

FREE MAGAZINE JUN-JUL 2023

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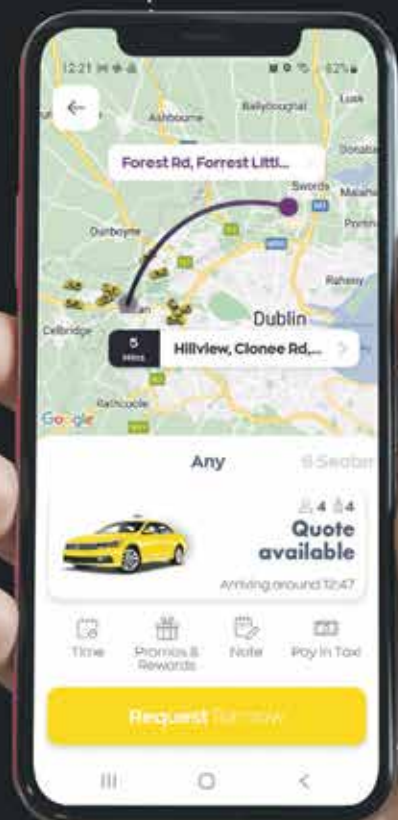
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EDITOR LETTER

Thank you for picking up the latest edition of Tacsai magazine.

In this issue we look at the findings of a survey conducted by the National Transport Authority on the impact the Covid-19 Pandemic has had on the taxi industry, the upshot of which is that drivers have left the industry in droves, and that the income of those who have stayed and, or returned has been diminished considerably. See inside for the full breakdown and link to the survey in full.

The NTA is also seeking input from drivers as part of a public consultation surrounding the Regional Airports Programme 2021 to 2025 was published by the Department on February 4th, 2021.

T.T.n.H. have recently been contacted by Dublin City Council informing of the following The Active Travel Program Office advise that due to upcoming works on the inbound route of the Clontarf to City Centre Cycle Scheme there is a requirement to suspend the

taxi rank located on Amiens Street at the junction with Sheriff Street Lower.

This suspension is required until September 29th and is necessary to facilitate new kerbing, footway and road construction, drainage and ducting works.

The National Private Hire & Taxi Association outlines a number of the key issues facing taxi drivers; from the multitudinous hoops prospective drivers have to jump through, to the ever evolving regulations imposed by the government.

Kind Regards
Tacsai Magazine

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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.
06. Harbour Radiators.
07. The Kesh at Dublin Airport.
08. Fonthill Autoparts.
09. Hailo, 12 Upper Mount Street.
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A few words from National Private Hire & Taxi Association



For decades, taxi drivers have been the unsung heroes of Ireland’s transportation landscape. From the bustling streets of Dublin and Cork to the scenic roads of Galway and Clare they have faithfully served the public, ferrying passengers to their destinations safely and swiftly. However, behind the wheel lies a world of challenges and problems that often go unnoticed. Let’s shed light on some of the hurdles faced by taxi drivers, highlighting the need for understanding and support from both the industry and the public.

One of the most significant challenges faced by new entrants to obtaining a taxi license requires meeting specific criteria, including passing stringent background checks, completing mandatory training program, and ensuring vehicles are compliant with safety standards. Moreover, the ever-evolving regulations and occasional changes in regulations create a constant need for drivers to stay updated and adapt accordingly. For example, the introduction of cashless payments and the increased charges for fines. Although technology is seen as a burden to some it is very welcomed by most drivers, particularly Satellite Navigation and Dash Cameras.

Many drivers who wish to exit the industry feel entitled to pass their licence to a family member or friend. Some would like to recoup some of the money they have invested and would like to be allowed transfer their licence. Many drivers entering our industry are very willing to pay for them and this has created a grey area

within our business. A high proportion of drivers getting out are willing their licence through inheritance form to new entrants for a fee. This agreement is a gamble for both parties. The licence holder wanting to finish with the licence always remains responsible for the licence until death and could face ramifications should the new licence holder misbehave. On the other hand, should drivers exiting not stay tax compliant or be unable to book the vehicle in for a suitability test the licence will become invalid thus rendering new entrants’ investment useless.

In our opinion transferability should be allowed. Why should a driver not be allowed step away with a payoff. Why should a driver not be allowed hand his business to a family member. Why should a very ill driver be stressed managing a licence when he just wants to give it to someone. The benefit to the public is taxi numbers will remain at an acceptable level.

Despite the recent hard fought fare increase which required many meetings and lobbying to TDs and

Ministers rising costs pose a significant burden to the taxi driver. NPHTA over previous years entered into agreements with Zego Insurance so that our members received very competitive quotes most often cheaper than all other insurance companies. Zego entering the market is a disruptor to the insurance market. We believe our arrangement is a major factor in other taxi insurance providers dropping prices more recently. Other expenses like app commission, health premiums, maintenance expenses, and vehicle upgrades particularly electric vehicles which are more expensive than combustion engine cars all contribute to the escalating financial pressures. Most drivers operate as self-employed, which means they are responsible for covering these costs themselves, as well as providing for their families. As a result, drivers often find themselves struggling to make ends meet, especially during periods of economic uncertainty. Taxi drivers have to be complimented for steering successfully through the pandemic. We are aware of the stress carried by some drivers and welcome them getting in touch with NPHTA at our office and hopefully we can assist in some way.

The advent of ridesharing services, such as Free Now & Uber, has introduced a new dimension of competition for Irish taxi drivers. These platforms speculate millions of euros buying the market while utilizing innovative technology to attract customers and there aim to ultimately control our industry. The rise of ridesharing services has significantly impacted the traditional taxi industry, as drivers face increased pressure to remain competitive while adhering to strict regulations and fare structures and pay up to 15% commission to app companies as well as Hello money to hotels.

Taxi drivers are also pigeon holed and prohibited from providing private services such as Child Friendly Taxi Services or Private Tours to clients who are willing to pay fixed prices for quality services. We need the NTA to remain strong on standards and support the people providing the service not the investors creaming the money off our labour.

Ensuring the safety of both drivers and passengers is of paramount importance for us in the NPHTA. Unfortunately, Irish taxi drivers frequently encounter situations that compromise their safety. Instances of verbal abuse, physical assault, and fare evasion are not uncommon, particularly during late-night shifts or when passengers have consumed alcohol and/or drugs. We at the NPHTA have been requesting a Garda liaison officer to work closely with taxi representatives for many years. Comprehensive safety measures and

fostering collaboration between National Transport Authority, Politicians, drivers, industry stakeholders, and An Garda is crucial to addressing this persistent issue. Presently the national transport authority will not meet with NPHTA to discuss policy despite numerous requests. We await the call.

Taxi drivers navigate a challenging landscape of dodgy passengers, congestion and inadequate infrastructure. Badly designed bus/cycle lanes and traffic congestion, particularly in urban areas, can significantly affect our ability to provide efficient service and meet customer expectations. Additionally, the removal of ranks, a lack of appropriate infrastructure, such as dedicated taxi ranks for major events or effective pickup and drop-off zones at concerts and passenger terminals, further compounds the challenges faced by drivers. Advocating for infrastructure improvements and enhanced traffic management strategies is essential to mitigate these difficulties. This is required sooner rather than later to help the flow of taxis at Dublin Airport. Recently DAA increased the number of permitted drivers by 300. This will shorten the wait times for customers but ultimately traffic management in favour of public service vehicles is required.

Taxi drivers play a vital role in ensuring the mobility and convenience of the general public. Its importance of door to door service cannot be under estimated. Ask anyone with mobility challenges. However, their journey is riddled with numerous challenges and problems that demand attention and support. From navigating nct and suitability tests to contending with rising costs and fierce competition, taxi drivers face an uphill battle daily. Addressing these issues requires a collective effort from Taxi Representatives, Drivers, the National Transport Authority, Politicians and Policymakers, and the Public To ensure a sustainable and vibrant taxi industry that continues to serve the people of Ireland reliably and safely.

Let us recognise the resilience, dedication and efforts of these unsung heroes and work towards a future that supports and empowers our industry.

The National Private Hire and Taxi Association is open Monday to Friday, 9am till 1pm, and you are welcome to call in during these hours and we can discuss how we can help you.

Drive safely !

NPHTA can be contacted at 014531977.



Citroën C5 Aircross PHEV Simplify Your Journey.

Building on the outstanding success of the original C5 Aircross, Citroën has launched an updated version of the spacious 5-seat SUV, and it comes with semi-autonomous driving technology, an upgraded interior, and an energetic design with a new front and rear light signature.

Engine & Trim Options.

The engine line-up consists of petrol, diesel and plug-in hybrid (PHEV) powertrains, all of which deliver power to the cars' front wheels. The PureTech 130PS petrol, and the BlueHDi 130PS turbo-diesel engines are available with a six-speed manual or eight-speed automatic transmission, and all versions feature Stop & Start (S&S) functionality. The PHEV powertrain combines a 1.6-litre PureTech petrol engine with an 81kWh electric motor for optimum performance and economy, and it produces a cumulative power output of 225PS along with cumulative torque of 360Nm via an eight-speed automatic transmission (ë-EAT8). Trim variants consist of Feel Pack, Flair and C-Series Edition, with all but the entry level Feel Pack trim available with the PHEV powertrain.

Impressive Safety Tech.

A 'Safety Pack' comes as standard across all trim levels, and includes Active Brake Assist with video assistance, Collision Risk Alert, Coffee Break Alert, Active Lane Departure Warning, Speed Limit Information, and Intelligent Speed Adaption, along with front & rear parking sensors and a reversing camera. Additionally, Flair and C-Series Edition trim variants include Blind Spot Monitoring indicators as standard.

Car on Review.

My C5 Aircross PHEV C-Series Edition review car looked spectacular in Pearl White metallic paint and a Perla Nera Black bi-tone roof and door mirror casings. Exclusive C-Series Edition specification includes 19-inch diamond-cut alloy wheels, anodised bronze insert on



Airbump and Air Curtain, black leather and leather-effect upholstery, electric driver seat adjustment, Highway Driver Assist, hands-free tailgate with foot-operated function, and a panoramic glass sunroof with an electric interior blind. PHEV specific features include a type 2 mode 3 charging cable, a 3.7kW on-board charger, and temperature pre-conditioning & remote charging via the MyCitroën app. The C5 Aircross PHEV can accelerate from 0-100km/h in as little as 8.7 seconds, and the car can achieve up to 64km of pure-electric driving from a fully charged battery. Charging the battery (0-100%) will take under two hours from a domestic wallbox charger, and in around seven hours via a domestic socket. The relatively high driving position and large windows make the C5 Aircross very easy to drive, and this is helped by the light, direct steering. The excellent suspension set-up provides occupants with a 'flying carpet' experience, making it more comfortable and more relaxing to drive than most family SUVs. When starting the car, it generally defaults to pure electric and will stay that way until there is a need for the petrol engine to cut in. Prioritising the EV mode is great for quick and quiet acceleration, and when the petrol engine does intervene it never sounds coarse or thrashy. The driver's seat is as comfortable as they come and is a great place to spend time in on a long drive. There is plenty of seat travel adjustment, so it is easy to find the ideal position, and the digital instruments in front of the driver are legible and easy to navigate through. Drivers can go for the ultimate in simplicity with just a big speed readout on the panel, or have the navigation displayed there for ease of viewing. The three individually adjustable back seats are great for

a growing family, and the seats can be moved forwards or backwards depending on whether you need extra legroom for passengers, or extra boot space to increase the load carrying capacity. Even with the rear seats in the most rearward position, the cargo capacity on offer in the PHEV is a respectable 460-litres (580-litres in the non-PHEV versions). Citroën's signature suspension with hydraulically-assisted springs delivers a smooth, supple ride. Hydraulic bump stops maintain compliance on rough roads, and cabin noise levels are also low. The scratchy plastics around the base of the centre console in the previous model have been replaced with leatherette trim in a bid to boost the feeling of quality. The whole car feels as though it was designed to cater for the needs of a growing family, with sensible touches everywhere – from the good-size cupholders, to the abundance of cabin stowage areas. Hard-wearing materials are used in all the right places, and this extends to the exterior of the car too.

Conclusion & Pricing.

The new Citroën C5 Aircross is one of the most stylish and distinctive five-seat SUVs on the market, and its dynamic design, elegant interior, Advanced Comfort Suspension, and Advanced Comfort Seats make it the ideal travelling companion on every journey. Three full-size rear seats, exceptional interior space, latest-generation connectivity and the most generous boot in its category make life on board easier in order to create well-being for drivers and passengers alike. The new Citroën C5 Aircross is priced from €39,830 for the BlueHDI 130PS Feel Pack, with the PHEV version priced from €48,500.

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COVID Impact Research - Taxi Drivers

Quantitative Rolling Survey October 2020



This report details the findings of a representative survey of taxi drivers in Ireland. The survey was undertaken by telephone, with a random sample of licence holder contact details provided by the NTA for interview. The survey was conducted between 1st - 16th of October, pre Level 5 Government Restrictions. A survey of taxi consumers has been undertaken online in tandem, covering a similar topic and aimed at understanding the impact COVID-19 has had on taxi usage and attitudes towards the safety of using taxis.

This report details the findings of a representative survey of taxi drivers in Ireland. The survey was undertaken by telephone, with a random sample of licence holder contact details provided by the NTA for interview. The survey was conducted between 1st - 16th of October, pre Level 5 Government Restrictions. A survey of taxi consumers has been undertaken online in tandem, covering a similar topic and aimed at understanding the impact COVID-19 has had on taxi usage and attitudes towards the safety of using taxis.

3 in 5 (59%) taxi drivers are over the age of 50, while more than half (54%) are working in Dublin. Three quarters of taxi drivers (77%) are working in a main city, while the vast majority are licence holders, with only 10% indicating they are driving a rental. The largest proportion (46%) are a licence holder and regular driver.

Little difference between the age profile of our sample and that of all taxi licence holders.

17% of drivers are known to be driving a wheelchair

accessible vehicle, while those more likely to do so are in Leinster/Connacht/Ulster, to be working in rural areas, to have stopped working as a result of COVID and/or to offer cashless payments.

On average, taxi drivers are working 15 years in the industry 9 in 10 (92%) taxi drivers stopped working at some point during the COVID restrictions.

Interestingly, the likelihood of having continued working throughout the pandemic increases with age. Meanwhile, those in Leinster (outside Dublin) and Munster and those working in rural areas were more likely to continue working.

461 taxi drivers stopped working at some point as a result of COVID. A fifth of those who stopped working since the start of the pandemic returned to work since the start of August. Those aged 51-65, those in Dublin and those driving a non-WAV vehicle who ceased working are the more likely not to have returned to work as yet.

Younger drivers more inclined to suggest there is a lack of demand, whereas older drivers (65+) who have not returned

to work more inclined to indicate that they are concerned about their personal safety. Cost of measures only a barrier for 1 in 10.

60% of taxi drivers who have not returned to work are unsure when they will do so.

Almost a quarter (23%) of taxi drivers intend on retiring/quitting the profession within the next 3 years, rising to 60% of those over 65 and higher outside Dublin and in smaller towns/rural areas.

On average, taxi drivers are working 5 days/38 hours on average per week: fewer hours over roughly same number of days than reported in 2019.

Older taxi drivers, those likely to work part-time in the future and owners driving a WAV vehicle (marginally so) are working fewer hours on average. Meanwhile those in Leinster (outside Dublin) and those working in small towns are working a higher number of hours on average.

Overall, 97% of taxi drivers are working any weekday (Monday-Friday) shifts, while 78% are working any weekend (Saturday/Sunday) shifts.

Again, must remember, only 50% of drivers have gone back to work.

As seen in the National Maximum Taxi Fare Review study undertaken in 2019, a higher proportion of taxi drivers working evening and night shifts outside of Dublin. However, overall, fewer working mornings than in 2019.

More than 9 in 10 (93%) taxi drivers who have returned to work indicate they are less busy than they were pre-COVID.

On average, those who are working are less busy than pre-COVID and are down 53%. This figure is higher among older taxi drivers, those working in main cities, owners and those who are planning to retire/quit within the next three years.

Almost all (97%) taxi drivers are earning less now than they were pre-COVID.

On average, taxi drivers earning less since COVID-19 are down 61%. Higher among older taxi drivers, those in smaller towns and those who are either planning to work part time in the future or quit/retire from the profession within the next 3 years.

Drivers aged 65+, those in Munster and Connacht/Ulster, those working in smaller towns and rural areas and those who are likely to quit/retire the profession within the next three years did not avail of any Government supports.

The average weekly cost of renting a vehicle has gone from €239 pre-COVID to €173.

One third of taxi drivers renting their vehicle advised that they don't know what the current rental cost is.

2 in 5 taxi drivers (41%) received a discount from their insurance provider, with the average discount given reported as 14%.

Two thirds of taxi drivers are wearing a mask when working, while more than half request that their passengers wear masks. Those looking to work full time in the industry are more inclined to have implemented a number of measures, whereas those likely to quite/retire more inclined not to have implemented any. Almost all working taxi drivers have implemented some sort of measures.

Three quarters now using a dispatch company/app provider/both, in comparison with two thirds last year. Almost half are using an app provider only, rising to 60% of those in Dublin and 67% of those under the age of 50.

Almost a quarter (23%) of taxi drivers intend on retiring/quitting the profession within the next 3 years. Incidence is higher among those over the age of 65, outside main cities, among licence holders and licence holders driving a non-WAV vehicle in particular.

More than two thirds (68%) of taxi licence holders aware that once they stop driving, you can rent your licenced vehicle to someone else to operate. 30% of taxi drivers indicate they will rent their SPSV vehicle to another driver.

Awareness of potential to rent licenced vehicle is weaker younger and increases with age, however likelihood to do so does not follow the same pattern. Interestingly, those likely to retire or quit the profession within the next three years are the least inclined to suggest they will likely rent their SPSV vehicle to another driver.

Overall, almost a fifth of those who are unlikely to rent their licenced vehicle indicate that they have never thought about doing so (higher among younger drivers). 15% wouldn't want to, while 13% feel there would be too much hassle/red tape.

87% of taxi drivers are aware that no one can inherit your vehicle licence unless a nomination form has been certified as received by the NTA.

Although the vast majority are aware of the requirement of a Nomination Form, awareness weaker among younger taxi drivers, those working in Leinster outside Dublin and those driving a WAV vehicle.

Overall, 2 in 5 are unsure of who they should leave their licenced vehicle to, rising to half (52%) of those in Munster and 56% in rural areas. Those in smaller towns are more likely than others to suggest they have done so already, while those in Connacht/Ulster the more likely to indicate that they 'keep meaning to do it'.

The full report with graphs can be found at: <https://www.nationaltransport.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/NTA-Taxi-Driver-Survey-Wave-1-1.pdf>



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Women in Ireland warned to ‘be very careful’ after disturbing taxi allegation

The taxi man brought her home as she requested, but when they arrived, he allegedly locked the doors.

A parent in Galway took to the internet to warn women nationwide to be ‘extremely careful’ when hailing taxis alone after her daughter’s very unpleasant experience.

The family, who wish to remain anonymous, spoke about the incident online after their daughter was allegedly sexually harassed by a taxi driver in Galway city.

The girl’s mum explained that her daughter had called a taxi to take her home on Saturday night. The driver brought her home as she requested, but when they arrived he allegedly locked the doors.

He reportedly told the woman that he would have done away with the fare if she would kiss him.

He allegedly repeated the question to the young woman several times, despite her refusal, before he unlocked the doors.

The post read: “She told him no and asked him to open the doors. He said it again to her and still wouldn’t open the doors. Yet again she told him no and to open the car doors repeating it several times.”

She added that the young woman took note of the driver’s details while paying online and said she is going to report him both to gardai and the taxi company.

She concluded her post with a warning to women; she advised that when they get a taxi, to always “have your phone out and unlocked, record the trip or have a number ready to ring if the driver starts acting weird. No woman should have to put up with this behaviour.”

The post reads: “Women be extremely careful. My daughter got a taxi last night in the city and when trying to leave the car the driver (male) locked the doors and proceeded to ask her would she kiss him, he’ll drop the fare. She told him no and asked him to open the doors. He said it again to her and still wouldn’t open the doors. Yet again she told him no and to open the car doors.

“Eventually he did and she was able to pay for the fare through revolut and so we have his number. We’re hitting roadblocks now trying to report this pervert through the taxi company itself so we’re going to contact the guards today and give them the full details.

“So I’m warning all women, if you’re getting a taxi have your phone out and unlocked, record the trip or have a number ready to ring if the driver starts acting weird. No woman should have to put up with this behaviour and it seems the company don’t do a good job at vetting their drivers either. Be very very careful women.”

An Garda Siochana has been contacted for a comment.

eSPSV23 Grant Scheme

The 2023 scheme remains open to applications. €15 million has been allocated for grants this year via the eSPSV23 Grant Scheme, to enable owners of small public service vehicles, such as taxis, hackneys and limousines, to buy electric vehicles. The scheme is funded by the Department of Transport and administered by NTA.

SPSV licence holders are also reminded that additional funding is available where the current licensed SPSV is scrapped and replaced with a fully electric vehicle. This additional funding is available where the current SPSV has an odometer reading exceeding 300,000 kilometres, or where the vehicle is within 3 years of the original maximum permissible age. Even if your vehicle received a temporary extension to the final operation date under the Small Public Service Vehicle (Contingency Measure – Vehicle Supply) (Maximum Permissible Age) Regulations 2022, you can still avail of this additional grant funding.

Further information about the eSPSV23 Grant Scheme, including how to apply, can be found at www.nationaltransport.ie/taxi/forms-and-guides/

SPSV Licence Renewal Reminder

Starting the Process Early does not Impact the Licence Validity Period

If your SPSV licence is due to expire in June or July, NTA recommends that you begin the renewal process as soon as possible to avoid delays during a very busy summer in the inspection centres.

Both the booking lines and inspection centres will be exceptionally busy in the summer months, with longer wait times expected.

You can book your renewal suitability inspection within 60 days of the licence expiry date. Renewing your licence early does not change the validity period of the licence. For example, if your licence expiry date is July 15th 2023, you can renew the licence on May 17th or on July 14th – either way, the next expiry date will be July 15th 2024.

NTA cannot guarantee an appointment if you leave it too late. If your SPSV licence expires, you will be required to pay a late renewal fee.

You must have the following documents in order when calling to book your licensing appointment:

Valid NCT certificate within 90 days of your appointment date. You must complete your NCT roadworthiness test at least 2 working days before calling to book your inspection. The NCT Booking line for SPSV operators is 01-4135960.

Valid tax clearance certificate. You must successfully complete the electronic tax clearance process with Revenue at least 48 hours before calling to book your inspection.

Bookings can only be made where a valid NCT certificate has been issued within 90 days and where the licence holder has a valid tax clearance certificate. Once the above is in place, you can contact the SPSV Booking Line on 0818 064 000 to arrange a suitability inspection.

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TAXI STANDS DUBLIN CITY CENTRE

David McGuinness TTNH

T.T.n.H. have recently been contacted by Dublin City Council informing of the following:

The Active Travel Program Office advise that due to upcoming works on the inbound route of the Clontarf to City Centre Cycle Scheme there is a requirement to suspend the taxi rank located on Amiens Street at the junction with Sheriff Street Lower. The attached drawing and Google maps screenshot below will assist with understanding the location and the proposal. This suspension is required until 29th September and is necessary to facilitate new kerbing, footway and road construction, drainage and ducting works.

I would ask that you bring the attached and the proposals to the attention of your members. Advance notice and signage will also be erected at the location. This along

with the reduction of taxi spaces at Eden Quay and Aston Quay stands is having a huge effect on drivers' ability to ply for hire in areas of sufficient footfall. Once again TTNH must express our disappointment with DCC and the total disregard for the taxi industry and our customers. I believe the notice given about Amiens Street closure is a disgrace and typical of the treatment of the taxi industry by the planners of DCC. As usual no consultation with the industry before a decision has been made. I'm sure DCC will contact the media when the travelling public are complaining about the lack of a taxi service at the second largest train station in the city. Why was no alternative rank space not considered while this closure is in place.?



Licensing System Fuelling Taxi Shortage

Ireland's taxi shortage is fuelled by the complex process required to get a licence, General Manager of Uber Ireland Kieran Harte has said.

During the pandemic, many taxi drivers quit the industry and when restrictions loosened decided not to return.

Even prior to COVID-19, the industry was slowly contracting and Mr Harte says Uber is often contacted by people who are put off by what it takes to get a licence.

"The biggest challenge for them is they are not able to licence the vehicle that they currently own," he told Newstalk Breakfast.

"To get a new vehicle licence, it needs to be a very specific make and model by the NTA and it's been like that for 10 years."

Others find the amount of training they are required to go

through off-putting.

"Many drivers tell us they're just not prepared to do the six months training to memorise every street and landmark in their local area," Mr Harte said.

Earlier this year, Fine Gael's Neale Richmond said the Government has to do more to help the industry.

"I think we are all very grateful for the service they provide and we're happy to pay it but ultimately, we don't have enough taxis in Dublin or across Ireland," he told Newstalk Breakfast.

"We don't have enough taxi drivers coming out at the times that are a little bit less appealing; we don't have enough taxi drivers servicing the airport and we need collectively to do a lot more to get more taxis out on the street to provide that service."

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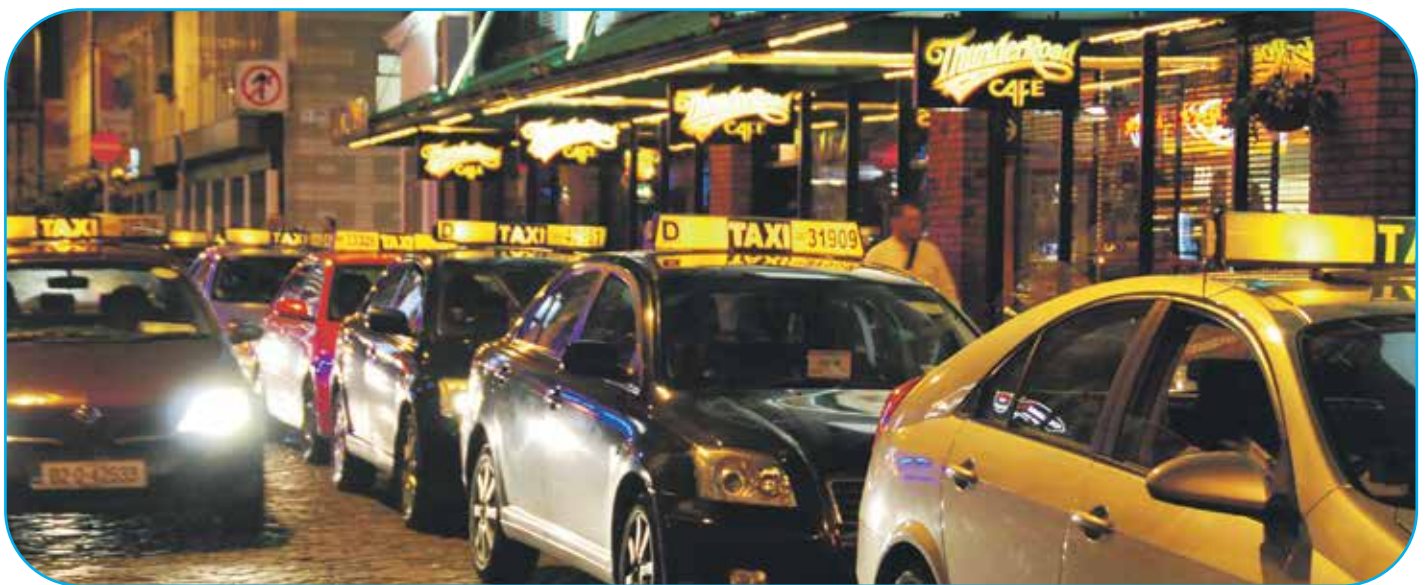
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TACSAÍ MAGAZINE

Uber anticipates their biggest summer season ever

Interview with Uber's Kieran Harte - Head of Ireland



Q: What are your expectations for the summer season?

We believe that this will be the busiest summer ever for Uber in Ireland. We are expecting strong growth in tourist numbers across the country. We experienced a significant boost from international passengers during the St Patrick's Festival in March and we believe this will continue over summer.

Q: Tell us more about what you are seeing with international passenger growth.

We have witnessed higher than expected growth already this year, and having recently launched in Limerick, Cork & Galway we are seeing that international passengers are using Uber as they travel beyond Dublin.

We also note that both Cork & Dublin Airports have recently increased their forecasted passenger numbers for the year, and this would be in line with

our airport trip expectations.

With the number of events and festivals back to 2019 levels, we think it's going to be a busy summer.

Q: In what parts of the country are you now active?

We are available to use anywhere in the country. We have actually witnessed taxi drivers from Kerry and Sligo recently getting started and picking up trips from tourists and locals in those counties before we've even advertised. All licensed Taxi drivers are welcome to sign-up at uber.com, upload their relevant documents and get started on the app.

We are also offering local riders incentives to trial Uber, and with the growth of our car branding campaign we are definitely seeing more and more local passengers.



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WORLD NEWS

Top stories from around the globe

UK

Taxi Licencing regulations are being toughened up in the cause of passenger safety. New measures will safeguard passengers and crack down on unfit taxi and PHV drivers, with tighter checks introduced across local authorities.

Building on existing legislation, councils in England will now be mandated to use a national database to record instances where taxi and PHV drivers have their licences removed for misconduct. This new law will prevent them from simply reapplying for a licence in other areas by alerting the system to concerns about their prior behaviour.

This will ensure passengers can use taxis and PHVs with greater confidence that these modes of transport are safe, helping to strengthen communities and restore pride in towns and high streets across the country.

While the vast majority of taxi and private hire trips are safe and efficient, there have been a small number of reports linking a minority of drivers to incidents of sexual harassment, abuse and poor driving.

The step will bring into full force the Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (Safety and Road Safety) Act 2022 and is being backed by the family of Sian O'Callaghan, who was tragically murdered by a PHV driver in Swindon in 2011, aged 22. Her family has since been campaigning for tougher measures to protect passengers.

The act, introduced last year, was spearheaded by Darlington MP Peter Gibson and has been supported by Ms O'Callaghan's family and the personal safety charity, Suzy Lamplugh Trust.

The existing database is already used voluntarily by some local authorities, but only 74% of councils in England are using it. As of April 27, use of the database will be compulsory for every driver licence application and the Department for Transport will monitor its use closely. Councils that fail to do the necessary checks could face legal action.

San Francisco

Cruise self-driving taxis now operate around the clock in San Francisco. Daytime rides are now open to the public, too.

You won't necessarily have to hail one of Cruise's robotaxis at night in San Francisco. Company chief Kyle Vogt

has revealed that Cruise now operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week across all of San Francisco. Only employees will have access to the whole region for those hours. However, Cruise is also opening daytime rides to public "power users" for the first time. While you'll only have access to a limited portion of the city at first (mainly Pacific Heights, Richmond and Sunset), it's now just a question of where you are, not when you're going. Staff have already been riding during the daytime for months. San Francisco officials have resisted expanding access to robotaxis from Cruise and Alphabet's Waymo over concerns the companies are moving too quickly. There have been incidents where the driverless cars blocked traffic, including emergency vehicles. The city's Transportation Authority has instead pushed for limited roll-outs with gradual expansions.

There's no timeline for wider deployments elsewhere, but Vogt promises that operations will "soon" grow in other cities. Successful use in San Francisco is a "litmus test" for robotaxis in other cities, the executive claims. The city's challenging terrain, unusual roads and wet weather are daunting for self-driving car sensors.

The wider access could help the GM-owned brand claim an edge over Waymo. Cruise was the first to start charging for self-driving rides in San Francisco. Now, it can tout non-stop service for some passengers. Waymo still has an advantage in areas like Phoenix, where it has charged for public rides for a while, but it clearly has a more difficult fight ahead.

Japan

Dynamic pricing aims to accelerate Japan's taxi market.

Taxi users may see fares fluctuate based on demand as the transport ministry plans a new system, as of May, that would allow operators to introduce dynamic pricing.

Taxi operators are currently required to determine their fares based on a price range set by the transport ministry, for instance adding on 20% for late nights or slashing fares by 10% for people with disabilities.

Under the dynamic pricing system, operators will have the option to flexibly set fares between 50% above or below their regular fare according to demand. For example, a taxi with a starting fare of ¥500 could have it set in a range between ¥250

Melbourne man charged \$468 after falling asleep in taxi



and ¥750, depending on demand.

Fares could be higher on rainy days, late at night after last trains or during the morning rush hour, and cheaper during the day when there is less demand. However, the dynamic pricing system will only be available for taxis hailed via approved ride-hailing apps with a predetermined route and pricing, which means people who hail a cab on the street will not be able to use the system.

“We’re hoping to cultivate demand for taxis from people who don’t usually use them,” said Tsukasa Iida, an official at the ministry.

In 2021, the ministry conducted a trial program with dispatch apps Go by Mobility Technologies and Uber Japan in some Tokyo wards with about 9,000 taxis.

While the ministry is still soliciting public comments about the system, the official roll-out is currently scheduled for May. Taxi operators will need to apply for ministry approval to introduce the dynamic pricing system. They will also need to report the total taxi fares earned every three months.

Australia

Melbourne man charged \$468 after falling asleep in taxi. The customer confronted the taxi driver about why such a substantial fare would appear on the meter.

A Melbourne man is reeling after falling asleep in a taxi and waking up to an alarming \$468 fare for an hour-long journey. The man, who goes by Ryan on TikTok, posted footage of him confronting the taxi driver about the substantial charge from Melbourne Airport to the suburb of Berwick, which is 75km away.

“I just drive you from the airport. There’s tolls on the way, there’s a freeway,” the taxi driver explained. “I’m a new taxi driver. I just know what the meter is saying, how are you going to pay buddy?”

According to an automated taxi fare calculator, the journey should’ve cost about \$146 at night and a maximum of \$161 during peak time. But what came up on the meter was almost three times more.

When the customer tried to understand how his trip amounted to a whopping \$468 after “falling asleep for 20/30 minutes,” the driver became defensive.

“Buddy stop complaining about me okay... I’m a taxi driver not a bank manager,” he aggressively said.

“I don’t usually complain but how do we figure this out?” the customer pressed.

“Buddy how about you pay the money and tomorrow you check what the f*** this is,” the driver said before apologising for swearing when the customer called him out.

After presenting his card, Ryan noticed the card machine read \$486.72 not \$468, which may include the booking fee, government taxes and a card surcharge. “You’ve put more on there,” he said, to which the driver responded with “buddy please just give me your card”. This is crazy’

At the time of writing, more than 308,000 people have viewed the video, which Ryan captioned “never fall asleep in a taxi”.

“He saw a vulnerable human and took his chances. I wouldn’t be able to control myself in anger!” one person claimed. “I would [have] got him to drive me to the police station,” another said.

“It’s like an advertisement for Uber,” a third person joked.

Some also pointed out how rudely the taxi driver spoke to the customer. “The way the cab driver speaks to you for asking reasonable questions is a disgrace,” a person commented.

Though others thought the fare made sense with all the surcharges. “Driver put surcharge prices and that’s almost tripled the money than it usually is,” one person said. “When they put surcharge prices (rush hour \$\$) it’s always extra.”

The video has now been deleted by the poster.

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TAXI LITE

Free Now launches new feature 'Taxi Lite' to ensure you pay less for your trip



This new option means you will “always pay the lowest price upon reaching your destination” Free Now’s latest taxi update will come as a welcome change for many, as the price of taxis continues to rise across the board.

In recent months, the price of taxi fares increased to reflect inflation and marked another blow to Irish consumers – particularly those struggling to make ends meet.

Now, to help people get where they need to be during off-peak hours, Free Now has launched a new booking option that will save you money on your next trip.

In a statement, a spokesperson explained: “We are excited to announce the launch of our newest booking option: Taxi Lite.

“This booking option offers the lowest guaranteed fare between 5:00 am-7:00 am Monday to Sunday, 10:00 am-4:00 pm Tuesday to Friday, and 7:00 am-11:00 am Saturday and Sunday.”

They went on to suggest that: “Lite is perfect for those who are looking to save money while still getting around town quickly and easily, as the maximum fare you will pay is capped

This new option means you will “always pay the lowest price upon reaching your destination.”

You’ll therefore be paying the lower of either what’s on the taxi meter or the upfront maximum price offered before booking Taxi Lite.

At this point, it is understood the service is only available in the Dublin City area.

WAV23 Grant Scheme: Closed to New Applications

NTA has had a remarkable response to the WAV23 (Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle 2023) Grant Scheme since its launch on the 1st January 2023. As a result of the high level of interest, the allocated funding was increased from €2,000,000 to €3,000,000.

Provisional Grant Offers have now been issued up to the enhanced funding amount and the WAV23 Grant Scheme has closed to new applications. Applicants currently on the waitlist

will remain on the waitlist, and may receive offers in future, should further funding become available. NTA will contact all waitlist applicants this week with further information on their application status.

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Concern Over Attacks on Drivers

Tony Roe, Chairperson of the National Transport Assembly Committee (NTAC), and Spokesperson on Taxis has spoken out on the chronic situation of attacks on taxi drivers.

Speaking to Tacsai magazine, Roe said: “I was speaking to a taxi driver who was assaulted, and hospitalized as a result. He was left on a trolley at Tallaght Hospital for hours and hours. He was on a trolley for 30 hours in succession.

He went on to say that taxi drivers have been doing great work over the past few years which he feels has not been acknowledged.

“Taxi drivers have been doing great work in the past few years as frontline workers when the pandemic was going on. Taxi drivers were one of the few public service vehicle operators working 24 hours a day, seven days a week and 365 days a year, inclusive of Christmas. They have been doing life-saving work [acting as ambulances], and they continue to do it to this day. Politicians are noticeably silent on this issue, and it’s more of a pity than anything else. Taxi drivers are being overlooked, disregarded and treated, in my opinion, as a sub-culture,” he said.

He further highlighted the high volume of attacks on drivers saying:

“We all know about the high incident rate of attacks on taxi drivers, and it is not being highlighted enough. We know from speaking to drivers, that when they do go to hospital,

they are being told at source that they’re looking at a 20 hour wait. Where is the Government on this issue? Surely taxi lives must matter. An overhaul of the whole structure is needed here to find a resolution to this.”

He went on to say that the safety of taxi drivers is being put in jeopardy, particularly as, unlike most European countries, taxi drivers must wear a seatbelt at all times. He said that during a large number of these attacks, the seatbelt has been used as a weapon to restrain the driver.

An Garda Síochána declined to comment on statements made by third parties.

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) could not provide figures for attacks on taxi drivers.

A spokesperson for the HSE said:

“The average Patient Experience Time (PET) for all patients, including those who are admitted to hospital for ongoing care/treatment and patients who are seen and discharged home, for hospitals in Dublin for 2022 and 2023 (to date) is as follows (in hours):

St. James’s Hospital 2022 Total: 7.1 (2023: 7.6)
Tallaght University 2022 Hospital 11.6 (2023: 11.3)
Mater Misericordiae University Hospital: 2022: 6.2 (2023: 7.1)
St. Vincent’s University Hospital: 2022: 8.7 (2023: 8.8)
Beaumont Hospital 2022: 8.4 (2023: 9.0)
Connolly Hospital 2022: 6.7 (2023: 6.7)”

Input Sought for Airport Consultation

2023 Public Consultation to inform a Mid-term Review of the Regional Airports Programme 2021-2025 & Future Policy Supports to Regional Airports

The Regional Airports Programme 2021 to 2025 was published by the Department on 4 February 2021.

Goals for review

Consideration will be given to how the Programme is performing in terms of:

- Ensuring effectiveness and value for money
- Maintaining and enhancing regional connectivity
- Supporting balanced regional economic growth & development
- Supporting direct access into the regions
- Supporting the decarbonisation of regional airports
- Supporting climate adaptation and resilience of regional airports
- Transitioning Ireland’s regional airports towards a financially sustainable model
- Delivery and engagement

The consultation period will be open until 16 June 2023. Stakeholders and interested parties will now have the opportunity to respond to the issues raised in the 2023 Public Consultation paper as well as put forward any other relevant issues for consideration.

The Department asks that all submissions be completed online with reference to the questions outlined in the link provided in Appendix 2 of the 2023 Public Consultation Paper (link also provided below). However, should an online submission not be feasible, submissions following the format of the Questionnaire provided under Appendix 2 are welcomed via email to airportsdivision@transport.gov.ie

The Regional Airports Programme 2021-2025 commits to a mid-term review of the Programme being complete in 2023.

The closing date for receipt of submissions is 16 June 6pm.



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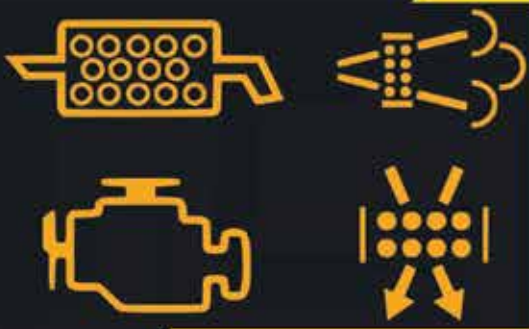
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Oh! Man

There is an overweight guy who is watching TV. A commercial comes on for a guaranteed weight loss of 10 pounds in a week. So the guy, thinking what the hell, signs up for it. Next morning an incredibly beautiful woman is standing at his door in nothing but a pair of running shoes and a sign about her neck that reads, "If you can catch me, you can have me." As soon as he sees her, she takes off running. He tries to catch her, but is unable. This continues for a week, at the end of which, the man has lost 10 pounds. After this he tries the next weight loss plan, 15 pounds in a week. The next morning an even more beautiful woman is standing at the door, in similar conditions. The same happens with her as the first woman, except he almost catches her. This continues for a week, at the end of which he, as suspected, weighs 15 pounds less. Excited about this success, he decides to do the master program. Before he signs up, he is required to sign a waiver and is warned about the intensity of this plan. Still he signs up. The next morning, waiting at the door, is a hulking 300 pound muscle man with nothing but a pair of running shoes, a raging erection, and a sign around his neck that says, "If I catch you, you're mine!" The man was supposed to lose 25 pounds in the week; he lost 34.

One day, a man came home and was greeted by his wife dressed in stunningly sexy lingerie. "Tie me up," she purred, "And you can do anything you want." So he tied her up and went golfing.

How many snowboarders does it take to screw in a lightbulb? 50: 3 to die trying, 1 to actually pull it off, and 46 other to say, "man, I could do that!"

Q: What's the difference between England and a teabag?
A: A teabag could stay in the cup for longer.



A man joins a soccer team and his new teammates inform him, "At your first team dinner as the new guy, you will have to give us a talk about sex." The evening arrives and he gives a detailed, humorous account of his sex life. When he got home, his wife asked how the evening went and not wanting to lie, but also not wanting to explain exactly what happened, he said, "Oh, I had to make a talk about yachting," his wife thought this a little peculiar but said nothing more and went to sleep. The next day she bumped into one of his new teammates at the supermarket and asked, "I heard my husband had to make a speech last night. How did it go?" His mate said smiling, "Oh, it was excellent! Your husband is clearly very experienced!" The wife looked confused and replied to his mate, "Strange, he has only done it twice and the second time he was sick."

A guy and his wife are sitting and watching a boxing match on television. The husband sighs and complains, "This is disappointing. It only lasted for 30 seconds!" "Good," replied his wife. "Now you know how I always feel."

It's game 7 of the NBA finals and a man makes his way to his seat at center court. He sits down and notices that the seat next to him is empty. He leans over and asks his neighbor if someone is sitting there. He responds, "No, the seat's empty." "The first man exclaims, "What?!? Who in their right mind would have a seat like this for the NBA finals and not use it?" The neighbor responds, "Well the seat is mine, but my wife passed away and this is the first NBA finals we haven't been together." The first man responds, "I'm sorry to hear that. Wasn't there anyone else, a friend or relative, that could've taken that seat?" The neighbor responds, "No, they're all at the funeral."



General Knowledge Questions

1. What was the name of England's first nuclear power station?
2. Which Shakespeare play is set on the island state of Illyria?
3. What is the World War 2 Operation Chastise now better known as?
4. What meat is found in a classic Reuben sandwich?
5. Which songs with "Night" in the title were UK top twenty hits for the following artists [a] The Commodores (1985), [b] The Bee Gees (1978), [c] Buddy Morrow (1953), [d] Cubic 22 (1991) and [e] Liberty X (2005)?
6. Who did Richard Thorp play in the TV soap Emmerdale for 30 years?
7. In which decade was the NSPCC founded?
8. Lexus is the luxury division of which car company?
9. What is taught under the Delsarte System?
10. Which TWO elements in the periodic table contain the letter "X"?
11. Which animated movie features the song "Bright Eyes"?
12. Who composed "The Carnival of the Animals"? S
13. The island of Trinidad lies at the mouth of which river?

THE TACSAÍ MAGAZINE BUMPER QUIZ

14. Who was the author of "The Secret Garden"?
15. Which professional skateboarder was known as "Birdman"?
16. What is the date of All Souls Day?
17. The rhea is a bird native to which continent?
18. What is the term served by a US Senator?
19. What were the first names of the title characters in TV's Hart to Hart?
20. What is the main ingredient of Shchi, a Russian soup?

8. Toyota.
9. Drama & Dancing
10. Xenon and Oxygen.
11. Watership Down
12. Saint-Saens
13. Orinoco.
14. Frances Hodgson Burnett
15. Tony Hawk.
16. November 2nd.
17. South America.
18. Six years.
19. Jonathan and Jennifer.
20. Cabbage.
1. Calder Hall.
2. "Twelfth Night".
3. The Dambusters raid.
4. (Corned) Beef.
5. [a] "Nightshtshitt", reached no 3, [b] "Night Fever", no 1, [c] "Night Train", no 12, [d] "Night in Motion", no 15 and [e] "A Night to Remember", no 6.
6. Alan Turner.
7. 1880's (1884).

ANSWERS



Plug in to Citroën's new C5 X PHEV.

Citroën's all-new flagship C5 X model aims to disrupt the traditional D-segment large car market. The C5 X combines the elegance of a saloon, the dynamism of an estate and the elevated stance of an SUV in order to ensure that a choice is no longer required between comfort and style in this segment.

The C5 X features a dynamic V-shaped LED light signature consisting of two distinctive sections. The upper set flows out from the central chevrons and towards the edge of the bonnet, while the lower set blends into the LED headlights, emphasising the width of the car. The same distinctive lighting design features at the rear with matching geometric lines, which also feature on the rear quarter glass, and a V-shaped LED signature which is on both in the day and at night. Generously curved sections, sharp lines, chevron detailing and chrome elements further reinforce the width of the car.

Striking Design.

The striking exterior design of the C5 X exudes confidence with a distinctive and innovative body style. The striking fastback silhouette, with its long bonnet, large

glass surfaces, aerodynamic lines and high waistline demonstrate distinction and dynamism. The cabin in the C5 X combines spaciousness, comfort and practicality, with an uncluttered dashboard design, Advanced Comfort seating and an expansive rear passenger compartment that invites rest and relaxation. The C5 X stands at 4,805mm long, 1,865mm wide and 1,485mm high, while a wheelbase of 2,785mm ensures spectacular interior space and comfort for driver and passengers alike. A wide boot opening reveals 545-litres of space behind the rear seats, but this can be expanded to 1,640-litres when the rear seats are folded down.

Three Trim Grades.

Thanks to its 81.2kW electric motor and a 13.2kWh battery pack, the new Citroën C5 X PHEV (Plug-in Hybrid) can travel up to 55km in full electric mode at speeds up to



135km/h. When required, the electric motor and 1.6-litre turbocharged petrol engine combine to produce 225hp and 360Nm of torque, allowing the car to sprint from 0-100km/h in just 7.8-seconds. There are three generously-equipped trim grades available in the C5 X PHEV: Feel Pack, Flair and Flair Pack – all of which are available in a choice of 6 exterior colours and 5 bi-tone paint options.

Review Car Details.

My C5 X PHEV review car was in mid-spec Flair trim grade, and it looked elegant in its Platinum Grey metallic paintwork. Key standard equipment includes 19-inch alloy wheels with black aero inserts, LED approach lighting, extended blind spot detection, MyCitroën Drive Plus, wireless smartphone charging, extended Head Up Display (e-HUD), black Paloma leather with black/grey leather-effect Advanced Comfort seats, heated steering wheel, wood film & grain dashboard and door panel trim, and Adaptive Cruise Control with Stop & Go function, along with enhanced safety features. The C5 X PHEV features a new electronically-controlled suspension system with special dampers fitted to give a pillow-soft ride quality, while thicker glass provides terrific sound insulation from road noise. The car is serene when driving on electric power alone, and even at motorway speeds it maintains its sense of refinement, as the petrol-electric powertrain hums nicely in the background as it juggles between power sources. The car's direct steering copes well on twisty back roads, and then car remains composed over rutted road surfaces. There is decent resistance to body roll through corners, and the overall driving experience is greatly helped by the willingness of the powerplant to provide power to the car's front wheels. The electrified automatic transmission (ë-EAT8) ensures remarkable

fluidity and drivability, with the immediate availability of torque for ultra-swift acceleration. The C5 X PHEV also features a Brake mode system that recovers energy for the battery during braking and deceleration phases. A selector positioned on the central console allows drivers to choose from Electric, Hybrid, Comfort or Sport drive modes to suit their individual driving style and road conditions. Electric mode may well be suitable for most users daily journeys, while Hybrid mode enables the car to automatically switch between the engine and electric motor for optimum efficiency. The Comfort driving mode offers additional flexibility thanks to Citroën Advanced Comfort™ Active Suspension, while the Sport mode offers dynamic performance thanks to the electric motor supporting the petrol engine. In this mode, the Citroën Advanced Comfort™ Active Suspension becomes firmer for better handling. A 7.4kW on-board charger allows for a full charge in approximately 100 minutes from a domestic wallbox charger, while owners can enjoy remote functions via the MyCitroën app.

Pricing & Warranty.

Citroën's new flagship plug-in hybrid is a highly commendable car that is sure to find favour with driver's (and their passengers) who value supreme comfort when on the move. Particular attention has also been paid to the ergonomics of the cabin, with numerous storage spaces cleverly distributed throughout. The new C5 X PHEV is priced from €50,120 (ex-delivery), with my review car specification priced from €52,520.

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