

# NEW VEHICLE LICENSING SERVICE SINCE JANUARY 2010

**The Commission has been operating its new vehicle licensing service since January this year. Over 30 dedicated centres are now fully operational and providing services for renewals and other vehicle licensing processes. This has been a significant logistical exercise and the Commission thanks industry members who have visited the centres in the first few weeks for their co-operation.**

The new SPSV licensing centres are operated by a dedicated team of inspectors who are specially trained in all areas of SPSV licensing and inspection. This is a significant enhancement to the previous system which was primarily based on the roadworthiness testing system rather than SPSV licensing on its own. The Commission looks forward to working with SGS to continually enhance the vehicle licensing service to the benefit of operators.

This newsletter provides some useful information on how to get through the new service as smoothly as possible.

### Renewing your vehicle licence on time

A key concern of the Commission is the level of last-minute renewals. Over a third of licence holders book their renewal in the last week and 10% book on the day their licence expires. The high volume of last-minute renewal appointments results in longer waiting times for all services including renewals, change of vehicle and transfer of ownership processes. It also increases the risk of your licence expiring due to invalid documentation.

It is your responsibility to make sure that your licence is renewed on time. Last-minute appointments will be accommodated in so far as possible but cannot be guaranteed.

The Commission strongly encourages all licence holders to avail of the full 90 days advance renewal period to avoid any third party delays leading to your licence expiring.

### Booking your NCT test

As the NCT service is now completely separate from the Commission's vehicle licensing service, you are encouraged to make as early an appointment as possible for your NCT test by phoning 1890 412 413.

## Make sure your documents are valid

An increasing number of licence holders are being failed at the first appointment for renewal due to invalid documentation. The most common reason for documentation not being valid is that the name on the tax clearance certificate does not match the name on the vehicle licence as required under regulations. With greater information sharing between agencies it is essential that all records match. Minor differences are therefore no longer acceptable.

Before booking your licence renewal assessment you should check that your name matches exactly on both these documents. Some examples of variations that would fail on renewal are shown on the right. See page two for advice on correcting your name on the SPSV register.

Name on licence*	Name on tax clearance certificate	Suitable for licensing
James Murphy	Jim Murphy	✗
	James Murphy Jnr	✗
	James Joseph Murphy	✗
	Séamus Ó Murchú	✗
	James Murphy	✓

\*Name used for illustrative purposes only.

## Vehicle licensing update

Our last newsletter detailed the changes to vehicle licensing announced in October 2009 and these have been under development. The regulations introducing these changes are currently before the EU Commission for observation. Once this process is complete the Commission will sign the reforms into law and inform licence holders of the confirmed changes through individual renewal notices, on the website and in the next newsletter. In the meantime if you have any queries in relation to licensing, please call the industry information line on 1890 347 347.

## Changing your vehicle? You'll need to return your tamper-proofs

As part of the new vehicle licensing system a number of enhanced security measures are being introduced. Please note that if you are changing your vehicle you are required to return the old tamper-proof discs. If you are unable to return your old tamper-proof discs please contact 1890 347 347 to request a declaration form. This process could take up to five working days. An inspector is unable to proceed with the transaction without either a set of discs or the completed approved form.

## Stakeholder engagement

Following the announcement of reforms last October, the Commission has met with all the national industry representative groups in recent weeks to discuss these reforms. The Commission is due to discuss the forthcoming *Strategy Statement 2010–2014* and *Action Plan 2010–2011* with industry representative groups over the next three months. These documents will also be available on the Commission website on release.

## NCT test alert

With effect from the 1st April 2010, an additional seven items will be added to the National Car Test. For information see [www.nct.ie/NewInspectionItems.aspx](http://www.nct.ie/NewInspectionItems.aspx)

# Changing your name on your documents?

The Commission facilitates licence holders to change a name on their licence in the following circumstances:

- 1 If there is a mismatch between the names on the tax clearance certificate and the vehicle licence
- 2 To reflect a change as a result of getting married etc.

To change your details on your SPSV licence certificate you must provide a copy of your passport or birth certificate as well as a completed Change-of-Name form. This is available by calling 1890 347 347

or from [www.taxiregulator.ie](http://www.taxiregulator.ie). Any significant change in name, such as a change of married name, may require further supporting documents.

If your name is correct on the vehicle licence and you wish to amend the name on your tax clearance certificate you need to contact your local Revenue office. A request to change the name on your tax clearance cert must be made in writing (email is acceptable).

You are advised to allow five working days for either the Commission or Revenue to process your request.

# Licence Renewal Assessment

The Commission has been operating its Licence Renewal Assessment (LRA) since January 2010 on an advisory fail basis and this system will remain in place until June. The advisory fail system gives the industry time to prepare for this new requirement. It also enables the Commission to

gather information on the most commonly observed fail items. The Commission will publish this data on an ongoing basis in order to provide the industry with all the necessary information they need to prepare for the LRA.

## Most Common LRA Fail Items

Fail Reason	Example*	% of failures
Fire extinguisher	— Less than 2KG or damaged	32%
Safety equipment	— Torch, high-viz vest, pen and paper, torch, warning triangle not functioning/missing	25%
First Aid kit	— Fails to meet standard set out in the Commission's National Vehicle Standards document	17%
Exterior of vehicle	— Obvious paintwork damage — Unfinished bodywork repairs	10%
Interior of vehicle	— Windows not working — Seat fabric torn or excessively worn/dirty	5%

\*For a full list of the relevant fail criteria for the LRA please visit <http://spsvlicensing2010.taxiregulator.ie/>

# Early renewal for driver licences

You can now submit your SPSV driver licence renewal application prior to its expiry date. The Commission recommends that you submit your application to An Garda Síochána no later than 12 weeks prior to your expiry date. 12 weeks is required for vetting, administration and printing and posting your ID cards.

Please note that applications received after the 12 week deadline may not be fully processed prior to their expiry date. Should your SPSV driver licence

expire you will not be able to operate until it is renewed. For more details on how to renew your SPSV driver licence go to [www.taxiregulator.ie](http://www.taxiregulator.ie)

If you no longer wish to retain your SPSV driver licence you must surrender it to your local PSV office or the Carriage Office along with the following documentation:

- ▶ White paper SPSV driver licence & brass badge
- ▶ Driver ID display card(s) & smart card

# Dispatch operator licensing

Congratulations to all the dispatch operators who have successfully completed the licensing process. Dispatch operators play an essential role in ensuring the supply of quality, accountable and accessible SPSV services to consumers. The Commission's licensing system recognises the high quality service standards and professionalism on offer by dispatch operators nationwide and assures consumers of the legitimacy of their local dispatch operator.

The first dispatch operator to become licensed was **Satellite Taxis** in Cork. Satellite Taxis offer modern spacious and clean cars, uniformed drivers, CCTV and GPS and are open 24/7, 365 days a year.

There are also a number of dispatch operators who are registered and currently in the process of being licensed. The Commission's enforcement team conduct regular audits and inspections of dispatch operators' offices throughout the country. It is an offence for dispatch operators not to be registered and licensed by the Commission. The Commission is following up directly with unlicensed dispatch operators given that the date for voluntary compliance has passed. Where a breach of regulations is detected by the enforcement team, appropriate action will be taken, which may include a prosecution in the District Court.

## Licensed dispatch operators in Ireland in order of date licensed (as of 19/03/2010)

01	Satellite Taxis, Cork	22	O Kay Cabs Ltd, Cork	43	Pats Cabs, Kildare
02	A2Z Taxis Ltd, Dublin	23	Dalkey Taxi Cabs Ltd, Dublin	44	Chara Cabs, Galway
03	MT Cabs, Wicklow	24	Coastal Cabs, Dublin	45	Bengy's Cabs, Kildare
04	Procabs, Galway	25	Terenure Taxis Ltd, Dublin	46	Phyllis Browne's Radio Cabs, Louth
05	Town Radio Taxis Ltd, Meath	26	Castletroy Corporate Cabs, Limerick	47	Baltinglass Cabs Ltd, Wicklow
06	Blue Cabs Ltd, Dublin	27	Mac's Cabs Ltd, Offaly	48	Tower Cabs, Limerick
07	Greypark Administration Ltd, Meath	28	Classic Cabs Baldoyle Ltd, Dublin	49	Swift Taxis Limerick Ltd
08	Xpert Digi Taxis, Dublin	29	Major Minor Cabs, Kildare	50	24/7 Cabs, Kerry
09	Yellow Cabs, Cork	30	A-One-Cabs, Waterford	51	Net Global Taxis Ltd, Dublin
10	Star Cabs, Cork	31	Mullingar Taxi Cabs, Westmeath	52	Rapid Cabs, Waterford
11	Burren Taxis, Clare	32	Gala Hackneys Limited, Dublin	53	Jaykabs, Wexford
12	Bandon Cabs, Cork	33	Express Taxis, Dublin	54	Ardmore Taxis Ltd, Wicklow
13	Dimo Cabs, Kerry	34	Premier Westside, Dublin	55	Mighty Cabs Limited, Galway
14	National Radio Cabs, Dublin	35	Oran Cabs, Galway	56	City & County Cabs, Waterford
15	Richies 708 Cabs, Clare	36	Floods Taxi Service Ltd, Cavan	57	Lee Cabs Ltd, Cork
16	Treaty Hackney Cabs Ltd, Limerick	37	Carrigtwohill Cabs, Cork	58	Rural Lift Ltd, Cavan
17	Dublin Taxi Management Services Ltd	38	Joe's Taxi, Tipperary	59	Cove Cabs, Cork
18	Dublin Dial A Cab Ltd	39	Economy Cabs Limerick	60	Gleneire Cabs, Cork
19	A Cab Hire, Leitrim	40	Dorothy Morris, Roscommon	61	McGrath-Coaches, Mayo
20	Westmeath Cabs	41	TK Kabs, Wexford	62	Near Cabs, Dublin
21	Enniscorthy Cabs Ltd, Wexford	42	Swift Transport, Clare	63	VIP Taxis & Courier Service Ltd, Dublin

# Skills Development Programme for SPSV drivers

As outlined in the October reforms document, the Commission has undertaken to fast-track the driver skills programme so that all drivers have undertaken the test by 2012. In advance of the test being introduced to existing drivers the manual and test question bank are being updated to reflect the changes to licensing following the reforms announced last year. Existing licence holders will be advised on how to receive a copy of the manual and book a test when the materials are updated. The updated manual will be a clear and comprehensive guide to the SPSV sector in Ireland in 2010. If you have any questions or require more information on how best to prepare

for the Industry Knowledge module, call our industry information line at **1890 347 347**.

Existing SPSV driver licence holders will only be required to sit the Industry Knowledge module of the Skills Development Programme. To date, in 65% of the Entry Tests, a pass mark has been achieved in this module. The Commission is confident that a licence holder who prepares by studying the manual and operates to expected standards will have the necessary knowledge to pass the test. An audio version of the manual will also be provided to aid study of the materials. A voice over is also available to assist candidates when taking the test.

## Commission's office closed for customer service until further notice

As a result of recent security issues, the Commission will no longer be able to facilitate drop-in calls by members of the industry at its offices. You can ring the industry information line on **1890 347 347** to order forms or seek assistance with general queries.

## Enforcement update

The overall level of compliance within the industry is very high. Commission enforcement operations and ongoing multi-agency checkpoints, made up of the Commission for Taxi Regulation, Gardaí, Revenue, Customs and Department of Social Welfare, continue to detect a number of offences and these are being dealt with by the relevant authorities. Further to this, the Finance Bill 2010, which is currently going through the Oireachtas, will make it easier for the Taxi Regulator and Revenue to work together in sharing information and improving compliance.

## Receipts

Following on from the recent customer advertising campaign, please be advised that **every** taxi passenger must be offered a printed receipt, (written for hackneys and limousines) at the end of the journey. It is your responsibility and in your best interest to offer a receipt to passengers. A receipt is a validated record of the journey and can be of great assistance in resolving any subsequent queries from your passengers. Failure to issue a receipt can result in a fixed-charge notice of €250.

## Limousine drivers and passengers

As the wedding season begins, the Commission reminds you that it is the responsibility of all limousine drivers (not the vehicle licence holder) to ensure that the number of passengers in the vehicle does not exceed the maximum number shown on the vehicle's tamper-proof disc. Carrying more than the maximum number is an offence under both licensing and insurance regulations. This offence applies to drivers of all categories of SPSVs. Should offences of this nature be detected, appropriate action will be taken by the relevant authorities.

# Facts and figures

Tables are correct as of 28 February 2010

Active driver licences

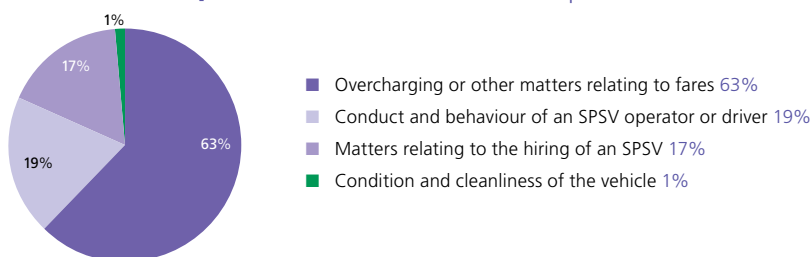
47,156

## Vehicle licences by county and category\*

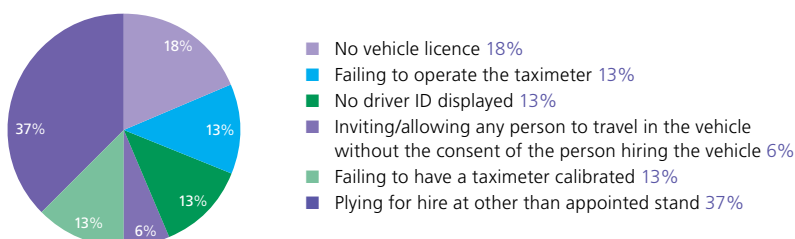
County	Hackney	Limousine	Taxi	Wheelchair	Total
County Carlow	44	1	100	24	169
County Cavan	106	3	95	16	220
County Clare	205	36	211	18	470
County Cork	670	152	1,465	109	2,396
County Donegal	318	23	204	25	570
County Dublin	196	371	11,629	676	12,872
County Galway	355	54	702	80	1,191
County Kerry	222	76	231	20	549
County Kildare	261	85	731	101	1,178
County Kilkenny	59	11	166	29	265
County Laois	83	6	151	42	282
County Leitrim	52	5	32	17	106
County Limerick	190	57	613	39	899
County Longford	32	4	74	13	123
County Louth	116	38	519	44	717
County Mayo	212	29	190	23	454
County Meath	155	63	1,076	86	1,380
County Monaghan	105	10	5	11	131
County Offaly	140	13	83	14	250
County Roscommon	113	13	43	11	180
County Sligo	37	22	145	15	219
County Tipperary	292	31	36	3	362
County Waterford	75	50	223	31	379
County Westmeath	56	17	274	41	388
County Wexford	166	40	148	30	384
County Wicklow	142	55	295	29	521
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,402</b>	<b>1,265</b>	<b>19,441</b>	<b>1,547</b>	<b>26,655</b>

\*Vehicle licences per county are calculated on the basis of where a licence is issued.

## Breakdown of complaints 2010 | Total of 77 complaints



## Breakdown of prosecutions 2010 | Total of 16 offences



## Fixed-charge penalties 2010

Offence	Number
Standing for hire at a place other than an appointed stand	30
Plying/standing for hire in a hackney/limousine	3
Failure to comply with regulations in relation to the fitting/operation of a taximeter	8
Failing to operate a taximeter	4
Failing to provide a receipt	3
Not having adequate knowledge of local area	9
Failure to have taximeter properly calibrated	1
Failure to display driver identification	8
Failure to display in-vehicle information	4
Failure to comply with roof sign requirements	1
Causing the taximeter to operate while standing or plying for hire	1
Displaying on a hackney or limousine a sign or advertisement other than one prescribed by the Commission	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>

## Breakdown of prosecutions by area

County	Number
Galway	1
Meath	2
Tipperary	1
Limerick	1
Kildare	1
Louth	1
Dublin	5
Sligo	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>

## Skills Development Test Pass Rates

Pass rate for Industry Knowledge section	65%
Pass rate for Area Knowledge section	24%
Total number of tests sat	4,702*
Total number of Skills Development Certificates Issued	926
Overall pass rate for Skills Development Test covering Industry Knowledge and Area Knowledge Sections**	19.70%

\*Includes re-sits.

\*\*Existing SPSV drivers only need to sit the Industry Knowledge Section to get their Skills Development Certificate.