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**W**e at Tacsai magazine like to flatter ourselves that we are a vehicle for the voicing of the opinions and airing of grievances and most importantly highlighting and discussing the issues that affect the industry.

The fact is however, that we would not exist without the drivers who sit behind the wheel clocking up mileage.

For this; we salute you.

More importantly however; throughout the pandemic with ambulance services stretched to breaking point, taxi drivers have been quietly saving lives. Whether it be taking patients for life saving procedures, transferring patients from one hospital to another in emergency situations.

While other front line workers receive well deserved praise, taxi drivers are forgotten.

To the taxi drivers of Ireland; thank you for all of your brave, efficient and modest hard work throughout these times of trouble.

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TACSAÍ MAGAZINE

All correspondence should be addressed to:  
Tacsai Magazine, 4 Castleknock Mews, Old Navan Road,  
Castleknock, Dublin 15  
Creative Top Publishing Ltd. publishes Tacsai Magazine.  
Company registration No. 534480

No part of Tacsai Magazine may be reproduced without the prior consent of the publisher.

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*Tacsai Magazine* is stocked in each taxi firm in Dublin, Cork, Galway and Limerick. Most ranks have "Rank Reps" who have a stock of magazines. Additionally, the magazine is available in the following locations:

01. Skan Taxi centre, Tolka Valley Business Park.
02. Emo Station (*Mount Brown*), Kilmainham.
03. Discount Till Rolls
04. TTnH Offices, Santry Hall Ind. Est.
05. Fonthill Motor Factors.
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# €6.5 million support package announced for taxi, hackney and limousine operators

The package will provide €3 million for the continued waiver of vehicle licence fees in 2022.

**T**ransport Minister, Eamonn Ryan has announced a €6.5 million support package for taxi, hackney and limousine operators. The new sectoral package, developed in consultation with the advisory committee on Small Public Service Vehicles (SPSV), will provide the following:

€3 million for the continued waiver of vehicle licence fees in 2022

€2 million for a once-off Motor Tax Refund scheme, specifically for taxi and hackney operators

€1.5 million for an NCT fee refund scheme

“There is no doubt that Covid-19 has had a detrimental effect on our taxi industry. While our society now begins to recover from the impacts of this pandemic, I am keen to remove as many cost barriers as possible for our SPSV drivers to return to work,” Ryan said.

“The €6.5 million financial package I have announced today will give operators the consistent support they require over the rest of this year and into the year 2022,” he said.

In addition to the supports for the SPSV industry, the government has maintained a some supports with broad eligibility criteria for individuals and businesses which have been adversely affected by Covid-19.

Many of these supports can be accessed by taxi drivers and include the Pandemic Unemployment Payment and the Enterprise Support Grant.

The PUP will continue to allow self-employed people, including SPSV drivers, to earn up to €960 over an eight-week period, net of expenses, while retaining their full PUP entitlement. This scheme has been extended to February 2022.

The Enterprise Support Grant will continue to provide business owners and self-employed drivers with a grant of up to €1,000 to restart their business which was closed as a result of the pandemic.

Claimants of the grant in 2020 who subsequently found themselves back on the PUP in 2021 will now also be able to access the €1,000 grant for a second time if they close their PUP payment on or after 1 June 2021.

## Irish taxi drivers welcome huge boost in business with return of international travel

Since July 19, the demand for taxis increased by 170% compared to the same week in 2020

**T**he return of international travel was welcomed by airlines across the board on Monday after a devastating year for the sector amid Covid. With thousands heading to the airport, the return of travel has seen taxi drivers experience a major boost in business since July 19.

New data released by Free Now reveals that with foreign travel, many Irish people are using taxis to get to Dublin airport with requests soaring by 80% from the previous week – and even more impressively, requests increased by 170% compared to the same week in 2020.

Trip data from the Irish taxi-hailing service also highlights a week-on-week jump in taxi trips to Cork and Shannon airports too on July 19 and 20, increasing respectively by 96% in Cork and 65% in Shannon.

The easing of restrictions, saw the busiest day for airport bookings on the app since the start of the year, while 4 am was the busiest hour to book a taxi.

There was also a 95% increase in collections from Dublin airport via the Free Now app as many thousands

return home to Ireland to visit friends and family.

Speaking about the significant increase in airport bookings Niall Carson, General Manager, said;

“FREE NOW welcomes the return of international travel and we are delighted to facilitate transport to and from airports for holidaymakers once again.

“A holiday abroad for many people in Ireland officially begins with a taxi journey to the airport - with our team of dedicated drivers and our pre-booking function which allows passengers to book a trip up to 4 days in advance, we hope to make it a seamless and stress-free process for passengers this summer.

“We expect the demand for airport bookings to continue growing over the coming months with the widespread roll-out of vaccinations and digital Covid certs, making foreign travel a safer and more straightforward process as we emerge from the pandemic.

“We are committed to playing our part in supporting Ireland’s post-pandemic reboot and keeping the nation moving with safe and flexible transport options.”



## Taxi driver who used remote control to increase fares has licence restore

A taxi driver, who scammed passengers 270 times over a six-month period by secretly using a remote control to add €9 to fares, has been allowed have his licence back and work again.

**R**aymond Pidgeon, 65, from Kilakee Close, Greenpark, Walkinstown, Dublin 12, will be allowed to resume driving his taxi, despite pleading guilty last year to over-charging customers contrary to the Taxi Regulation Act.

He used a concealed remote control device to increase fares on his meter, which he did 15 times a week from 1 February until 12 June, 2019.

His prosecution at Dublin District Court in January 2020 followed a massive probe by the National Transport Authority (NTA) into widespread use of a device to rip off unsuspecting taxi passengers.

The offence can result in a fine of up to €4,000. As a result of mitigating factors, however, he was handed a nominal fine of €200 and was ordered to pay €400 in prosecution costs.

After the prosecution, gardai revoked his taxi licence.

However, Mr Pidgeon came back to the district court today to appeal the licence revocation, which was opposed by gardai from the carriage office.

Judge John Brennan noted the evidence from NTA inspector Liam Kavanagh, who investigated reports that some taxis were over-charging by covertly using a remote device with certain meters.

Following a complaint by a tourist, Mr Pidgeon had been interviewed by the NTA in mid-June 2019 about a €20 over-charge on a fare. The inspector became suspicious by Mr Pidgeon's explanation and €9 could not be accounted for, the court heard.

He learned the taxi driver used an Aguila meter, the type that was being used with the remote control. He cautioned Mr Pidgeon again and told him he was also investigating the use of remote devices to over-charge taxi passengers.

At that point the taxi man "broke down". He admitted he was one of the drivers and that he had bought one of the remote controls.

He had done it for eight months, but could only be charged for

the offences committed over the latest six-month period prior to the investigation.

Mr Kavanagh said the taxi man acted "cute" by not bringing the remote to the meeting, but he later handed it over.

As a result of the NTA investigation, 260 taxi meters were recalled and recalibrated.

Mr Pidgeon, who had no prior convictions, was co-operative, the appeal heard.

Pleading for the restoration of the driver's taxi licence, Matthew Holmes BL asked the court to note the evidence that his client's wife had been suffering ill health at the time. Medical documents were available.

The barrister submitted that the witness's description of his client as "cute" did not stack up with the evidence of a man crying and giving cooperation which assisted the investigation.

Mr Holmes described it as a "slip-up" by the driver in his 20-year career.

Judge Brennan remarked that slip-up lasted six months.

He noted there had been other convictions as a result of the investigation. These were serious matters for members of the public who were essentially defrauded by way of over-charging, he added.

He took into account testimonials on Mr Pidgeon's good, hard-working character and that he had pleaded guilty when the prosecution came to court last year, after which he had suffered from the publicity. The health issues were not mitigating circumstances, however, he held.

He noted Mr Pidgeon had been a taxi driver for a long time and that his co-operation assisted the NTA's large scale investigation. He has been off the road since March last year and "colloquially speaking he has done his time".

That tipped the balance in his favour, said Judge Brennan as he allowed the appeal.

# DRIVER FOCUSED CABAPP TO KICK START NATIONAL APP ACROSS IRELAND AND THE UK



In a changing and challenging taxi market Cabapp is looking to the future and stepping up to become Ireland and the UK's biggest and most ethical industry booking app for drivers.

**C**abapp's platform will provide a one stop shop for drivers, placing drivers at the core of its business by offering a range of taxi services. Importantly by offering one point of contact should a problem arise, Cabapp will be able to support drivers.

By aggregating multiple services on one app working life is made easier for drivers, while bringing thousands of individual drivers together on to one platform it greatly reduces drivers' costs, so the platform operates as a bulk buying club for negotiating the best deals on drivers' behalf.

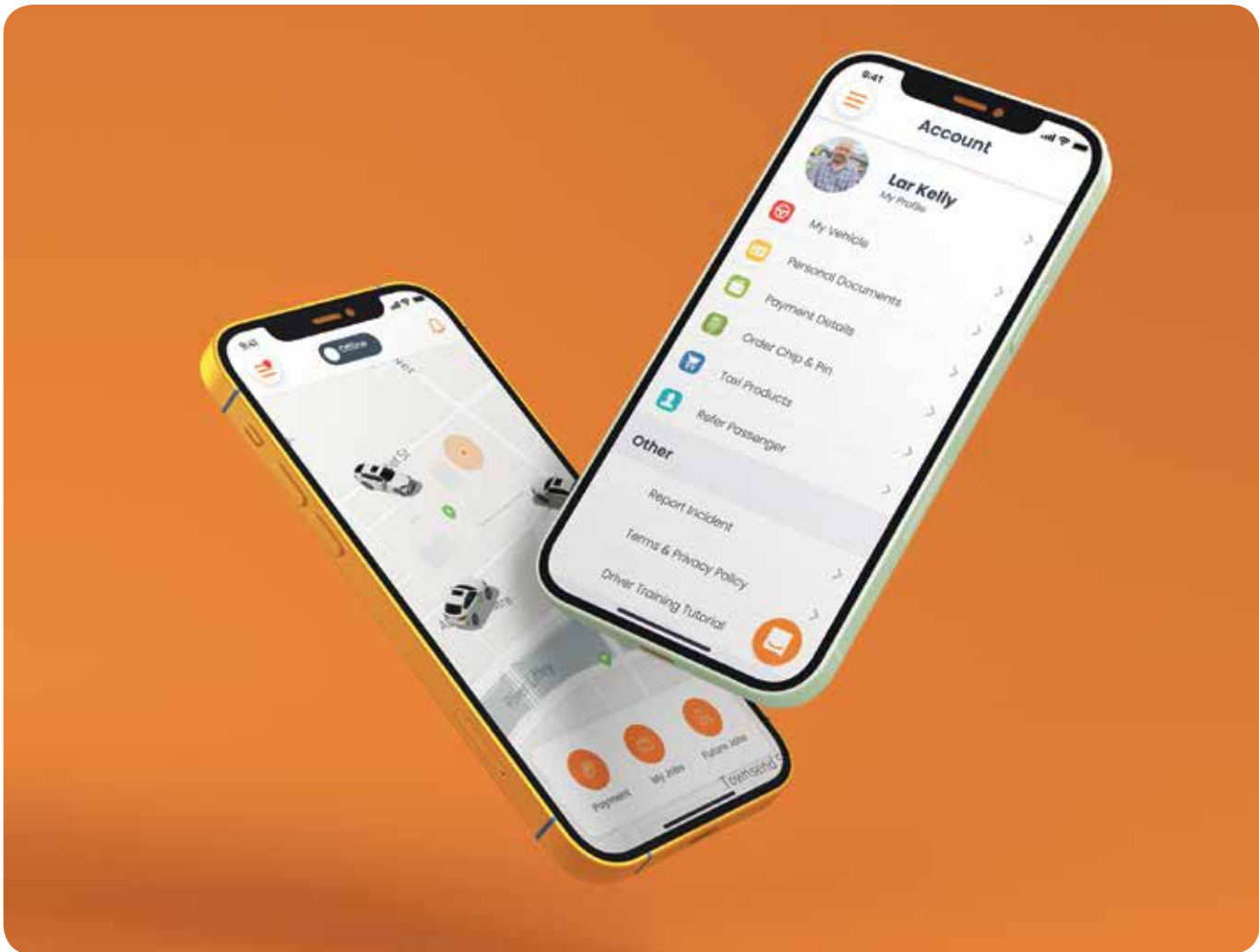
Lar Kelly Co-founder of Cabapp, said "well first and most importantly Cabapp's business model is all about helping and supporting drivers, so everything starts from the driver and works out from there. Drivers are our customers and the app functionality is designed to generate more paying customers for drivers at significantly lower commission rates. By helping drivers in this way, it allows a driver's earning potential to increase and hopefully

reduces their working hours, so they have more time to spend with their families or on hobbies with less time behind the wheel.

On the new version of Cabapp's national booking app there are several unique selling points that help improve the passenger experience on their taxi journey. For drivers there will be no booking commission (in perpetuity) for all passengers signed up by drivers or by word of mouth, so if drivers share the app link with all their mobile phone contacts, their friends on Facebook and families using social media there is no commission. Drivers can even share with their day-to-day customers to download Cabapp and book via the app, so if the passenger pays cash the driver will keep the full amount of the fare and if they pay by card then only a card processing fee will apply.

Cabapp does not want to compete with street or rank jobs, unlike other apps who charge a commission rate for doing so. The trust in other apps is waning among drivers across Ireland and the UK due to increasing commission rates eating into drivers' earnings.





Cabapp is already active in 59 towns and cities with over 12,000 registered drivers and where over 400 drivers in 30 locations are now shareholders, so with growing interest from drivers it's a win win.

If a customer travels in any of these locations where drivers are actively promoting Cabapp, all driver led sign-ups will be commission free on bookings with only card fees deducted if the passenger pays by card. With thousands of drivers already using the daily card payment system, this puts Cabapp in pole position towards building the largest ever driver network on one taxi booking app.

To help win more bookings for drivers, Cabapp will be promoting the new booking app directly to corporate and business customers as well travel affiliates e.g. airlines, train companies, hotels, bars and restaurants. On winning these accounts to generate jobs for drivers, Cabapp will charge drivers a flat rate of 10% commission, which includes card fees and a 2% revenue share to encourage these sectors to promote to their customers and get back on their feet post COVID.

So from a customer's perspective, whether promoted by drivers or directly by Cabapp, passengers have the convenience of booking a licenced taxi or black cab from one app anytime,

anyplace across Ireland and the UK.

To encourage wider driver participation, Cabapp's business model enables every driver to become a shareholder. Cabapp has now launched a monthly share savings scheme for all drivers of all nationalities so they can become shareholders and contribute to their industry's future.

In taking this step, it's in every driver's interest to promote themselves via Cabapp so it helps to secure their trade as opposed to helping corporate backed apps continue with rising commission rates. Other apps also put driver against driver by having to do a minimum number of fares each week, giving driver priority or becoming ambassadors to obtain gold or silver acceptance rates, so there's no end to this. But now there is a new way and that's joining the Cabapp revolution!

To enforce this, Cabapp recently changed its company constitution / articles of association by adding a clause that prohibits private hire vehicles from ever using the Cabapp platform and guaranteeing that all passengers signed up by drivers will be commission free in perpetuity.

Cabapp offers drivers an alternative app, so by helping ourselves to help each other, it's now possible to achieve success together.

**If you would like to join your 400+ fellow taxi drivers that are already Shareholders by owning a stake in your future from €10, then please email us for more information at [support@cabapp.net](mailto:support@cabapp.net)**



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## Free Now Goes Electric In Cork, Galway & Limerick

Ireland's leading multi-mobility app FREE NOW, has announced the expansion of its Eco booking service in Cork, Galway and Limerick. Passengers in these cities can choose more sustainable transport options by selecting a hybrid or electric taxi on the app at no extra cost.

**T**his announcement forms part of FREE NOW's sustainability strategy – Move to Net-Zero programme – which includes immediate offsetting and long-term Net-Zero efforts with the goal of achieving 50% fully electric vehicle rides by 2025 and 100% zero emissions by 2030.

Following the initial launch of its Eco booking option in Dublin last year, FREE NOW has experienced a huge demand from the public for environmentally friendly transport choices with eco trips in Dublin soaring by 146% between September 2020 and July 2021.

The national expansion of the new Eco booking service into major cities across Ireland coincides with European Mobility Week 2021 which takes place from the 16th-22nd September to support sustainable transport across Ireland.

According to new research conducted by FREE NOW\*, 87% of passengers are worried about climate change and 60% would like to have sustainable transport as a default booking option on the app. Furthermore, 58% believe that there are too many private cars on the road, and 17% stress that private vehicle dependency is one of the main transport difficulties in their area.

### FREE NOW sustainability commitment across Europe

FREE NOW has integrated almost 130,000 new electric vehicles in the app in order to widen its green mobility offer and become the mobility platform with the biggest vehicle choice in Europe. By the end of 2021, FREE NOW expects to complete 4 million rides with multi mobility partners such

as TIER & VOI (Scooters), EMMY & Cooltra (Mopeds), Miles & ShareNow (car sharing) on the app.

FREE NOW is also working with ClimatePartner to develop offset projects to compensate for the current output of CO2 emissions produced by both the company and its services.

In total, FREE NOW is offsetting 173,000 tons of CO2 emissions with three projects in Madre de Dios, Peru (dedicated to protecting a threatened piece of the Amazon); in Indonesia (extending wind energy in the region and developing rural areas); and in Europe (supporting the afforestation and the change of local forests by regional tree planting).

Carson, General Manager at FREE NOW Ireland: "We are delighted to announce the launch of Eco bookings for drivers and passengers across Cork, Galway and Limerick. Supporting the national effort to develop a more sustainable transport system across Ireland is a crucial part of our sustainability strategy, and the expansion of our electric offering is a key milestone in reaching our target of a 50% EV fleet by 2025, and 100% net zero emissions by 2030.

"The demand from our passengers for more environmentally friendly transport is extremely positive with 84% saying they would choose a sustainable booking option if it was available, so we are delighted to make this a reality at no extra charge for people as we continue to expand our electric offering."

**Further information is available at [free-now.com](https://free-now.com)**



## More Help and Support From Government Needed by Taxi Drivers

Tony Roe, Chairperson of the National Transport Assembly Committee and Spokesperson on Taxi Drivers, has said that taxi drivers nationwide need more help and support from the government, and a lot could be done to make the job better better, especially throughout the pandemic.

**A** lot could be done to make the job better. Taxi drivers provide a high standard, and quality service throughout Ireland. This should be the aim of the National Transport Authority (NTA). The behaviour and attitude of any workforce, depends on the workers satisfaction in any trade or industry, and as taxi drivers are the only form of public transport, to be all sorts of public transport; from taking people to hospitals, doing life saving work, acting as ambulances, and this job is done 365 days a year, 24 hours a day. And it is important to look at why so many people are leaving the industry. This has not been addressed and it must be done; firstly; there are not taxi ranks to facilitate drivers, and there are too many taxis on the road per head of population. Secondly; the issue of taxi licenses must be looked at concerning standards and with people going around threatening taxi drivers; a better job should be done, could be done and must be done to protect drivers. I have suggested that they should have a proper uniform on them and that would be a great deterrent, particularly for illegally operating drivers," said Roe. He went on to suggest that the rigorous checks done on taxis and they're drivers such as making sure your first aid bandages are in date; something that can and often does lead to a fine. "The real issue of compliance in my opinion is not being addressed, and a uniformed deterrent would go a long way to protect drivers in the street and stop illegal operators

operating. These illegal operators are a danger, particularly to young people late at night. These people must be stopped and illuminated, and its very easy to target drivers over bandages and fire extinguishers which is a bit pointless. We would like to hear this issue addressed, and at the moment we are getting a lot of complaints from some legitimate drivers, and it seems to be getting out of hand in a lot of places. It has been reported to us quite often that these night workers in the capital have approached these illegal operators after confirming their illegitimacy by looking them up on the app. They weren't registered on the apps and when the legitimate drivers approached them, they got abuse. This was never the situation when the taxis were operated by the Garda Carriage Office, they did a great job in illuminating this. They did a great job, and now all you see is people being stopped over their bandages and these serious issues are going under the radar.

Taxi drivers are in a position where the laws are not being made by them and the usual end up costing taxi drivers and they end up being seen as a cash cow. With the great, life saving work being done throughout the pandemic. A lot of these drivers who have been giving lifts to these patients to these life saving procedures due to the lack of taxis, are being told that a lot of lives were saved b these drivers," said Roe. He went on to say that the real issues are not being addressed and they must be.

# THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT LISTEN TO THE CONCERNS OF DRIVERS DURING COVID

BY DARREN O'ROURKE TD

The taxi industry was hit extremely hard during the pandemic. The stay at home orders, the collapse of tourism and the total absence of social and sporting events over the past year and a half, saw demand for taxi services fall off a cliff.

**D**uring the lockdowns, taxis provided an essential service. Many worked throughout, despite the dangers, amongst many things ferrying nurses and doctors to hospitals to ensure they could continue to care for patients.

Unfortunately, drivers didn't get the recognition or support they deserved from the government during this time.

The one size fits all approach of pandemic supports did not work for the taxi industry. For

example, 23% of drivers in the industry are aged over 66 years and were excluded from the Pandemic Unemployment Payment scheme, despite our calls for their inclusion.

The government did not listen to the concerns of drivers and in September last year they were forced to take to the streets in protest to highlight their frustration and plight.

Taxi drivers weren't calling for just financial assistance, but for regulatory reforms that will help them weather this economic downturn and help them get back on their feet as our economy recovers.

Changes such as reform of the Taxi Advisory Committee, continued access to bus lanes and an extension to the 10-year-rule were all put forward as solutions.

Sinn Féin have supported drivers throughout the pandemic and as Transport spokesperson I've been raising these issues with the Minister, the Department and the NTA continuously.

Taxis are a key part of our public transport system, and it's imperative the government recognise that and work with them to fix issues in the industry.

In our recent Alternative Budget, Sinn Féin allocated dedicated funding for taxi drivers to help cover ongoing overheads when business levels remain depressed.

Unfortunately, we didn't see any similar proposals in Budget 2022. It appears taxi drivers have been forgotten, yet again, by this out of touch government.

Minister Ryan needs to up his game as the Minister for Transport, recognise the important role taxis play in our transport system and provide the supports and regulatory reforms needed to help the sector recover from the last 18 months.

**Darren O'Rourke is Sinn Féin spokesperson on Transport and TD for Meath East.**





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# THE WORLDWIDE TAXI-CAB INDUSTRY ROLLS BACK THE YEARS TO RESTART PRODUCTIVE MANUFACTURING OF HYDROGEN AUTOMOBILES FOR PASSENGER HIRE TRANSPORTATION AND DESIGN OF THE SPECIAL CARRIAGE VEHICLE

**By Derry Coughlan of the Cork Taximen's Association**

The World turns and brings time back to us again to re-establish manufacturing car plants for the demand of the Taxi-Cab industry in cities and towns to which it serves.

**D**uring the end of the Nineteenth century, the first motorized cars were built, being electric cabs, were slow, heavy, had range limits and were unable to sustain wide use and were soon replaced by gasoline powered vehicles. The modern sought vehicle for passenger hiring transport must have a passenger size capacity of maximum 8 passengers and luggage, while wheelchair accommodation must also be provided; that is four, six and eight seater vehicles are requested worldwide. Interior room space, body works and passenger seating is one thing, but the mobility power for future generations is another issue. The manufacturing establishments will have to select hydrogen engines, nothing else is going to last over the dangerous years ahead! The fuel cell is relatively young technology, but the fuel cell does not require recharging with a continuous supply of hydrogen and oxygen, it will go on working with only water as a by-product, so, with hydrogen replacing petrol and diesel in the filling stations, things could go forging ahead, if hydrogen is the fuel, electricity/water and heat are the only by-products, where the fuel cell uses the chemical energy of hydrogen. Recharging batteries is not the long-term answer – it has to be atomic power in the long term, the future depends on the rate of progress of waste free nuclear power by way of the fusion reactor.

As you are aware, the World Health Organisation brought pressure on Motor Vehicle Manufacturing Companies to come up with a wheelchair accessible vehicle for public use, which they did, in wagon form with rear door ramp entry for wheelchair occupation and carriage, an alternative to private cars, which made their way into the Taxi scene for hire purposes, where there was no alternative provided. So now, the World Public Transport Organisation is calling on motor manufacturers worldwide to produce a vehicle for the Taxi-Cab Industry, which is in demand for public transport in every city of the world. The vehicle design will be spacious, long lasting age span, bench seating in front with a three-seater rear, giving a minimum of five passengers per automobile.

The majority of these taxi-cabs will be able passenger carriage in our cities, with the wheelchair accessible version available also to the needed providers, with rear door luggage compartment and adjustable entry ramp for wheelchair bound passenger carriage; overall, this proposed Taxi-Cab vehicle will be conspicuous for business methods in our cities worldwide, no confusion will exist with the private car existence on our streets – reinstating the values of our Taxi-Cab in the civilized cities it serves. The simple reason for the success of the Tax-Cab industry is convenience, the taxi provides easy, comfortable, and affordable door to door transportation in private at any hour and anywhere. We are now setting out to advance the Taxi-Cab design and availability for this Licenced trade in Public Transport means, continuing where the world-famous introductions left off, that is the London Cab, and the Checker, Red Top and Yellow Taxi-Cabs that served American cities. France and Germany also had their versions too. These new, modern public hire vehicles under Licence only will also be fitted with the updated, modern Taximeter, which will take credit card, travel card concept, tap card and cash start up payments for the hiring journey, thus reducing the non-payment of fares; giving you a hold on waiting time and banning “Bilkers” and so called “Runners”, reducing the non-payment of fares and time wasting, etc. These new Taximeters will incorporate your Bank Transfers, mobile phone, and advanced booking of selective fares on your hiring app or Taxi Base operations, incorporating private bookings and emergency assistance, etc.

The planning, management and operation of the licenced Small Public Service Vehicle, Single Fare Taxi services in countries of Europe must be totally revised and updated for public awareness, efficiency and understanding this transporting function, therefore the operating industries and public hiring sites must be set out and supervised by Local Government and Central Government, retaining public protection, mobility and access, addressing transport policy issues in Superior Legislation (Motor Traffic Laws, etc.) As car ownership has grown, there is still a demand





for Taxi Hirings, which requires the retention of public place and terminal taxi ranks, with alternative night-time support Taxi Ranks and with the off-street support in the advanced booking order travel facilities, vital business nowadays. Where parking is very limited, as in some older cities or at certain periods, overflow taxi ranks must be provided outside parked vehicles for crowd removal, such as concerts, games and the night-time travel city trade, while no parking must be strictly enforced on all city centre and Terminal Permanent Taxi Ranks – customs must be retained at all times in our business.

The early Taxi industry had been primarily a service for the rich, but nowadays it is a completely different market, so retaining the kilometre and waiting rates as long as possible, nowadays drives the marketplace, the more fares you get in less time – no waiting – the greater your turnover is going to be, with better rest periods, too many fare increases are costly and can reduce demand-oriented approaches to hiring determination.

Until the new proposed taximeters arrive on the scene, we must seek powers for identification and agreeing the price in certain instances – take payments before commencement of journey. Surcharges are also needed on all credit card payments, say for example 2 euro per transaction, this is also supported by the delay in “extra cost” and network blackspots – card failure, etc. Updated Superior Legislation should, like the “olden days” carry and impose a “jail sentence”, through the courts for non-payment of fares, assaults or vehicle damages, etc. Taxi Drivers in modern times always like to get regular fare increases, but this is not legal situation, as the public transport “fare units” charges remain the property of the public hiring passengers, in Law, public transport must be always made affordable for its users, this is why the Economical College study was used before deregulation was introduced, etc. This is a typical example, why Deregulation never works and is of no help to the service providers, who must invest in the taxi systems and lawful provisions. The fare is a statutory charge and not a private journey price! Furthermore, this is why we had “Private Hire” outside our Taximeter Areas, so as we could arrange an all-in Price/Quotation for their business Requirements and Journey Hiring, etc.

Two well known Car manufacturers in this world are investing and promoting the “Digital Sharecropper” with very expensive technology status marketing equipment, and one sector involves Taxi Hiring, Goods and Food deliveries, exploring the App and Online issues, etc. So now, why don’t these billionaire industrial companies go first down their natural requirement road for the preservation of the Motor Vehicle Industry, where they first got their Financial support and profit from, etc. Look at the business and turnover they would achieve by setting up and constructing the special SUV Motor Wagon for the Worldwide Taxi Industry and its maintenance service to follow in supporting public transport services worldwide, bringing the future motor engine into being and available standards for public consumption, etc.

Passenger Travel Accommodation will have to be developed, improved and advanced to supply requirements in the “Single Fare” Public Transport Arrangements, with every country in the world supporting and requiring these new future Public Transport Vehicles for such amenities in cities and towns worldwide. These purpose-built commercial vehicles will and can also be used for private and domestic purposes, which will also retain our oblong, unique Roof Light Taxi Sign and Door Banners, while the various countries will provide funding for costs and upkeep, these vehicles will have a long life span in operation also.

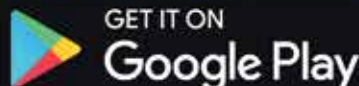
1902/3 The Cork Taximens Association, then mainly horse carriage jarveys headed the parade for the Great Cork International Exhibition opened by the visit of King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra, therefore we still continue to service our city even though many functions have been hijacked, by the non-retention of 1929 Cork City Management Act, which was the progressive rule for the city’s legal operation and commercial function, etc. Our Taxi Drivers deserve better support and assistance, but in the meantime, keep in touch with the Taxi College, until we obtain change and a legal programme with our Licences and hiring Sites/Methods, etc.

To conclude, for the survival of the Taxi Industry, as you can see, the European Taxi Confederation will have to prepare Charters for establishment.

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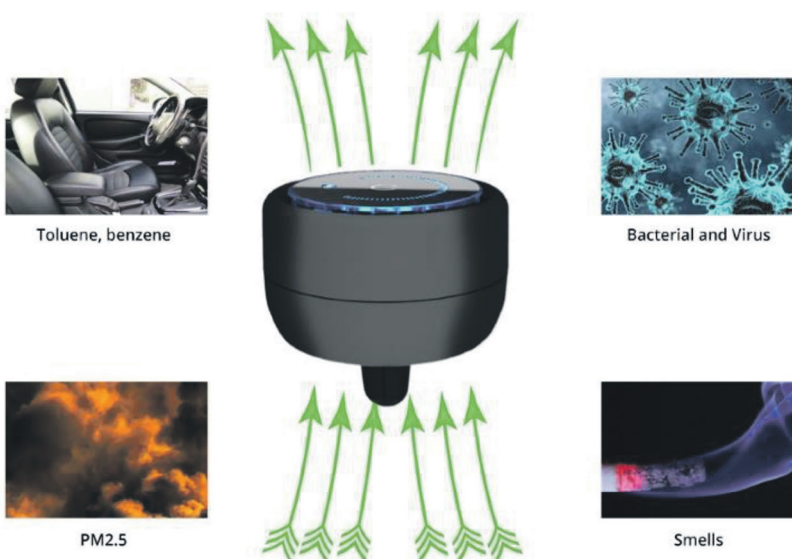
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# Microfinance Ireland to lend to electric taxi buyers

Taxi owners who wish to buy an electric vehicle can now apply for loans of up to €25,000 from Microfinance Ireland.

**E**arlier this year, the Government made €15m available under the Electric SPSV Grant Scheme to help drivers of taxis, hackneys and limousines replace their diesel or petrol cars with an electric wheelchair accessible vehicle.

But as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, many would-be electric Small Public Service Vehicle purchasers have been finding it hard to access finance from the banks.

Microfinance Ireland has now stepped into the breach, offering loans to those who can't get them from mainstream lenders.

"We are very pleased to support this important government initiative and to provide further help to small businesses in this sector," said

"We are providing loan finance to those that are having difficulty in securing funding from banks and commercial lending providers due to the impact of the pandemic on their business but who now wish to replace their vehicle with a more sustainable model."

"If they are having difficulty in securing finance, they should talk to us to see if Microfinance Ireland can help."

Loans of between €5,000 and €25,000 will be available, with an Annual Percentage Rate of between 4.5% and 5.5%, depending on whether the application is made through a Local Enterprise Office or directly to Microfinance Ireland.

The loans will be up to 5 years and there will be no interest-only or repayment moratoriums.

Only firms with less than 10 staff and a turnover of less than €2m can apply.

The development has been welcomed by the Government.

"This new loan demonstrates the cross-departmental links between my Department, the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications and Transport whereby taxi drivers and other SPSV owners, whose income has been severely reduced in the last 18 months, can access a loan to take advantage of the part grant being delivered by Government," said Minister of State for Business, Employment and Retail, Damien English.

"We want the future to be green and this is a strong signal that our microbusinesses involved in transport can lead on this move into the future."

## Business student who used taxi to transport loaded gun through Dublin held on €15,000 bail

The detective said the weapon was loaded with two cartridges and the gun 'was ready for use, ready to fire'

**A** business student arrested in Dublin for transporting a loaded sawn-off shotgun which was "ready for use" with its safety pin switched off has been held on €15,000 bail.

Beloji Kareem, 22, of Rochfort Avenue, Lucan, Co. Dublin was arrested on Monday by officers from the Garda National Drugs and Organised Crime Bureau (GNDOCB).

He appeared before Judge Conal Gibbons on Thursday evening for a contested bail hearing.

Mr Kareem is charged with two offences under the Firearms Act for possessing a 12 gauge Beretta shotgun and two rounds of ammunition in suspicious circumstances, which can result in a 14-year sentence.

Detective Garda Liam Eviston told the court Mr Kareem made no reply to charge. Objecting to bail he told the court the GNDOCB conducted an intelligence led operation into movement of firearms.

Mr Kareem was allegedly under surveillance when he met

an unknown male in Tallaght.

The detective claimed that the accused was given a Tesco bag containing a cylindrical tube.

The court heard he then got a taxi which was stopped about 10 minutes later at the Ballyowen Road, in Lucan and he was caught red-handed.

The detective said the weapon was loaded with two cartridges, it had the safety pin switched to the off position and the gun "was ready for use, ready to fire".

It had been wrapped in two layers of black plastic.

A plastic can filled with petrol, lighters and a change of clothes was also recovered, the bail hearing was told.

Questioned by defence counsel Kevin McCrave, the detective agreed that the weapon was sealed in double wrapping.

The barrister put it to him that the gun had been already loaded with the safety pin off when it was given to his client.

The detective said he had no evidence to the contrary.

Flight risk was a ground for the objection to bail.



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# Gardaí withdraw PUP theft charges against man in Cork

A number of legal challenges regarding the stopping of the €350 PUP have been heard in the High Court this year Gardaí have withdrawn all charges against a man of alleged theft of the Pandemic Unemployment Payment after hearing the matter may have gone to judicial review.

**K**hurram Cheema had faced a total of 20 charges of PUP theft, with the charges having been levelled against him in Bandon District Court last March and April.

Mr Cheema, a courier driver with a previous address at Apartment 2, Zunera Lodge, Quayside House on Pier Road, Kinsale, and more recently living in Kippagh in Dunmanway, was accused of theft arising from claiming the PUP from April 21 to September 29 last year.

Gardaí had alleged he had been breaking the law by being in Pakistan for a time, but the court had already been told Mr Cheema was an Irish national whose work and family were based here.

At Bandon District Court on Thursday, Judge James McNulty was told all charges were now being withdrawn on the instruction of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Mr Cheema's solicitor, Graham Hyde, addressed the court and said when his client was first charged "TV cameras and whatnot had been present".

He said judicial review had been threatened in relation to the charges against his client, who the court was told has been living in Ireland for 15 years.

"He was stranded in Pakistan," Mr Hyde said of his client. "He made efforts to get back to Ireland."

Mr Hyde said the PUP was an emergency measure that had been brought in on an "ad hoc" basis and this case may have been "a misapplication of the rules or criteria".

He said when Mr Cheema returned to Ireland he had been arrested and told what had happened had been illegal.

Judge McNulty said: "But it wasn't so." A number of legal challenges regarding the stopping of the €350 PUP have been heard in the High Court this year.

The district court in Bandon had previously heard that Mr Cheema had worked as a taxi driver for a number of years but his PSV licence was recently not renewed and so he had turned to driving as a courier. The court heard he was self-employed and that he had just successfully applied to have his wife and children join him from Pakistan.

# Hairdresser (28) told taxi driver 'I don't like blacks'

A hairdresser who told a taxi driver "I don't like blacks" and damaged his cab by running on to the bonnet has been spared jail.

**M**atthew Feeney (28) hurled abuse and damaged the taxi in a violent, drink-fuelled episode during one of his first nights out after lockdown.

Dublin District Court heard Feeney had worked in a top London salon but had returned to Ireland after a relationship breakdown and had been forced to move back in with his parents.

Judge Marie Quirke said Feeney's behaviour had been "reprehensible" but spared him a criminal record after he paid €600 in compensation and wrote a letter of apology to the taxi driver.

He had been "racist in his demeanour to a member of society" and she found this to be "very reprehensible behaviour".

She dismissed the case under the Probation Act, leaving him without convictions.

Feeney, of Cormac Terrace, Terenure, Dublin, pleaded guilty to criminal damage, public intoxication, and using threatening, abusive and insulting behaviour and violence in a garda station.

The court heard the taxi driver called in to Rathmines Garda station at 12.20am on June 4 this year. He said a

passenger, the accused, would not pay a fare. Gardaí went to Rathgar Road where they found Feeney in a highly intoxicated state.

He eventually paid the fare but as the taxi driver left, Feeney became abusive and said: "I don't like blacks, you are all pigs."

He ran on to the bonnet and windscreen of the taxi, causing damage, and was arrested. He continued to be abusive in the Garda station and physically resisted officers.

The accused had no previous convictions.

Feeney apologised for what was a once-off, isolated incident, his barrister said.

He had been "cooped up" in his house due to the pandemic after returning from London, where he worked in a top hairdressing salon, she said. He was "exceptional in his field" and had competed abroad.

The incident happened on one of his first nights out after lockdown and he "by no stretch covered himself in glory".

He had since gone to a therapist and displayed a commitment to ensuring that this behaviour never happens again, the lawyer said.

"If he could, he wishes he could take it all back," she said. "He promises he will never be in trouble again."



## NI TAXI DRIVER CHARGED OVER PASSENGER SEX ACT VIDEO

**Andy Tortolani (54) appeared at Craigavon Magistrates Court charged with improper use of a public communication network by sending a “message or other matter was indecent.”**

**T**he charge relates to an incident on July 18 when videos were circulated on social media depicting a couple in the back seat of a Value Cabs taxi engaging in a prolonged sex act.

Tortolani, from Sandringham in Portadown, spoke only to confirm he understood the charge against him.

None of the facts were opened in court last week but it is understood the offence relates to Tortolani allegedly releasing to social media a three-part video of the couple in the back of his taxi.

Granting legal aid District Judge Bernie Kelly adjourned the case to September 15.

There was no sign of Mr Tortolani at his bail address when Sunday Life called to the door last week, with the house emptied of furniture and possessions.

Numerous pictures of the family man appear on social media accounts.

Footage emerged last month of a man and a woman engaging in a prolonged sex act in the back of a Value Cabs taxi and quickly went viral after being shared on social media.

Following the widespread distribution of the video the man in the back seat in the footage contacted the PSNI and said the images were taken without his consent.

He also claimed to have been subjected to racist abuse online after the footage went viral.

Value Cabs later confirmed one of their drivers had been

sacked following the incident.

In a statement issued to concerned customers Value Cabs said: “This self-employed taxi driver breached his driver guidelines and is no longer affiliated to Value Cabs.

“This incident is now in the hands of the PSNI.”

The viral images were recorded from the front of the taxi and show the driver in a Value Cabs uniform with the couple in the back seat.

The driver appears to keep his eyes on the road throughout most of the journey while the couple begin kissing before engaging in an explicit sex act.

An awkward exchange follows at the end of the journey when the male passenger pays the £17.80 fare, plus a £2.20 tip, and the driver quips “cheaper than a room”, before chuckling to himself as he tucks away a £20 note.

Three separate clips of the incident, two at around a minute long and one lasting 20 seconds, have been shared widely across social media sparking jokes, derision and disgust online.

It is unclear how the footage ended up on social media and Value Cabs have so far refused to comment to the press.

When contacted by Sunday Life the alleged male victim declined to comment and directed our reporter to his legal representatives who said there was “no comment” to make.

The PSNI and members of the public, including friends of the woman involved, have appealed to people on social media to stop sharing the footage.



## Gardaí remove taxi driver's licence after sexual assault conviction

Gardaí have removed the licence of a taxi driver who was pictured back behind the wheel of his taxi, just two days after he was convicted of sexually assaulting a passenger.

**E**xclusive pictures showed how Kusika Kudia was driving his taxi in Dublin's southside recently.

When confronted, Kudia said no one had mentioned to him that his conviction meant he was unfit to carry passengers.

Just two days earlier, Dublin Circuit Criminal Court had heard how Kudia kissed a female passenger, forcibly inserting his tongue into her mouth, without her consent as she was collecting her bag from his car.

The 55-year-old, pleaded guilty to sexually assaulting the woman outside her Dublin home on February 13, 2020.

Garda Mark Paul told Elva Duffy BL, prosecuting, that the woman got into Kudia's taxi with a friend following a night out in Dublin.

Her friend was dropped off before she directed Kudia to take her to her home. She said during the journey she checked if he accepted card payment and when he said that he did not, she asked to stop at an ATM to withdraw cash.

On her return to the taxi, Kudia asked her to sit in the front seat beside him rather than in the back as she had been doing.

She refused but Kudia asked her to move again.

On arriving at her home, she got out of the car but then noticed that Kudia had got out too.

She later told gardaí that he approached her and asked for a hug and to "come back with me".

She refused but he wrapped his arms around her and "got a good hold of her".

Once she realised that he had a strong hold of her she said "no, in a meaningful way" and tried to elbow him but he pushed his face towards her and forced his tongue into her mouth.

The woman said she then went into "survival mode" and managed to get away from Kudia and get into her house.

The fact that Kudia was back on the road carrying passengers just two days after such a conviction led to widespread outrage. But also, gardaí visited Kudia and took possession of his licence almost immediately.

In a statement to the Sunday World this week, a spokesperson said: "Section 30 of The Taxi Regulation Act 2013 provides a schedule of offences on conviction on indictment that invoke a mandatory disqualification from holding a SPSV licence.

"Section 30(4) provides that the disqualification under this section takes effect on the expiration of the ordinary time for bringing an appeal against the conviction concerned.

"While the responsibility to cease operating as an SPSV license holder rests immediately with the convicted person the Garda Carriage Office, on receipt of notification of such conviction, serves a notification on the SPSV holder.

"An Garda Síochána has engaged with a taxi driver subject of a recent conviction on indictment, has informed him of the legal position and has taken possession of his SPSV licence issued by the Carriage Office."

Kudia's details have now been removed from Transport of Ireland's 'Driver Check' app.



## Taxi driver weeps in court over dispute about pensioner's homemade will 'leaving him €275k home and contents'

**A Co Kildare taxi driver wept in court as he recalled a friendship he struck up with an old age pensioner who left him his €275,000 house and its contents in what was described as a home-made will.**

**S**eamus Conroy (67) has denied, in a Circuit Civil Court dispute over the will, allegations that he preyed on vulnerable old people to win their trust and confidence for personal financial gain.

An emotional Conroy, of Beatty Grove, Celbridge, Co Kildare, broke down several times as he outlined to Judge John O'Connor

O'Connor a bond he claimed had developed between him and 85-year-old widower Joe Kavanagh, of Swords Street, Oxmanstown Road, Stoneybatter, Dublin.

He told his counsel Eanna Mulloy SC he had picked up Kavanagh when waved down in North Circular Road, Dublin, and afterwards made a deal to bring him daily to and from the sick bed of his wife, Frances who later died in St Mary's Care Hospital, Phoenix Park, Dublin.

Mr Conroy, a former photographer with Irish Press, said the agreement was for €30 per day and was paid weekly at €210 per week, an understanding that lasted for several years until Joe Kavanagh's death.

He told Mr Mulloy, who appeared with barrister Tim Dixon and Swaine Solicitors, Galway, that he would daily collect Kavanagh at his home,

bring him to the hospital and, when the visit was over, bring him to a restaurant and buy him a lunch or afternoon tea.

"The fare, waiting time and food very often cost me not less than €50 or €60 but Joe was never charged more than the €210 weekly agreed rate," Mr Conroy said.

He said that through Frances Kavanagh's time in hospital and until Joe died several years later he had done everything he could for the former printer with the Leinster Leader in Naas.

Conroy, a shared Lotto winner and part-time property developer, faced a challenge over the will by Cormac O'Ceallaigh Solicitor who claimed to have drawn up an original will for Mr Kavanagh.

In this will he had bequeathed 60pc of his net estate to charities and divided the remainder between two nieces.

Money was to go for the upkeep of priests and church buildings, parish funds, the Legion of Mary Concillium and St Peter's Church, Phibsborough, Dublin.

Mr O'Ceallaigh told the court that when Mr Kavanagh's home had been put on the market as per the original will, a purchaser paid a deposit of €7,000. Swain Solicitors on behalf of Mr Conroy had written indicating they were in possession of a final will appointing Mr Conroy as Executor and that no further steps be taken in connection with the sale.

Conroy told Judge O'Connor that Mr Kavanagh, a considerable time before his death, had handed him an envelope and had told him to keep it and not to open it until after his death. When he eventually opened the envelope he found the will in which he had been left the house and contents.

Barrister Rory de Bruir, who appeared for Cormac O'Ceallaigh, told the court that total charges for taxi fares had topped €40,000. He said Mr Conroy had changed his evidence of the money being for taxi fares to having spent it on afternoon teas for Mr Kavanagh.

Mr Conroy denied having wrongly influenced charges for taxi fares had topped €40,000. He said Mr Conroy had changed his evidence of the money being for taxi fares to having spent it on afternoon teas for Mr Kavanagh.

Mr Conroy and O'Ceallaigh have lodged claim and counter claim regarding the legality of both wills.

Mr Mulloy and Mr de Bruir are to submit legal submissions to the court before judgment is delivered.



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# WORLD NEWS

## TOP STORIES FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

### WORLDWIDE

#### Flying-Taxi Hubs Planned for 65 Cities Spanning London to LA

A network of flying-taxi hubs is planned for 65 cities in a tie-up between infrastructure firm Urban-Air Port and South Korean automaker Hyundai Motor Co., which is developing a vertical take-off and landing craft.

Bases are planned in the U.K., the U.S., France, Germany, Scandinavia, Australia, South Korea and Southeast Asia, the companies said in a recent statement. A first site in Coventry, England, is due to open in early 2022.

Urban-Air Port says it's the only company focused solely on building networks for operating flying taxis and cargo drones. Just \$150 million has been spent on physical infrastructure this year, compared with \$5 billion invested in eVTOLs themselves by startups such as Joby Aviation and Lilium GmbH.

"The sector is soaring and we know that a future with electric flying vehicles and drones in cities is going to be a reality soon, but it can't happen if we don't have the infrastructure on the ground and in the air," Urban-Air Port founder and Executive Chairman Ricky Sandhu said in the release.

After Coventry, the next sites due to come online will be in another city in England's midlands and in Los Angeles, a spokesman for the U.K.-based company said. The London hub will be situated somewhere in the West End retail district or City financial center, he said.

Urban-Air Port plans to establish a network of more than 200 electric air mobility facilities worldwide in the next five years. The hubs will be modular and designed to fit into both dense urban areas and more-remote locations where charging will be provided using hydrogen fuel cells. The Coventry base, to be known as Air-One, will see drones from Malloy Aeronautics and SkyFarer ply routes to demonstrate the viability of carrying cargoes such as refrigerated medical supplies. Safeguard Vertiports will meanwhile develop a certification program that meets U.K. Standards.

### THAILAND

#### Covid: Idle taxis used to grow food for out-of-work drivers

Thailand's tough Covid-19 restrictions have left the city's hectic

streets quiet, putting taxi drivers out of work.

As fares dried up, many drivers left the city for their home villages, leaving so-called taxi graveyards behind.

Now, one company has decided to use the roofs of the idle vehicles as small vegetable plots, which they hope can help to feed out-of-work drivers and other employees.

Workers at the Ratchaphruek Taxi Cooperative built the miniature gardens by stretching black bin liners across bamboo frames and covering them with soil.

They then planted a variety of crops, including chillies, cucumbers and courgettes.

It is hoped that after helping the drivers, any leftover food can be sold at local markets.

The taxi trade in Bangkok normally relies heavily on tourism but tight restrictions on entering the country means it has almost come to a standstill.

"This is our last option," Thapakorn Assawalertkun, one of the company owners, told AFP news agency, adding that many of the vehicles still had large loans outstanding on them.

"Growing vegetables on top of the roofs won't damage the taxis since most of them have already been damaged beyond repair. The engines are broken, tyres are flat. There's nothing that could be done," he said.

### UK

#### Oxford Taxi Driver Jailed for Raping Passenger

Asif Khan, 37, of Great Horton Road, Bradford, attacked the woman, aged in her late teens, in the early hours of 19 August 2017, police said.

He collected the woman from Oxford's Atik nightclub, escorted her into her home, then dragged her to a bed, a police investigation found.

He was found guilty of rape at Oxford Crown Court.

The woman woke up after the attack to find condom wrappers in the bin and a Bluetooth headset that belonged to Khan.

He was identified via Automatic Number Plate Recognition, with forensics also linking him to the headset and a condom wrapper, Thames Valley Police said.

Khan, who denied rape, will now be on the sex offenders register for life.





Det Con Josie Cassidy said: "Khan was in a trusted occupation as licensed taxi driver in Oxford, and the victim should quite rightly have trusted him to get her to her destination safely.

"However, Khan completely abused this trust and raped his victim, who was alone and therefore extremely vulnerable.

"This type of behaviour is utterly abhorrent, and when you consider the context of Khan's job, it was a horrific ordeal for the victim in this case."

She paid tribute to the woman for her "courage and dignity while she had to relive her ordeal in court" and hoped the sentence would "bring some solace to the victim and also to the local community".

She called the incident "extremely rare" and said taxi drivers in Oxford were "appropriately vetted" with ongoing awareness training being delivered.

## SINGAPORE

### Taxi and private-hire car drivers issued advisory on Afghanistan crisis

Taxi and private-hire drivers should not talk about or debate the crisis in Afghanistan with their passengers and colleagues, to avoid getting into situations where conversations may get heated.

They should also not make posts online or give comments regarding the situation that may incite violence or promote ill will.

These directives were part of an advisory to the drivers issued this month by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Singapore Police Force and the Land Transport Authority.

The advisory warns that the developing violence and crisis in Afghanistan is worrying, and may pose a security threat.

"The situation in Afghanistan could inspire transnational

terrorist groups like Al-Qaeda and ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria) to regroup and establish safe havens," it said.

"Radicals from South-east Asia may also be inspired to travel to Afghanistan to take up arms with militant groups there, just as Jemaah Islamiah (JI) members had done so in the past."

Responding to queries from The Straits Times, the Internal Security Department (ISD) said it works closely with different agencies to spread the counter-terrorism message to different segments of the community, including foreign workers and public transport workers.

"Taxi and private-hire drivers, as part of the community at large, are important partners in the Government's counter-terrorism efforts," it said.

"Such advisories on global security developments of interest, for example, the extremist propaganda of ISIS and developments in Afghanistan, help equip them to be alert towards suspicious persons and activities and alert the authorities early."

The advisory added that Singapore does not tolerate any form of extremism or terrorism, and advised drivers not to support or import foreign politics into Singapore.

Those who wish to make donations to help victims should also do it through legitimate channels, and exercise caution, it said.

If caught donating to terrorist groups, they will be dealt with under the Terrorism (Suppression of Financing) Act, and may be jailed and fined.

The ISD said there is currently no information of a specific terrorist threat to Singapore arising from the situation in Afghanistan.

It said it is watching ongoing developments closely and will calibrate its security posture to commensurate with the prevailing threats.

# Taxi driver weeps in court over dispute about pensioner's homemade will 'leaving him €275k home and contents'

A Co Kildare taxi driver wept in court as he recalled a friendship he struck up with an old age pensioner who left him his €275,000 house and its contents in what was described as a home-made will.

**S**eamus Conroy (67) has denied, in a Circuit Civil Court dispute over the will, allegations that he preyed on vulnerable old people to win their trust and confidence for personal financial gain.

An emotional Conroy, of Beatty Grove, Celbridge, Co Kildare, broke down several times as he outlined to Judge John O'Connor a bond he claimed had developed between him and 85-year-old widower Joe Kavanagh, of Swords Street, Oxmanstown Road, Stoneybatter, Dublin.

He told his counsel Eanna Mulloy SC he had picked up Kavanagh when waved down in North Circular Road, Dublin, and afterwards made a deal to bring him daily to and from the sick bed of his wife, Frances who later died in St Mary's Care Hospital, Phoenix Park, Dublin.

Mr Conroy, a former photographer with Irish Press, said the agreement was for €30 per day and was paid weekly at €210 per week, an understanding that lasted for several years until Joe Kavanagh's death.

He told Mr Mulloy, who appeared with barrister Tim Dixon and Swaine Solicitors, Galway, that he would daily collect Kavanagh at his home, bring him to the hospital and, when the visit was over, bring him to a restaurant and buy him a lunch or afternoon tea.

"The fare, waiting time and food very often cost me not less than €50 or €60 but Joe was never charged more than the €210 weekly agreed rate," Mr Conroy said.

He said that through Frances Kavanagh's time in hospital and until Joe died several years later he had done everything he could for the former printer with the Leinster Leader in Naas.

Conroy, a shared Lotto winner and part-time property developer, faced a challenge over the will by Cormac



O'Ceallaigh Solicitor who claimed to have drawn up an original will for Mr Kavanagh.

In this will he had bequeathed 60pc of his net estate to charities and divided the remainder between two nieces.

Money was to go for the upkeep of priests and church buildings, parish funds, the Legion of Mary Concillium and St Peter's Church, Phibsborough, Dublin.

Mr O'Ceallaigh told the court that when Mr Kavanagh's home had been put on the market as per the original will, a purchaser paid a deposit of €7,000. Swain Solicitors on behalf of Mr Conroy had written indicating they were in possession of a final will appointing Mr Conroy as Executor and that no further steps be taken in connection with the sale.

Conroy told Judge O'Connor that Mr Kavanagh, a considerable time before his death, had handed him an envelope and had told him to keep it and not to open it until after his death. When he eventually opened the envelope he found the will in which he had been left the house and contents.

Barrister Rory de Bruir, who appeared for Cormac O'Ceallaigh, told the court that total charges for taxi fares had topped €40,000. He said Mr Conroy had changed his evidence of the money being for taxi fares to having spent it on afternoon teas for Mr Kavanagh.

Mr Conroy denied having wrongly influenced charges for taxi fares had topped €40,000. He said Mr Conroy had changed his evidence of the money being for taxi fares to having spent it on afternoon teas for Mr Kavanagh.

Mr Conroy and O'Ceallaigh have lodged claim and counter claim regarding the legality of both wills.

Mr Mulloy and Mr de Bruir are to submit legal submissions to the court before judgment is delivered.



*TaxiFair Insurance wishes everyone in the SPSV industry a Merry Christmas and a safe, Happy New Year.*



## **CHRISTMAS OPENING HOURS**

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# At BUMBLEance our aim is to make every trip a positive experience



A chance encounter at a graveside between two retired taxi drivers from different generations United in grief and career has spawned an excellent and heart-warming idea. The granddaughter of the older driver works for Bumbleance.

**Our vision** is to provide improved and professional medical transportation services for long-term sick and seriously disabled children, who require professional ambulance transportation. We will transport children in a fun environment from the far reaches of Ireland, both urban and rural, to their treatment centres.

At BUMBLEance our aim is to make every trip a positive experience.

## Our Values

Put Children First – We put the happiness, delight and well-being of children first in everything we do.

- Impact Driven – We strive to maximise the impact in everything we do, to make positive life impacts in the lives of children requiring our services.
- Always Learning – We are constantly seeking to improve our services, operations and approach. We take the feedback on-board of all our stakeholders.
- Partnership Approach – We always seek to partner with those who know more and believe that together we can achieve more than working alone.
- Respect and Dignity – We aim to always treat our clients, staff, volunteers, partners and stakeholders with the respect and dignity they deserve.
- Accountable & Transparent – We believe we are honest & accountable to all our stakeholders and strive to operate our services, fundraising and resourcing openly and transparently.

One such driver was Bob McCauliffe. Bob took the proverbial ball and run 100 miles, but he still has one to go. That is where other drivers come in.

Unfortunately Bill has decided to step down as pro so you're stuck with the team Bob McAuliffe of the National Taxi Forum, Andrea Bocarossa, Darren English, Liam Sheffron, David Knox, and James Kelly.

## The best way for now is to talk with other drivers about it

The idea is simple if each county can sell 100 bumper stickers at €20 each saying that they are going to the picnic fundraiser and can sell another 100 saying that they are supporting the picnic at €10 the drivers of each county will donate directly to Bumbleance €3000 if we get the 26 counties for that's €78000

If the north come onboard that's another €18000

But as each county operates separately it's not a lot of work each county committee and as they donate the money raised directly it's very simple and transparent

The numbers for each picnic will be limited by each county so that it's easy to coordinate

If it works then the following year we can look at increasing the numbers attending

National taxi forum have had conversation with various organisations, submitting to government to a lack of support. Heated discussions as to why the lack of community within the industry was another issue.

Bob McCauliffe who is out of work through illness says: "The plan is a Picnic in each county, Bringing the industry together, having a family picnic in aid of bumbleance. Sense of community is needed. They are rebuilding the website as we speak. Everything will be ready for next year May.

€20 Euro entry fee having bought bumper sticker is all that's needed for entry for the entire family or tenner bumper sticker in support, with all proceeds to Bumbleance. Trying to reach out to unions hasn't proved successful. We're Emailing every taxi company to get on board. We're having problem getting companies to form a committee. Local CLRs have been helping out, plans are in place for talks with the students union about getting involved. Big plans are in place for future years based on the success of the inaugural event. Small raffle comes with sticker. Local sponsors hopefully. We're asking companies to sponsor t-shirts printing, and AXA are helping with insurance," says Bob.

Bob would like to stress that not only is it a great cause, it's a great way to rebuild the sense of community among taxi drivers.

**VISIT: WWW.BUMBLEANCE.COM**



# THE TAXI DRIVERS FAMILY PICNIC



**Our goal is to host a family picnic in every county, and bring the taxi community together!**

BUMBLEance provides a free transport service to children affected by critical and life limiting conditions. Each BUMBLEance is designed to provide safe, comfortable and child friendly transportation to families often travelling from rural areas of Ireland to the main treatment and respite centres in Dublin. Each BUMBLEance is fitted out with state-of-the-art entertainment systems to ensure each journey is as enjoyable as possible. At BUMBLEance, the goal is to deliver smiles to Ireland's youngest patients.

Events like this are vital to BUMBLEance, to ensure they can cater to the ever-growing number of children around Ireland that need their service. Please support in any way you can!



## **What can you do to help?**

We need volunteers in every county to make this event a success!

We are seeking County Coordinators, organisers, fundraisers, and stewards.

Please contact Bob: [bobtaxipicnic@gmail.com](mailto:bobtaxipicnic@gmail.com)  
or James: [jk1taxipicnic@gmail.com](mailto:jk1taxipicnic@gmail.com)

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### WE NEGOTIATE WITH INSURERS, SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO

We pride ourselves on offering the best price, first time on both new quotations and renewals. Are you tired of having to call your insurer multiple times to get their best offer? Talk to TaxiFair.

### WE SOLELY FOCUS ON THE IRISH TAXI MARKET

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