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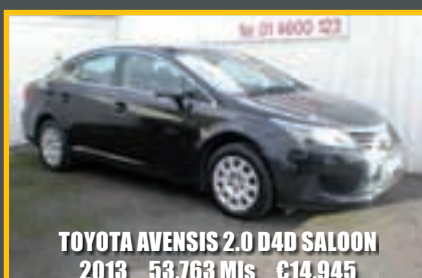
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# EDITORIAL

**O**h yes. It's that time of year again... the NTA have proposed more things that will annoy just about everyone in the industry. In other news, it's Christmas.

Language tests and uniforms are the pick of this year's bunch. All the while ranks are closing in Dublin and Galway, insurance is driving cabbies out of the business and racism is becoming as massive problem for drivers. But hey, once everyone is in uniform, all that other business will just be small change right?

It's not all bad though. The Irish government are standing up to Uber in Europe, in a case that could prove very interesting indeed for the Californian app giant should they get an unfavourable outcome. Irish companies are leading the way at home and abroad and if you've ever fancied

going electric, Peter Hanley is the man to see on page 13.

We're feeling all festive here at Tacsai Magazine this month and we're giving away prizes to some top Irish companies. Lynk have been growing at a phenomenal rate since they started in early 2015 and they're among three other companies who've been selected for Tacsai trophies this edition.

We speak to Atecea's Noel Maher, and Tony Rowe regales us with memories of the Gresham rank which closed in October. Along with many other rank closures in Dublin and Galway, Tony joins Tommy Barton of the DTA in discussing the current Driver Entry Requirement proposals.

From all at Tacsai Magazine, have a safe and happy Christmas, and a prosperous New Year.

Safe travels.

**Stephen Young**  
Editor

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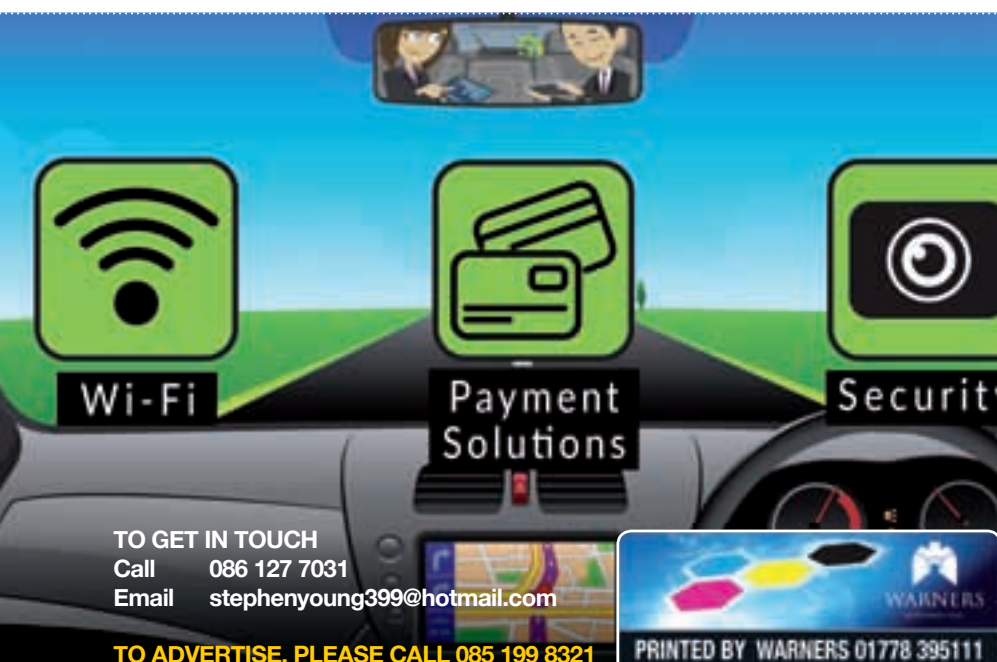
*Test your knowledge*

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# PATRICK COTTER, CEO TAXI CONNECT

***Patrick Cotter started his entrepreneur career at the age of 16 after he acquired market stalls in Dublin's Fruit markets. Cotter moved quickly from selling flowers to selling voice and data products for major telecom companies in Ireland.***



**PATRICK COTTER,  
CEO OF FLEETCONNECT**

**S**et up in 2008, Fleet Connect has grown into a real success story in the short space of eight years, providing free internet access across the transport industry. Fleet Connect now provides passenger WiFi services to major transport companies including Irish Rail, Bus Eireann and Dublin Bus to name a few.

Unique in Ireland, Fleet Connect has managed to become market leader by keeping several steps ahead of the game.

Patrick has won numerous awards with Fleet Connect including best start up at the National Enterprise Awards in 2011 and the Fingal Enterprise Award in the same year. Ben Dunne, who was on the judging panel was so impressed by Cotter, he claimed he had 'star quality,' and should be a leading figure in Irish business.

He says of his success; "Defeat is not the worst of failures. Not to have tried is the true failure. Success is to be measured not so much by the position that you have reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome."

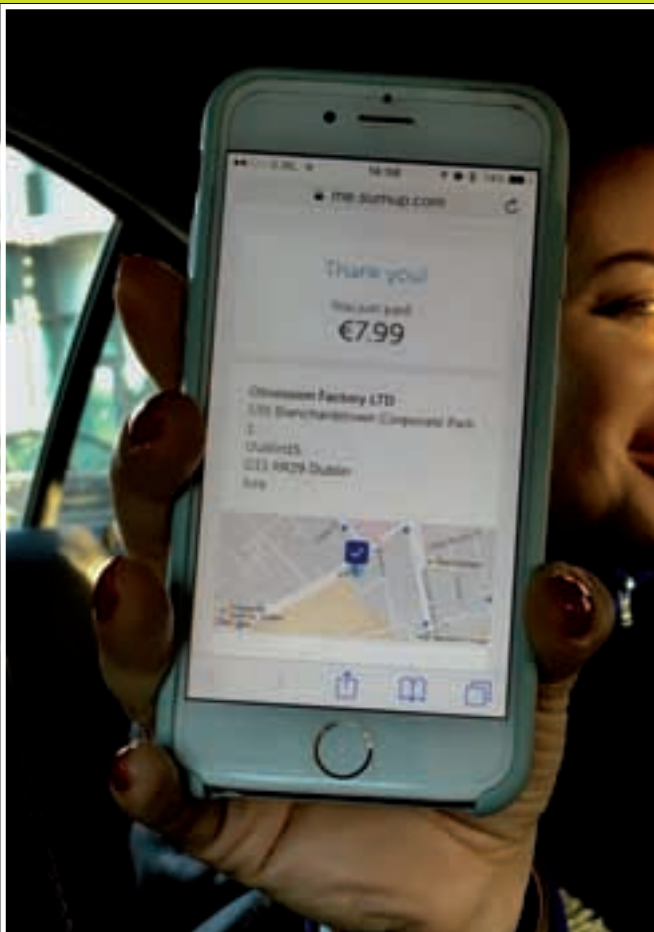
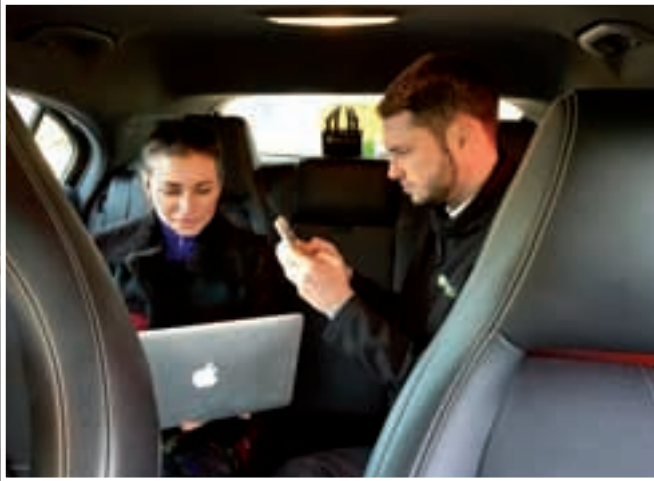
Following the success of Fleet Connect, Patrick then looked to other countries around the world and thought why not provide WiFi to the taxi industry in Ireland, from this, Taxi Connect was founded.

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# THE WORD IS ON THE STREET

## *PROPOSED LANGUAGE TEST DIVIDES OPINION IN THE INDUSTRY*

**S**hould those applying for a taxi licence here undergo an English language test? Should there be an electronic navigation equipment test for applicants? Should drivers have to undergo a medical? And should taxi drivers, once licensed, have to adhere to a dress code?

These are among a range of questions posed by the regulatory body for taxis, the National Transport Authority, as part of a review it is conducting of licensing drivers to work in the industry.

It says that since the introduction of a knowledge test for drivers of small public service vehicles such as taxis, limousines and hackneys in 2009, the numbers of drivers licensed here has fallen by 42 per cent. And the ones who are licensed are not getting any younger. More than one fifth are in their 60s and 6 per cent are over 70. Just 1 per cent are under 30.

In preparation for the review, it looked at current regulatory practices in the taxi industry around the world including a number of European countries as well as in Australia and New Zealand. It has posted details of its findings on its website and now wants input from the public on whether the current regime for testing an applicant's suitability to be licensed as a driver of taxis, hackneys or limousines in the Republic should be revised or remain the same. To help people come to a view it poses 17 questions to which it is seeking answers.

These range from whether there should be a specific test for applicants to drive taxis and hackneys, or should a standard driving licence, confirmation of tax clearance and Garda vetting be sufficient? It also asks whether knowledge of the geography of an area should be tested. Another question asks should a programme of continuous learning or professional development be a



**JAMES MAGUIRE**

condition of renewing a licence. And then whether the licence when granted should be renewed every one, three or five years. And should there be a requirement on all new entrants to the industry to affiliate with a dispatch operator for a set period on entry?

The Irish Taxi Drivers' Federation is supporting calls for the introduction of an English language test for cab drivers.

James Maguire, a director of the group, said drivers were often the first point of contact for tourists arriving in Dublin and as such, should be able to converse and to recommend points of interest.

His comments came after it emerged that the National Transport Authority (NTA) was reviewing the need for a knowledge test for taxi drivers, and considering whether they should have to pass an English test.





"You can't have people driving taxis who can't speak English properly," said Mr Maguire.

"When tourists arrive at the airport, the first person they meet is their taxi driver.

"If I go to the airport for a pick-up, I can converse. I can recommend places to stay or pubs. I can tell them about the city."

As part of its review, the NTA has been looking into practices in other countries, such as Australia.

Mr Maguire said the federation would be making a submission as part of the NTA's public consultation process.

He also supported the idea that taxi drivers should adhere to a dress code while at work and that vehicles being used as taxis should be held to a standard of cleanliness.

"You should have a clean and spotless car and you should be dressed neat and tidy," he said.

Asked about the possibility that English language tests could be seen as discriminatory, or complaints that some customers purposely reject taxis driven by foreign nationals, Mr Maguire disagreed there was racism in the industry.

"A lot of people don't keep their taxis tidy. If a customer has a choice of a Mercedes or a rust bucket, they'll walk

past the rust bucket."

"People are not going to want to get into a car like that. It's not racism," he said.

Mr Maguire believed the reduction was down to increasing costs, such as insurance, some drivers failing to secure tax clearance certificates and a pick up in the economy.

The current test in place has proved tough enough for some in the past already though.

Figures provided by the National Transport Authority back in April show that one applicant for a taxi licence finally succeeded in passing the entry test after failing on 23 previous occasions — in the space of 18 months.

Two other individuals only succeeded in qualifying for a taxi plate on their 12th sitting of the test.

The NTA has confirmed that the two-part test to become a taxi driver has a high failure rate with more than half of all applicants not being successful.

On average, it takes 2.4 test attempts to pass the current test for successful candidates.

**Have your say, should all drivers be made to take a language test? Email the editor at: [stephenyoung399@hotmail.com](mailto:stephenyoung399@hotmail.com)**

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# PROTECTING THE FLEET

## IRISH COMPANY FLEETCONNECT INTRODUCE SAFETY MEASURE

**A**n Irish company is set to improve the everyday safety of taxi drivers - while adding some free Wi-Fi for customers into the mix. FleetConnect, who operate Wi-Fi on buses and trains around the country, are planning on introducing the safety measures to Irish taxis.

The measures include a security camera and a panic button which drivers can use to alert passers-by if they are in danger.

"Drivers will be able to connect a security camera to multiple devices and back to our hub where we can alert the authorities," Patrick Cotter, CEO of FleetConnect, told Independent.ie.

"There will also be a panic button feature which drivers can use to alert passers-by if they are in distress," he continued.

The panic button, which can only be activated by the driver, uses a voice alert to say that the driver is in distress.

Mr Cotter said he hopes the camera and panic button will create a safer working environment for taxi drivers.

The product comes just months after a Dublin taxi driver was stabbed repeatedly by passengers in a horrific attack.

Thomas Vayalil, who is in his mid-30s and originally from India, was subjected to a vicious and unprovoked attack and had his taxi stolen in Swords, Co Dublin, in the early hours of a Saturday morning in September.

Mr Vyalil picked up two men outside a busy fast-food restaurant and drove the two men just a short distance when he was assaulted and stabbed a number of times.

It is believed that he was stabbed six times in the neck, chest and stomach.

FleetConnect will also provide a Wi-Fi system for taxis, and can be used by drivers in rural areas where mobile data is limited.

"Our system operates on the Paddywagon tours, which drive throughout the country," Mr Cotter added.

Meanwhile, A Limerick taxi driver was yesterday found not guilty of threatening to kill a National Transport Authority inspector after his vehicle failed a meter verification test.

Christopher Carroll, aged 58, of 30 The Crescent, Kilteragh, Dooradoyle, pleaded not guilty at Limerick



**PATRICK COTTER,  
CEO OF FLEETCONNECT**

Circuit Court to threatening to kill or cause serious harm to Patrick Doyle on April 8, 2013.

Mr Carroll, in a statement to gardaí and in a letter of apology, admitted losing his temper and said he did not intend to harm Mr Doyle.

In his statement, he said he apologised for what he said and could not recall making the threats alleged.

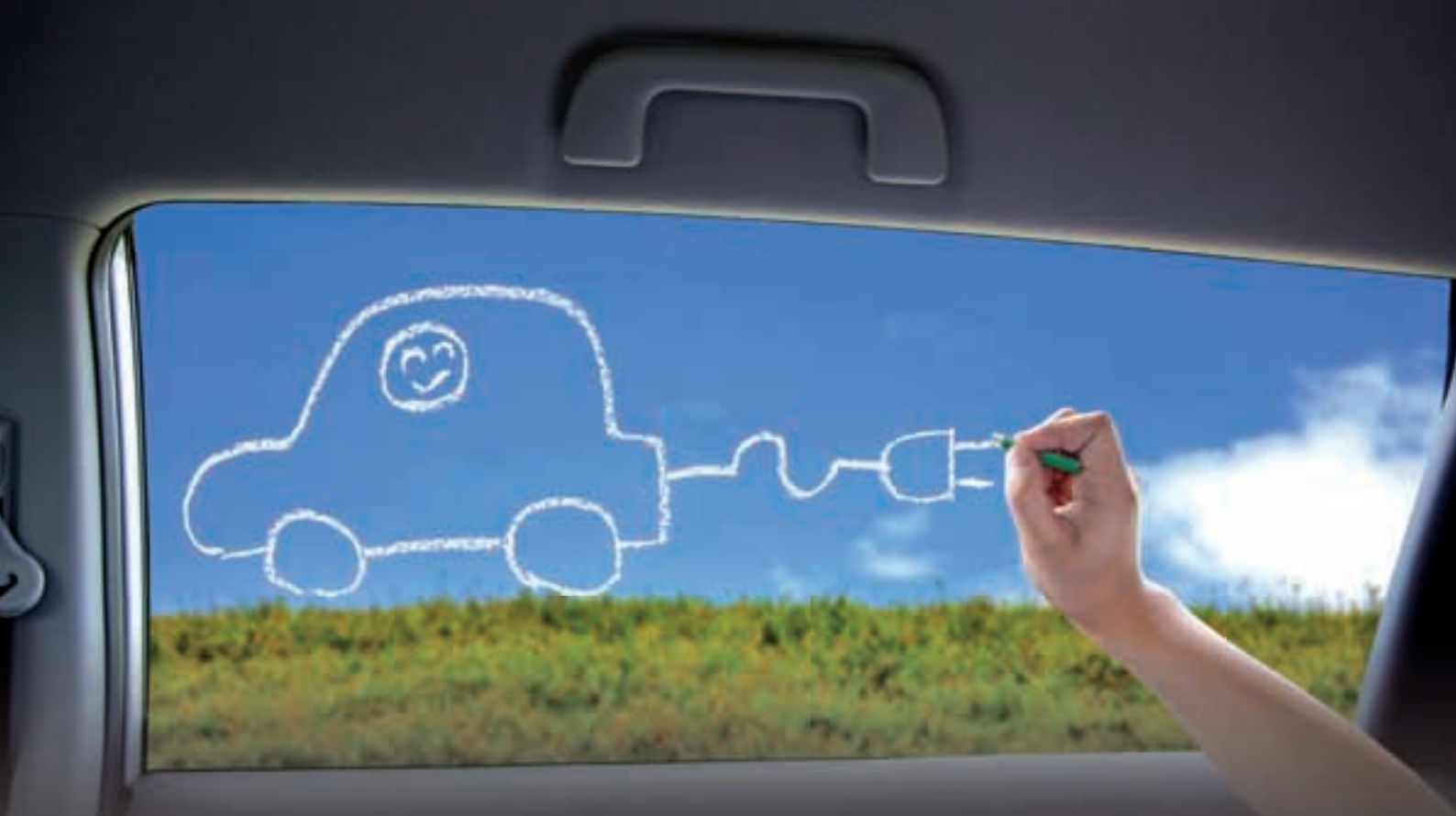
Mr Doyle said in evidence that he worked with SGS Ireland Ltd at East Link Business Park, Ballysimon Rd, where the company carried out metering and other tests on taxis on behalf of the National Transport Authority.

As part of a meter verification test, Mr Carroll's Avenis was found to have front tyres with different sizes. On telling the accused his taxi had failed the test, he said Mr Carroll became very agitated and came close to his face, saying he would bite his "fucking nose off".

Mr Doyle asked the accused to leave and he said the accused replied: "I'll be back wearing a balaclava and put a bullet in your fucking head."

The jury returned a unanimous verdict of not guilty.





## TAXI DRIVER “HAPPY TO BE SAVING THE PLANET”

**Says new electric vehicle better value than second-hand petrol car.**

**D**ublin taxi driver, Peter Hanley became one of the first taxi drivers in Ireland to work in an electric car when he bought his new Nissan Leaf just over a year ago. There aren't many drivers currently using such cars.

*Tacsaí Magazine* heard from the cabbie, and how he's finding the change from standard fuel vehicles.

“It started out about saving my pocket but now I'm happy to be saving the planet as well,” says Hanley.

The car cost him €21,500 after discounts of €4,000 for scrapping his old car and a €5,000 government grant paid directly to the car dealer. “I was switching from night time taxi-ing to days and I discovered it wouldn't cost much more to buy a new electric car than to buy a four-year-old second-hand petrol car and I'd save on fuel costs too,” says Hanley.

The greater level of comfort is the main advantage to driving an electric car, according to Hanley.

“There is no engine noise or vibration. It's like you're floating along. The seats are a little higher and it's very comfortable to drive,” he says.

While, we here at *Tacsaí* do actually have a problem with the cars being almost next to silent – just remember what you were



taught at school; stop, look and listen – the service costs of an electric car are also considerably lower and road tax is about €120 per year. Electric cars don't emit any greenhouse gases which is why the Government offers a grant towards their purchase.

Running out of battery charge (as opposed to fuel) is, however, the biggest concern for drivers of electric vehicles. There are about 1,200 charge points across the island of Ireland.

Most of these are standard charge points where it can take between three and eight hours to charge an electric car.

There are about 70 fast charge points, mainly at service stations, which Hanley says are his best option. “I can charge the battery from 30 per cent to about 80 per cent in about 25 minutes, giving me about 120 km,” he says.

Newer electric car models are promising between 250 and 420km on a full battery charge. However, recently Hanley has found many of these fast charge points aren't working. “I think that they aren't being maintained as well as they used to be.”

While other taxi drivers haven't expressed great interest in his electric taxi, Hanley says that his customers really enjoy the electric vehicle experience. “They love it. One woman said it was the best car for putting her make up on in. Another told me it was like sitting on a marshmallow.”





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**Richard Boyd Barrett**

# TTnH KEEP THE PRESSURE ON AS PREMIUMS SOAR

## We hear from Alan Brennan on October's protest

Insurance premiums are showing no sign of stabilising as we head into the New Year. For the past 18 months, taxi drivers have been strangled by enormous financial cost of keeping their cars on the road, and in work. A report is due out while this magazine is gone to print. We all hope its conclusions have an affect.

We spoke to Alan Brennan from the TTnH to find out how a taxi drivers' protest in October went, and other issues that have been raised by the SPSV driver entry requirements review .

He said: "A motor insurance protest, against the spiralling cost of Taxi Insurance took place on October 12th. The route saw drivers assemble on Mountjoy Square travelling to Merrion Square South. The event was well attended by drivers and we would take this opportunity to thank Richard Boyd Barrett, Brid Smyth and Robert Troy T.D. who took time out to address drivers and listen to their concerns. A letter was handed into Dept. of Finance where we met with officials from Central Bank, Dept. of Finance, and Government Statistics.

"At the time of writing a report on insurance is due to be published by Eoghan Murphy and we hope this report will offer real change in the Insurance Sector with a view to lowering premiums and give drivers transparency. We have also contacted the Irish

Road Haulage Association with a view to supporting a protest and we await their response. Currently we are awaiting the outcome and report of the committee set up to tackle motor insurance.

"At the time of writing a review of SPSV driver entry requirements is taking place closing (date 30/11/2016). One of the queries asks does the PSV test need to be done away with. We totally object to this proposal with real concerns if private motorists with only a full driving licence and Garda vetting where to obtain PSV licences.

"This move we feel would be a move towards ride sharing in private vehicles offering passengers no real protection in terms of security, insurance, and pricing. An influx of Psv licences could also lead to a call for saloon plates to be issued. A submission was drafted for drivers to sign and over 2000 submissions have been handed in. We expect the outcome of this process at the Taxi Advisory Committee in late January.

Currently Robert Troy of Fianna Fail is offering amendments to the Road Traffic Act which will see regulations drafted regarding rickshaws. Recent media reports showed these operators openly offering drugs to the public. In our view these operators should be banned and we have contacted the Transport Minister and Robert Troy making our views known. We will be handing in completed submission documents in January and will keep drivers informed."





# GALWAYS DRIVERS RAGE OVER EYRE SQUARE FIASCO

## No temporary taxi spaces for Christmas

**T**axi drivers are “up in arms” that no temporary taxi spaces are being provided by the Galway City Council as the Eyre Square rank has been removed for five weeks to facilitate the Christmas Market.

The new location for the market at the top of Eyre Square has reduced the number of taxi rank spaces by 16 in what is the busiest rank in the city. Taxi drivers are also angry at the lack of consultation and discussion over this decision.

Pat Hardiman, a taxi driver and member of the Galway City Council Transportation SPC Committee, said the reduction in rank space was “not discussed at the SPC’s most recent meeting in October”. He also noted that the issue failed to be raised at the recent city council meeting.

Speaking to the Galway Advertiser, Mr Hardiman said: “We are here 11 months of the year. Why do we have to give it up for the busiest month?”

He also argues that it is not just taxi drivers that have been inconvenienced, but the public as well. “Customers are not happy,” he said, “especially elderly customers, who bring shopping bags from the shops around Eyre Square. They are not happy about part of the rank being removed for Christmas.”

He added the closure of the turn off at Eyre Street, near the Bank of Ireland, will also cause traffic problems for ordinary motorists and taxis, especially in the lead up to Christmas.

Mr Hardiman said he would raise this issue at the next meeting of the Transportation SPC in City Hall.

The Progressive Friends Taxi Association have also complained about the lack of consultation regarding the move and have

warned that the chaos created may lead to incorrect parking. In a letter, their chairman Frank Okonkwo has asked that Gardai apply discretion to illegal parking because of this.

He said that they feel let down because of the lack of information and have said that there is increased tension and confusion that could have been avoided if a meeting had taken place to inform them well ahead of the closures.

Meanwhile, in Limerick, a city taxi driver has initiated court proceedings in an effort to overturn the decision of Chief Superintendent David Sheahan to revoke his PSV licence.

The man is currently the subject of a criminal investigation arising from an incident which is alleged to have happened at the beginning of September.

During an appeal before Limerick District Court, Chief Supt Sheahan said he met the man on two separate occasions after he became aware of the allegations against him.

He said given the nature of the allegations he decided to revoke the man’s licence “with immediate effect”.

He described to decision to revoke the licence as a “balancing exercise” between the man’s human rights and his duty to ensure there is public safety.

“In my view a breach of trust and responsibility occurred,” he said telling Sgt Donal Cronin that he is no longer satisfied the man is a “fit a proper person” to hold a PSV licence.

“It was a risk beyond that which I could take to allow him to drive a PSV vehicle given the nature of the allegation,” he said adding it is only the third time he has revoked a PSV licence during his time as head of the Limerick Garda division.

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# NTA PROPOSE UNIFORMS FOR ALL DRIVERS

## Dress code mooted under new proposals

It may be time to get suited and booted ladies and gents...

Taxi drivers might be required to adopt a formal dress code including a possible uniform under new proposals being considered by the National Transport Authority.

A review of driver licensing for small public service vehicles (SPSVs), which also includes hackneys and limousines, is to examine the possible benefits of introducing a dress code policy for licence holders.

The NTA pointed out that taxi drivers are already expected to wear smart clothing in many jurisdictions, although nothing in particular is specified, while uniforms are required to be worn in some parts of Australia, Spain, and Canada.

In Edinburgh, drivers are required to wear a shirt with a collar, smart trousers or skirt, and shoes, while items such as runners, denims, and t-shirts are forbidden.

A public consultation discussion paper just launched by the NTA has sought the views of the industry and members of the public on the merits of a formal dress code.

The NTA is also concerned at the aging profile of taxi drivers and the rate of attrition from the industry. Almost two-thirds of current licence holders are aged over 50 years with almost a third are aged over 60.

The NTA noted that the number of active SPSV driver licenses has fallen by 42% since it peaked in May 2009 with 47,259, while the number of licensed vehicles had declined by 23% from a 2008 peak of 27,429.

The falling number of taxis and taxi drivers has been attributed to the decline in the economy as well as increased vehicle standards, a prohibition on license transfers except upon death and a 2010 decision to restrict new licences to wheelchair accessible taxis.

However, the NTA said the size of Ireland's national SPSV fleet

was still high by international standards. It has the eighth largest fleet in Europe on a per capita basis. A total of 21,246 SPSVs were licensed at the end of last year, of which 17,249 were taxis together with 27,400 licensed drivers — the lowest levels in the past decade.

The NTA also pointed out that not all license holders are actively working in the industry.

It said the number of new drivers entering the industry remained stable each year with 519 new driving licenses issued in 2015.

However, 122 driver licenses were surrendered last year, while 1,985 were allowed to lapse permanently. The NTA also revealed that just over half of all candidates who apply to become taxi drivers successfully pass the SPSV Driver Entry Test which examines both industry and local area knowledge.

Since the tests were introduced in July 2009, only 54% of more than 9,000 applicants have passed. Of the unsuccessful candidates, just over half made no attempt to re-sit the test. On average, an applicant had to sit the test almost three times to pass.

The NTA pointed out that, unlike in some other countries, once passed there is no compulsory on-going training for Irish taxi drivers and it is rarely undertaken by licence holders.

Other areas under review are medical fitness, age restrictions, language proficiency and the requirement for taxi drivers in some larger counties to have full area knowledge.

"The aim of this review is to allow consumers and the SPSV sector to have confidence in the suitability of the system for driver licensing and to ensure that legitimate and competent operators and drivers are rewarded fairly by operating under a regulatory framework that is adequately enforced and competitive," an NTA spokesperson said.





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# BARTON EAGER TO SEE NTA ADDRESS DRIVER'S CONCERNS



***DTA STATEMENT ON DRIVER  
ENTRY REQUIREMENTS***



**T**acsaí Magazine spoke to Tommy Barton of the DTA in the early days of December to hear his association's take on the recent public consultation regarding Driver Entry Requirements.

Tommy, pleased with the large number of participants, is now eager to see if the NTA will listen to the drivers' submissions.

He said: "The closing date for the public consultation Driver Entry Requirements SPSV passed at 5pm on November 30.

"We would like to thank all individual drivers who participated in signing the submission that we brought around to the ranks, it is much appreciated. They say the pen is mightier than the sword, now we will just have to wait and see if the NTA will listen to us.

"There were thousands of individual submissions handed in by Gerry Macken for taxi drivers across the country, from Cork to Galway.

"There has been a lot of feedback from drivers about required uniforms; in the submission that drivers signed, it clearly states that smart, neat address is already required and is already in place.

"I don't think it would benefit the passenger by having a uniform because a uniform can be clean or dirty just like the driver.

"We have been requesting, from a blueprint document as far back as 2009 in relation to holding an Irish driver's licence, for at least five years before applying for a SPSV. Not three, but we won't complain.

"It's only common sense that this is put into legislation but the taxi regulator back then, Kathleen Doyle, didn't listen.

"When we all protested the Taxi Regulator's office, sitting on a cold floor, we were not even given the basic human right of using a toilet while we protested in the office.

"The regulator just thought that our taxi comrades outside were creating havoc and causing a nuisance to the public. I'm glad to see that the NTA is going to deal with this issue now. Protest does work.

"At this present time you could pass your driving test, pass your SPSV test and put stickers on your Taxi for two years and go about your daily business picking people up for hire and reward. What would a paying customer think of this? That's something that the public wasn't consulted about or told about in this consultation document.

"As for communication skills in English the DTA believe that this is vital part of being a taxi driver and they should implement a written and oral test for each applicant with efficiency of good grammar and the spoken word.

"A lot of the work done on this submission was done by Gerry Macken who is a full time taxi driver and sits on the Advisory Committee. So as part of the Dublin Taxi Association we thank him for his input and all his hard work."

Tommy was also keen to address the issue of rickshaws – something the authorities have been slow to act on.

He said: "The paper documents that the NTA want to introduce to legislate for rickshaws was discussed at a meeting on Tuesday November 29 with the Minister for Transport. We believe it's a first real step, as they say, to legislate for rickshaws.

"Before this it was a game of tennis between DCC and



the NTA with the Minister's office just keeping score.

"The DTA wants them banned, as we've said you can't regulate for mayhem and madness with previous articles that Tacsaí Magazine has published.

"There has been some coverage in the media recently regarding drug dealing and rickshaws and we believe the time is right to finally deal with the matter instead of kicking the can down the road.

"Galway County Council banned rickshaws a number of years ago on the basis that they were a health and safety issue and didn't add any value to Galway City. They had been regulated in the past by Galway County Council but found that even after regulating them there was still double the amount of unregulated rickshaws operating in Galway.

"So why do we want to regulate them in a far busier traffic congested City like Dublin?

It's crazy stuff.

"It was very naive to say the least that the NTA through transport regulations could not see this coming considering they tell us that they look at other jurisdictions and cities as examples for other consultations on our transport industry.

"Do they propose to give Rank spaces now for rickshaws when legislating? Where will these rickshaw ranks be located in the city? Will they be next to Taxi ranks in footfall areas? Will they hire more enforcement officers to fine rickshaws?

"These are some of many questions that must be answered. Once they are legislated that's when they legally become indirect competition with taxi drivers.

"Also take for example the Vehicle Age Limit. It would make a mockery of the nine-year-rule from a health and safety point of view, which the NTA keep telling taxi drivers is a safer car.

So legislating for 6 people with beer bottles hanging out of a rickshaw is a safer form of transport than a nine-year-old taxi?"

Finally, we would like to wish all the drivers and their families a peaceful and happy Christmas



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# IRISH TAXI FIRM LYNK SECURES MAJOR EXPANSION INTO THE US

## Huge news for homegrown company

**I**rish taxi company Lynk is continuing its expansion across the Atlantic having secured a number of deals in the US over the past week with its international partner Riide.

The Lynk/Riide joint venture was launched last year after a €25m investment allowed the two firms to partner up in a bid to expand into the UK and US markets.

It operates under the Riide moniker in the US and in the UK.

The new agreements, signed this week, will result in Riide trebling the number of drivers operating in the US. The company currently has 5,000 drivers operating Stateside, but that figure will soon grow to 15,000 following successful negotiations between the company and US taxi firms in Phoenix, Arizona, this week.

Lynk was founded in 2015 in Dublin but the company has managed to carve out a major portion of the Irish taxi market in a short space of time.

Tacsaí has spoken to main man Noel Ebbs on numerous occasions – never failing to be impressed to the drive of the man and company, first expanding nationwide here, then to the UK, and now to the biggest market in the western world.

It has developed its own software, which enables it to tailor the service to benefit customers and drivers. It is heavily focused on pre-booking, and has garnered much of its business from corporate clients.

The firm has 2,500 drivers in Ireland, with an average of 1,700 cars on the road at any time.

Lynk's Irish operation has 11 taxi firms under its umbrella. Ebbs, managing director of Lynk, said: "When you are in the business for a long time, you are able to get to grips with where

**Lynk's main man  
Noel Ebbs.**



the gaps in the market are. We saw those gaps and addressed the areas, developing the technology necessary to tailor our offering effectively."

Ebbs said that the Lynk app can be used by customers in Ireland, the UK and America, providing users with a trusted service they can use when they are travelling.

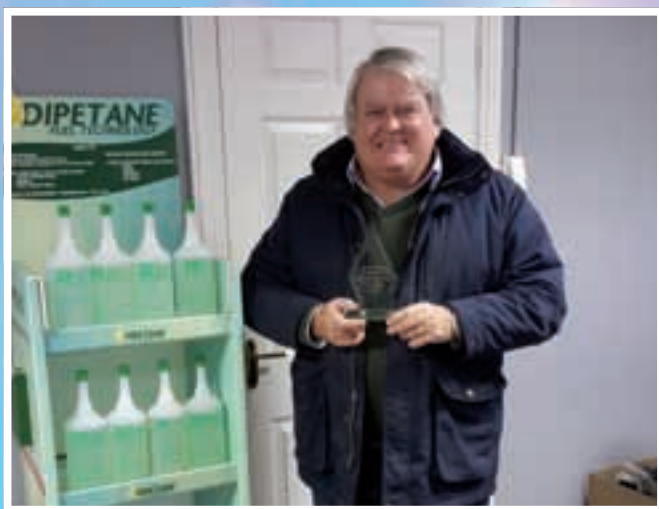
"We were faced with competition internationally, so we knew what we developed had to be equal or better to the apps and services that they had to offer," he said.

Ebbs added the high premiums being paid by Irish drivers was "casting doubt over job security for people interested in joining the industry".

We wish Noel and all the team at Lynk the very best.



# TACSAÍ AWARDS CHRISTMAS 2016 SPECIAL



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## LYNK TO THE TOP

**Lynk truly have been one of the big success stories in the Irish taxi industry.**

**H**aving launched in February 2015, Noel Ebbs has driven his business forward faster and more comprehensively than anyone had ever thought possible.

We here at *Tacsaí* have tracked the progress of the company and have been suitably blown away by their achievements.

Lynk now has 2,500 fully vetted drivers and 90 support staff.

We spoke to Molly Ebbs on the company's meteoric rise.

She said: "This is our busiest year ever, our intake of jobs has increased by 20% since last year which is great for us and the drivers."

So what does the future hold for Lynk?

Molly adds: "Lynk has big plans for the New Year. We are on course to expand across Ireland, England, USA and recently Canada. Our first plan is to expand into Cork, Galway, Limerick and Waterford with two other taxi companies. Along with this exciting news, we are on standby in the UK to launch with separate company called Riide, which is owned by Lynk and 9 other investors. So once we get our ducks in a row, Riide will launch in the UK with over 20,000 drivers, which should put us number 2 in the UK market."





## KP TAXIS A CLASS APART

**Tacsaí Magazine recently caught up with KP Taxis' main man Krzysztof Sierant to hear how his company is going from strength to strength.**

**T**he Finglas-based firm has developed a strong reputation in the last three and a half years since their founding – providing 9 cars for rental to the taxi industry as well as installing meters and other equipment.

Krzysztof said: “We provide full mechanic and electrician jobs along with our taxi rental services. We do laser wheel alignments, pre-NCT testing, air conditioning... everything except panel beating.”

The cars in KP's fleet include two Skoda Superbs, a Passat, a Prius and a 9-seater among others. KP now also have a Wheelchair Accessible Taxi available too. KP also fit roof signs, sell thermal printers and have state-of-the-art Primus Mirror taxi mirrors in stock. For more information on their taxi rental or garage go to [www.kptaxis.ie](http://www.kptaxis.ie) to learn more about this fantastic company and the services on offer.



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# IRISH GOVERNMENT FINALLY PUT THE SQUEEZE ON UBER

## App giant meets resistance from Dublin

Ireland will insert itself into the middle of a European dispute that centres on whether US car-sharing giant Uber should be regulated like a taxi provider.

The government plans to join an upcoming oral hearing in a European Court of Justice case between a group called Asociación Profesional Élite Taxi and the San Francisco-based company.

Asociación Profesional Élite Taxi is Barcelona's licensed taxi-drivers association and the hearing is being held to determine whether Uber should be treated as a digital service or a transport service.

The case has major implications for the company's business in Europe, because if Uber is ruled an IT service it opens the door for it to circumvent national taxi regulations.

However, if it is declared a transport service, the company can be regulated like any other operator.

While Uber has grown into one of the world's biggest privately-held tech companies over the past seven years with its model of facilitating paid-for lifts in private drivers' cars, it has run into heavy resistance from taxi companies in several jurisdictions.

Besides passing basic background checks, Uber drivers don't need to have a taxi- or hire-car licence.

When Uber tried to move into Barcelona in 2014, Asociación Profesional Élite Taxi complained to a local court that the US firm was in breach of competition rules.

The court was unsure as to how the law should be interpreted,

so the case was referred to the ECJ.

Ireland is one of seven EU member states to get involved in the case, where it will argue that national taxi laws need to be upheld.

A spokesman for the Department of Transport said: "Ireland's position is that the ability of member states to regulate the services concerned must be maintained with a view to protecting the public interest and ensuring public safety and consumer protection."

The government will argue that Uber's business model, which involved "acting as an intermediary" between drivers and passengers, should be classified as a transport service.

In Ireland, Uber is currently treated like a dispatch operator, which means it is required to provide bookings only to a licensed driver using a licensed vehicle.

In practice, that means the company's app can only be used to book taxis or chauffeur-driven cars, similar to Hailo, due to the effective ban on private drivers taking paying passengers. Uber has been lobbying for those laws to be changed.

Uber is one of Silicon Valley's fastest-growing companies with an estimated valuation of \$68 billion. It has taken on nearly \$13 billion in equity funding so far, including a \$3.5 billion plunge from Saudi Arabia's sovereign wealth pool.

The company opened a base in Limerick earlier this year and announced plans to hire 300 people to carry out support and customer-service duties for Uber's operations in cities across Europe, the Middle East and Africa.



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# DRIVERS PROTEST AT SOARING INSURANCE PREMIUMS



**While a government report has found that a “blame game is going on”**



**A**lmost one hundred taxi drivers staged a protest in Dublin over the rising cost of motor insurance last month. They beeped their horns while driving through the city centre to draw attention to their demonstration.

Taxi drivers say their protest in Dublin was a ‘last resort’.

Taxis drove through the city centre blaring their horns to draw attention to the rising cost of motor insurance.

Dave McGuinness, the Chairperson of the TTnH said he is hopeful the drivers’ demonstration will help.

Mr McGuinness said “Protesting does actually work in this country, look at the result of the Dublin Bus strike and the Luas strike, their protests worked.

“This is a last resort for taxi drivers, taxi drivers don’t want to be protesting, they want to be out working.”

Elsewhere, insurance premiums have risen by 37% on average, a report has found.

An Oireachtas report has made 76 recommendations; including that there is a “blame game” going on when it comes to the rising cost of car insurance.

Some motorists had been hit with premium hikes in the order of 200-300pc.

The cross-party committee, which is chaired by Fianna Fail TD John McGuinness, expressed “serious concerns”

that consumers have effectively been told to accept these exorbitant increases without any explanation. It also criticised the role of the Central Bank which was accused of abrogating responsibility for protecting consumers, saying motorists had been “thrown to the wolves”.

The insurance industry argues that it has been losing money on motor cover in Ireland for the past number of years and the current increases were an attempt to get premiums back to a profitable rate.

In addition, they maintain that the cost of claims including both individual awards and legal fees are driving up premiums. These arguments were rejected by the committee as no supporting evidence to verify their claims was supplied.

New laws forcing insurance companies to reveal details of claims, measures to crackdown on fraud and tougher penalties for drivers caught speeding are among some of the 71 key recommendations in the report.

But it is the lack of transparency in revealing the cost of claims and the lack of data that is the core problem, according to the report.

The committee accused the insurance industry of hiding key information from customers; more than 70pc of claims cases are settled out of court by the insurers with no public visibility of the sums involved in the awards.

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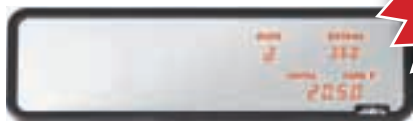
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# THE CLOSURE OF THE GRESHAM RANK A SAD DAY FOR THE INDUSTRY

***Tony Rowe laments Dublin's rank closures.***

**T**he face of Dublin city centre has changed dramatically since the first recorded photographs of the nation's capital. Nelson's Pillar has been and gone, the trams have gone and come back and all these changes are happening at a faster rate now than ever before. Soon, College Green will be pedestrianised and driving from the south of the river north or vice versa will become known as the long way round.

Rank closures have hit the taxi industry hard, but there's one rank in particular that even the public will miss.

Tony tells us the story of the Gresham Hotel rank.

"Well, there's been public outrage over the closures of taxi ranks in the city centre. We've been overrun with complaints from both the public and those within the industry at the amount of ranks that are going out of commission.

"But probably the oldest taxi rank Ireland, certainly the oldest taxi rank in Dublin anyway, has just closed. It's been decommissioned and demolished and that is the rank on O'Connell Street at the Gresham Hotel. It goes back to the days of horse and carriages, when they were the taxis of the day called Jarveys. And this particular rank fell into that category, it was worked by horse and carriages. The rank itself it really quite

unique. Local people used to have prayer vigils on it. Now it closed on October 18. The rank was famous – it was used for film locations. Celebrities used to get their picture taken at it; people like Bruce Springsteen, Rock Hudson, Kim Novak and very recently aswell, our very own Hozier.

"Now that rank could house 30 taxis, it was there 24 hours a day – all through the night. And it was actually policing the area because the taxis there with their illuminated roof signs did help police the area, and their presence and visibility was quite well known.

"We've been onto the council asking for more ranks – not less. They pulled a bit of tokenism there recently, when they supplied a rank of just three spaces on O'Connell Street. Overall there's been 12 taxi ranks closed down altogether. Recently there's been six, and there's another closure coming up soon on Foster Place. Now on O'Connell Street, you could always get a taxi. We've brought it up with the Minister now that taxis are being shoved into cubby holes, little sideroads, and they're low-visibility. And as a result now taxi revenue is suffering. Apart from the loss of revenue, and maybe because of it, drivers are working longer hours and they're using up more fossil fuel.

"It's contravening contamination and pollution laws;





having drivers driving around in circles waiting to get a space on a rank.

"Now, we want more taxi ranks. We've itemised 57 ranks where we could be supplying a better service. It's quite disgraceful, in fact, that in recent times that a taxi rank has been closed in St James' Hospital. We'd like to see that being resolved.

"In the O'Connell Street area, there was a rank at Prince's Street, near the GPO, there was a rank on Abbey Street where Wynn's Hotel is, there was a rank on O'Connell Bridge and over O'Connell Bridge and there were ranks on both sides of O'Connell Street where Penneys is now. There were spaces of around 100, that number has now been reduced to three spaces, which is complete and utter lunacy.

"These are some of the current issues we'd like to see some movement on here. We'd like to see the County Council acting in conjunction with the Minister to get something done."

At the time of writing, the Driver Entry Requirements review was taking place, and Tony had this to say on the matter, particularly the new proposed language section; "It's impossible to take a test if you're not familiar with the language. Just visualise going to Germany, not speaking German and taking a test. It must speak volumes about the test, and it must be

looked into if that's the case. It seems like something out of Disneyland, that you could come to a country, not speak the language, not be in a country, but do a test which is supposed to be very substantial?

"We've even had unconfirmed reports, but many reports, that people are going in to do a knowledge test for taxis in Dublin and they're bringing in interpreters with them. This again is complete lunacy and it's unacceptable.

"There are things now like this dress code that's being talked about. Now, we already have a dress code in the industry, and I could tell you people who were actually fined for not having the proper attire. So we don't want them being evasive here and focusing on insignificant things when the real issue have to be addressed. The real issues are; safety for the general public and also safety for the service provider. Taxis need to be treated like everybody else – not being out off main roads and not being put into cubby holes that affect our business and we want taxis to be more visible on the streets of Dublin, particularly in the city centre."

A sad day indeed to see such a famous rank go. Lets hope the council see some sense and find a way of bringing taxis back onto the main streets of the city again.



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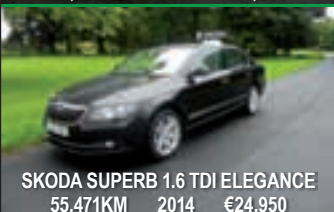
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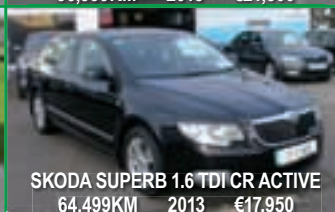
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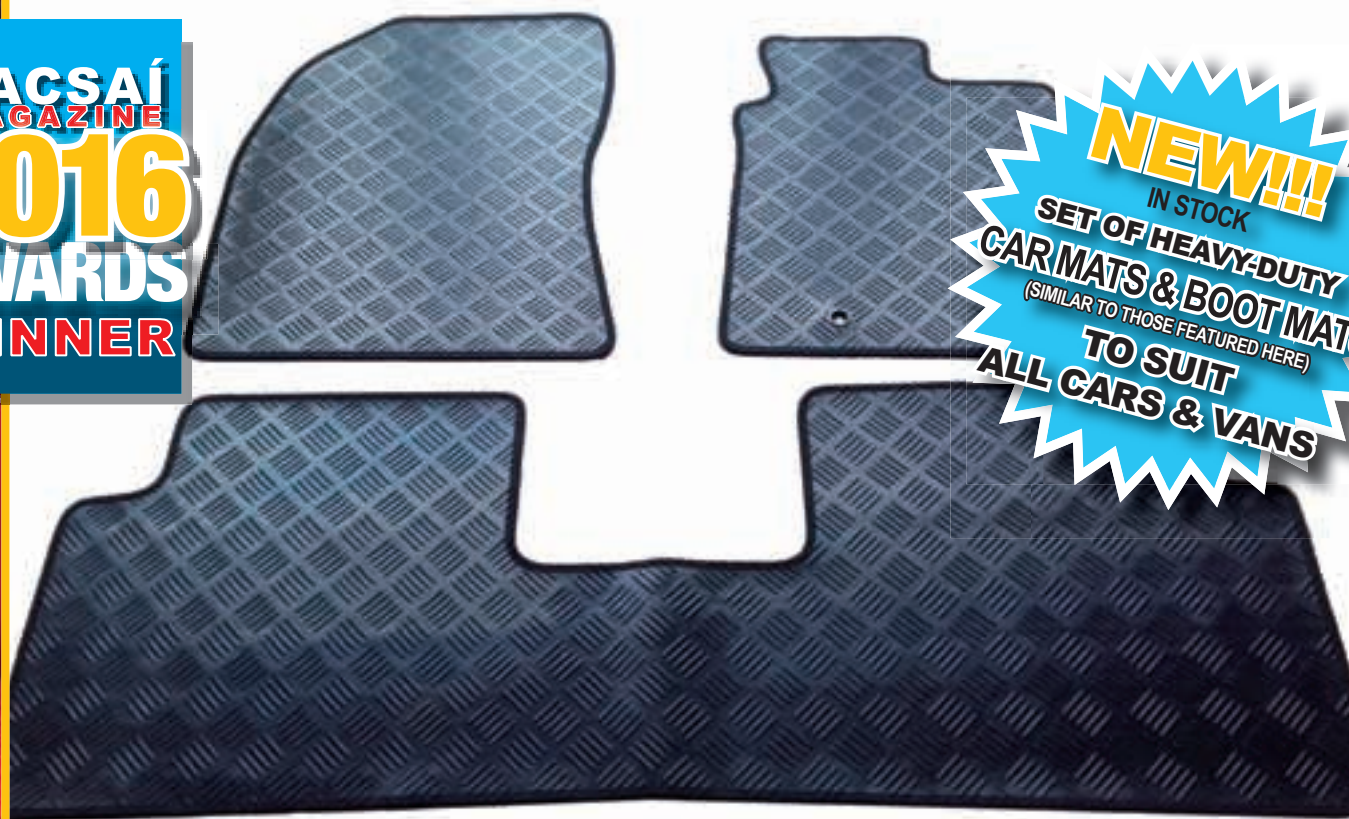
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## Tacsaí talk to Atecea's Noel Maher



Atecea's Noel Maher

**A**n Independent Automotive Engineer should be high on your list of priorities and the first number you call because your potential new car needs something a little more than a tyre-kicking mate who watches Top Gear - it needs a taxi industry automotive specialist.

Are you planning on plying for trade in a Wheelchair Accessible Taxi? Then you will need to get in touch with an independent automotive engineer / vehicle assessor.

Have you been dealing with an insurance company and numerous other parties following an incident on the road?. If you require expert advice regarding your vehicle then, Talk to an independent automotive engineer. Talk to ATECEA.

We did. In early December Tacsaí Magazine spoke to Noel Maher, who is an avid supporter of the taxi industry, and as a highly-qualified engineer, he is here to help.

Noel is an experienced vehicle assessor and technical automotive examiner with over 20 years in the insurance industry and vehicle inspection sectors.

His areas of expertise include damage assessment & estimation, forensic investigation, electronic diagnostics, motor industry technology, vehicle repair processes, special investigation and fraud.

He told us: "I understand the problems and issue the normal driver is facing out there every day and it is a thankless job with no recognition given.

"The industry is changing and we are happy to support the industry with a good service that will benefit drivers if they need Car Inspections Ireland – launching soon – or ATECEA."

The company's website says: "The deregulation of the taxi industry in recent years has brought a much larger fleet of Public Service Vehicles (PSV) to the nation. This fleet has grown rapidly across Ireland. The nature of the role requires the vehicle to be on the road at least eight hours a day, five to six days a week. Taxi operators rely on their vehicles being available and roadworthy in order to maintain their business.

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Noel adds: "If anyone in the taxi industry requires any of the above certification or reports we are happy to advise and provide the necessary certification.

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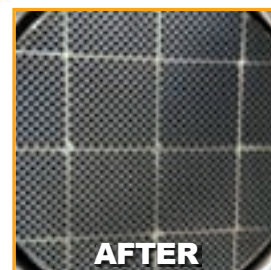
**I**s your DPF light on? Has your car lost power and gone into limp mode? If the answer is YES then your Diesel Particulate Filter is probably blocked.

Your esteemed editor at Tacsáí Magazine did not have that knowledge knocking around inside his noggin though of course, the good folks at DPF Doctor did. And they're the experts!

Limerick-based DPF Doctor are now introducing an economical alternative to expensive replacement in the form of Diesel Particulate Filter Cleaning. Clogged diesel particulate filters are a common problem in Ireland, particularly in urban areas.

Diesel vehicles that only do short trips are prone to DPF clogging as high exhaust gas temperatures necessary for regeneration are not reached. This means the filter clogs over time, reducing engine performance and causing possible engine failure. This can happen after driving as little as 20,000 km on urban journeys only, where as a DPF will normally last 100,000 km or more.

We spoke to Paul at the company, who said: "The aim is to remove 80% in the average diesel particulate (matter) emissions and although a great concept, it brings about a whole new line of problems. We are taking calls constantly from anxious customers and garages across the country when their DPF light is illuminated on the dash, indicating that there is at least a partial blockage in the DPF system."



If the majority of journeys are city based, short or stop/start, or a combination of them all, then the filter will not be able to regenerate, the honeycomb will block with soot and a DPF warning light will illuminate on the dash board, in some cases the car may enter Limp Mode to protect both the DPF and the engine from damage.

"But the story does not end there; the result of the regeneration is ash, over a period of time the ash resulting from correct regeneration accumulates inside the filter, a correctly operating filter will eventually block with ash, something usually between 70,000 and 100,000 miles.

"Regular filter cleaning will help reduce engine emissions, reduce ash build up in the filter, extend the life of the Diesel Particulate Filter, keep vehicle running costs down, improve overall fuel economy and maintain an efficient engine."

# TAKING THE MICK!

## Driver with expired license lands Mattress Mick €900 fine

**B**edding salesman and internet sensation Mattress Mick has been ordered to pay €900 for unwittingly renting out a taxi to a driver with an expired public service vehicle licence.

Prosecuted by the National Transport Authority (NTA) under his real name, Michael Flynn, the 65-year-old was summonsed to appear at Dublin District Court on Monday.

Mr Flynn, of Kincora Road, Dublin 3, pleaded guilty to not keeping a record of the driver's licence but was given a chance to avoid a criminal conviction.

Judge John O'Neill was told that during a compliance check a taxi was stopped in Stillorgan in Dublin on March 8th last. It took off at speed, but the driver's home was

later placed under surveillance. When questioned, the man admitted he had been the driver and his public service vehicle (PSV) licence had expired in January 2015.

He had rented the taxi from Mr Flynn, who was later interviewed by an NTA inspector. Judge O'Neill heard Mr Flynn was found to be very co-operative and professional.

Mr Flynn, who represented himself, told the judge he had not known the driver who rented the taxi from him did not have a PSV licence at the time. He said he had paid for the man to get one reissued. The driver does not rent the taxi from him anymore.

Judge O'Neill noted his explanation and ordered him to donate €500 to the Simon Community and to pay €400 in prosecution costs.



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# GALWAY DRIVER SPEAKS OUT ABOUT RACISM

**Customers are still skipping down the ranks to find white drivers.**

**W**e here at *Tacsai* have heard this kind of story before. A white customer approaches a rank, sees that a black driver is at the front of the queue, and demands to pass further along the rank until they meet a “suitable driver”.

It’s a sickening practice, and one that we had hoped was on the decline. Not so, it seems.

Black taxi drivers have expressed concern about people deliberately walking past their vehicles at ranks in Galway city, and getting into taxis with a white person behind the wheel.

“Why do customers have the right to pick a cab from the rank rather than the first car in the rank?” asked one driver, Steve Sommaria, from Nigeria.

“I have the same car, pay the same tax, and the same insurance as the other guy. Ireland is my home and I pay my taxes. Yet, just because I have a different colour of skin, some people don’t want to use my car. It is a big problem in the community.”

“I have heard people say, ‘Oh, you’re black, fuck off’ after opening the door of my cab. It’s hard to live up to the motto that the customer is always right in a situation like that.”

Mr Sommaria also said he was incredulous recently when a garda arrived on the scene after a customer broke his windscreen. He had called the gardaí, but the garda was

more interested in talking to the person who had committed the offence.

Charles Ikenna Igbokwe, a Nigerian barrister who works as a cab driver in Galway, does not believe the vast majority of Irish people are racist.

“The issue of racism is worldwide,” he said. “Some people clench when they see a black man. They believe the media or the film industry when black men are being portrayed in a bad light. I don’t want to call it racism.

“It’s more implicit bias, judging somebody without knowing his character or giving him a chance. Some people are ignorant because of things they have been told.”

He said it saddened him to experience racism at work in Galway because Irish people had experienced the same sort of hostility when they encountered ‘No blacks, no Irish, no dogs’ signs in the UK in the past.

Some reading this magazine will have witnessed or even been victim of this kind of behaviour from the public in the past. Maybe even today, or tonight?

Do not tolerate it. Do let these customers pick and choose their drivers. They must obey the order of the rank, as the authorities demand the drivers obey the authority of the rank. And if they do pass the first car, it’s your duty to gently remind the customer, that no other driver on the rank will take their fare.

Like a virus, this practise cannot spread if it is not let.





# DRIVERS GIVEN €35,000 IN FINES LAST YEAR

## NTA release new figures

**T**axi drivers were handed down on-the-spot fines worth over €35,000 last year for breaches of rules and regulations governing the industry.

The National Transport Authority reported that increased compliance checks on vehicles and drivers in 2015 resulted in 692 fixed charges notices totalling €35,410 being issued to taxi licence holders.

The single biggest number of fixed payment notices — around 40% of the total — were related to drivers failing to notify details of the vehicle being operated to the NTA. Such a breach incurs a fine of €40 for the driver of the vehicle in question.

The NTA said the registering of such information was important as it is used to support the Driver Check App. The app, which was introduced by former Public Transport Minister Alan Kelly TD allows passengers or intending passengers to assess the details of their taxi driver and vehicles and to email a chosen third party the details for security reasons.

NTA officials carried out almost 40,900 checks and audits on taxi drivers and their vehicles in 2015. That is an increase of 45% on 2014 figures.

The second most common offence committed by drivers

was standing for hire in a location that was not an appointed taxi rank while 14 drivers were fined €250 each for having taxi meters which gave out inaccurate readings. Over three quarters of fixed-payment notices were paid on the spot, with the remainder of the case then proceeding to court for prosecution.

The NTA said 154 cases ended up in court last year for the non-payment of fixed payment notices.

An additional 99 court cases were brought last year for breaches of legislation outside of the system of on-the-spot fines. The NTA said it was successful in over 94% of cases, which then resulted in a criminal prosecution for the drivers.

The latest annual report also showed the total number of complaints against taxi drivers fell 2.5% last year to 928, that number is down from 952 in 2014.

More than half of all complaints related to the conduct, behaviour or identification of a driver.

A total of 3,086 tests to become a taxi driver were taken by 1,458 candidates last year — an annual increase of 24%.

Almost 40% were successful, although it required 2.33 attempts on average to achieve a pass mark.

However, 47% of successful candidates passed on their first attempt.



# WORLDWIDE REPORT

TAXI NEWS ROUND-UP FROM AROUND THE GLOBE.

## EU

The Uber is 'Not a Taxi Company' defense is currently on trial in the EU.

The stakes are high as the company fights being regulated as a transportation provider in bloc's Court of Justice

Uber Technologies Inc. has long tried to fight local transportation laws by saying it isn't a transportation company. Judges in Luxembourg heard oral arguments Tuesday in a court case that could decide whether that defense will work in Europe.

A ruling isn't expected until next year, but the stakes in the case are high for Uber on one side, and taxi companies and local regulators in Europe on the other. They have been locked in battles across some of the European Union's biggest countries.

The outcome could also have broader implications for other tech companies, like Airbnb Inc., that have faced regulatory scuffles in Europe. Several EU countries are also lined up on both sides of the fight, both at the hearing and in briefs filed ahead of the case.

Many regulators and taxi companies argue that Uber is a scofflaw that has raised more than \$11 billion in capital to steamroll into countries, ignoring rules aimed at protecting passengers and drivers—while crushing local competition.

Uber argues that national transportation regulations in Europe are outdated. It is arguing at the EU's Court of Justice that those rules don't apply to Uber because it is an online-service provider, rather than a transportation provider—a designation that it says should give it protection under existing EU laws.

Uber argued Tuesday that because it is an "information society services provider" that matches drivers with passengers, it should benefit from EU protections for such businesses' freedom to provide services anywhere in the EU without facing disproportionate licensing requirements.

"This case should show that European laws fully support the development of a digital single market," said Gareth Mead, a spokesman for the California-based firm.

Elite Taxi, the Barcelona-based association of independent taxi drivers that initiated the case against Uber, disagrees. "Uber is a company that is building a new model for transportation service at no cost, using third parties. It's unfair competition," Ivan Sesma, a member of the association's management board, said in an interview.

The Luxembourg case is the latest round in a pugnacious legal strategy by the California-based firm to punch through regulatory battles, particularly in Europe. The company has faced local or national bans on at least some of its

services in Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain and Hungary. Two French executives were fined in criminal court earlier this year for one service that used drivers without professional licenses.

The company also faced a setback in London in October when a tribunal said its drivers were entitled to minimum wage and paid holidays, potentially upending its business model.

## CANADA

Uber is now revving their engines after a bylaw review makes their business model feasible in Calgary.

Councillors approved a livery bylaw tweak (in the form of a one-year pilot) that would give Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) another licensing fee option. These changes are what Uber has indicated would bring their services back to city streets after they left in February.

The news brings a mix of anger and relief for some taxi drivers and brokerages, who have been advocating the city release all remaining plates in the wings to help the industry "compete with Uber."

Associated Cab President Roger Richard said Uber was able to do business back in February, and "no other TNC wanted these changes."

"It's all about Uber making more money," said Richard. "If one side is open, the other side should be the same...if they won't regulate the number of TNCs, they shouldn't regulate the number of taxis."

## UK

Taxi companies, angry at proposed tougher laws licensing the trade from Pendle Borough Council, Burnley, called a snap strike in Pendle last month. The dispute, which was sparked by the council's plans to introduce a stricter, wider-reaching Taxi Licensing Policy, spilled over when angry drivers put the brakes on their trade overnight.

Leader of Pendle Council, Coun. Mohammed Iqbal, took to social media when he announced that no notice of industrial action had been given. He defended the council's actions and said that public safety was paramount.

He said: "I can confirm that no notice was given to Pendle Council about a strike by taxi drivers in Pendle. "In terms of the reasons for the strike I like many people are unaware of these and would ask the taxi association representatives to share the grounds for the sudden strike.

"One reason given was the so-called increase in fees. I will post the council





report for everyone to read. Please note we had no objections to the revised fee structure when the decision was taken in September 2016.

“As leader of the council I am prepared to meet with the trade and avoid any further disruption to the public but safety is not something we will compromise on.”

Taxi firm Matrix Cars said: “It has been agreed that the strike action will continue up to the council meeting on Monday night. At this time we will hopefully know when the taxi companies will resume service.

“We apologise for any inconvenience caused and thank you for your continued patience and support.”

### **SOUTH AFRICA**

A Limpopo taxi driver was shot and killed on Sunday by a fellow driver in what is suspected to be a flare up of violence over Limpopo taxi routes, local police have said.

The 25-year-old driver was murdered at a traffic light behind the Seshego police station, near Polokwane, on Sunday.

A 30-year-old taxi driver was arrested in connection with the shooting.

The killing comes weeks after a taxi was set alight during a bitter feud between taxi operators in the same area.

Police said that during Sunday’s incident the two taxi drivers started

assaulting each other and one pulled out a firearm and shot his rival.

“Two taxis stopped at a red [traffic light] and a driver who was at the back alighted, ran to the one in the front, slapped the other driver... and later produced a firearm and shot him to death at a close range while he was still behind the steering wheel,” police spokesperson Lieutenant Colonel Moatshe Ngoape said.

The gunman was arrested.

### **UNITED STATES**

UBER is reportedly set to employ people convicted of being PROSTITUTES in a bold new scheme designed to give reformed criminals the chance to turn their lives around.

The taxi app is preparing to change its rules in some American states so people with non-violent convictions can begin working as drivers.

This means that ex-sex workers can take to the road, as well as people who have convictions for harassment, resisting arrest, petty theft or minor property damage.

The rules have already come into force in California but will be rolled out in Connecticut at the beginning of next year.

On his Facebook page, founder Travis Kalanick wrote: “Millions of Americans have served their time and want to earn an honest living.

“To break the cycle of recidivism, we need to give them a second chance.”



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With over twenty years of experience in the motortrade, the Freedom Mobility team are not only experts in the purchase of wheelchair accessible vehicles, they are also available to provide advice to disabled drivers on the purchase of new and second-hand vehicles for

adaptation to suit their needs.

The National Disability Authority reports that between 10 and 20% of people in Ireland have disabling conditions; Freedom Mobility aims to support these individuals to ensure that transport is both easily accessible and affordable.

With showrooms in Mayo and Galway, Freedom Mobility also provides a no-obligation home visit service and ongoing customer support.

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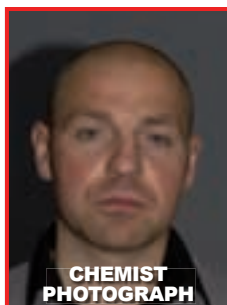
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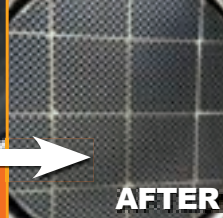
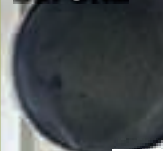
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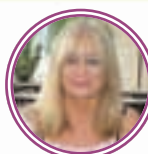
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## WeBringg offering drivers a chance to earn more.

**S**eán Murray from WeBringg has an interesting one for all drivers out there this month.

His company, co-founded with Alan Hickey, wants to change the way goods move by crowd sourcing drivers to connect businesses and their customers in minutes rather than days. WeBringg is an on-demand delivery platform aiming to disrupt traditional logistics and providing retailers with a new competitive edge.

WeBringg connects retailers' websites with their team of crowd sourced drivers to deliver online sales same day or within a 1 hour window of choice.

"It's crowd-sourced delivery. Basically anyone can deliver for us once they've passed our background checks and they have the app downloaded.

"We get all our drivers in for a one-to-one training session, and then we do our own little background check aswell, usually just having the SPSV details is enough though.

"The job works exactly the same as Hailo. So if there's a job within a few kilometres of them they'll get a notification if they're

the closest one to it, and then they can either accept or reject it. If they accept, they will go to the collection point which is usually a retail outlet, they have an ID badge, they'll show that, they'll show their app that'll have their delivery details on and they pick it up and off they go.

"We do a flat rate with the retailers. The driver will come out with roughly 5.25 euros for a job, now our jobs at the moment are, on average, taking twenty minutes or less and they're about five to six kilometres long.

"We do have a lot of taxi drivers on board with us at the moment and some drivers are more than happy to do it because they're picking up fares in their slack time."

Seán adds: "Consumers are now expecting a lot more from their online purchases. They want instant gratification, the same feeling they get when they are in a store. The term omni-channel has been around for a few years but we are now seeing retailers understanding the importance of giving a consistent experience across all channels. This now applies to the delivery of online sales. When a customer buys online and selects a WeBringg delivery, they will receive their goods in minutes not in days.

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# Knock Knock...

**Harry prays to God: Dear Lord, please make me win the lottery. The next day Harry begs the Lord again: Please make it so I win the lottery, Lord! The next day, Harry again prays: Please, please, dear Lord, make me win the lottery! Suddenly he hears a voice from above: Harry, would you kindly go and buy a lottery ticket.**

**Police officer talks to a driver: Your tail light is broken, your tires must be exchanged and your bumper hangs halfway down. That will be 300 dollars.**

**Driver: Alright, go ahead. They want twice as much as that at the garage.**

**An old guy in his Volvo is driving home from work when his wife rings him on his cell phone.**

**"Honey," she says in a worried voice, "please be careful. There was a bit on the news just now, some lunatic is driving the wrong way down the highway."**

**"Oh it's worse than that," he replies, "there are hundreds of them!"**

**A man hired a lawyer when he got sued by his company for embezzlement of many millions. At the beginning of the process, the lawyer kindly reassured him: "Don't worry, you'll never go to jail with that amount of money." And the lawyer was right. When the man did go to jail, he didn't have a penny anymore.**

**Mother: Eat your bread.**

**Child: I don't like bread. Why do I have to eat the bread.**

**Mother: So you become big and strong.**

**Child: Why do I have to become big and strong?**

**Mother: So you can provide the daily bread to your family.**

**Child: But I don't like bread!**

**Man to his wife: "Do you know what our 6 year old son wants to be once he's big?"**

**Wife: "No."**

**Man: "A bin man. And you know why?"**

**Wife: "No, why?"**

**Man: "Because he thinks they only work on Tuesdays."**

**The magical golden fish agreed to grant three men a wish each.**

**The first man wished for a room full of gold.**

**The second man wished for a room full of diamonds.**

**The third man wished for keys to those rooms.**

**Teacher: "OK class, who will give me the chemical formula for water?"**

**Pupil: "HIJKLMNO."**

**Teacher: "What on earth are you on about?"**

**Pupil: "Well you said yourself yesterday it was H to O!"**

**An eskimo brings his friend to his home for a visit. When they arrive, his friend asks, puzzled – "So where's your igloo?"**

**"Oh no, I must've left the iron on..."**



## QUESTIONS

1. In 2001, Irish troops vacated Camp Shamrock, ending more than two decades of peacekeeping duty in which country?
2. The lead singer of which band wrote the opening theme tune to Channel 4 comedy series, Father Ted?
3. Who became Northern Ireland's first Prime Minister in 1921?
4. Tattoo, Calling Card and Wheels Within Wheels are all albums by which Irish musician?
5. If the colour of the carpet in the Dáil Chamber is blue, what colour are the carpets in Seanad Éireann?
6. Which horse trained by Jim Dreaper won the Irish Grand National in 1975, 1976 and 1978?
7. Which late broadcaster and astronomer was once curator of Armagh Observatory?
8. Who took over from Gay Byrne as Chair of the Road Safety Authority in 2014?
9. In which decade was a proposal for the penalty kick accepted by the Football Association (FA)? The proposal was the brainchild of Armagh's William McCrum and was championed by his colleague in the FAI, Jack Reid.
10. How many presenters of the Rose of Tralee have there been?
11. Who from 1959 to 1977 was the first presenter of the Rose of Tralee?
12. Mullagh, Feakle, Carron and Labasheeda are all villages in which Irish county?
13. What was the final score in Munster's famous 1978 win over the All Blacks?
14. Former US President Bill Clinton travelled to which Northern Irish town in 2002 to open a £3m peace centre named after him?
15. In what year did the last outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease occur on the island of Ireland?
16. Priest and established palaeographer, Leonard Boyle was a native of which Irish County?
17. Name the Mayor of Limerick City who was shot at his home by disguised members of the Black and Tans in 1921.
18. Which former Sunday Tribune editor replaced Eamon Dunphy as presenter of Today FM's The Last Word show in 2002?
19. Born in 1957, athlete John Treacy is a native of which Irish county?
20. In which year did George Bernard Shaw die?
21. In Northern Ireland's Parliament at Stormont, what does MLA stand for?

## THE TAXI MAGAZINE CHRISTMAS QUIZ

22. What is the county town of Leitrim?
23. Who scored the equalising goal for the Republic of Ireland in their 1-1 draw with Germany in October 2014?
24. How many times has Clare won the Liam McCarthy Cup?
25. Who were the first winners of Liam McCarthy Cup?
26. Irish republican and socialist leader, James Connolly was born in which city?
27. What was the title of U2's first album?
28. Who is the Irish Government Chief Whip (as of November 2014)?
29. Which future Ireland and Lions rugby captain was born in Toomebridge, Co. Antrim in 1940?
30. While Father Ted Crilly lived on Craggy Island, what island did Father Dick Byrne live on?

21. Members of the Legislative Assembly  
22. Carrick-on-Shannon  
23. John O'Shea  
24. 3 (Clare have won 4 All Ireland titles. However, the 1914 win was before the Liam McCarthy Cup's introduction)  
25. Limerick (1921)  
26. Edinburgh  
27. Boy  
28. Paul Kehoe  
29. Willie John McBride  
30. Rugged Island

10. 7 (Kevin Hilton, Gay Byrne, Derek Davis, Marty Wheahan, Ryan Tubridy, Ray D'Arcy, Dáithí Ó Sé)  
11. Kevin Hilton  
12. Clare  
13. 12-0  
14. Enniskillen  
15. 2001  
16. Donegal  
17. George Clancy  
18. Matt Cooper  
19. Waterford (born in Waterstown)  
20. 1950

1. Lebanon  
2. The Divine Comedy (lead singer Neil Hannon wrote the theme)  
3. James Craig  
4. Rory Gallagher  
5. Blue  
6. Brown Lad  
7. Sir Patrick Moore  
8. Liz O'Donnell  
9. 1890s (1891 was the exact year)

## ANSWERS



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MOISTURE CONTENT TO ENSURE MAXIMUM HEAT AND QUALITY!**

Crate dimensions : L115 x W87 x H200cm



## KILN DRIED HARDWOOD LOGS 2m Crate

**Birch**  
WAS €335.00  
Now Only **€300.00**

**Ash or Oak**  
WAS €370.00  
Now Only **€335.00**

Crate dimensions : L115 x W87 x H120cm



## KILN DRIED HARDWOOD LOGS 1.2m Crate

**Birch**  
WAS €235.00  
Now Only **€200.00**

**Ash or Oak**  
WAS €270.00  
Now Only **€235.00**

**CUT TO AN AVERAGE LENGTH OF 25CM.  
PRICE INCLUDES VAT & NATIONWIDE DELIVERY**

Bag dimensions : L80 x W80 x H80cm



## KILN DRIED HARDWOOD LOGS Bulk Bag

**Birch** WAS €99.00  
Now Only **€90.00**

**Ash or Oak**  
WAS €110.00  
Now Only **€100.00**

**Super  
Sale Prices**

Pallet dimensions : L120 x W100 x H100cm



## FULL PALLET KILN DRIED HARDWOOD LOGS

**Birch**  
WAS €325.00  
Now Only **€290.00**

50 x 15KG  
NET BAGS

**Birch**  
WAS €225.00  
Now Only **€200.00**

50 x 10KG  
NET BAGS

Mention this advertisement to receive discount prices - Offer ends 19th November - All major credit cards accepted.

See [www.monahans.ie](http://www.monahans.ie) for product range & low prices



# PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT **THINK GREEN**



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# ARE YOU...?



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02. LOOKING FOR A 7-SEATER RENTAL OR RENT-TO-BUY?
03. NEEDING A COMPETITIVE INSURANCE QUOTE?
04. WANTING A 152 TAXI ON LPG WITH JUST A €5000 DEPOSIT?
05. NEEDING A PRIUS TAXI TO DRIVE? HEARD ABOUT THE **eCABS** BENEFIT?
06. NEEDING A TAXI SECURITY SYSTEM? (**KABZY**)
07. NEEDING AN LPG CAR OR CONVERSION?
08. NEEDING A NEWER DIESEL TAXI?

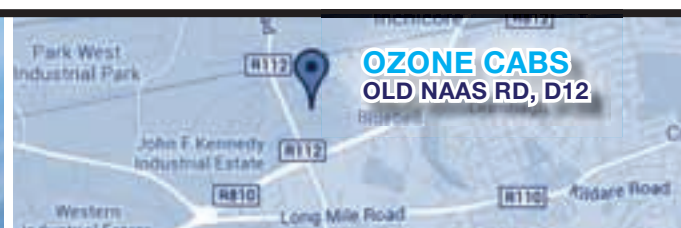


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**OZONE CARS & CABS: PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT - EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY - SECURING FUTURES**