible service. A registration form will be forwarded to all wheelchair accessible licence holders to fill in the details required.

The details required by the Commission are:

- » *Name of the licence holder and/or Dispatch Operator*
- » *Contact telephone number of the licence holder and/or Dispatch Operator*
- » *Details of when your service is available personally or through a Dispatch Operator*
- » *Area in which your service is available*

Wheelchair accessible licence holders are also required to keep records of all bookings taken and such records must be available to the Commission on request. Records must include the date and time of the booking, the name and contact details of the person who made the booking, details of the destination of the journey booked and time the destination is reached. These records will assist the Commission in dealing with complaints where people with disabilities encounter difficulties in availing of a wheelchair accessible vehicle without success.



Change of address/ contact details

All licence holders are reminded they are obliged to inform the Commission of any change of address or contact details. This is essential for the purposes of maintaining the licence database and also to enable the Commission to keep you informed on industry developments and consultations.

Passing on Bookings

As a point of clarification, any person who takes a taxi, hackney or limousine booking with the intention of passing it on to another driver or firm is automatically classified as a 'Dispatch Operator' for the purposes of our regulations, and therefore assumes the same responsibilities as a Dispatch Operator. This includes the requirement to register with the Commission. This is the case even when an individual driver takes a single booking and passes it to another driver to deliver the service.

Tax Clearance Certificates

Reminder to all licence holders

When renewing your SPSV licence you are required to produce a tax clearance certificate that is in the same name and address as that of the licence holder. This means that the name and address on the tax clearance certificate must be the same as the name and address on the licence. It is your responsibility to ensure that these documents are correct and available prior to renewal.

Tamper-proof Discs

As outlined in the last edition of Industry News, a new colour-coded system of discs for each category of SPSVs has been introduced. The discs are colour-coded; yellow for taxis, blue for hackneys and silver for limousines. They will continue to be displayed on the windscreen and rear window at all times.

SPSVs will be issued with new tamper-proof discs upon renewal of their vehicle licence and on all new licence applications. If a licence holder requires a new set of tamper-proof discs after the renewal of a licence, there is an administrative charge of €50 to cover the costs incurred by the service provider, on behalf of the Commission for this duplicate set of discs.



Your Questions Answered

Q: Under what circumstances can vehicle licences be transferred?

A: Under current regulations, the Commission for Taxi Regulation can transfer a taxi or wheelchair accessible taxi vehicle licence between individuals. In order to transfer a taxi licence, the licence must be active. Hackney and limousine licences are non-transferable.

Q: I operate a hackney; can I display my name and telephone number on the vehicle?

A: No, it is an offence to display any advertisement or sign on a hackney other than one that has been prescribed by the Commission.

Q: When does the nine-year age limit on vehicles apply?

A: New vehicle licences shall, from 1st January 2009, only be issued to vehicles that are no more than nine years old from the date of first registration. This is the date on which the vehicle was first registered, irrespective of the country of registration. The age limit requirement applies to existing vehicle licence holders on licence renewal from 2012.

Q: When might there be a subsidy for purchasing a wheelchair accessible vehicle?

A: The Commission for Taxi Regulation is in ongoing discussions with the Minister for Transport and the Department of Transport regarding the proposed introduction of a subsidy to assist in the purchase and use of new wheelchair accessible vehicles. No decision on this has been taken yet.

Q: I have had to replace my windscreen; can I remove the old tamper-proof disc and place it on the new windscreen?

A: No, a new tamper-proof disc must be obtained from the NCT and their staff will place it onto your vehicle. The cost of replacement discs is €50. The vehicle cannot be operated without the appropriate discs in place.

Q: How exactly do you define Dispatch Operator?

A: A Dispatch Operator is a person engaged in the activity of taking a booking for a SPSV that is operated by another person and arranging with the operator or driver of the vehicle to provide the service booked. This does not necessarily have to be from an office, if you work from home or a mobile and are taking bookings for another person you are classed as a Dispatch Operator and need to register with the Commission for Taxi Regulation.

Q: Under what circumstances should I surrender my licence?

A: A surrender of a SPSV licence should only be carried out by a SPSV licence holder who no longer intends to operate that licence, and does not have the option of transferring the ownership of the licence (i.e. a limousine or hackney licence). A surrender is an irreversible de-activation of the licence, so the licence holder must be certain this is what they want before proceeding.

To surrender a licence you need to complete a VL5 form and forward it to the Commission, together with a copy of the original vehicle licence. The licence holder will be informed in writing of the surrender within 3-5 working days.

Q: I have a conditional offer for a licence and date for my vehicle's 'suitability test'; can I begin to operate the vehicle?

A: No, the vehicle must undergo the full licensing procedure. Only when this has been successfully completed, the licence certificate issued and the tamper-proof discs affixed to the windscreen and rear window can the vehicle be operated as a small public service vehicle.

For further information on any matter relating to SPSVs please contact:

Commission for Taxi Regulation

35 Fitzwilliam Square

Dublin 2

by telephone 1890 347 347

alternatively via the Commission's website:

www.taxiregulator.ie

or email commission@taxiregulator.ie

