New signs in Cork tell you when bus will arrive

**Minister Alan Kelly and Deputy Lord Mayor Tony Fitzgerald launch
pilot of new electronic bus information signs in Cork**

Live testing of Real Time Passenger Information signs begins for Cork bus services

Website, mobile app and SMS texting services also being developed.

CORK – THURSDAY 9th FEBRUARY, 2012: The Minister for Public and Commuter Transport, Alan Kelly T.D. and the Deputy Lord Mayor of Cork, Cllr Tony Fitzgerald today launched the pilot phase of a new real time passenger information service for Cork where electronic bus stop signs will tell passengers when their bus is due to arrive. The first of the new signs was switched on at Grand Parade, Cork, this morning.

The service has been developed by the National Transport Authority and Dublin City Council who are managing the system for local authorities. In Cork, 14 of 47 new signs are now being live tested on an introductory basis. Cork City Council will place the signs at some of the busiest bus stops across the city and suburbs during 2012.

The launch of real time passenger information services in Cork forms part of a national rollout of electronic bus information signs which started last year with services in Dublin and will also be extended to Limerick, Waterford and Galway by year-end.

Minister Alan Kelly said: "This will be a major boost for public transport in Cork. We have prioritised these initiatives to improve public transport and information services in Cork and other major cities. Cork is the first city to have real time information for Bus Éireann services and modern new buses are also on their way. By using innovative and consumer friendly technologies, we can make public transport more convenient and reliable. These systems also help to encourage people to use public transport more regularly in their travel choices. It forms part of the overall integrated approach that we are pursuing to improve overall mobility and quality of life for everyone."

Cllr. Tony Fitzgerald, Deputy Lord Mayor of Cork said: "We welcome this improvement in services for bus users in Cork which will see these new real time bus information signs established extensively across the City and into the wider County. Knowing when your bus will actually arrive provides a greater level of certainty for passengers and I believe they will benefit from this new service. I also think that it will encourage people to use the bus more often which is important in reducing traffic congestion and this will help to make our City even more accessible for everyone."

SMS texting, Web and mobile app services are also being developed to provide bus arrival time information for all stops, each of which will have an individual identification number. Bus Éireann are currently in the process of physically numbering all stops in Cork. These services will be launched in the summer.

This live testing phase is designed to check the accuracy of the information on the first 14 new signs in Cork. The National Transport Authority is encouraging public feedback through a website, **www.TransportforIreland.ie** which will be highlighted on the electronic display signs at bus stops.   A trial version of the new web service is also available on www.TransportforIreland.ie. This shows real time information for key stops in Cork City and will be extended once the real time system is fully established.

The new real-time information service in Cork is being delivered in co-operation with Bus Éireann, who are responsible for the automatic vehicle location system and the associated real time arrival predictions for their buses. The scheme can also take information from other licensed transport operators.

Gerry Murphy, Chief Executive, National Transport Authority said: "We are very pleased to launch the first Bus Éireann real time information system in Cork. The Authority is focussed on the continual improvement of public transport in terms of the quality, efficiency and reliability of services throughout the country. We are also working to create far more integrated information systems and services to ensure that passengers have access to useful and accurate information for all transport providers.

"We will launch a national journey planner in spring which, for the first time, will have information about all public transport services in the one place - www.TransportforIreland.ie. These initiatives will mean that everyone in Ireland can more easily plan and make public transport journeys with enhanced reliability. We look forward to continuing this process in other major cities and around the country in the year ahead."

Martin Nolan, Chief Executive, Bus Éireann said: "The real-time passenger information system for Cork will be of major benefit to public transport users in the city and we look forward to working with the National Transport Authority on its roll-out following the pilot. It is one of several service enhancements, which also include new city and commuter vehicles and advanced customer information displays that our customers in Cork can look forward to in 2012."

The electronic signs provide bus users with up to the minute information on when the next bus is due at that stop. Locations for the signs are being selected on criteria which include the busiest stops, placement on bus corridors or being close to other transport connections, major shopping zones and public areas. The location and activation of signs will be progressed throughout the year.

The new real-time information service uses Automatic Vehicle Location systems on buses and a computerised system which tracks the buses and feeds information to the signs. The signs can also carry other information about bus services or update messages for passengers at bus stops.

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To provide real time information, buses must be equipped with an Automatic Vehicle Location transmitter. A Global Positioning System (GPS) tracks the bus and sends a signal to the bus stop through a central control system. The screens at the bus stops count down the minutes until the bus arrives and are updated every 30 seconds, depending on where the bus is along its route.

The system has been developed for use in all nominated cities by the National Transport Authority and Dublin City Council, who have been working closely with Cork City Council throughout.

The new signs are provided by Data Displays based in Ennistymon, Co.Clare.

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