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EDITORIAL

It's all going to hell in a handbasket for Uber this month. The London Mayor has officially shut the company down in one of Europe's biggest cities. And here, Tony Roe is calling for the Irish authorities to follow suit and give the app the boot.

There's been good news for other apps though, as mytaxi have announced a huge booster for their drivers with news that the two euro pick up charge has been implemented. We hear from Tim Arnold and Niall Carson at the mytaxi headquarters to hear all about their plans for Ireland and their commitment to see more drivers enter the taxi industry.

Lynk are going nationwide. Noel Ebbs tells us about their plans in what is a massive expansion of their operation, incorporating Ireland's biggest cities into their already-strong base in Dublin, and we look forward to hearing more good news from them.

The NTA last month released some shocking figures; driver numbers in Ireland are down 45% from the peak of 2009. A pick up in the economy

seems to have led to 20,000 drivers fleeing the industry for pastures new. The drop-off has had a big knock-on effect for many, the general public are getting increasingly frustrated with trying to hail a cab, while cab companies are struggling to meet supply and demand expectations.

One such start-up company, Whistle Taxi App, are putting the call out to drivers to get involved in their venture. We hear from John Boyle on what Whistle have been getting up to (some very funny shenanigans on the streets on Dublin indeed).

One driver has highlighted the problems with illegal operators at Dublin airport, while we print the shocking story of a cabbie who was attacked by a bus driver in Limerick.

And last but certainly not least, the Dublin Taxidriver's Special Children's Day Out has been another roaring success! We speak to a driver who participated and organiser Johnny Walker to hear how this year's event went.

We have all this and more in this month's Tacsai Magazine, enjoy!

Stephen Young
Editor

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LONDON GIVE UBER THE BOOT

App company has its license revoked as the house of cards comes falling down

2017 is the Chinese year of the rooster, for Uber, there's been no golden eggs, only rotten ones.

The American app company has been embroiled in controversy for months now – from Travis Kalenick's embarrassing rant to board resignations – and it seems the wheels may finally be coming off the Google-backed billion-dollar venture.

Uber UK's chief executive has come out and apologised for the taxi app's mistakes in London and promised to change as the company fights a decision by the city not to renew its licence. The firm is battling to keep operating in the English capital after Transport for London decided not to renew its licence to operate. Uber's London licence expired on September 30th, although it will continue to run taxis while it pursues a legal appeal process that could last a year.

TfL said last week Uber was not a "fit and proper" private car-hire operator and cited four areas of concern, including its approach to reporting criminal offences and carrying out background checks on drivers. But sources close to TfL indicated that a change of conduct from the taxi firm, the culture of which is being reformed by its new chief executive, could leave the door open to a fresh licence application.

Dara Khosrowshahi, who succeeded Uber founder Travis Kalanick as CEO a month ago, wrote in an open letter: "While Uber has revolutionised the way people move in cities around the world, it's equally true that we've got things wrong along the way. On behalf of everyone at Uber globally, I apologise for the mistakes we've made.

"We will appeal [against] the decision on behalf of millions of Londoners, but we do so with the knowledge that we must also change."

Sadiq Khan, the London mayor and chair of TfL, said he welcomed Khosrowshahi's apology. "Obviously I am pleased that he has acknowledged the issues that Uber faces in London," Khan said. "Even though there is a legal process in place, I have asked TfL to make themselves available to meet with him."

However, another Uber executive told the BBC on Monday the company did not understand the concerns of London's transport regulator.

Fred Jones, an executive at Uber's UK operation, said: "Sitting down with TfL representatives as soon as possible would be the most helpful thing to really understand their concerns, to work out what they are. It is just not clear to us what those concerns are."

When asked why Uber does not report criminal offences directly to the police and instead notifies TfL, which lengthens

the investigative process, Jones said: "We follow the rules."

Referring to one specific incident involving an Uber driver who sexually assaulted a passenger, he said: "We hold our hands up, we made a mistake. In that incident we just didn't realise when that passenger wrote in how serious it was ... We apologise to everyone involved."

The Uber driver involved stayed on the company's books and went on to commit another, more serious, attack.

Jones defended Uber's usual practice of notifying TfL of criminal offences. "As soon as we receive a serious complaint or we are alerted of it, we restrict the access to the app and immediately investigate and that would involve notifying TfL."

He added that Uber had set up a working group. "This is absolutely something we will work on with the police. This is absolutely an area where we want to go further."

Khan said Uber had brought "unfair pressure" on TfL, employing an "army" of PR experts and lawyers.

The mayor said: "I want companies that abide by the rules, I want companies that innovate, harbour new technologies, I want disruptive technology coming to London but you've got to play by the rules."

In a separate dispute, Uber will on Wednesday challenge a tribunal ruling over the employment status of its drivers, which lawyers say is also a public safety issue. Uber is attempting to overturn a landmark ruling that its drivers are workers, with rights to paid holiday and the minimum wage.

Lawyers representing the original claimants, James Farrar and Yaseen Aslam, said Uber was deliberately "kicking the can down the road" and had so far ignored the ruling from October last year. Paul Jennings, of Bates Wells Braithwaite, said: "At the heart of this is safety. Imagine if it was bus or train drivers who couldn't take a paid holiday. Given the numbers involved and the nature of this work, there is a real risk."

So what now for Uber in Ireland? The Centre of Excellence in Limerick is still standing, though exactly what kind of 'excellence' they are espousing in the Treaty County god only knows...

The NTA and Minister of Transport have both put blocks on the company's plans to launch UberPop and UberX, deeming those practices illegal for the Irish market. In a meeting Tacsáí held with Uber three years ago, we were told that the company had "no plans" to launch UberPop or UberX in the Irish market. We have that on record. So can Ireland really trust a company who have gone back on their word? Can Ireland trust a company who have been given the boot out of London and countless other cities across the globe?

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THE BEST DAY YET!

**Dublin
Taxidriver's
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Day Out is a huge
success.**



Another September has been and gone, and another Dublin Taxidriver's Special Children's Day Out has been a massive success!

Dublin taxi drivers treated hundreds of special needs children and adults to a grand tour of the capital last month.

Special schools and groups were ferried around the city in style, with a parade on O'Connell Street and a garda escort to Leopardstown Racecourse for food and an afternoon disco.

Lorraine O'Connor, a special needs assistant at St Joseph's Special School in Tallaght, said the big day out was a highlight in the students' calendar – some of whom rarely get into the city.

"They look forward to it every year, because they really have a ball," she said.

"The taxi men couldn't be nicer either. They were telling jokes the whole way in the car.

"A lot of them wouldn't get into town. An awful lot of them wouldn't even go on a bus.

"If they're from Tallaght, they wouldn't leave Tallaght. This is their only chance to get into town."

The special day first began in 1960 and taxi drivers from across the city continue to volunteer.

John Hoey, a taxi driver from Blanchardstown, has been involved in the event for 20 years.

"I'm retired now but I still do the children's outing every year," he said. "I have an old 1960 taxi and it leads the parade most years.

"I think the taxi drivers sometimes get more pleasure than some of the kids," he added. "It's something that has to be done every year, it makes you feel good."

"It's a fantastic day out," said Johnny Walker, who has been chairman of the organising committee for 26 years.

"You see a lot of children here today and to watch them when the disco starts, they're jumping around, dancing and smiling. It's a great morning."

Mr Walker praised the taxi drivers who fundraised for the day.

"We have great support from all the taxi drivers for this," he said.

"They're losing a day's pay for all this, they put a lot into it."

They do indeed. It's a great day for the kids, a good representation of Dublin's taxi drivers, and a celebration for the industry as a whole. Long may it continue!



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MASSIVE DROP IN DRIVER NUMBERS

Dramatic decrease of 45%

The number of taxi drivers on the roads has dramatically dropped by 45% since 2009, according to figures from the National Transport Authority. The number of active drivers had decreased to 26,087 at the end of August 2017 from 47,222 active drivers eight years ago.

Joe Herron, president of the Irish Taxi Drivers' Federation, said there has been a huge number of drivers leaving the industry and living standards are "beginning to return to a favourable level".

Mr Herron said there has been countless drivers leaving the industry after the country's roads were "flooded with taxis" in 2009.

"At its peak you were talking about roughly the same amount of taxis operating in Dublin as there are in London, and we have a population of around one million," he said.

"Other jobs have become available now and loads of people have left the business, leaving wages starting to return to a more favourable level," he said.

It came as news broke that taxi app mytaxi will now be adding a fee of €2 for passengers.

The Irish Taxi Drivers' Federation said the additional fee for passengers is "not a new charge" and goes back decades.

"This new charge is a very small charge for a driver to pick you up from outside your place or your preferred location and is part of the driver's wages and earnings," he said.

Mr Herron said drivers have been known to accept a job from 4km away from the pick-up point.

Meanwhile, the Maximum Fare Order Proposal has been approved.

Section 24 of the Taxi Regulation Act 2013 empowers NTA to make a "maximum fares order" fixing the maximum fares that may be charged by the driver of a taxi. The making of a maximum fares order is a matter reserved for NTA Board determination. In accordance with section 24 of the consolidated Taxi Regulation Acts 2013 and 2016, a consultation process must be undertaken in relation to any proposed maximum fares order.

This involves public advertisement, publication of the proposals, a submissions period and consultation with prescribed parties. Each of the requirements in relation to these processes was complied with over recent months. The NTA Board met today (September 15) to consider the recent Taxi Fares Review. The Board approved the proposed increase in the maximum taxi fare by an average of 3.22%, to take effect on February 1st 2018.



SHOCKING STORY OF BUS DRIVER'S ATTACK ON CABBIE



A bus driver bringing home Irish rugby fans got into a late-night fight over parking with a taxi driver and allegedly punched the taxi man 10 to 15 times in the face and stomach.

Petrus Hoffman's solicitor Daragh Hassett said his client lost his job as a result of his assault on taxi driver Sean O'Connor, 57, in November 2016.

Hoffman, of Huntsfield Avenue, Dooradoyle, Limerick, was bringing home Irish rugby fans after the Ireland versus Australia rugby match last November.

Inspector Kieran Ruane told Ennis District Court Hoffman got into the row with O'Connor in the carpark of the Temple Gate Hotel in Ennis shortly after midnight on 27 November.

Ruane said Hoffman alleged that the way O'Connor's taxi was parked resulted in his bus hitting a bollard and sustaining damage.

The inspector said that, as passengers were disembarking, Hoffman got out of the bus and started to verbally abuse O'Connor over the way he was parked.

According to the inspector, one witness said Hoffman punched O'Connor 10 to 15 times in the face and stomach. Hoffman has pleaded guilty to assaulting O'Connor.

Hassett said: "This wasn't handbags. Hoffman clearly landed some punches on this man."

Judge Patrick Durcan said: "This is an appalling case and a very serious case – by the nature of the assault

but also by virtue of the circumstances surrounding it."

Durcan said the court has to consider a prison sentence, a disqualification and a heavy fine for Hoffman.

Hassett said: "I hope to persuade you differently, judge." He said O'Connor was parked incorrectly on the night in question and was parked in a yellow box.

Hassett said Hoffman was an excellent employee who took particular pride in his job, and that he blames the taxi driver for doing what he did and the damage caused to the bus.

Hassett said, as a result of the 10-second row, Hoffman – a married man with a teenage son in secondary school – lost his job. Hassett said his client had €2,000 in court to compensate O'Connor.

In his victim impact statement, O'Connor said the assault "left me traumatised".

He said: "I was left bruised with a severe headache. I was unable to work, on doctor's advice, for a week due to bruising, headache and stress. Subsequently, I am wary of strangers approaching me."

Hassett said Hoffman is back doing some work for the State that involves driving and that a conviction would make it very difficult for him to get more work.

Hassett said his client has no previous convictions. Judge Durcan adjourned the case to November 8th.



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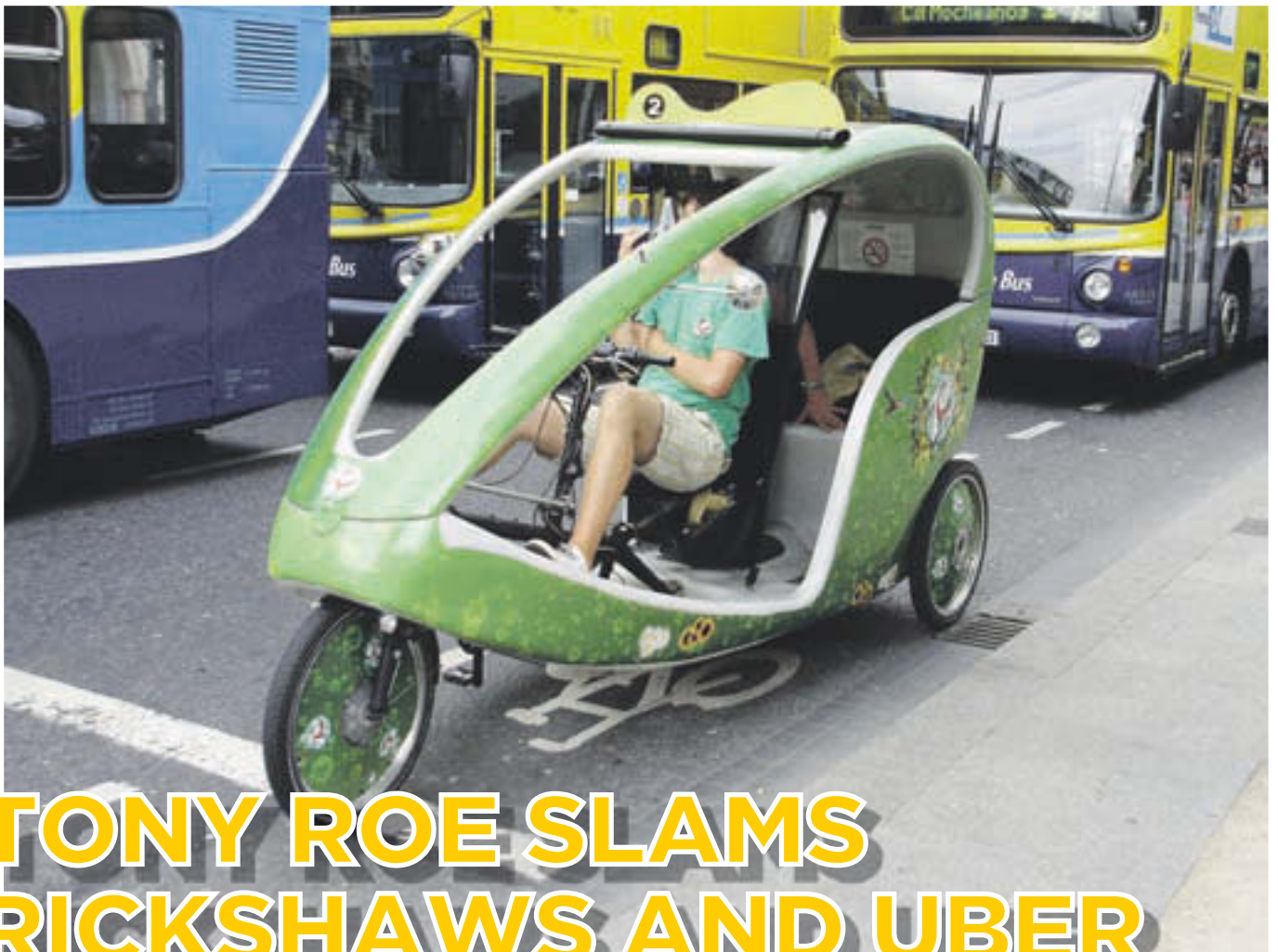
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TONY ROE SLAMS RICKSHAWS AND UBER

Tacsaí Magazine spoke to Chairman of the National Transport Assembly, Tony Roe, has spoken out on the banning of rickshaws in Dublin city centre, and Uber too, in the interest of public safety.

Tony said: "Public safety must be paramount and we're being overrun by complaints from the public, from service providers and all sections of the community concerning what's happening with rickshaws and Uber. Our concern is now that anybody who has been denied an SPSV license for various reasons, what's stopping them from becoming an Uber driver?"

"We'd like the Minister for Transport now to act on these matters. We've had several different meetings with politicians on these matters and yet nothing has been done. Some of these people are getting involved in drug activity through the rickshaws. They have been prosecuted, and yet the garda's hands are tied now, because unlike Galway, where these things have been declared illegal. We're calling for the same situation to be implemented in Dublin. We want these people banned and taken off the roads immediately. We don't have any insurance on these things and they have to look into it."

"Now, private cars operating as public service vehicles is very dangerous and it's very dangerous at night. The Mayor of London has said exactly this, and he has said that he won't allow Uber a license in the interest – like what we've been saying for years – public safety, and security of citizens."

"It's been well documented that with Uber in London over 32 rapes a year have been reported. This is one of the reasons why the Mayor won't give them any license to operate there, because there's no background and safety and that's then approach that's needed with Uber here too."

"There are people that the Garda Carriage Office will stop from getting a PSV license but there's nothing stopping some of these people from joining Uber. It's an unfair playing ground for taxi drivers because Uber is an illegal taxi service in my opinion. Recently an EU court advisor said Uber could even be penalised, so the consequences there are too great and it's just open for abuse. There's no checks and balances on these people and they have no legal requirements. So it's an accident waiting to happen."

Luckily, Uber have failed to gain much traction in this country. They have largely failed to break into the Dublin market and have now shifted their sights to Limerick, where they've also been met with a frosty reception from the locals. The Minister and the NTA have denied them UberX and UberPop licenses and the recent news from London may just be the first fall in a domino effect that could knock on throughout Europe.

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MYTAXI ARE GIVING A LITTLE SOMETHING BACK YOU

Drivers boosted as pick-up charge implemented.

It's been a tough couple of years for taxi drivers.

In the midst of the worst recession since the 1930s the government unleashed a string of hard-hitting reforms on the industry - the reviled vehicle age limit chief among them, and this, combined with the astronomical hike in insurance premiums, has left drivers on their knees and many have abandoned the industry for safer shores.

So the recent news that mytaxi drivers have been given the opportunity to charge the National Transport Authority-recommended two euro booking fee is a most welcome one.

If you heard a collective cheer around town in late September it was the sound of mytaxi drivers rejoicing, because now the company is opening up its business to more hotels and more workplaces, giving their hard-working cabbies a pre-Christmas gift.

Between now and the end of the year every single driver using mytaxi will be able to earn over 1000 euro in bonuses.

Not too shabby, right?

Neither is this - drivers are earning over 50% more now on mytaxi than they were on Hailo.

mytaxi drivers are flourishing as the company goes from strength to strength. So how can drivers not affiliated with the fast-moving firm get in on the act?

Simple really. Get in touch...

Drivers are welcome to visit their office at 11 Upper Mount to talk to the team over some tea or coffee and biscuits

Since the 2 euro pick-up charge was reintroduced drivers are leaving radio companies in droves as they see the value in mytaxi. Tacsai sat down with the team at their headquarters and Niall Carson highlighted the security of using mytaxi amid heightened safety concerns.

"We know that there are certain venues around the city that are considered black spots for drivers, and some will certainly be wary about going to those areas, but people's phone numbers are like an ID badge at the moment and if somebody is willing to hand over their number then they're transferring a lot of information over - so it becomes a two-way street then. It's safer for the passenger and the driver

"We're getting some unbelievable feedback from drivers across the country, from Cork, Limerick, Galway..."

Tim added: "That's the thing at the moment; all our drivers are doing so much work at the moment, we have more work than we can give them. They're doing 50% more work this year than last year. It's incredible.

"A huge difference for us is that tourists can come here from

around Europe, use the app, and get a taxi straight away..."

Niall added: "The other thing is drivers are coming into the driver centre telling us that they've been able to upgrade their cars or get a new mortgage all because they're with mytaxi, as they've got a steady earning history.

"Unfortunately for years, taxi drivers were treated differently than people working in a different jobs, but now they can show with mytaxi that they work however many hours each week and they get this kind of an income."

Over 600 drivers come through the Mount Street office every week. Along with free printer rolls, drivers are welcome to use the toilet facilities and can call in for mytaxi branding.

mytaxi are also offering financial aid to help potential new Dublin taxi drivers.

The company will help out drivers who wish to sit the Small Public Service Vehicle (SPSV) Entry Test to encourage entry into the industry to meet ongoing growth in demand.

The news comes after it was revealed the number of taxis in Ireland declined by 24% since its peak in 2008.

Tim said: "With the total number of Small Public Service Vehicle (SPSVs), in particular taxis, in the Irish fleet declining by 24% from the peak of 2008, Ireland really needs more taxi drivers and we want to encourage more to enter the industry and join our network. We are offering real scope for drivers to boost their earnings, with our drivers completing more trips in July than even during the extremely busy run-up to Christmas in 2016

"mytaxi wants to be able to meet the continuing upsurge in demand for our services so we are now committing to pay the Dublin SPSV Entry Test cost for anyone who is interested in entering the taxi industry."

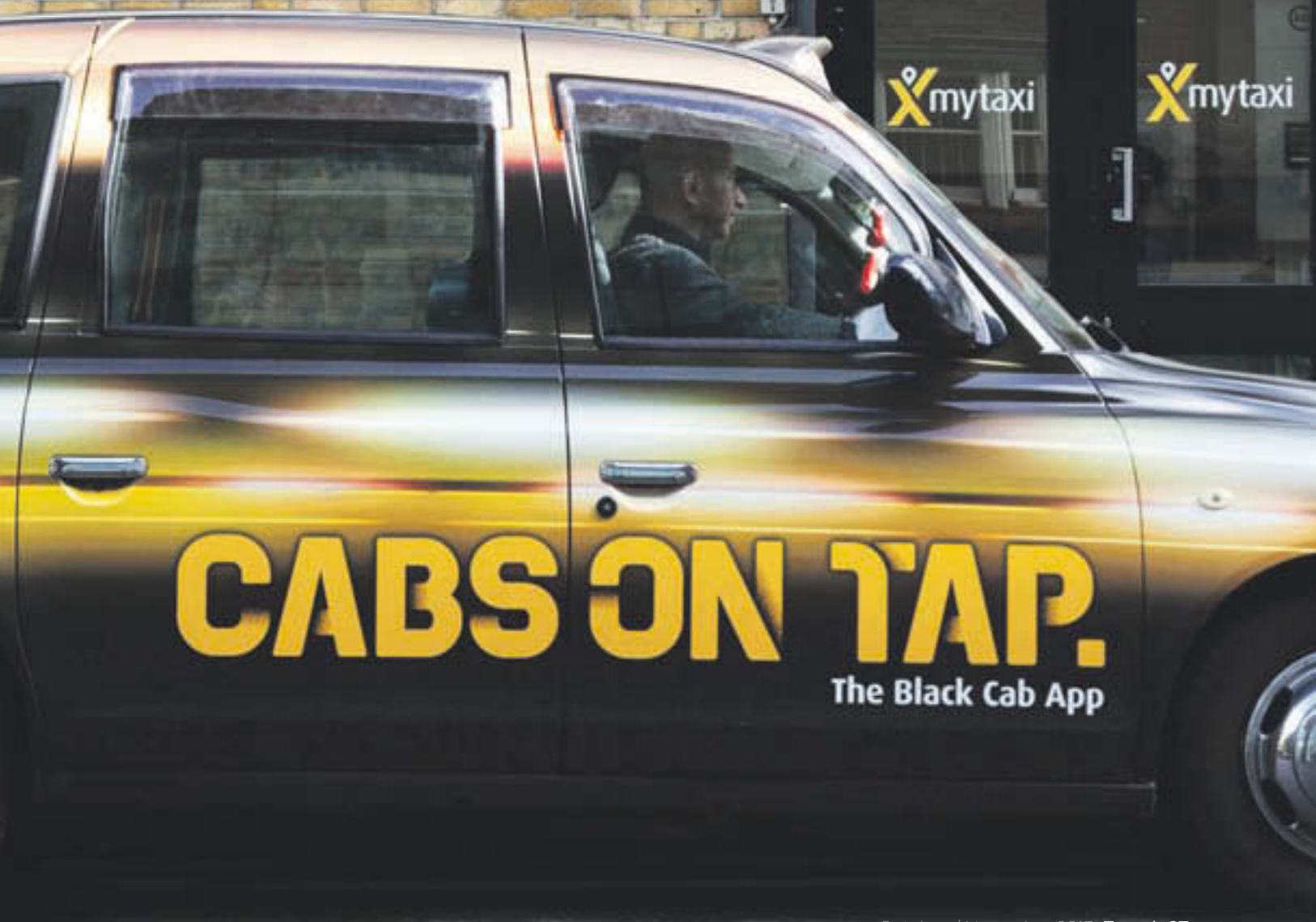
He added: "We are also continuing to offer new industry entrants and existing drivers incentives and bonuses to join our network of 10,500 drivers, already the biggest in Ireland.

"New drivers can now earn up to an additional €1,000 on their normal takings in their first four weeks with mytaxi through our new driver sign-up scheme.

"All existing mytaxi drivers also have the opportunity to recommend new drivers and receive a referral bonus of up to €200."

So if a higher and steady earning power is what you've been looking for you may have found it, thousands of Irish taxi drivers already have. mytaxi are going from strength to strength in the Irish market, make sure you get in touch on ie.mytaxi.com for more information.

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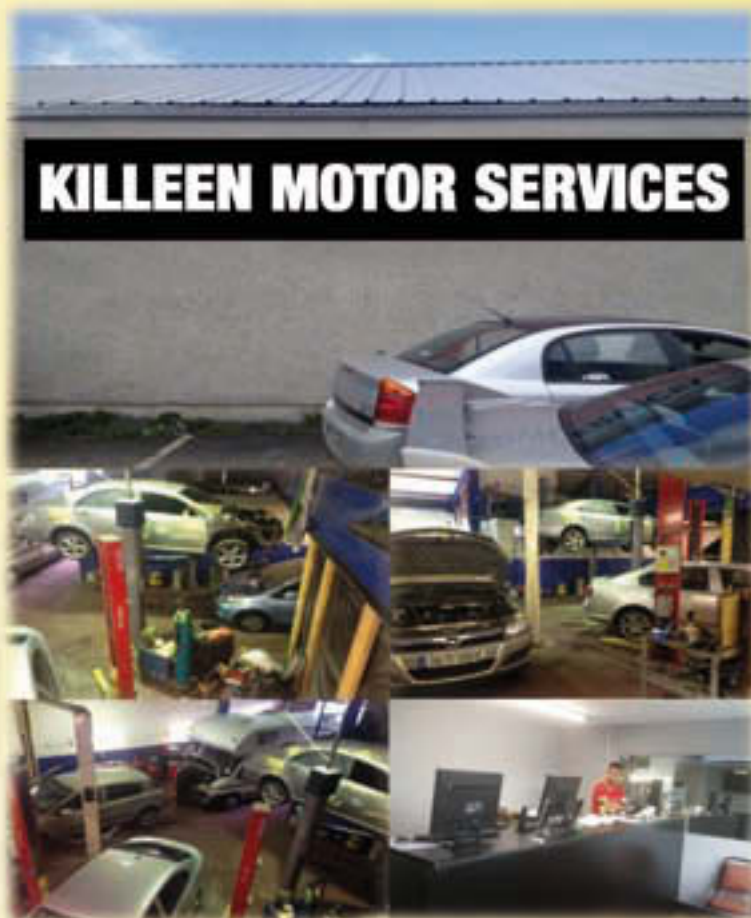
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Mobility Hire & Sales have over two dozen WAVs to hire. We spoke to Wayne at the company, who said: "The majority of our vehicles are Peugeot Partners from 2011 on. They've never been worked as taxis, they're all low mileage, 1.6 diesel, very economical cars. We're doing a special at the minute with the 2011 vehicles with a rent-to-buy. So drivers take it out on a rental over 36 months and after that you own the vehicle. We're one of the only companies around offering that.

Based in Clondalkin, Mobility Hire & Sales are up running since the summer and already have a number of drivers working with them, but there is always room for more, and Wayne told me they are keen to hear from more drivers.

"It's 180 euros a week, that's all your maintenance inclusive, and servicing etc. That's plus your insurance

aswell. Obviously different drivers have different no-claims bonuses and experience, so the insurance does vary. The most expensive the insurance could be, without a deposit, would be 173 euros a week. Now we had a chap there looking to rent – he went around a couple of insurance companies himself trying to buy a Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle and nobody would quote him because he had no experience. So we did eventually get him a quote, now we had to go through three companies and his last option was to go through the Insurance Bureau, and they gave him a quote of 11,500 euro. And in fairness to our lads, they took that on board and got it for 6,900 euro. I know the insurance has gone up across the board for everybody but we do our best to keep it down you know."

So if you want to get in touch for more information, call Wayne on **01 456 8819**.

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Many of you who work around Dublin city will know Lombard Pharmacy, a well-worn trail to the door on Lombard Street East for PSV photos is the lime-green fronted store just a hop, skip and a jump from Pearse Street Station.

Mary-Louise Irwin works there, and last week Tacsaí spoke to her about a great new offer that Lombard Pharmacy have for you.

She said: "We've always had a lot of taxi drivers coming in. There are a good number of ranks nearby so we must be the closest pharmacy for a few of those... We've got an offer that we'd like to share with your readers. If they come in to get their PSV photos done we'll give them 10% off on anything else they buy in the pharmacy in the same visit. So whether it's a repeat prescription that they want, or just a one-off

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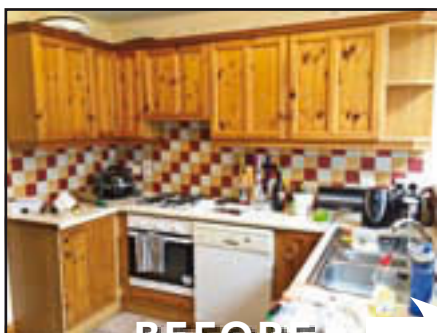
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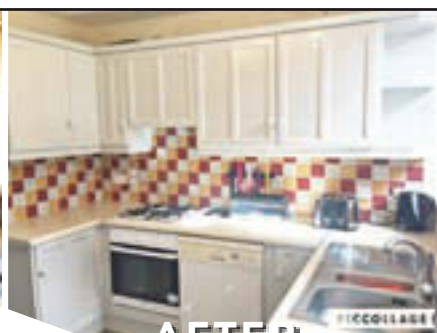
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AN OPEN LETTER FROM THE AIRPORT



This month, the TTnH have passed Tacsáí Magazine on a letter from airport taxi driver Mick Barrett. Mick is concerned with taxis illegally plying for hire. We print the letter here in full...

Permit holders at Dublin Airport taxi rank are requesting assistance from the enforcement team of the NTA in relation to taxis illegally plying for hire on the T2 Departure Road and at the bus area opposite the T1 Taxi stand.

Over the years there has always been some opportunist who would take the chance on departure roads to snatch a job, but from 2015 to the present the number of illegal operators has spiralled to an all-time high. Plate numbers that have been recorded by permit holders and by myself while after being called to the rank to witness them illegally take fares. These roofsign numbers have now been passed on to The NTA for a presence in the airport to stop this practice.

Permit holders who pay either from €440 or €484 yearly and who abide by all rules and regulations of the DAA airport byelaws feel not enough or little has been done to fix this problem. Over the years when I was representing drivers myself on numerous occasions I brought this issue to the attention of the DAA at Taxi Forum meetings and gave the plate numbers to Airport police who were present at some of those meetings.

The promise of The Dublin Airport Shannon bill that granted the airport police new powers to impose fines to illegal operators is just not effective. Although a few fines have been issued and a few court appearances we

are told it certainly is having not having any impact in deterring illegal operators to stop what they're doing. In fairness to Airport police when permit holders ring them to report illegal activities with taxis they will agree to send a car around but by the time they get there the taxi, and now with passengers on board, has gone. In other cases when Airport Police move them they simply drive around the block and straight back up again. It's actually gone that bad now that some of the illegal operators are attempting to come through the T2 barrier and mix in with the queue of permit holders who have been called from the Kesh.

What's badly needed is a lengthy presence from the NTA Enforcement Officers especially from the hours of 10pm nightly to last flight time at approx 2am when this situation is at its worst and random checks from early evening. We believe that any overtime expense occurred by NTA Enforcement Team would be easily recouped with the amount of fines that could be handed out and would put a stop to this practice before this situation gets any worse and gets beyond resolve. At the time of writing I have requested TTnH raise this issue at taxi Advisory Council level.

On behalf of the permit holders who came to me with the above concern

Mick Barrett

Dublin Airport.



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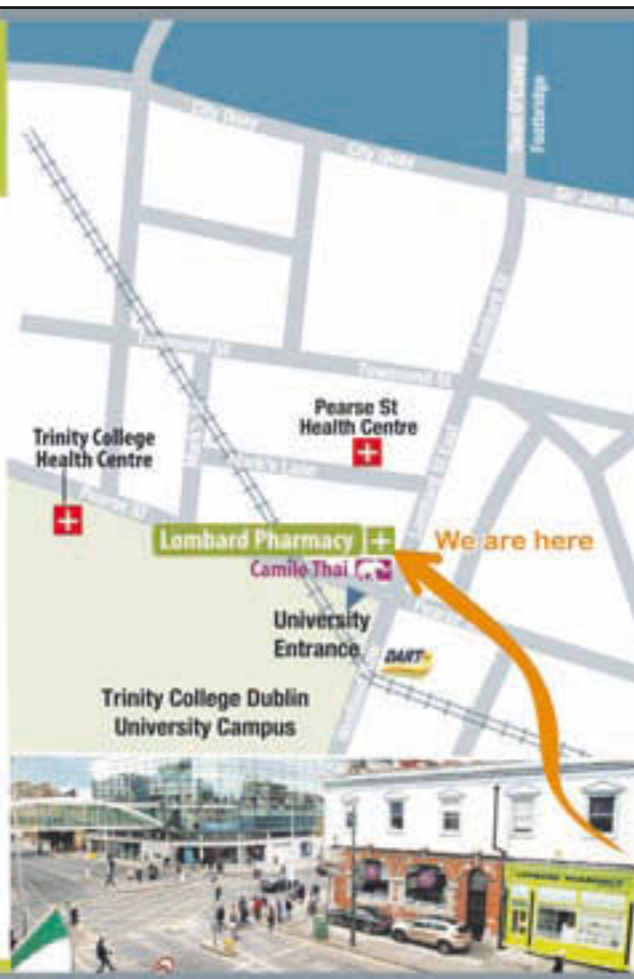
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WORLD NEWS

TOP STORIES FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

UK

A pensioner has been reunited with his life savings after a taxi driver realised the man had been the victim of a con.

Fraudsters called Barry Stone and pretended to be police investigating bank fraud, telling him to withdraw money from his bank account.

The 78-year-old from Marlow withdrew £12,000 and then sent the cash to London by taxi where, he was told, the notes were to be checked for fingerprints.

But taxi driver Izy Rashid realised the elderly man was being conned so returned the savings to Mr Stone's address.

As reported by the Daily Mail, Mr Stone said: "I didn't sleep afterwards and I couldn't eat at all, it was such a lot of money.

The widowed father-of-one added: "I feel so relieved now, I can have something to eat, no problem. I'm very, very relieved."

Speaking about the scammers Mr Stone said: "You just believe them sometimes, don't you? You think you're helping people out."

After withdrawing the money, Mr Stone was told to put the money in a box and give it to a taxi driver.

He was told to say it was aftershave for his son but Mr Rashid saw through the scam and called the police.

Mr Stone had his money returned to him and described the cabbie as a "wonderful man" and they were now "very, very good friends".

USA

TECH giant Apple allowed Uber special access to its smartphones meaning the taxi app could read iPhone screens even when it was only running in the background.

The "totally unprecedented" permission was highlighted by cyber security analyst Will Strafach who said he found no other non-Apple apps with the same kind of access.

He said that the access gave the company the "ability to read directly from the screen even in background".

He added: "I checked our dataset to find out if any other app was granted a sensitive entitlement by Apple. Uber is the only non-Apple app."

His assertions appeared to be confirmed by Uber whose head of security and privacy communications, Melanie Ensign, replied that

it was used to show maps on iPhones and Apple Watches but that it was no longer being used.

She said: "(The software) was used to render Uber maps on iPhone & send to Apple Watch before Watch apps could handle it. It's not in use [and is] being removed."

TEXAS

Taxi technology company KAPTYN INC. has signed a five-year agreement with Houston taxi company Taxis of Houston to outfit the Texas fleet with their NCWM/NIST certified smart meter and proprietary software platform.

The platform is comprised of a first-of-its-kind taxi meter equipped with an open platform for ride hailing applications, dispatch systems, and payment and cashing options.

Acting as the brain of a connected taxi, the meter collects, processes, and reports live trip data, while simultaneously functioning as a federally-regulated meter. The data is then consolidated into KAPTYN proprietary CabManager operating system, providing owners, drivers and regulators a comprehensive view of their operations, allowing for cashing, shift tracking and performance data to be easily tracked and reconciled in real time.

"It's great to add another key U.S city to the KAPTYN platform. Our commitment has always been to create a flexible and sustainable solution for fleets and drivers," said Andrew Meyers, CEO of KAPTYN INC. "We are in over 90 per cent of the Las Vegas market and have been able to operate in parallel with the emergence of TNC's. Our goal is for them to realize that pairing their mobile platform with our justified and proven supply chain is the right answer to the taxi ecosystem."

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Taxi operators in the city must remove tints from car window glasses.

As part of the Motor Traffic Act it is a requirement for taxis for remove tinted window before a PMV license is issued.

Although constant warnings from authority to remove tints however operators have continued to ignore laws.

Many taxis are operating illegally and on countless occasions I



have urged these operators to come forward and register their taxi's.

Road Transport Authority CEO Nelson Terema that there have been recent reports that taxi's with tinted glasses or windows are being used for criminal activities and this must stop.

"My officers are always on the road doing roadblocks to ensure safety to the travelling public but as a precaution the public must be careful when jumping on a taxi cab," said Terema.

"I am appealing to this taxi's with tints to please remove them, it is illegal and dangerous," said Terema.

"These taxi's that are operating illegally must step forward, register their taxi's accordingly and follow the law," said Terema.

GREECE

Greece, a country with a lot of debt and an angry taxi lobby, is the latest to ponder anti-ride-sharing legislation. The country reportedly plans to force ride-sharing firms like Uber and Taxibeat to ink three-year contracts with licensed drivers, effectively turning them into full-time employees. Operators would need to buy taxi licenses be subject to stricter rules than currently allowed, according to Reuters.

Greece's taxi drivers have reportedly lobbied the government to make the changes, saying that drivers using the new services have lower barriers to entry. "You can't have a group of professionals being normally taxed ... and a few others not paying at all for the same job, because there [are no set rules]," taxi union head Thymios Lyberopoulos told Reuters.

As in France, Uber does not offer its UberPop service in Greece,

but instead gives its app to professional taxi drivers and chauffeurs licensed for tourism-related activities. It's not clear whether the new rules would affect one or both groups of drivers.

CANADA

Quebec's traditional taxi industry suffered another blow on Thursday after the province's Superior Court rejected its demands to have Uber's operations declared illegal and its permit revoked.

Taxi companies, the union representing taxi drivers and other stakeholders argued Transport Minister Laurent Lessard exceeded his authority when he signed a deal with the ride-hailing company in 2016.

The agreement gave Uber a one-year operating licence in Quebec under a pilot project with the possibility of a one-year renewal.

Justice Élise Poisson said in her ruling the transport minister didn't exceed his powers in signing a deal with the San Francisco-based ride-hailing company.

The taxi industry argued the pilot project created two parallel systems of taxis in Quebec that amounted to "unfair competition" against traditional drivers and permit holders.

Taxi drivers must buy or rent a costly permit to operate in Quebec, while Uber drivers, under the deal, were allowed to work under a different system allowing them to bypass the permit requirement.

Quebec taxi law, the drivers argued, only allowed the minister to enter into an agreement "with actual players in the industry and not outside actors."

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LYNK-ING UP THE COUNTRY

Ebbs talks expansion

Irish-founded taxi booking app Lynk, whose primary customer base is in Dublin, is looking to expand nationwide, with plans to start operating in Cork and Galway shortly.

The expansion comes after the company, a homegrown rival to mytaxi (formerly Hailo), has invested about €1 million in recent months to partner with a number of small taxi operators in the greater Dublin area.

Lynk was founded by Noel Ebbs in early 2015. It has about 500,000 customers in Dublin and a fleet of 2,700 drivers.

Overall, the company, which also operates across several UK cities and in the US, has “several million” customers.

The company ramped up operations in the UK and US last year after securing €25 million in private funding to launch the Riide brand in both markets.

Lynk has completed four local acquisitions over the past few months, snapping up Penny Cabs in Lucan, Maynooth Cabs, Tallaght Express Cabs, and Exchequer Cabs, which operates on Dublin’s northside.

“We’re operating throughout the greater Dublin area and plan to be available in Cork and Galway before the end of the year,” Ebbs said.

Mr Ebbs said that in addition to becoming a national platform, Lynk was intent on further expansion overseas.

“We are operating across all the major cities in the UK now and have about 20,000 drivers working for us,” Mr Ebbs said. “We formed an alliance with a number of investors there to take the software platform nationwide and have enjoyed great success. So much so that it is a bit like shooting fish in a barrel.”

“We have also done a number of deals with yellow cab companies in Washington and Virginia recently and are very excited about prospects there,” he added.

The company recorded turnover of about €15 million in 2016, with Mr Ebbs saying the company had performed ahead of every expectation since its launch.

“Increased competition means we might not do this in 2017 because it is becoming more difficult to maintain such a high level of growth, but I’d be very optimistic that we’ll reach our targets of a 10 per cent rise in revenues. If we don’t we’ll be very close,” Mr Ebbs said.

Lynk, based in Newmarket, Dublin 8, employs about 100 people directly, most of whom work in customer services and administration.

Unlike rivals such as MyTaxi, whose business model is based on taking a percentage of every cab fare, Lynk makes much of its revenue from membership fees paid by drivers who sign up to the service.

CABBIE CAUGHT WITH COCAINE IS TRYING TO KEEP HIS LICENCE



A taxi driver is trying to stop gardai from revoking his licence after he was successfully prosecuted for cocaine dealing.

The court action brought by Barry Burns (43), of Bath Road, Balbriggan, is being opposed by Supt Thomas Murphy of the Dublin Region Traffic Department, which includes the Carriage Office.

Burns' barrister Patrick Jackson told Judge Deirdre Gearty at Dublin District Court that, in February 2015, his client was stopped in a vehicle and found to be in possession of €70 worth of cocaine.

On a date in February last year, undercover gardai made four calls to his phone and later that day Burns provided them with seven deals of cocaine, worth about €550, counsel said.

The case came before Swords District Court last December.

Burns was prosecuted for possessing drugs for his own use as a result of the first incident, but the second led to a more serious charge of having cocaine for sale or supply. He pleaded guilty to the charges.

Mr Jackson said that, at the time, the father-of-three had been going through family difficulties and began using drugs.

Those charges were struck out after he had gone to counselling, provided samples to show he was off drugs and donated €1,000 to charity.

Supt Murphy told Judge Gearty that counsel omitted to mention that Burns was using his taxi at the time and there was a "tick list" amounting to several thousand euro owed to him by customers.

Philip Kavanagh, of the TTnH, told the court he had known Burns for about 10 years and said he felt comfortable with him remaining a taxi driver.

He said Burns had told him of his difficulties at the time, but since then had perked up and seemed to be trying to get on with his life.

Counsel for Burns provided the court with documents showing that tests proved his client has stopped taking drugs. Burns told

the court he had been stupid and had let his family down.

Since the prosecution, he has continued to go to drug testing, he added.

Judge Gearty adjourned the case, which will be listed for mention again in a number of weeks.

Meanwhile, a taxi driver was punched in the lip by a Moldovan man who did not have money for his fare and tried to sell the driver a €400 phone for €25.

Alexandr Tabachnic, aged 46, of an apartment at Copper Gate, Anglesea Terrace, Cork, pleaded guilty to assault causing harm.

Inspector Adrian Gamble outlined the background to the case at Cork District Court yesterday.

"Shortly before 5am on December 27, 2015, a taxi driver called into Anglesea Street Garda Station.

"The driver said he picked up a fare on Evergreen Road who wanted to go to Greenmount. He didn't know precisely where in that area.

"He [the passenger] showed him a box containing €400 phone and speakers. He said he would sell it for €50 and later said €25. The taxi driver refused several times.

"He pointed out a house at Gould St. He said he would drop in and get the money to pay for the ride.

"The driver agreed if the box could be left in the car until he returned with the money. He said he would call the gardai if he did not return. The man became aggressive when there was mention of the gardai. Suddenly without warning the driver received a blow to the upper lip from this man.

"About 30 minutes later the driver saw the same man on Bishop's St. He drove behind him at a distance and called that gardai. He identified himself to Sgt Seán O'Donoghue at Grand Parade a few minutes later."

THE TACSAÍ MAGAZINE BUMPER QUIZ

1. Which football team in 1889 became the first to win the FA Cup and League double?
 2. Which bird, a member of the Threskiornithidae family, shares its name with a chain of hotels?
 3. Which city is known as the Treaty City?
 4. Who in 1901 became the first physicist to win the Nobel prize for his work with X-Rays?
 5. What songs with "Hand" in the title were UK top ten hits for the following artists, [a] Reef (1996), [b] Breathe (1988), [c] Des O'Connor (1967), [d] Pink (2006) and [e] Dollar (1979)?
 6. Which actor presented the first Academy Awards in 1929?
 7. What was the blues singer Muddy Waters real name?
 8. What county is the setting for WH Hudson's book "A Shepherd's Life"?
 9. Which three US States have names beginning with the letter "C"?
 10. The Battle of Alma took place in which war?
 11. In which country did Limberger cheese originate?
 12. Which three countries in South America does the equator pass through?
 13. What colour signifies the Starboard side of a ship?
 14. What sport do you associate with the Leicester Riders?

BUMP
QUIZ

 15. Who was the lead guitarist of Brit Pop band Blur?
 16. Which was the first British newspaper to publish a daily crossword in 1924?
 17. Which Canadian rock band provides the opening music for TV's "The Big Bang Theory"?
 18. Which government post did Winston Churchill hold at the beginning of World War I?
 19. Which two financial institutions were created by the Bretton Woods conference in 1944?
 20. Which is the only US State to share a border with Maine?

14. Basketball.
 15. Graham Coxon.
 16. Daily Express.
 17. Barenaked Ladies.
 18. First Lord of the Admiralty.
 19. The World Bank & The International Monetary Fund.
 20. New Hampshire.

6. Douglas Fairbanks Sr.
 7. McKinley Morganfield.
 8. Wiltshire
 9. California, Colorado and Connecticut.
 10. Crimean.
 11. Belgium.
 12. Ecuador, Brazil and Colombia.

ANSWERS

1. Preston North End.
2. Ibis.
3. Limerick.
4. Wilhelm Röntgen.
5. a) "Place Your Hands"
reached no. 6, [b] "Hands
to Heaven", no. 4, [c]
"Careless Hands", no. 6,
[d] "U and UR Hand",
no. 10 and [e] "I Wanna
Hold Your Hand", no. 6.
6. Douglas Fairbanks Sr.
7. McKinley Morganfield.
8. Wiltshire
9. California, Colorado
and Connecticut.
10. Crimean.
11. Belgium.
12. Ecuador, Brazil and
Colombia.
13. Green
14. Basketball.
15. Graham Coxon.
16. Daily Express.
17. Barenaked Ladies.
18. First Lord of the
Admiralty.
19. The World Bank & The
International Monetary
Fund.
20. New Hampshire.

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.

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!

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!"

"Knock, knock."
"Who's there?"
"Nobel."
"Nobel who?"
"No bell that's why I knocked."

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..."

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."

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!"

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.

A drunk staggers out of a bar and runs into two priests. He goes over to the first priest and says, "Dude, I'm Jesus Christ!" And the priest says, "No son, you're not." So the drunk goes over to the second priest and says, "Man, I'm Jesus Christ!" Then the priest says, "No son, you're not." Finally, the drunk had enough and said, "Here, I'll prove it." He walks back into the bar with both priests and the bartender looks up and sees the drunk and says, "Jesus Christ, you're back AGAIN?"

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