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EDITORIAL

Four! Uber are going four it in Limerick it seems... The American app company announced last month that they are venturing to the South West to the tune of a 4 million Euro investment!

The massive bankroll comes as Uber continue to come under fire across the globe, and the move has been met with skepticism by drivers working in the Treaty County.

This month Tacsai Magazine we've picked our jaw up off the floor to also bring you right up to date on the ongoing battle against rickshaws.

That's right, those pesky pedallers are still unlicensed and unregulated. We hear from the DTA's Tommy Barton on the issue.

A group of cabbies in Kilkenny have been doing the industry proud in recent times. Actively

trying, and succeeding, to prevent suicides in the city has drawn praise from many quarters. We hear from them on pages 16 and 17.

Mandatory in-car CCTV and roof signs are the new commandments being handed down by the NTA this month and we hear how drivers feel about the proposed changes, with our very own Taxi Spy and the TTnH giving us their thoughts.

The NTA have also announced that almost 900 drivers quit the industry in the first six months of this year, we investigate on page 38.

And after all that, if you need some light entertainment as always we've got our gags and quiz pages at the back to put a smile back on your face.

Safe travels!
Editor,
Stephen Young

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SPOTLIGHT ON RICKSHAWS

We speak to the DTA

Unlicensed, unregulated and undeterred, rickshaws have pedaled onto our streets in the last few years seemingly beyond the clutches of the authorities over the public transport sector. While some taxi representative bodies have made progress in pushing the matter with the powers that be, anger is mounting on the ranks as a blatant two-tier system takes hold.

Drivers we've spoken to have expressed their concern over these rickshaws - famously used in cities such as Bangkok, where there is a much smaller taxi industry - have both taken business from cabbies and done so in a manner whereby they go about their business unregulated by the National Transport Authority.

Tommy Barton of the DTA spoke to us recently about such concerns.

He said: "Some taxi drivers have said to me that rickshaws don't affect them or their income because they don't work town... I would ask them to look at the big picture.

"Every stage through the process of applying for the renewal of your taxi licence, your PSV car tax, to getting a car passed, to getting a tax clearance cert it hits your pocket at every stage financially. They are, and make no mistake about it, competition against you, your family income, and also the use of the public roads. It seriously affects you.

"Every time there is a full rickshaw going to and from Croke Park, concerts at Marley Park - which they're always packed for hire and reward - and on your place of work which is a taxi stand, your job is seriously undermined. Your profession is seriously undermined thanks to the National Transport Authority, Dublin City Council and the Minister Pascal Donoghue.

"These rickshaws ensure that it's one less fare for us; it's as simple as that. Without any restrictions or any legislation whatsoever they earn money right out of your pocket.

"Do some drivers really think that it doesn't affect them in any shape or form? How many times have you drove

around applying for hire or on designated taxi stands FOR YOUR TAXI ONLY controlled by legislation and said to yourself hang on a minute if I didn't have a fire extinguisher in my car I wouldn't get my car passed or if I didn't carry a first aid kit its a fine if the sticker on the side of the first aid box was out by a day?

"I wouldn't get my SPSV.

"Will rickshaws get fined and dragged through court by the the NTA the way taxi drivers have been?

"A ban on rickshaws is the only way forward!"

Drivers can text 'ban rickshaws' to 085 8320001.

The frustration amongst drivers is palpable.

And there aren't many who would argue the case for rickshaws.

But many will ask, what will be done? And it isn't hard to understand the belief of some that nothing will be done.

As we've highlighted before with the vehicle age limit, there does appear to be a two-tier system in operation for the public transport system. Now would be a good time for a bit more fairness at the very least.

Will the industry get it? Possibly.

But with the College Green plans around the corner, they may giveth with one hand and take away with the other.



Tommy Barton



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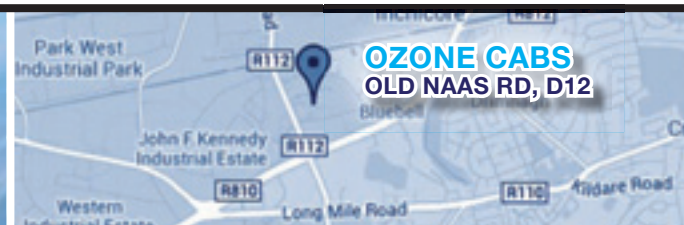


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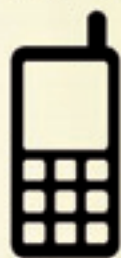
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CATS THE WAY TO DO IT!

Kilkenny cabbies saving lives

Kilkenny aren't just leading the way in hurling these days...

A brave group of taxi drivers in the Cats County are being hailed as heroes after it was revealed their Taxi Watch initiative has saved the lives of 45 people since the end of last year.

The suicide prevention project was set up by Callan native Derek Devoy back in November after he witnessed three people attempting to take their own lives in Kilkenny City. Two of these incidents happened on the same night, just hours apart.

"I was driving around the centre of Kilkenny and I was going by John's Bridge and I saw a fella on it and it looked like he was going to jump," said Derek.

"I went over to him, got him into the car which I thought was the safest place for him at the time. I rang the guards and they came down. They took charge and I went back working."

Less than two hours later, at around 3am, Derek was again passing the bridge and saw another man standing on it.

"I got him down and he burst into tears. He was a

foreign national, he had been having trouble with his kids, he didn't have any access to them.

"The first fella, he was threatening to jump because the bank was repossessing his house," said Derek.

"So, I rang the guards again and they said 'you're joking me' and I said 'I'm not, there's another fella at the exact same spot'. They came down again and the fella went off with them. He hugged me and he said I had saved his life."

However, this was the second and third time Derek had intervened in a suicide attempt; a year previously, he stopped a woman from jumping off Ossory Bridge, also in Kilkenny City.

"There was an old woman on the bridge and another woman with her trying to talk to her.

The old woman, she actually went to jump and I grabbed onto her. She must have been about 65 or 70, but the strength of her," he said.

"She was moving around and it took everything I had to keep on to her. I'm a big fella and it took all my strength to hold her. The guards came then and had to put handcuffs on her. She was in a bad way."

The taxi driver said all three incidents really resonated with him, since he had previously suffered from depression.

"That could easily have been me up there. I broke my back in an accident and I couldn't work or go anywhere for a year. I'm ok now, but it was a very dark time."

In November, Derek put himself on a SafeTalk course to learn how to deal with depressed people and how best to help them. He found it so enlightening that he gathered a group of 15 taxi drivers and got them to take the course as well.

Together they formed Taxi Watch Ireland, an initiative that seeks to help prevent suicide.

So far, they've saved the lives of 45 people in Kilkenny and hope to expand to cover the whole country some day.

Thanks to a donation from Scorpion founder Walter O'Brien, who went to school with Derek, the drivers are all kitted out with potentially lifesaving equipment, such as throw ropes and floats.

To expand their operations in Kilkenny, Taxi Watch is currently fundraising €200,000 to refurbish a house for use as a 24/7 counselling hub.

"When you talk someone down from a bridge or something, the only place you can take them is the Garda station or A&E. The A&E is so busy, if you go there, they will flat out tell you to bring them to the Garda station instead, but as you can imagine, a Garda station isn't exactly the best place for a person contemplating suicide. The last thing a depressed person needs is to feel locked up," said Derek.

"We managed to get a house at the top of John Street, so that people can walk in off the street, and get counselling then and there for free. We have two counsellors on call all the time. Earlier this year, a teenager tried to jump in the river the day before the Leaving Cert. We got a counsellor in Ballyragget to meet her and we got her counselling within 20 minutes."

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LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION

NTA propose CCTVs in all taxis

The National Transport Authority is considering putting CCTV cameras in taxis, new proposals have revealed.

The State agency is calling for submissions in relation to additional driver safety equipment in the small public service vehicle sector, which covers taxis, hackneys and limousines.

As of June 30 last, there were 28,578 drivers licensed to provide public transport services across the country.

The rationale behind the consultation is that the industry has an almost unique set of characteristics in that a driver's daily activity involves 24 hour lone working, door-to-door services on unscheduled routes, the handling of money and valuables and, as has been increasingly reported upon in recent years, both threats to personal security and violence at work.

As part of the report of the Taxi Regulation Review Group, set up in 2012, a consultation process will be carried out with the public industry on the possibilities and merits of introducing a requirement for the mandatory provision of certain driver safety equipment in taxis.

Potential options include in-vehicle security cameras, a partition separating the driver front seat area from the remainder of the vehicle; A locational alert system; or other new technology based options.

A number of drivers have expressed concerns for their safety recently, and last week a taxi driver was stabbed in his car in Athlone. The NTA is now opening public consultation on mandatory safety equipment in taxis - including always-on security cameras.

John Motherway of Safe Cab Security is in favour of the idea, but said it is important the right to privacy is maintained.

"There are many systems out there at the moment which taxi drivers are using, which provide zero data protection to drivers and passengers alike," he said.

"The taxi industry in Ireland is in dire need of a robust security system to benefit both drivers and customers.

He said if cameras became a requirement there would have to be assurances that the passenger's privacy is protected.

"There are a lot of inferior products out there - out of a lucky bag almost.

"In some cases there is nothing to stop a taxi driver taking out the SD card and putting the footage on Youtube," he said.

He said many systems use SD cards to record video data, which can be physically removed with ease, tampered with, or have their non-encrypted contents uploaded to video sites like YouTube.

The mandatory requirement for "safety equipment" in small public service vehicles - including all forms of taxi - covers not only security cameras, but also partitions separating the driver and passengers, and a location tracking system.

Our very own Stig - Taxi Spy - gave his opinion on the proposals. Taxi Spy said: "This is just more expense at the driver. Everything that comes out is all geared at the driver having to spend. It's like the old saying 'if you're seen to be doing something, they'll actually believe that you're doing it'.

"Everything, in terms of spending on these types of things, is geared towards us. Everything.

"Drivers have been attacked for the last 30 years. This is nothing new.

"I was attacked 20-odd years ago, but I'm not gonna go out and start getting cameras or whatever in the car. If that was the



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case you might as well get out of the business.

“Another aspect is; if I do go out and get one of these CCTV’s in my car and some fella gets in and beats me up. I go to the Gardai with this CCTV footage... how long is that process going to take? And then when your man is convicted; he gets Grievous Bodily Harm, gets a year in jail and is then back out to commit the same crime again... You know?...”

Two very different opinions on the matter.

We here at Tacsai Magazine have championed more action on the issue of driver safety. The recent spate of attacks, an apparent

rise, means action has to be taken. Whether or not drivers should have to foot the bill whilst operating in the public transport system is another matter.

Crucially, everyone in the industry can have their say....

Submissions, clearly marked ‘Mandatory Driver Safety Equipment Consultation 2015’, must be received by the Authority by 5pm on Friday, September 25 next either by email: driversafety@nationaltransport.ie or by post to the address details below to Driver Safety, National Transport Authority, Dún Scéine, Iveagh Court, Harcourt Lane, Dublin 2.



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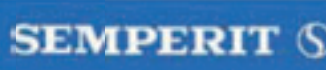
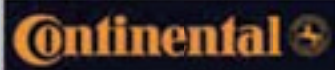
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STEPPING UP TO THE PLATE

Authorities out to curb costs

Taxi plates could become smaller under plans by the National Transport Authority (NTA) to reduce air pollution and driving costs, the Irish Independent reported last month.

Current roof signs add as much as 50% to fuel costs because of the drag exerted on the vehicle, and a smaller sign could help reduce emissions, it says. And the authority has also launched a public consultation on whether internal security cameras should become mandatory in all vehicles to help prevent attacks.

The move follows an attack on an elderly taxi driver in his 70s in Athlone, Co Westmeath, last week, where he was stabbed a number of times during a late-night robbery.

The NTA has published two proposals, with submissions invited until September 25 next.

It says a new sign could be smaller, include more information and also be fitted with mobile communications to allow vehicles be tracked to improve driver and passenger safety. In other countries, including the UK and Sweden, smaller signs are common.

A study found that signs fitted across the roof added around 50pc to the

power required to drive the car, which resulted in an increase in fuel usage while also having a “detrimental effect” on overall pollution.

Separately, the NTA is also seeking submissions on a range of safety measures which could be implemented, including in-vehicle security cameras, a vehicle location system and a partition separating the driver front seat from the remainder of the vehicle.

“What we want to do is get out there and find out if the drivers and public want to make these mandatory,” a spokeswoman said, adding they were installed in the UK “as a matter of course”.

A decision is expected in 2016.

Our Taxi Spy added: “Basically it seems that the authorities are doing anything they can to re-regulate the industry.

“They’re putting de-cals on your doors, they’re giving us ID badges, they’re sticking stickers on your windows. At the end of the day they should be giving us the VRT. It’s a little expense here and a little expense there.

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OC Cars are a company specialising in vehicle adaptations and providing wheelchair accessible vehicles for both disabled drivers and passengers. We recently spoke to them about their new venture.

"During the course of our business and through feedback from various customers, we soon realised that there was a shortage of wheelchair accessible PSV vehicles. We further recognised that the fitting out cost of these vehicles to ensure they met the National Transport's standards were quite prohibitive for the ordinary PSV operative.

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more suitable and affordable W.A.V in order to increase the P.S.V wheelchair taxi market. Stephen had been actively working with the taxi regulator and department of transport for a change in regulations to allow for a smaller WAV to increase the PSV WAV fleet.

"For our part we demonstrated suitable vehicles to the taxi regulator and department of transport with the combined effort of Stephen Mc Clusky. Stephen was successful in his endeavours and subsequent changes have been made in the regulations. Stephen was allowing more affordable PSV WAV. The department of transport allocated a 1,000,000 grant to assist with the new taxi W.A.V vehicles.

After the success of the Grant last year the National Transport Authority have decided to reintroduce the grant for wheelchair taxis this year, running from the 1st July to the end of October.

The grant works on the same principle as last year. "O C CARS are happy to be a partner in making more wheelchair accessible taxis available to the general public .

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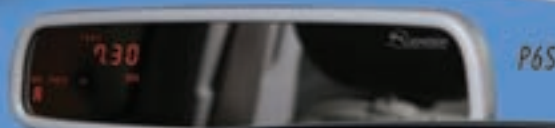
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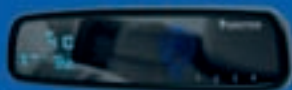
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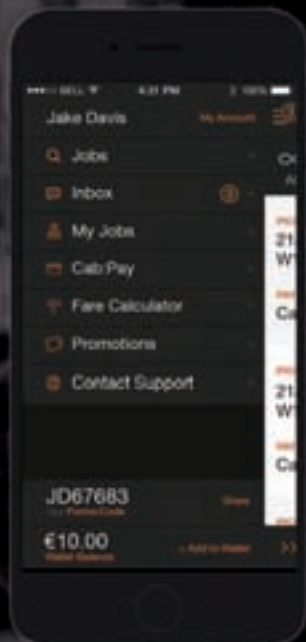
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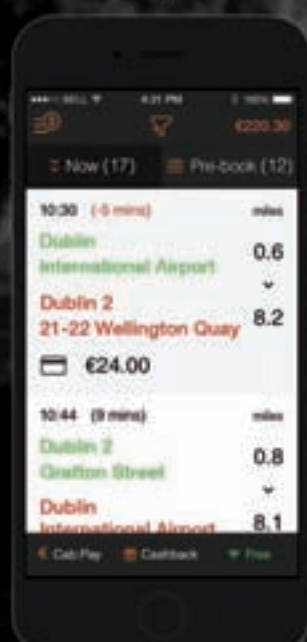
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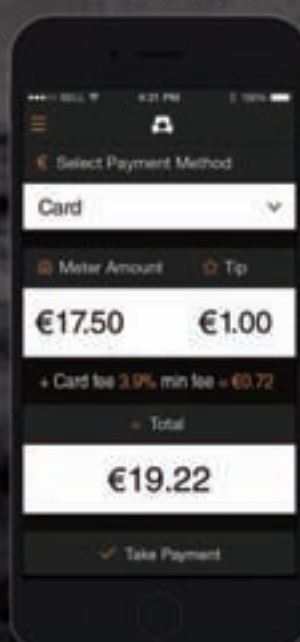
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ON YER BIKE!

Cyclists shocked at new rules

As of August 1st, Gardai can enforce new on-the-spot €40 fines for cyclists who commit a range of dangerous no-nos, offences that already carry parallel penalties for motorists. Aaron McKenna of *The Journal* wrote a superb piece a few weeks ago in which he highlighted the mood of the driver. Up until now there has been one set of rules for vehicle-users and another for cyclists.

The move is the beginning of a long overdue fight back against aggressive, dangerous and boorish cyclists whose number has increased in tandem with the burgeoning popularity of the transport mode.

Many taxi drivers we've spoken to here at *Tacsai Magazine* have often expressed their annoyance with cyclists' behaviour on the roads – particularly couriers!

A large number of cyclists were shocked when gardai began a crackdown campaign last year, stopping dangerous cyclists and giving them a telling off. Drivers are often maligned, not always without merit, for being boorish and inconsiderate on the roads. It is a well recognised problem, with a lot of penalties, enforcement and investment into prevention.

Cyclists, on the other hand, have been getting a relatively free ride where it comes to their responsibilities on the road, and there is a feeling of *lèse-majesté* when criticism of their behaviours are discussed. Cyclists have had the backing of powerful bureaucratic interests, for it seems every senior civil servant and county manager involved in roads policy likes to cycle in to work from the leafy inner suburbs of Dublin. These officials sound like they've been off sipping taxpayer-funded coffees on fact-finding missions to fine European cycling metropolises.

An accommodation needs to be reached in our cities and across the country. The idea that motorists should be forced off the streets to make way for cyclists is ideologically driven twaddle from city planners. Drivers pay for their right to use the roads by contributing a ton of VRT, motor tax, and 57 cents in every euro of petrol going to the exchequer.

If drivers switch en masse to using the bus or cycling, you can also bet that those taxes will go up to cover the shortfall from our newfound good habits. Just ask drivers who flocked to low CO2 emission cars what happened when the tax incentive to do so started costing government real money.

Our cities aren't going to get bigger, and we're not going to start demolishing buildings to make the streets wider. So the accommodation needs to involve better behaviour from drivers and cyclists alike, backed by a robust and enforced system of penalties.

There are private speed vans and a traffic corps deployed on the roads to catch out bad driving, and we need to see a similar enforcement against cyclists who break traffic signs, don't use lights on their bikes, or generally cycle recklessly.

Rather than cut off city centres to private motorists, such as with the plan to cut off College Green entirely in Dublin, we could introduce congestion charges. Drivers need to recognise that a city centre is both well provisioned with public transport and congested, and so it would be appropriate to pay a usage charge for the convenience of driving through it.

Anti-motorist planners need to recognise on the other hand that motorists already pay for the privilege of being on the roads, and can't be cut out entirely. These new fines will promote better behaviour and ultimately safer roads.

YOUR UBER
IS ARRIVING

UBER SET SIGHTS ON TREATY COUNTY

American app giant to invest 4 million Euro

Taxi app giant Uber will create 150 new jobs in Limerick city by the end of the year.

The controversial American company will invest 4 million euro in a new 'Centre of Excellence' focused on customer services.

The centre will create 150 jobs in the city by the end of the year and around 300 when it is fully up and running.

The company is also investing €4m in the city this year as it aims to make Limerick one of its growing network of customer service hubs.

Uber is already advertising for an initial 50 jobs as it looks to start operations in the city by the end of August, and has signed a 10-year lease on a site on Thomas Street that will become home to 300 local employees when fully operational.

"What better place to launch our first Centre of Excellence outside the US

than in Ireland," said Kieran Harte, general manager at Uber Ireland.

"We are so thrilled to be here and setting up our operations in this city, which has a tradition of welcoming innovative technology companies. Not only are we investing in the city we're also proud to be bringing employment at all levels to the region."

The Centre will become a major hub of Uber's support organisation within EMEA driving innovation and service excellence for the community of Riders and Partner Drivers in the region.

Uber has in just a few short years become a ubiquitous app and the company has grown to an unparalleled valuation, despite local battles with city councils and taxi unions around the world. It is estimated that Uber will generate US\$10bn in revenues by the end of 2015.

The taxi app is currently used in 329 cities in 59 countries worldwide. It emerged last month that Uber has raised total funding of US\$10bn, setting a new record for US technology companies. The company is estimated to be worth between US\$40bn and US\$50bn. If valued at US\$40bn that values Uber at 1.5 times the capitalisation of Twitter and gives it the same capitalisation as Salesforce.com, Delta Airlines and Kraft Foods.

Uber was founded in 2009 by StumbleUpon founder Garrett Camp and CEO Travis Kalanick with US\$200,000 in seed funding.

“Uber’s investment in Limerick is testament to the skills and talent of the Irish workforce. I very much welcome this decision, which demonstrates once again Ireland’s attractiveness for foreign direct investment,” Taoiseach Enda Kenny TD said.

“This will be Uber’s first customer support hub of its type outside of the United States, confirming Ireland as the location of choice for leading, innovative companies, and will be a welcome boost to Limerick and the wider region.”

While there has been a huge welcome for Uber’s decision to open a Centre of Excellence in Limerick, a taxi firm owner believes it could be “a disaster” for his industry.

Jude Williams, who owns Treaty Cabs in Davis Street, said that while Uber has insisted it will only allow licensed taxi or limousine drivers to operate here, he is concerned it may renege on this at a later stage.

But Eric Hatton, a taxi driver from Pallaskenry said he was “reassured” that the service can only be operated by cabbies.

“Even though our industry is heavily regulated, it is probably a good job that it is so regulated in this case,” he said.

Education Minister Jan O’Sullivan pledged to ensure competition rules are “strongly adhered to”.

In other jurisdictions, Uber is open to anyone who has a car, and they can charge for seats. In Ireland, they only allow licensed taxi drivers use the service.

Uber has made headlines in both New York and Paris, leading to calls for the service to be capped.

The service currently operates in Dublin, and with the firm due to open a support centre in Limerick City Centre, Uber will also operate on Shannonside. However, the Irish market is miniscule compared to Uber’s worldwide operation, and the centre in Limerick will manage support services in Europe, the Middle East and Asia (EMEA), rather than targeting the local taxi industry, it is understood.

The company said the Limerick centre would “become a major hub of Uber’s support organisation within EMEA driving innovation and service excellence for the community of Riders and Partner Drivers in the region”.

But Mr Williams said: “They are coming in at the moment and are saying they are only hiring taxi and limousine drivers. But they did this in the States, and then they ended up hiring people driving every car on the roads. It became a free for all. Any guy finishing work could say there is a car outside, and could sign up for it, and get work off us.”

He added that taxi drivers should not sign up to the service.

It hasn’t been all good news for Uber recently though;

Uber France leaders were arrested last month for running an illegal Taxi

company. Uber France CEO Thibaud Simphal and Uber Europe GM Pierre-Dimitri Gore-Coty were both taken into custody in Paris. The AFP first broke the news. The police started investigating Uber in November 2014 and raided its office in Paris in March 2015.

The two executives were charged with two different allegations. First, according to them, Uber is running illegal taxi operations. Uber has been struggling with this charge in many countries, starting with the US. In 2010, the company had to change its original name from UberCab to Uber as taxi companies didn’t want to create any confusion.

Second, the police said that Uber France is concealing digital documents. It’s hard to tell what the police was looking for when they raided the French office in March. But apparently, some documents are missing and slowing down the investigation.

The transportation company executives weren’t taken into custody because of the violent protests that occurred last Thursday – taxi drivers want Uber to stop its cheapest service, UberPOP. But it’s hard to rule out a link between the two events. The police might have sped up its investigation following last week’s incidents. Cabbies damaged 70 cars – some of them were even flipped over and burnt.

As a reminder UberPOP was launched in February 2014 and is the confusingly named equivalent of UberX in France (UberX in France is the equivalent of Uber in the U.S.). With UberPOP, anyone can become a driver without any special professional license.

Many taxi drivers saw the new service as unfair competition. UberPOP was banned in Brussels, the Netherlands and, yes, France.

The French police has been issuing fines for a few months now, but when an UberPOP driver gets fined, Uber pays for the fine. Recently, Uber rolled out UberPOP in a few smaller French cities, making it available to many more potential customers.

That’s why taxi drivers protested against UberPOP last week, asking for a real unequivocal ban. Interior Minister Bernard Cazeneuve talked with taxi unions, told the police to stop UberPOP drivers and fine them – 200 additional police officers are now in charge of this task. French President François Hollande also reminded that UberPOP cars could get seized by the police, but it’s unclear whether it will become a widespread practice.

Yet, as long as there is no justice court order, the Government can’t do much more than that. On Thursday, Uber France director Thibaud Simphal said to BFM TV that as long as a justice court didn’t order Uber to stop UberPOP, the service would continue – as of today, you can still find UberPOP cars when you open the app.

Uber were asked for a quote on the story, a spokesperson said (translated from French):

“Our CEO for France and General Manager for Western Europe were invited to a police hearing this afternoon; following this interview, they were taken into custody. We are always available to answer all the questions on our service, and available to the authorities to solve any problem that could come up. Talks are in progress. In the meantime, we keep working in order to make sure that both our customers and drivers are safe following last week’s turmoils.”



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TTnH ZERO IN ON NEW PROPOSALS

Organisation speak out

As covered in this month's Tacsáí Magazine, the National Transport Authority has announced new proposals on roofsigns and mandatory CCTV for all taxis.

The NTA says a new sign could be smaller, include more information and also be fitted with mobile communications to allow vehicles be tracked to improve driver and passenger safety.

While, after a spate of recent attacks, CCTV could soon be mandatory for all cabs. TTnH Spokesman, Dave McGuinness, said: "First and foremost I would like to say; with regard to the taxi review that took place under the guidance of former Public Transport Minister Alan Kelly in 2011/2012 there doesn't seem to be much good coming out of it for the full-time taxi driver. I mean the money that's going to be generated from these new roofsigns... who benefits? Certainly not the taxi driver anyway!

"How did something like new roofsigns come up? They're definitely not needed. The ones we have at the moment are just fine. We're totally against this proposal.

"The effects of the recession are still being felt by the

ordinary full-time driver and there's a petition going around the ranks to get this stopped.

"The Taxi Alliance is 100% behind this and we've argued to the NTA that there's no point whatsoever in bringing in new roof signs.

"As for mandatory CCTV, again, we're against it.

"The TTnH feel if individual drivers want to go out and buy their own CCTV equipment then that's fine it's their business, but mandatory cameras are a different story.

"In no other business would it be mandatory for a self-employed person to have to shell out for this. But again, there was no discussion on this..."

Lastly, an update on the proposals at College Green.

Dave said: "We have been assured that there will be no definite decision on this matter until mid-2017. While the NTA have also committed to ongoing discussions until that time."



CAMERA ROLLING: MIDLAND AUTO ACCESSORIES

We speak to the dash camera experts

We've been ardent in publicising the attacks on taxi drivers in recent times here at Tacsáí Magazine. Safety is paramount for drivers. And safety is just what Midland Auto Accessories is offering.

The company specialise in dash cameras for taxi drivers. Amidst the recent proposal announcement from the NTA on mandatory CCTV in cabs, we spoke to Midland's Richard Allen to hear what his company are offering right now to concerned drivers.

Richard, a former truck driver, truck driving instructor as well as a car enthusiast wanted to offer a better service for auto lighting products in Ireland. He founded the company in 2012, initially called Midland Auto Lighting, they changed their name in 2014 and launched their website www.autoaccessories.ie

Richard said: "A couple of years ago I was told about the cameras and I heard about the incidents happening. We started selling the dash cameras the the uptake was good.

"We're based in Westmeath and you'll see a lot of the

drivers in Mullingar and the rest of the county using the camera now.

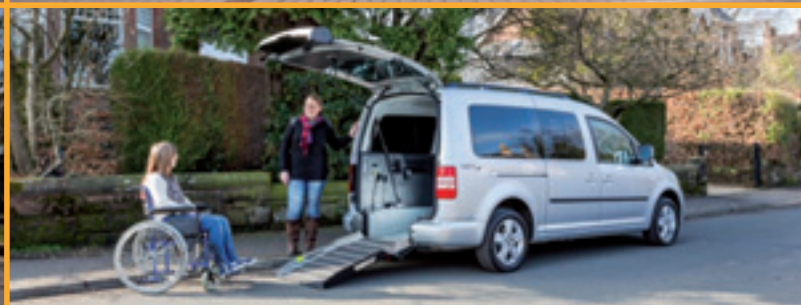
"We've also had an uptake in Dublin aswell. Word-of-mouth has been good and it's great that drivers feel they can have that bit more protection now.

"When it comes to allegations made against drivers from customers; the proof can be there aswell. The same goes with people making allegations that you went around the world twice to take them home when it's not the case - there's an in-built GPS built in with our system that also records your location.

"We import from China. All our products listed on the website are in stock and depending on order time may be shipped on same day. We always use a tracked shipping service and in most cases a courier which means that over 90% of our orders will be shipped for next day or 48 hour delivery - business days only, excluding weekends."

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For more information go to www.autoaccessories.ie or call Richard on 0872864336.



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Freedom Mobility was established by a team of motorindustry professionals who identified the need for a dedicated, disabled driver and vehicle adaptation service in the West of Ireland.

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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“900 DRIVERS QUIT THE INDUSTRY IN 2015”

NTA announce shocking new figures

Almost 900 taxi drivers have quit the profession in the first six months of 2015, according to new figures from the National Transport Authority (NTA).

Competition from online taxi service providers like Uber and Hailo is seen as the main reason for the continuing decrease in the number of taxi drivers registered with the NTA.

Although taxi fares have risen by 4% on average since an increase was sanctioned on April 30, many drivers complain that they are still unable to make a decent living from driving a cab due to the large number of people operating in the

profession.

The entry into the market in recent years of operators of smartphone apps for taxis — such as Uber and Hailo — with lower standard fares has placed increasing pressure on the income levels of traditional taxi drivers in a sector which is regarded as having an oversupply of taxis, particularly in Dublin.

New figures from the NTA show that there were 28,578 active taxi drivers licensed at the end of June, a reduction of 879 compared to the start of 2015.

It follows a continuing trend in which the number of taxi drivers has been in decline since 2009 when the number

of licence holders peaked at over 47,200, following controversial deregulation of the industry in 2000.

More than 18,600 fewer taxi drivers are now officially registered than in 2009.

However, some of the reduction is also viewed as people exiting the taxi profession to take up better-paid employment, as growth returns to the Irish economy.

According to the NTA, there are also almost 340 fewer vehicles registered with a taxi or hackney licence since January, with 122 fewer in Dublin.

The number of taxis registered in Cork has fallen from 1,334 to 1,305 in the first half of the year. Other counties where there were double-digit decreases in the number of taxis were Meath, Galway, Kildare, Limerick and Sligo.

All counties have seen a reduction in the size of their taxi fleet so far in 2015, with the exception of Louth, Waterford and Wexford, where there was a slight increase in the number of licensed taxis, and Longford and Monaghan, where the numbers remained unchanged.

However, one growth area in the sector has been for limousines licensed for use as a taxi service. The number of

limousines licensed with the NTA nationwide jumped from 1,437 in January to 1,511 by June.

In contrast, the number of licensed taxis has declined from 16,899 to 16,607 over the same period, a decrease of 292 vehicles.

A total of 330 fixed-charge notices were issued against taxi drivers in the first half of 2015, with almost half of the fines being for a failure to notify the NTA of a small public-service vehicle being operated.

A quarter of the total fixed-charge notices were issued for standing for hire at a place other than an appointed stand.

The NTA has received a total of 404 complaints against taxi drivers in the year to date, with 224 cases related to the behaviour of the driver.

Dave McGuinness was eager to question the numbers.

The TTnH Spokesman said: "We would like to know how the NTA have come up with the number 900?"

"It would be a hard number to give an exact figure on.

"We would suggest that there are possibly 900 fewer taxis on the road and not necessarily 900 fewer drivers. Which would be a huge difference!"

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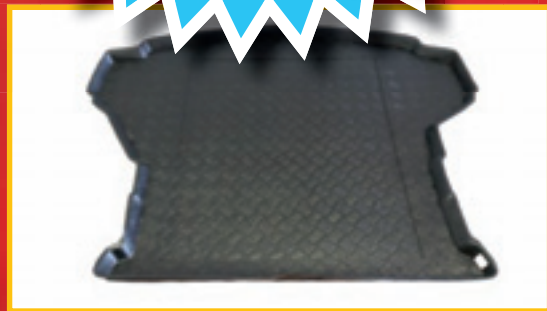
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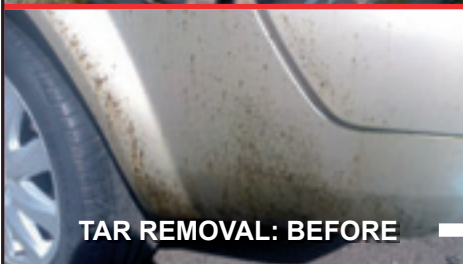
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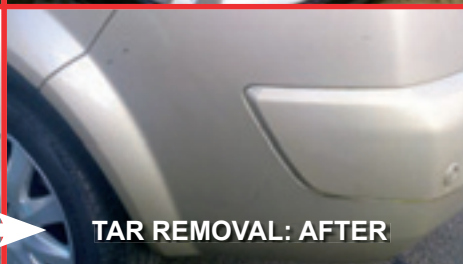
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WORLDWIDE REPORT

TAXI NEWS ROUND-UP FROM AROUND THE GLOBE.

CHINA

A champion hammer thrower has denied reports that he paid for a taxi home with his gold medal after getting drunk on a night out celebrating his World Athletics Championships glory.

Poland's Pawel Fajdek woke up in Beijing the morning after his winning throw of 80.88 metres only to find he no longer had his precious gong.

The worried 26-year-old, who was the youngest defending gold medallist at the Championships this year, immediately contacted police to report the loss.

Officers reportedly set about helping him retrace his steps the night before and managed to trace the taxi driver - who told them Fajdek had willingly handed his medal over in payment.

Presumably after persuasion from police, the taxi driver returned the missing medal.

But Fajdek has now accused Chinese media of inventing the story.

LONDON

Private taxi apps like Uber and Hailo are becoming ever popular, but not everyone is happy with their UK expansion. But how widespread are they? According to new figures from the Department of Transport, the number of private hire vehicles in England has risen by 11.8 percent since 2013, with London seeing a massive 26 percent rise alone. There are now a record 62,754 private vehicles operating in the capital, up from 49,854 in 2013.

The increase in private taxis has London mayor Boris Johnson on edge. He's already backed calls for a limit on the number of private hire vehicles made available in the city of London and may force drivers to pass a local knowledge test to prove their geographic expertise. Johnson admits he doesn't like "the brash attitudes" of large American internet companies and believes the proposed (easier) test would ensure regular cabbies "retain

their distinctiveness." New York Mayor Bill de Blasio recently proposed a similar plan to enforce a cap, but later put it on ice.

While the number of licenced taxis rose by 1.5 percent to 25,000, there are now 58 fewer Hackney Carriages in operation than in 2011. The Licensed Taxi Drivers Association (LTDA), which represents London's black cab drivers, argues that Uber's growth has gone unchecked. It believes fare-calculating apps are illegal and so pressured Transport for London (TfL) to restrict the private hire company's operations, but that decision now rests with London's High Court.

NORTHERN IRELAND

A woman who won €38m in the Euromillions has been ordered by a judge to complete 150 hours of unpaid community work for assaulting a taxi driver.

Margaret Loughrey, from Bridge Street in Strabane, Co Tyrone, also admitted causing criminal damage to the driver's glasses and satellite navigation system during an alcohol-fuelled incident outside her home on May 14.

A Public Prosecution Service solicitor told Strabane Magistrate's Court that Loughrey, who had no previous criminal convictions, also verbally abused police officers following her arrest after the incidents.

"She is a woman with a number of advantages and she accepts that her behaviour on this night was totally unacceptable" the court was told.

Deputy District Judge Sean O'Hare also ordered Ms Loughrey to pay restitution of €782 for the damage she caused to the glasses and also ordered her to pay the driver compensation of €280.

MONTREAL

Deep-rooted frustration among taxi drivers with the UberX ride-



hailing service rose to the surface Tuesday at a demonstration involving several hundred cabbies in Montreal.

They parked their vehicles in an industrial park for more than an hour to listen to speeches that slammed UberX and promised even stronger actions if the provincial government fails to act.

The anti-UberX protest was one of the biggest demonstrations that were held in cities across the province.

About 100 taxi drivers also staged a demonstration against Uber in front of the national assembly in Quebec City.

“We will not accept UberX -- that’s the message,” Wilson Jean Paul, a spokesman for taxi owners, told the Montreal crowd.

The drivers called on the government to clarify its position on the new service, which allows users to hail a car using an application on their smartphone.

Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard suggested recently he’s open to legalizing the ride-booking service while Montreal’s mayor is strongly against it.

“Two weeks ago he (Couillard) declared it was a good idea, but at the same time the minister of transport had a different position,” Dominique Roy, the president of Diamond Taxi told reporters.

“We want to make sure everyone who is involved has a clear position and we know exactly what’s going on.”

UNITED KINGDOM

One of Britain’s largest trade unions has said it plans legal action against the US-based taxi app Uber over pay and conditions for drivers.

The GMB said Uber should pay drivers Britain’s national minimum wage, give them paid holidays and ensure they take sufficient rest breaks.

It claims the app “is in breach of a legal duty to provide them with basic rights on pay, holidays, health and safety and on discipline and grievances.”

Uber, who have announced plans to hire up to 300 staff at a new customer service centre in Limerick, allows passengers to get in touch with private drivers who pick them up and take them to their destination, often for a lower fare than a traditional taxi.

The US-based firm, reportedly valued at €45 billion, operates in some 300 cities worldwide. It has around 15,000 drivers in London and expects that will increase to 42,000 next year.

Knock Knock

Two tall trees, a birch and a beech, are growing in the woods. A small tree begins to grow between them, and the beech says to the birch, "Is that a son of a beech or a son of a birch?" The birch says he cannot tell, but just then a woodpecker lands on the sapling.

The birch says, "Woodpecker, you are a tree expert. Can you tell if that is a son of a beech or a son of a birch?"


The woodpecker takes a taste of the small tree and replies, "It is neither a son of a beech nor a son of a birch, it is, however, the best piece of ash I have ever poked my pecker into."

Now wipe that smile off your face.

A man went to his lawyer and told him, "My neighbor owes me \$500 and he won't pay up. What should I do?" "Do you have any proof he owes you the money?" asked the lawyer. "Nope," replied the man. "OK, then write him a letter asking him for the \$5,000 he owed you," said the lawyer. "But it's only \$500," replied the man. "Precisely. That's what he will reply and then you'll have your proof!"

A boy asks his father, "Dad, are bugs good to eat?" "That's disgusting. Don't talk about things like that over dinner," the dad replies. After dinner the father asks, "Now, son, what did you want to ask me?" "Oh, nothing," the boy says. "There was a bug in your soup, but now it's gone."

A police officer attempts to stop a car for speeding and the guy gradually increases his speed until he's topping 100 mph. The man eventually realizes he can't escape and finally pulls over. The cop approaches the car and says, "It's been a long day and my shift is almost over, so if you can give me a good excuse for your behavior, I'll let you go." The guy thinks for a few seconds and then says, "My wife ran away with a cop about a week ago. I thought you might be that officer trying to give her back!"



A man walks out on his front porch one day and sees a gorilla in the tree on his front lawn. He calls animal control and about an hour later a man shows up with a ladder, a pit bull, and a shotgun. The animal control employee tells the man, "I'm here to get the gorilla out of your tree. I'm going to use this ladder to climb up the tree and shake the branch the gorilla is on to knock him to the ground. The pit bull is trained to go after anything that falls from the tree and bites their balls which calms the animal down so I can put him in the truck." The man says "Okay, I see what the ladder and the pit bull are for but what is the shotgun for?" The animal control employee says, "Oh, that's for you. In case I fall out of the tree instead of the gorilla, shoot the dog."

So two Kerry men are traveling to Australia. Before they leave home, one of their dads gives them both a bit of advice: "You watch them Aussie cab drivers. They'll rob you blind. Don't you go paying them what they ask. You haggle." At the Sydney airport, the Kerry men catch a cab to their hotel. When they reach their destination, the cabbie says, "That'll be twenty dollars, lads." "Oh no you don't! My dad warned me about you. You'll only be getting fifteen dollars from me," says one of the men. "And you'll only be getting fifteen from me too," adds the other.



General Knowledge Questions

THE TACSAÍ MAGAZINE BUMPER QUIZ

- Used in forensic investigations, what was invented in 1921 by John Augustus Larson, a Police Officer from Berkeley, California?
- What is the highest mountain in Canada?
- In which year was the Aintree Grand National officially run?
- Which actor born 10 July 1977 played Solomon Northup in the 2013 movie '12 Years a Slave'?
- Irish War of Independence here Michael Collins was a native of which county?
- Which African country joined the United Nations on 14 July 2011?
- Anthony Charles Lynton are the Christian names of which former British Prime Minister?
- Chorophobia is the irrational fear of what?
- What was invented in 1890 by Harold P. Brown and Arthur Kennelly, both employees of Thomas Edison?
- Name the only Irish cyclist to have won the Tour de France?
- What is the capital of Montenegro?
- The River Shannon is the longest river in Ireland. What is the second longest?
- What is commonly regarded as the shortest river in Ireland?
- In what year did Roger Bannister break the world mile record and the four-minute barrier at Iffley Road Track in Oxford?
- In 1865, six Confederate veterans, meeting in Pulaski, Tennessee, formed which secret society?
- What date is Mahatma Gandhi's birthday and is also a National Holiday in India?
- Zinedine Zidane was sent off during the FIFA World Cup Final for headbutting which player?
- Which famous figure was born as Marie Grosholtz in 1761 in Strasbourg, France?
- What animal derives its name for the Latin for 'Little Thief'?

- Pushtu is the main language in which country?
- Which country won the 1938 FIFA World Cup?
- What are the Chinook and the Sirocco?
- What is Pakistan's currency?
- Constance Georgine Markievicz, the early 20th century Irish Sinn Féin and Fianna Fáil politician, achieved which first in politics in 1918?
- What does the 'S' represent in United States Army general George S. Patton Jr's name?
- Name the Anglo-Saxon King killed at the Battle of Hastings in 1066
- Who did Beatle Sir Paul McCartney marry in 2011?
- In motoring terms, what does India, Tonga, Malta and Tanzania have in common?
- Which capital city lies on the Potomac River?
- In the 1970's East Pakistan became known as which modern day country?

- ## ANSWERS
- Polygraph (lie-detector)
 - Mount Logan
 - 1839
 - Chitwetel Ejifor
 - Cork
 - South Sudan
 - Tony Blair
 - Dance
 - Electric Chair
 - Stephen Roche
 - Podgorica
 - River Barrow
 - The River Corrib which flows from Lough Corrib through Galway to Galway Bay. The river is among the shortest in Europe, with only a length of six kilometres from the lough to the Atlantic.
 - 1954
 - Ku Klux Klan
 16. 2 October
 - Marco Materazzi
 - Marie 'Madame' Tussauds
 - Ferret (furrus)
 - Afghanistan
 - Italy (beat Hungary 4-2 in the final)
 - Winds
 - Pakistani Rupee
 - She became the first woman elected to the British House of Commons
 - Smith
 - King Harold II
 - Nancy Shevell
 - Cars drive on the left
 - Washington D.C.
 - Bangladesh
 - Afghanistan
 - Italy (beat Hungary 4-2 in the final)
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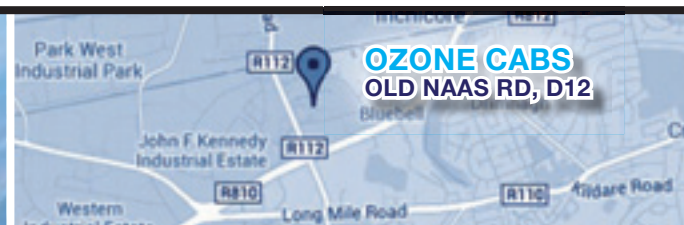


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