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EDITOR LETTER

Welcome to the April Edition of Tacsai Magazine. In this issue, we spotlight the mounting pressures facing taxi drivers—from the outdated 10-Year Rule to rising payment scams and safety concerns. Tony Roe shares insights on regulatory blind spots, while we explore the role of technology in shaping the industry's future. As one Limerick driver laments a sharp drop in nighttime fares, others navigate tense encounters with passengers and harsh penalties, like fines for misusing EV bays. We also report on a sobering court case, underscoring the duty of trust. Together, these stories reflect a profession at a crossroads—resilient, yet urgently in need of reform.

The Taxi Magazine Team

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

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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:

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The Statue Complaint: A Call for Multiculturalism in the Taxi Industry

A recent controversy has arisen regarding a statue of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus located near a taxi rank in O'Connell Street.

The long-standing religious monument, which has been part of the city's landscape for generations, has become the center of a debate after a non-national taxi driver lodged a complaint, claiming that the statue interferes with his work and contradicts his religious beliefs.

The Background of the Statue

According to Tony Roe, Chairman of the National Transport Assembly Committee and Spokesperson on Taxis, "This statue has been here for generations, long before any of us started in this industry. It was originally funded by taxi drivers themselves in memory of Eugene Lawlor, the rank organizer. It's not just a religious symbol—it's a piece of Dublin's taxi heritage."

"Much like Stella Maris/Réalt na Mara on Bull Island represents protection for seafarers, this statue has always been a part of our industry. Elderly residents come here to offer prayers, and it has become a source of comfort and tradition for many drivers."

The Complaint and Public Response

The complainant has reportedly approached various government agencies, requesting that the statue be removed from its current location, arguing that its presence at a public taxi rank is inappropriate.

"This request has caused quite a backlash from the majority of taxi drivers," Roe explains. "For years, drivers have worked in the presence of this statue without issue. To suddenly claim it is a problem is unnecessary and divisive."

Many drivers argue that the statue has never interfered with their ability to work. "No one is forced to pray or acknowledge it. It's simply there as part of history," Roe adds. "There are many taxi ranks across Dublin, and if the statue is truly offensive to an individual, they have the freedom to work elsewhere rather than demanding changes to a historical site."

Multiculturalism: The Pendulum Swings Both Ways

"Ireland is a multicultural society, and we welcome people from all backgrounds. But multiculturalism is a two-way

street," Roe asserts. "That means while everyone has the right to follow their beliefs, they should also respect the traditions and heritage of the country they now live in. This includes the cultural and religious symbols that have long been part of the landscape."

Interestingly, Jesus himself is recognized across multiple faiths. "Jesus was born a Jew, is referred to as a Muslim prophet in the Quran, and many scholars believe his teachings share roots with ancient Buddhist philosophies," Roe notes. "In this way, the statue could be seen not just as a Christian icon, but as a symbol of multiculturalism itself, bridging various faiths and beliefs."

Government and Media Involvement

The issue has gained media attention, with several outlets covering the debate. "We've reached out to government agencies about this, but there is no official decision yet on the statue's future," Roe states. "Many of us believe this is political correctness taken too far. We're talking about a piece of cultural history here, something that represents both faith and the long-standing history of Dublin's taxi drivers."

A Call for Perspective

While respecting all religious and cultural differences is important, many believe that attempting to remove the statue is an unreasonable demand. "At the end of the day, we all have to work together and show mutual respect," Roe emphasizes. "If an individual feels uncomfortable working in a location due to its historical or cultural elements, they have the option to work elsewhere rather than imposing changes on the broader community."

What Happens Next?

For now, the statue remains in place. "We're closely monitoring the situation and will strongly oppose any attempt to relocate or remove the monument," Roe confirms. "The outcome of this debate will set a precedent for future disputes over cultural and religious symbols in public spaces. It's about ensuring that mutual respect remains the foundation of a truly multicultural society."

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The 10-Year Rule: A Crisis in the Taxi Industry

For many taxi drivers across the country, the so-called “10-year rule” is a source of ongoing frustration, uncertainty, and financial distress.

The rule, which mandates that taxis older than ten years must be removed from the road, is a point of contention among drivers who argue that it is impractical and unnecessarily harsh.

Understanding the Rule

According to Tony Roe, Chairman of the National Transport Assembly Committee and Spokesperson on Taxis, “This so-called 10-year rule is actually a 9-year rule, because once your car hits its tenth year, you can’t drive it anymore. That means drivers are forced to replace their vehicles far earlier than expected, often at a huge financial burden.”

“We are seeing hardworking taxi drivers being unfairly pushed out of the industry because they simply can’t afford to keep up with this rule. A car that has passed an NCT and a suitability test should be allowed to stay on the road—it’s as simple as that.”

A Call for an Extension

In response to industry outcry, there have been discussions about extending the rule. However, many drivers remain in limbo as no formal resolution has been put in place. “Drivers don’t know where they stand,” Roe explains. “The National Transport Assembly is actively engaging with government officials, pushing for an amendment that would bring relief to affected drivers. But until then, these men and women are stuck in a position of uncertainty.”

The Real-World Impact

One case highlights the devastating effects of the rule. “I’ve been contacted by a driver with a 2015 vehicle—perfectly roadworthy, passed all required tests—and yet, because of this rule, he is off the road

and out of work,” Roe says. “It’s absolutely ridiculous. How can a car be good enough to pass all safety inspections but not good enough to be driven as a taxi?”

An Unequal Standard

A further inconsistency emerges when comparing taxi regulations to those governing other vehicles. “If you have a wheelchair-accessible taxi, you can keep it for 15 years. If you’re running a private hire vehicle for weddings or executive transport, there’s no restriction at all. So why is it that a standard taxi, even if it meets the same safety standards, is being forced off the road after just 10 years? It makes no sense.”

The Push for Change

Industry leaders continue to press the Minister for Transport and local representatives to address this issue. “We need fair treatment for drivers,” Roe insists. “We’re not asking for special treatment—just that a well-maintained and properly tested car be allowed to operate beyond the arbitrary 10-year limit.”

What Can Drivers Do?

“Drivers need to make their voices heard,” Roe urges. “We are asking everyone in the industry to contact their local TDs, speak up about this issue, and put pressure on policymakers to finally address this nonsense. The more pressure we apply, the sooner we can get this resolved.”

As the debate continues, the industry remains hopeful that a resolution will be reached—one that balances safety with economic fairness for those who keep our cities moving. “We’re not backing down on this,” Roe concludes. “It’s time for change.”

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The Martina Roe Counseling Society

Supporting Taxi Drivers in Need

The Martina Rowley Counseling Society, formerly known as the Taxi Drivers Lay Counselling Society, has recently expanded its services nationwide, providing vital support for taxi drivers facing bereavement, mental health struggles, and financial stress.

According to Tony Roe, Chairman of the National Transport Assembly Committee and Spokesperson on Taxis, “The Martina Rowley Counseling Society has become a lifeline for many drivers who have nowhere else to turn. We are now operating from Belfast to Cork, and we rely entirely on volunteers. Unlike traditional support organizations, our members fund the activities themselves, ensuring that every service remains free and accessible to those in need.”

“Our volunteers visit struggling individuals, organize group outings, and provide hands-on emotional support to those going through difficult times,” Roe adds. “This is about community and ensuring that no driver feels alone.”

Addressing the Mental Health Crisis in the Transport Industry

The taxi industry, like many sectors in transport, has long suffered from a high rate of suicide and mental health issues. “Many drivers face intense financial pressures, long hours, and the challenges of bereavement, often without adequate support,” Roe explains. “This job can be incredibly isolating, and we knew something had to be done.”

Recognizing this, the Martina Rowley Counseling Society has launched weekly support meetings. “The idea is simple,” Roe says. “We create a safe space where drivers can connect, talk openly about their struggles, and access practical assistance in a stigma-free environment. We’ve seen firsthand how much of a difference this makes.”

Therapeutic Activities and Group Support

Beyond traditional counseling, the society promotes alternative therapies such as music sessions and organized group trips. “A lot of our lads are now involved in music sessions,” Roe shares. “It started as a form of therapy, but it has become something much bigger. The camaraderie and support from these sessions are just incredible.”

Recent excursions to Alicante, Madrid, and Belfast have proven to be highly beneficial for members.

“These trips are more than just a break from daily stresses,” Roe explains. “They foster a strong sense of community. Our next trip, scheduled for April 3rd to Lanzarote, is open to all transport industry workers, and we’ve secured affordable group rates to make it as accessible as possible.”

Challenging the Inadequacies of Traditional Counseling

Many members of the society have expressed frustration with the formal mental health system. “The waiting times are far too long, and the costs are ridiculous,” Roe states. “Drivers are expected to pay €70 per hour for private counseling, which is just not realistic. That’s why we’re stepping in to provide immediate intervention.” “What we do differently,” Roe continues, “is ensure that no driver in distress has to navigate their struggles alone. They don’t have to jump through hoops or wait months for an appointment. We’re here when they need us.”

How to Seek Support

Drivers experiencing difficulties are encouraged to reach out via the Taxi Magazine or directly through the society. “We want every driver to know that there’s help available,” Roe emphasizes. “They just need to take that first step.”

For immediate support, drivers can also contact:

Suicide Survivor Hotline: 1890 577 577

Aware (Mental Health Support): 1890 303 302

Breaking the Stigma

“For too long, taxi drivers have suffered in silence, feeling isolated and overlooked,” Roe states. “The Martina Rowley Counseling Society is changing that by fostering a culture of openness, support, and solidarity within the industry.”

“The message is clear: No driver has to face their struggles alone. Help is available, and support is only a phone call away. We’re here, and we’ll continue to fight for the well-being of our fellow drivers,” Roe concludes.

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Card Payment Scams: A Growing Crisis for Taxi Drivers

A troubling issue facing Dublin taxi drivers today is the rise of fraudulent card payments, which exploit a regulatory loophole that leaves drivers financially vulnerable.

This scam, increasingly reported by drivers, allows passengers to take advantage of a legal requirement that forces drivers to accept card payments, even when the card is fraudulent or non-functional.

How the Scam Works

The scam is relatively simple but highly effective. Passengers enter a taxi and, upon reaching their destination, present a bank card for payment. The driver processes the transaction, only to discover that the card is either fake, expired, or lacks sufficient funds. When confronted, the passenger may claim ignorance or simply walk away, leaving the driver without any payment for the journey.

The core issue arises from the €200 fine imposed on taxi drivers if they refuse to accept card payments. This regulation, intended to provide convenience for passengers, has instead become a tool for scammers who know that drivers must accept their card, even if it appears suspicious. Drivers are put in an impossible situation: risk a financial penalty for refusing a payment method or risk completing a journey without receiving any payment at all.

The Psychological and Financial Toll

Many drivers report feeling powerless and exploited, knowing that criminals and opportunists are using the system against them. Some drivers have even had multiple experiences in a single week, losing significant amounts of income. Since taxi drivers often work long, grueling hours just to make ends meet, even a few unpaid fares can have serious financial consequences.

Beyond the financial losses, this problem has also led

to an increase in verbal and even physical confrontations when drivers attempt to demand payment. Some scammers threaten violence or make false accusations, creating even greater risks for drivers already dealing with challenging working conditions.

An Urgent Need for Reform

Taxi industry representatives are calling on the National Transport Authority and Minister for Transport to amend the payment regulations, allowing drivers to reject suspicious cards without fear of being fined.

Proposed solutions include:

Allowing drivers discretion to refuse clearly suspicious card payments without penalty.

Introducing a verification system to ensure that customers provide a valid payment method before starting a journey.

Holding fraudulent passengers accountable by requiring ID for larger fares or reporting incidents to authorities.

A Call for Action

Taxi drivers are urging fellow drivers, industry representatives, and the public to put pressure on policymakers to close this loophole before more drivers fall victim to payment fraud. While cashless transactions offer convenience, they must also provide security for those whose livelihoods depend on fair and honest exchanges.

Until a solution is implemented, drivers are advised to stay alert, document all interactions with passengers, and report repeat offenders to law enforcement. The message is clear: No driver should be forced to work without guaranteed payment, and no scammer should be able to exploit a broken system.

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Dealing with Difficult Passengers: A Taxi Driver's Guide



Being a taxi driver isn't just about getting passengers from point A to point B—it's also about managing people, often under challenging circumstances.

While most passengers are polite and respectful, taxi drivers frequently encounter individuals who can be rude, intoxicated, or even refuse to pay. In these situations, maintaining professionalism and composure is key. This guide will help taxi drivers navigate difficult encounters with grace and efficiency, ensuring safety and satisfaction for both them and their passengers.

1. Handling Rude Passengers

Every taxi driver has likely encountered a rude passenger at some point. Whether it's a passenger who speaks harshly, ignores basic etiquette, or complains without reason, dealing with these situations calmly is important.

Strategy: Stay Calm and Professional

The key to managing rude passengers is staying calm and not taking things personally. As a driver, it's your job to ensure the ride goes smoothly, even if the passenger's attitude doesn't match that. Here's how you can keep things in check:

- **Remain neutral:** Don't engage in arguments or escalate the situation. Simply acknowledge the passenger's comments politely and steer the conversation back to a neutral topic.

- **Use positive language:** If the passenger is complaining about something, try to find a solution. For example, if they criticize the route, calmly explain the choice of route and assure them it's the quickest way, if that's the case.

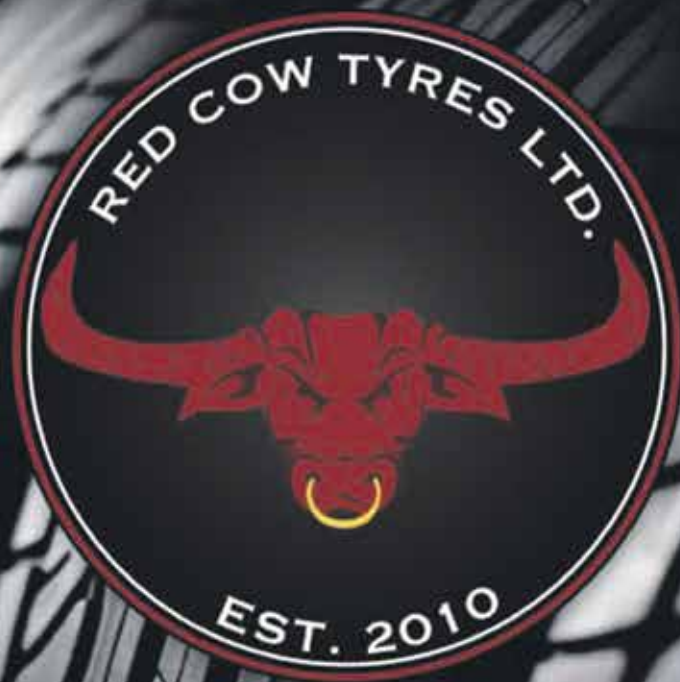
- **Keep your tone respectful:** When responding to rudeness, keep your tone polite and steady. Responding with anger or sarcasm will only worsen the situation.

Example:

If a passenger complains about the temperature in the car, rather than getting defensive, offer to adjust the air conditioning or ask if they would prefer a different setting. A simple, "Let me make you more comfortable" can go a long way in defusing tension.

2. Managing Drunk Passengers

Drunk passengers are one of the most common challenges taxi drivers face, especially on weekends or



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during late-night shifts. They may be loud, unsteady, or even aggressive, making the ride difficult and potentially unsafe.

Strategy: Prioritize Safety and Set Boundaries

While you can't control how much someone has had to drink, you can control how you respond. It's essential to prioritize safety—both yours and the passenger's—while setting clear boundaries.

- Stay professional: Keep your calm and avoid getting frustrated with their behaviour. A drunk passenger may not be able to make rational decisions, so don't take their rudeness personally.

- Set limits early: If the passenger is too intoxicated to understand simple instructions or is being physically aggressive, set clear boundaries early on. Politely but firmly tell them if their behaviour is unacceptable. For example, "I'm happy to take you to your destination, but I need you to remain seated and quiet during the ride for everyone's safety."

- Know when to end the ride: If a drunk passenger becomes aggressive or dangerous, it's crucial to trust your instincts. If needed, pull over safely and call the authorities to handle the situation. Never try to handle a dangerous situation on your own.

Example:

If a passenger is overly intoxicated, you can calmly say, "I understand you're enjoying your night, but I need you to remain calm for your safety. Let's get you home safely." If they don't cooperate, you can remind them that you may need to end the ride for their safety and yours.

3. Dealing with Non-Paying Passengers

There's nothing more frustrating than taking a passenger to their destination, only for them to refuse to pay the fare. While most customers are honest, non-payment can happen, especially with ride-hailing apps or when someone feels they can get away with it.

Strategy: Be Prepared and Assertive

Having a clear strategy for non-paying passengers is crucial. Always remain calm and assertive, without becoming confrontational.

- Set clear expectations upfront: If possible, confirm the fare estimate before starting the ride. For example, "I'll give you an estimate for the fare based on the route," so the passenger is aware of the cost.

- Stay firm but polite: If a passenger refuses to pay, calmly explain that it's illegal to refuse payment and that you'll need to take the matter up with the authorities if necessary. For instance, "I understand there may be confusion, but I can't let you leave without payment. If there's an issue, we can sort it with the authorities."

- Have a payment backup plan: If you work with ride-hailing services, ensure you follow up with the company

immediately to report the non-payment. If you work independently, it's important to have a clear process for disputes, including offering alternative payment options like card payments or contacting the police if needed.

Example:

If someone refuses to pay, calmly say, "Unfortunately, you need to settle the fare before exiting the vehicle. I'm happy to wait while you arrange payment."

4. Dealing with Aggressive Passengers

Occasionally, passengers may become belligerent or violent. Whether due to frustration, intoxication, or personal issues, dealing with aggressive behaviour requires quick thinking and a calm approach.

Strategy: Stay Calm and Protect Yourself

Your safety should always be your number one priority. If a passenger becomes aggressive or violent:

- Don't engage in physical confrontation: If a situation feels unsafe, it's best to avoid confrontation and get the passenger out of the car as quickly and calmly as possible.

- Call for help if needed: If the passenger refuses to leave or becomes violent, pull over in a safe location and call the police. Let them handle the situation.

- Know when to walk away: If you feel unsafe, it's better to remove yourself from the situation than risk injury. Don't hesitate to ask a passenger to leave the car if necessary.

Example:

If a passenger starts shouting at you, stay calm and say, "I'm happy to talk this through, but we need to keep things respectful. If the situation escalates, I will call the authorities."

5. Staying Safe While Handling Difficult Passengers

In addition to the specific strategies mentioned, here are some general tips for staying safe while handling any difficult passenger:

- Have an emergency plan: Keep your phone charged and within reach and always have a way to call for help if needed.

- Trust your instincts: If something feels off about a passenger or the situation, don't hesitate to take extra precautions.

- Use a dash cam: Installing a dash cam can help protect you legally if a dispute arises or if you need to report a passenger's behaviour.

Conclusion

Dealing with difficult passengers is an inevitable part of being a taxi driver. Whether you're handling rudeness, intoxication, or non-payment, staying calm, setting boundaries, and prioritizing safety are key. With the right approach and strategies, you can manage challenging situations professionally and ensure a safer, more enjoyable ride for everyone involved.



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myPOS Provides a Seamless Payment Solution for Taxi Drivers in Ireland

In today's fast-moving world, taxi drivers require a reliable and efficient payment system to keep their business running smoothly.



Christopher Humphrey, President NPHTA and Seamus Murphy, Country Manager myPOS Ireland at their recent partnership announcement.

Since September 2022, it has been mandatory for taxi drivers in Ireland to accept credit and debit card payments, yet many have struggled to find a solution that meets their needs. myPOS has emerged as a game-changer, offering an all-in-one payment system that simplifies transactions and improves cash flow. With hundreds of taxi drivers signing up each month, myPOS is fast becoming a preferred choice across Ireland.

Designed with the unique requirements of taxi drivers in mind, myPOS provides features that ensure hassle-free payments and a superior customer experience. One standout function is the multi-operator mode, which enables multiple drivers to share the same terminal while keeping their transaction records separate. This is particularly beneficial for larger taxi fleets, reducing the need for multiple payment devices and lowering hardware expenses. Additionally, the built-in tipping functionality allows passengers to seamlessly add gratuities via the terminal, boosting driver earnings while making tipping more convenient for cashless customers.

Furthermore, myPOS smart terminals—such as the myPOS Pro and myPOS Carbon—offer the flexibility to issue both digital and paper receipts, catering to varying customer preferences. While many passengers

appreciate the convenience and environmental benefits of digital receipts, business travellers and corporate clients often require printed copies for expense reporting.

Unlike other solutions that rely on mobile phone connectivity—often leading to service interruptions—myPOS devices come equipped with a built-in SIM, ensuring uninterrupted transactions. A major advantage for drivers is the instant settlement feature, which provides immediate access to earnings via the myPOS platform or the complimentary business debit card. This allows taxi drivers to cover expenses such as fuel and maintenance without unnecessary delays.

With a pay-as-you-go model, myPOS eliminates long-term contracts and hidden fees, making it a cost-effective solution for taxi drivers. Its strong local presence in Ireland, including offices in Dublin City Centre and Santry, ensures convenient access to support and assistance.

Backed by a strong track record across Europe and strategic partnerships with key industry players such as NPHTA and Skan Taxi Centre, myPOS is establishing itself as a leader in Ireland's taxi payment market. As taxi drivers increasingly seek fast, secure, and flexible payment solutions, myPOS continues to deliver with a system tailored to their evolving needs.



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State's scheme to help taxi drivers switch to EVs paused amid record demand



Grants of up to €25,000 have been available in recent years for taxi, hackney and limousine operators who wish to buy electric vehicles.

The State's scheme aimed at helping taxi drivers to buy electric vehicles (EVs) has been paused just a month after applications opened due to record numbers seeking grants.

Grants of up to €25,000 have been available in recent years for taxi, hackney and limousine operators who wish to buy EVs under the eSPSV Grant Scheme.

With a budget of a €12.5 million, the goal of the scheme is to accelerate the transition to EVs in the small public sector vehicle (SPSV) industry and support those who are scrapping older, more polluting or high-mileage vehicles to make the switch to electric.

The Department of Transport announced on Thursday that the National Transport Authority (NTA) – which administers the scheme – will be temporarily pausing it because it is fully subscribed.

The pause is taking place while the NTA reviews and processes the applications that have been received. After this assessment, the scheme may reopen later in the year.

Minister for Transport Darragh O'Brien said: "The sheer volume of applications received is a strong endorsement of the EV transition, particularly among high-mileage taxi, hackney and limousine drivers who are eager to embrace a cleaner, more efficient technology.

"The surge in interest highlights not only the attractiveness of the grant offering but also the significant shift in the market towards greater EV adoption."

The Minister said the response is "a clear indication that Ireland's taxi, hackney and limousine industry is ready for change".

"High-mileage drivers, at the forefront of daily operations, have shown strong support for transitioning to EVs," he said.

Mr O'Brien said this "not only helps reduce carbon emissions but also positions the small public sector vehicles as leaders in the nation's

broader environmental initiatives."

According to the department, the scheme has seen more than 2,800 SPSV operators make the switch to electric since its introduction in 2018.

The scheme provides grants of varying levels towards new and second-hand EVs, with a higher level of funding on offer where an older existing vehicle is scrapped.

The highest level of grant – €25,000 – is available to those who scrap an eligible older vehicle and buy a new wheelchair-accessible EV.

Applicants must purchase a vehicle that appears on the NTA's list of approved EVs.

The list includes EVs made by Kia, Mercedes, Nissan, Tesla and Volkswagen among several others. The only plug-in hybrid model listed is the wheelchair-accessible black cab made by the London Electric Vehicle Company.

A Department of Transport spokesman said more than 1,850 grant applications have been received this year and they are currently being processed.

He said that in previous years, not all applications have met the eligibility criteria and there is also a two-month validity period for successful applicants to draw down the grants.

"Following assessment of these initial applications, the scheme may reopen later in the year," he said.

A spokesman for the NTA said not all applicants choose to complete the process.

Based on past performance of the scheme the NTA estimates that around a third of applicants will choose to complete the process and the average grant level will be approximately €18,000.

The latest figures from the NTA show there are more than 2,600 fully electric taxis, hackneys or limos on the road and over 5,400 hybrids.



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Taxi Driver Dies from Sepsis After Dog Licks Open Wound, Inquest Hears



A 49-year-old Dublin taxi driver died from a rare and aggressive infection after his pet dog licked an open wound on his leg, an inquest has heard.

Craig Jones, a father of two from Hartstown, Co. Dublin, was admitted to Connolly Hospital in December 2022 with severe sepsis. He had been experiencing fever, vomiting, and bloody diarrhoea in the days leading up to his hospitalization.

His wife, Sandra, told Dublin District Coroner's Court that he had felt disoriented while at a pub shortly before his death, later describing himself as "hallucinating." When she saw him after work, she noticed his skin had turned "purple." Concerned about the long wait for an ambulance, she drove him to the hospital herself, where he collapsed upon arrival.

Consultant physician Prof. John McDermott described Mr. Jones as having "very severe sepsis" and evolving organ failure. Despite intensive treatment, he suffered six cardiac arrests and died on December 21st, just one day after arriving at the hospital.

A Rare and Aggressive Infection

Initial microbiology tests failed to identify the cause of his sepsis. However, following his death, consultant microbiologist Prof. Eoghan O'Neill sent a sample to the UK Health Security Agency for specialized testing not yet available in Ireland. The

results confirmed the presence of *capnocytophaga canimorsus*, a bacterium commonly found in the mouths of dogs and cats but rarely associated with human infections.

"This is an extremely rare infection," Prof. O'Neill explained, noting that cases occur in just 0.5 to one per million people. Once in the bloodstream, the bacteria have a high mortality rate of around 30%.

Mr. Jones had a beagle he adored, and family members told the court that the dog often licked him affectionately. Given his history of severe psoriasis, doctors believe a large ulcer on his leg provided the most likely entry point for the bacteria.

Increased Vulnerability to Infection

Mr. Jones was at heightened risk due to his weakened immune system. He had undergone a splenectomy (spleen removal) two decades earlier, which reduced his ability to fight infections. Additionally, he was taking Stelara, a medication for psoriasis that can suppress the immune response.

Although doctors treated him with broad-spectrum antibiotics that would have covered the infection, his condition had progressed too far to be reversed.

Coroner Dr. Cróna Gallagher described the case as "so rare and so unusual" and returned a narrative verdict, taking into account the bacterial infection, his medical history, and the medication he was taking.



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Maximizing Your Earnings

Smart Ways to Increase Your Taxi Income



As a taxi driver, your income can vary significantly depending on the time of day, your location, and the strategies you employ to attract customers.

Whether you're looking to boost your earnings for a few extra hours or develop a long-term approach, there are plenty of smart ways to increase your taxi income. From choosing the best routes to offering additional services, here are some practical tips that can help you make the most out of your time on the road.

Work During Peak Hours

Timing is one of the most important factors when it comes to maximizing your taxi earnings. Understanding when demand for rides is highest can help you take advantage of busy periods and increase your chances of getting more fares.

Strategy:

- Rush hours: Typically, early morning and late afternoon/early evening are high-demand periods when commuters are heading to or from work. By positioning yourself in busy areas like business districts or transportation hubs (train stations, bus stops), you'll increase your chances of getting quick, short-distance fares.
- Weekend evenings: Nights out on the weekends are another peak time for taxis, especially in entertainment districts or near popular nightlife spots. People who are out for dinner, drinks, or events are more likely to rely on taxis to get home safely. Be sure to target these areas during late-night hours.
- Special events: Concerts, sports games, or conventions are often huge drivers of demand. Make sure to stay near venues where these events are

taking place, as people will be looking for a ride to and from the event.

By consistently working during these peak hours, you can capitalize on higher demand and potentially higher fares.

Choose the Best Routes

The routes you take can make a significant difference in your earnings. While it's important to get passengers to their destination efficiently, you can also strategically pick routes that allow you to maximize your time and profits.

Strategy:

- Know the city: Familiarity with your city's streets, neighbourhoods, and traffic patterns is invaluable. Avoiding congested routes and knowing shortcuts can save time, helping you pick up more passengers and complete more trips in a day.
- Shorter routes with higher tips: Some passengers prefer the fastest route, even if it means avoiding highways or tolls. Offering shorter, more direct routes can result in higher satisfaction, potentially leading to bigger tips.
- Strategic positioning: If you know an area is going to be busy, like a shopping mall during the holidays or near a concert venue, park near it and wait for rides. By positioning yourself in the right spots, you'll increase the chances of getting fares without driving around aimlessly.

Offer Additional Services

Beyond just getting people from point A to point B,

offering additional services can help set you apart from other drivers and provide opportunities for extra earnings.

Strategy:

- Luggage assistance: Offering to help with luggage or groceries is a small gesture that can make a big difference in customer satisfaction. Passengers are often willing to reward drivers who go above and beyond with a larger tip.

- Delivery services: Some taxi services offer delivery of parcels, documents, or even food. If you're available and have the flexibility, offering to deliver small packages or takeout orders can open up another revenue stream.

- Airport and hotel services: Airport runs are typically lucrative, as they often involve longer distances and set rates. Similarly, positioning yourself near major hotels can attract tourists or business travellers who may require transport to meetings, events, or sightseeing.

Example:

If a passenger requests a ride to the airport, offering to help with their luggage or providing a helpful tip about where to check in for flights could lead to a higher fare or a generous tip.

Maintain a Clean and Comfortable Taxi

A clean, well-maintained taxi is more likely to earn positive reviews, repeat customers, and even bigger tips. Taking pride in your vehicle can go a long way in making passengers feel comfortable and valued.

Strategy:

- Regular cleaning: Ensure your taxi is cleaned both inside and out regularly. A tidy, fresh-smelling vehicle leaves a positive impression, making passengers more willing to tip.

- Comfort features: Providing a comfortable environment can make the ride more pleasant for passengers. Offering things like phone chargers, air conditioning, or even a good selection of music can enhance the passenger experience.

- Smaller touches: Small gestures like offering a bottle of water or letting a passenger choose their preferred radio station can make a big impact. Passengers are more likely to remember and recommend a driver who treats them with respect and care.

Build Relationships with Regular Customers

One of the most effective ways to increase your income is by building relationships with regular customers. Loyal passengers will be more inclined to take your taxi regularly, which can result in a more predictable stream of income.

Strategy:

- Get to know your customers: Friendly conversation and a willingness to listen to your passengers' needs can create a bond. For example, if you drive the same passenger every day, learning their preferred route or

talking about their interests can make them feel more comfortable, ensuring they choose you for future rides.

- Offer discounts for repeat riders: Some taxi drivers offer a small discount for loyal customers as a way to keep them coming back. Offering a 5% discount on regular rides could encourage repeat business.

- Promote your availability: Keep in touch with regulars, if possible, letting them know when you're available for their usual trips. Word-of-mouth referrals from satisfied passengers can bring in more consistent work.

Use Technology to Your Advantage

Technology can play a significant role in boosting your taxi earnings. From ride-hailing apps to payment processing tools, using the right tech can streamline your work and attract more customers.

Strategy:

- Ride-hailing apps: Ensure you are signed up with popular ride-hailing apps like Uber, Lyft, or local alternatives. These apps connect you with a larger customer base and offer features like route optimization, which helps you find the most profitable fares.

- Navigation apps: Use GPS navigation apps like Google Maps or Waze to avoid traffic jams and find the fastest routes. These apps also help you discover new locations to pick up passengers.

- Cashless payments: Accepting credit and debit cards or offering mobile payment options can increase your earnings by making the payment process smoother and more convenient for passengers.

Stay Safe and Maintain Good Health

It's essential to prioritize your well-being as a driver. Staying healthy means you can work longer hours without feeling fatigued, leading to better earnings.

Strategy:

- Healthy habits: Take breaks when needed, stay hydrated, and make sure to get plenty of rest. Driving while tired can lead to mistakes that affect your earnings and safety.

- Safety first: Make sure you feel comfortable with each passenger. Trust your instincts and prioritize your safety when dealing with unfamiliar riders or potentially risky situations.

Conclusion

Maximizing your taxi earnings is all about strategy, timing, and creating a positive experience for your passengers. By working during peak hours, knowing the best routes, offering additional services, and leveraging technology, you can significantly increase your income as a taxi driver. Remember, small improvements in your service, attitude, and knowledge of the area can lead to more loyal customers, higher tips, and more opportunities for growth in the competitive world of taxi driving.

Pedestrian Killed, Another Seriously Injured in Donegal Crash Involving Taxi



Gardaí in Co. Donegal are investigating a serious overnight collision in Letterkenny that resulted in the death of one pedestrian and left another with serious injuries.

The incident occurred at approximately 3 a.m. on Lower Main Street when two male pedestrians, both in their 60s, were struck by a car.

One of the men, who sustained critical injuries, was taken to Letterkenny University Hospital, where he later passed away. The coroner has been notified, and a post-mortem examination will be conducted.

The second pedestrian was airlifted to Galway University Hospital, where he continues to receive treatment for serious injuries.

The collision involved a local taxi, which also struck a nearby house, causing minor damage.

The driver, a male in his late teens, was arrested at the scene and remains in Garda custody.

The area remains sealed off for forensic examination

by Garda Forensic Collision Investigators, with diversions in place. The crash site is on the route of Letterkenny's scheduled St. Patrick's Day parade.

Gardaí are appealing for witnesses, particularly anyone with dash-cam or CCTV footage from the area between 2:30 a.m. and 3:30 a.m. on Monday, March 17, 2025. In particular, they are seeking information from those who were in the vicinity of Dry Arch Roundabout and Oldtown Road during this time.

Anyone with relevant information is urged to contact Letterkenny Garda Station at (074) 916 7100, the Garda Confidential Line at 1800 666 111, or any Garda station.

This incident has been referred to the Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission (GSOC) due to prior interaction between Gardaí and the driver before the crash.

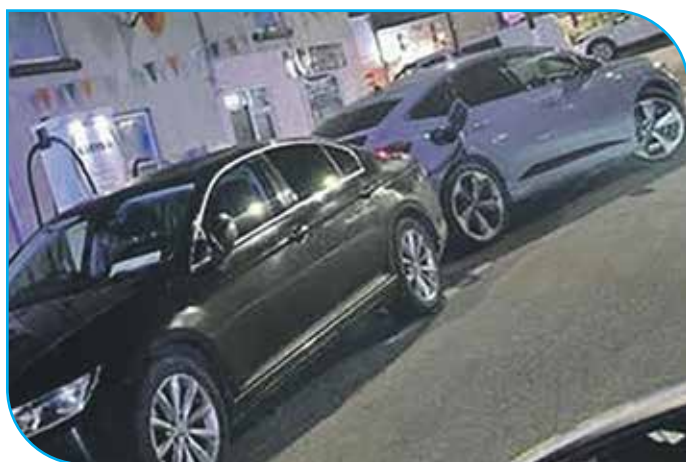
Driver Fined for Blocking EV Charging Bays in Laois

A motorist who parked across two electric vehicle (EV) charging bays in Mountrath has been fined by local gardaí.

The non-EV driver occupied the designated spaces, preventing access to the charging point for EV users.

Sharing a photo from the scene on social media, gardaí reminded the public that misusing EV charging bays is an offence, carrying an €80 fine.

"Gardaí wish to remind motorists that parking in an EV charging bay without an electric vehicle is an offence. These spaces are limited and essential for those who need to charge their vehicles," they stated.



They highlighted that in this case, the driver's actions created unnecessary inconvenience and potential hazards for others.

While enforcement of this offence was initially approached with discretion, authorities noted that misuse of EV bays continues to be an issue. As a result, Fixed Charge Penalty Notices (FCPNs) of €80 are now being issued, including in this instance.

Gardaí urged drivers to "park responsibly and respect designated EV charging bays."

Former Taxi Driver Jailed for Two Years Over Sexual Assault of Teen Passenger

A former taxi driver has been sentenced to two years in prison for sexually assaulting a teenage passenger after making crude remarks to her during a late-night journey.

Badrizzaman Masum (47), of Forest Mews, Swords, Co. Dublin, pleaded guilty at Dublin Circuit Criminal Court to the sexual assault of an 18-year-old woman on November 27, 2024. The father of four had no prior convictions. Garda Ciara Ryan told prosecuting counsel, Marc Murphy BL, that the victim had booked a taxi via an app at approximately 2:30 a.m. in a Dublin suburb.

During the ride, Masum repeatedly touched the young woman's thigh and made inappropriate sexual comments. The victim soon realized he was not following the correct route and offered to let him use Google Maps on her phone for directions.

Masum then suggested she move to the front seat so he could see the screen more clearly. He eventually dropped her home, but as she exited the vehicle, he embraced her and forcefully groped her breast.

The victim later reported the incident to gardaí, and Masum was identified through CCTV footage and data from the taxi app. He was arrested and questioned but did not admit to the offense.

A victim impact statement was prepared for the case but was not read aloud in court.

The defence noted that Masum had not worked as a taxi driver since pleading guilty in November. His counsel acknowledged the breach of



trust, stating that the victim had been entitled to a safe and uneventful journey, which she did not receive.

Judge Patricia Ryan highlighted the severity of the breach of trust, emphasizing the victim's young age. While acknowledging that Masum had no previous record and had shown remorse, she sentenced him to two years in prison and ordered that he be placed on the sex offenders register.

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Limerick Taxi Driver Says Nighttime Business Has “Fallen Off a Cliff”



Rising fuel costs and changing travel habits are taking a toll on Limerick’s taxi industry, with nighttime business dropping significantly, according to a local driver.

Speaking on Live 95’s Limerick Today, taxi driver Anthony said that while St. Patrick’s weekend saw a reasonable number of fares, demand remains far below pre-Covid levels.

He pointed to soaring fuel prices as a key factor, citing a recent Aviva Insurance report that found motorists are cutting back on driving as petrol and diesel prices continue to rise for the fourth consecutive month.

“Everybody knows that when you put in a euro’s worth of petrol, you wouldn’t get much for it now,” Anthony said, adding that government action could help alleviate the burden on drivers.

“There’s no such thing as giving people a break—saying, ‘Look, we’re going to reduce excise on petrol and diesel’—and then they bring in the carbon tax,” he added.

Taxi fares increased by 9% in December, marking the first adjustment

in two years, but Anthony said the hike was quickly offset by rising fuel, tax, and insurance costs.

While acknowledging that more people are turning to public transport, he noted that accessibility remains an issue.

“It’s fine if you live in an area with bus service, but not everyone does,” he said. “Public transport works well in cities and some towns, but in general, many people still rely on taxis.”

Anthony believes the combination of higher costs and financial strain is discouraging people from going out at night, further impacting the taxi industry.

“As far as I can see, people just aren’t using taxis at the moment,” he said. “Nighttime business has fallen off a cliff.”

Despite a slight boost over the holiday weekend, he said demand is nowhere near pre-pandemic levels.

“People just don’t have the money—it’s too expensive to go out.”

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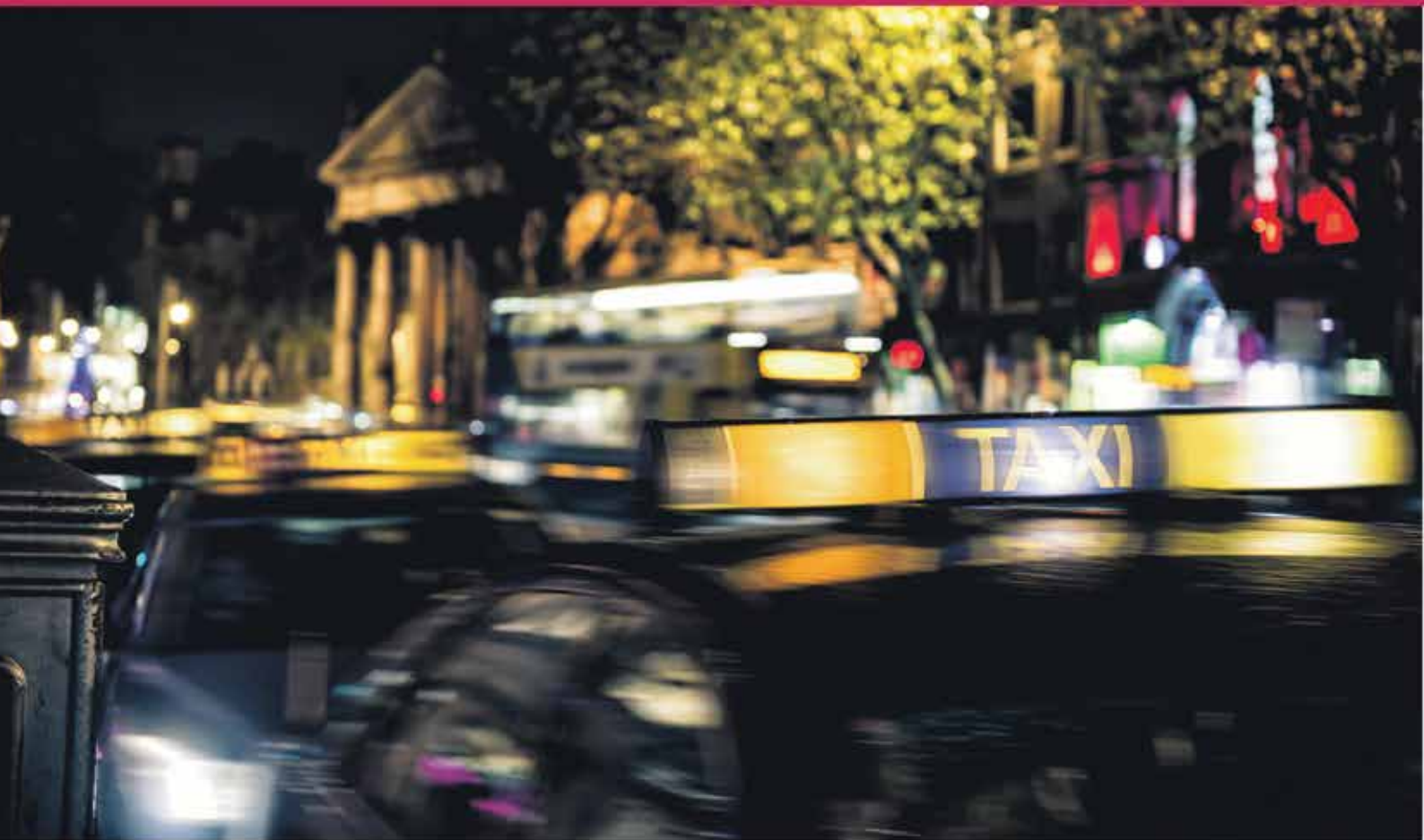
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