

# NEW BRANDING FOR IRELAND'S TAXI FLEET UNVEILED – ALAN KELLY

Public Transport Minister Alan Kelly has welcomed the new taxi branding signage which will be phased in to Ireland's taxi fleet from January of next year.

The branding, developed by the National Transport Authority, will see semi-permanent decal 'Taxi' signage affixed to the driver and passenger doors of each car. The move is intended to encourage greater professionalism and accountability within the taxi sector.

Minister Kelly stated:

"New York has yellow taxis, London has the famous black cabs. These approaches would be far too expensive for Irish taxi drivers but to ensure the people who operate in the sector are accountable for their vehicles, we have opted for semi-permanent branding for taxis."

"This is a very significant reform and will encourage a more professional approach to the taxi sector. We want to ensure that those who operate taxis are committed and accountable. It will make it harder for rogue drivers to continue operating in the sector."

The branding will contain the individual vehicle licence number associated with a particular vehicle and it will also carry the 'Transport for Ireland' logo, further aligning taxis with other public transport services.

The move follows a review of the taxi sector by Minister Kelly and adopted by Government on January last. The National Transport Authority, in consultation with the Taxi Advisory Committee and sector representatives, developed the branding.

The branding will be phased in from January whereby taxi vehicles will need to be fitted with the official signage in order to renew the vehicle licence. The NTA will now initiate a process of licensing official suppliers to carry out this work.

"By licensing official suppliers to print and fit the branding, there will be competition in the market place and taxi drivers will be able to shop around and achieve the lowest possible price for operators," stated Minister Kelly.

The move will follow a new Taxi Regulation Act which the Minister intends to publish before the end of the year as part of the taxi sector review. A number of actions from the taxi review report are set to be implemented in January by the National Transport Authority including:

1. A new online system that will link the driver with the vehicle they are using allowing passengers to check the appropriate driver is in the vehicle.
2. New age limits for vehicles.
3. Prohibiting 'Taxi Plate Only' Rental.

4. Linking the SPSV vehicle licence with the vehicle owner.
5. Prohibiting of tinted windows in new taxi and hackney vehicles entering the fleet.
6. Ending the transferability of taxi vehicle licences.
7. Reducing the inactive licence period.

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