



Bus Statistics for Ireland

State Funded Services



Bulletin Topics:

- Total number of passenger journeys
- Bus patronage and general economic data
- Total operated kilometres
- Passenger revenues
- Free Travel Scheme revenue
- Subsidy Payments
- Numbers of buses
- Age of buses
- Operating fleet with Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL)
- Operating fleet with smartcard reading equipment
- Operating fleet that is wheelchair accessible

Introduction

This statistical bulletin is a publication of the National Transport Authority of Ireland (“the Authority”). It focuses on bus statistics for those contracted services that are subsidised by the State. The contracts are subsidised because the operators are required to deliver, what are called, Public Service Obligations (PSOs).

On 1st December 2009 the Dublin Transport Authority Act 2008 and the Public Transport Regulation Act 2009 came into effect. Under these Acts the Authority signed contracts with Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann. These contracts were new and much more comprehensive than previous arrangements. Consequently, the annual bus statistics in this bulletin begin in 2010 and cover the period 2010 to 2013 inclusive. Some data from prior to 2010 is included such as subsidy payments in order to give a historical perspective to the level of payments in recent years.

Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann currently provide the majority of PSO bus services under contract to the Authority - two other public service contracts are in place with M&A Coaches. The details in respect of M&A Coaches' contracts are outlined in Section 11 of this document.

The Rural Transport Programme provides bus services in many isolated areas of rural Ireland with journeys tending to be local in nature and approximately 75% of them being delivered door-to-door. The programme is also grant-aided by the State via the Authority.

Management of this programme was transferred to the Authority in April 2012 and its statistics have also been included to the extent they were collected and are available.

The reader of this bulletin may wish to see data on the operational performance of Dublin Bus, Bus Éireann and M&A Coaches. Quarterly reports on the key performance indicators of these public service contracts can be found on the Authority's website www.nationaltransport.ie under the heading Public Transport Services.

Statistical Qualification - it is important to note that the figures used in this bulletin are intended to illustrate broad trends and are not meant to be read as exact calculations. Rounding has been used and this could affect overall percentages.

There can also be approximations for a number of reasons. Reporting periods could differ slightly due to calculation methods and this would limit the precise accuracy. Other factors could affect figures e.g. severe weather conditions, amendments to routes, et cetera.

1

Total Number of Passenger Journeys

Tables 1A and 1B along with Figure 1.1 illustrate the changes in passenger journeys on PSO services across the State.

Dublin Bus passenger journeys have continued to fall between 2012 and 2013, albeit at a slower rate than in previous years. However, it is important to note that in September 2010 and over the following years Dublin Bus, in conjunction with the Authority, introduced their Network Direct project. This project saw the redesign of the Dublin Bus service network to provide customers with an improved public transport offering.

One of the outcomes of the project was the introduction of increased cross-city and orbital connections. This has had an impact on total passenger journeys because whereas previously a passenger making a cross-city trip needed to take one journey into the city centre and then another to their final destination, in many cases after the network changes, they only needed to make one combined trip. This should be borne in mind in assessing changes to Dublin Bus passenger journeys. However, although the network change would account for some of the reduction in passenger journeys, the economic environment would also have had a significant effect.

Bus Éireann passenger journeys have seen a reasonably significant increase of 3.7% in 2013. This was primarily driven by the success of the reconfiguration of bus services in the regional cities, a project initiated by the Authority.

As can be seen in Tables 1C and 1D, where passenger journeys are broken down by geographic segment, the success in the regional cities is especially evident in Cork and Galway. The overall increase means that Bus Éireann passenger journeys were higher in 2013 than in 2010.

One important factor that affected both Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann passenger journeys in 2013 was the lost service days that happened as a result of industrial action in both companies. For Bus Éireann, no PSO bus services were provided on Sunday the 12th of May and Monday the 13th of May; and for Dublin Bus, no



PSO bus services were provided on Sunday the 4th of August, Bank Holiday Monday the 5th, and Tuesday the 6th of August, which was an ordinary working day.

The Rural Transport Programme (RTP) saw annual passenger journeys rise substantially between 2010 and 2011; however, this increase was partially owing to new reporting methods that saw the inclusion of passengers on additional contracted services being included. Since then RTP passenger journeys have remained reasonably stable between 2011 and 2013 with only small changes, despite falling subsidy.

Table 1A
Annual passenger journeys (*millions*)

Year / Operator	Dublin Bus	Bus Éireann	Rural Transport Programme
2010	117.05	29.13	1.42
2011	115.05	28.48	1.74
2012	113.28	28.63	1.73
2013	112.49	29.69	1.74

Note: Figures are in millions and only include PSO services.

Table 1B
Percentage change of annual passenger journeys

Year / Operator	Dublin Bus	Bus Éireann	Rural Transport Programme
2010	-	-	-
2011	-1.7%	-2.2%	22.4%
2012	-1.5%	0.5%	-0.6%
2013	-0.7%	3.7%	0.5%

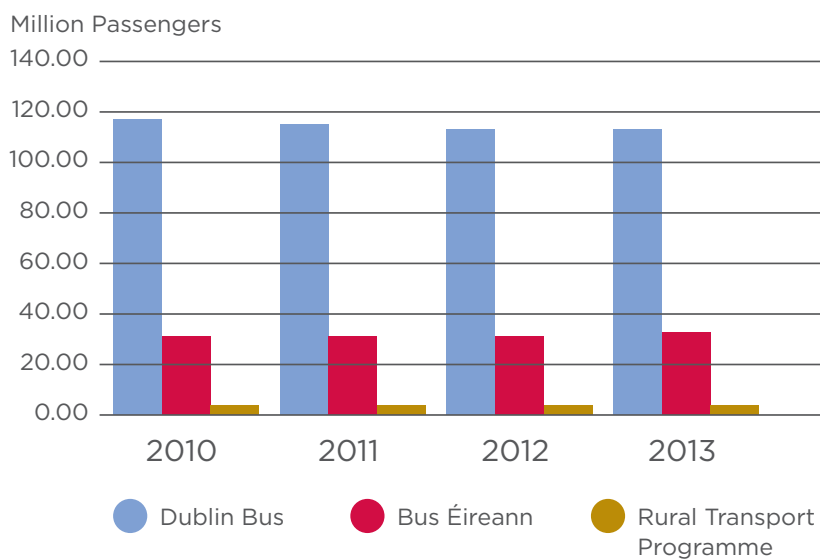
Table 1C
Bus Éireann Annual passenger journeys by segment

Year / Segment	Stage Carriage	Dublin Commuter	Cork City	Galway City	Limerick City	Waterford City	Total
2012	5.1	6.8	9.5	3.5	2.9	0.8	28.6
2013	4.9	7.0	10.3	3.9	2.8	0.9	29.7

Table 1D
Percentage split of Bus Éireann Annual passenger journeys by segment

Year / Segment	Stage Carriage	Dublin Commuter	Cork City	Galway City	Limerick City	Waterford City	Total
2012	17.9%	23.7%	33.2%	12.3%	10.0%	2.9%	100.0%
2013	16.5%	23.4%	34.7%	13.0%	9.5%	2.9%	100.0%

Figure 1.1
Public Transport Passenger Journeys, 2010-2013



Bus Patronage and General Economic Data

Passenger demand for public transport services is correlated to economic activity. Economic growth generally increases employment, net immigration, disposable income and consumer spend, all of which lead to greater travel. Economic decline produces the opposite effect. Consequently, passenger journeys increased greatly during the economic boom but declined radically from 2008 onwards, resulting in a significant reduction in patronage.

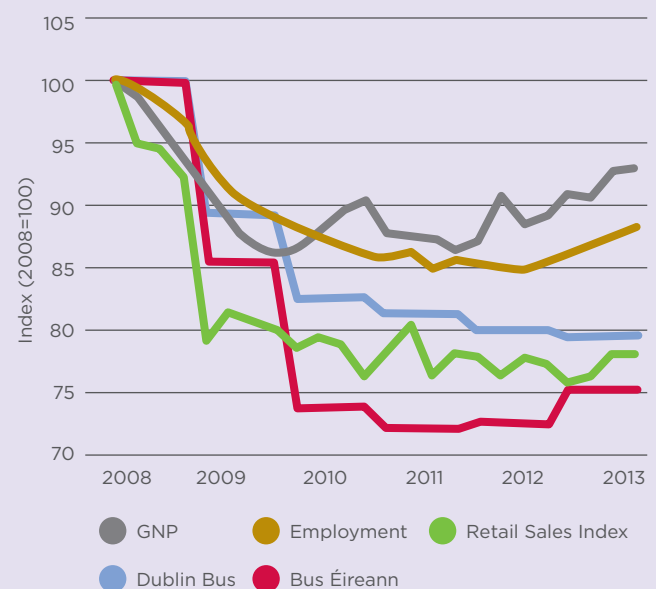
In Figure 1.2, the graph shows changes in Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann passenger journeys, alongside some general economic data.

Gross National Product (GNP) is a measure of the value of the goods and services that the country's citizens produced, regardless of their location. Change in GNP is often used as an indicator of the general health of the economy and in broad terms, an increase in real GNP is interpreted as a sign that the economy is doing well.

Employment simply highlights changes in the numbers of people at work. As employment increases there is the potential for a higher number of commuter and business trips as well as discretionary travel, if those who have gained employment choose to use public transport.

The Retail Sales Index (RSI) is a short-term indicator of changes in the value of retail sales in Ireland. It provides a measure of retail trading, and supplies a valuable guide to consumer spending behaviour in the Irish economy. The RSI is compiled and published every month by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) and although it is a short-term indicator, it is a valuable tool for better understanding the general economic climate in Ireland. Further details are available on the CSO website.

Figure 1.2
PSO Bus Passenger Journeys alongside
General Economic Data, 2008-2013



2

Total Operated Vehicle Kilometres and Vehicle Seat Kilometres

The changes in both vehicle kilometres and vehicle seat kilometres operated by Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann across the State are shown in Tables 2A to 2D along with Figure 2.

'Operated vehicle kilometres' refer to the actual amount of vehicle kilometres that a bus company has operated in a given period, as opposed to 'scheduled vehicle kilometres' which would indicate the number of vehicle kilometres that they intended to operate as per their cumulative timetables.

'Vehicle seat-kilometres' meanwhile, is a unit of passenger transport capacity measuring the total number of seats available multiplied by the kilometres travelled.

Given that Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann both operate a variety of vehicles with differing numbers of seats, vehicle seat-kilometres can be more instructive in illustrating actual transport capacity.

Although there was a downward or neutral trend in both measures between 2010 and 2013, this reduction can be partly attributable to route improvements through the reconfiguration of services, and a better matching of public transport supply with a changed transport demand.

This is illustrated by the fact that greater reductions have occurred in these two measures than in passengers carried (see Section 1) for Dublin Bus, and especially for Bus Éireann, where vehicle kilometres and vehicle seat kilometres operated have been falling, but passenger journeys have been increasing. This again highlights a feature of the success of the reconfiguration of Bus Éireann services in terms of operational efficiency.



Table 2A
Annual operated vehicle kilometres (*millions*)

Year /Operator	Dublin Bus	Bus Éireann
2010	56.50	38.08
2011	53.90	37.34
2012	52.10	37.34
2013	50.30	35.94

Note: Figures are in **million kilometres** and only include PSO services.

Table 2B
Percentage change of annual operated vehicle kilometres

Year / Operator	Dublin Bus	Bus Éireann
2010	-	-
2011	-4.6%	-1.9%
2012	-3.3%	0.0%
2013	-3.5%	-3.7%

Table 2C
Annual operated vehicle seat kilometres
(millions)

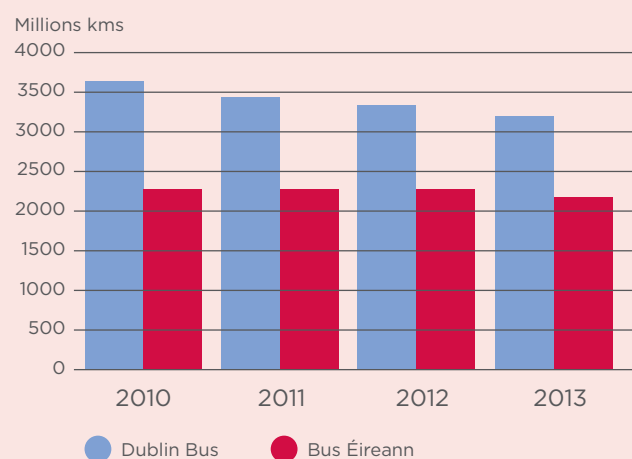
Year / Operator	Dublin Bus	Bus Éireann
2010	3,629.30	2,298.23
2011	3,475.00	2,260.44
2012	3,342.90	2,255.42
2013	3,222.80	2,169.47

Note: Figures are in **million kilometres** and only include PSO services.

Table 2D
Percentage change of annual operated
vehicle seat kilometres

Year / Operator	Dublin Bus	Bus Éireann
2010	-	-
2011	-4.3%	-1.6%
2012	-3.8%	-0.2%
2013	-3.6%	-3.8%

Figure 2
Annual vehicle seat kilometres operated
2010 - 2013



3

Passenger Revenues



In Table 3A passenger revenues for Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann are made up of cash, Leap revenue, and prepaid ticket sales (including Tax saver tickets), as well as the Free Travel Payment grant from the Department of Social Protection (details of that are set out in Section 4).

The passenger revenues reported in this section do not include the annual subsidy, which is outlined in Section 5. Passenger revenue is presented at current prices, that is, figures are not adjusted for inflation and this is the same for other financial data in the bulletin unless otherwise stated. Passenger revenue only relates to contracted PSO services and does not include commercial sources (e.g. the Dublin Bus Airlink airport service or Bus Éireann's Expressway services).

The growth of passenger revenue for Dublin Bus in the years when passenger journeys have been falling is accounted for by fares increases approved by the Authority.

Bus Éireann passenger revenue has increased in 2012 and 2013 as a result of fares increases approved by the Authority and increased Bus Éireann passenger journeys. However, at the same time as Bus Éireann has been experiencing increased passenger journeys in regional cities, (where trips are shorter and fares are lower), they have also been losing passengers on services that provide longer journeys (where fares are higher) and this effect has reduced the gains one would have expected to their overall passenger revenue.

As mentioned in Section 1, the lost service days that were incurred by both Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann as a result of industrial action in 2013 will also have affected passenger revenue for that year.

The Rural Transport Programme increased the number of funded passengers through other contracts, for example through contracts with the Health Service Executive (HSE). The RTP figures include contracted revenue which has resulted in the increased passenger revenues between 2011 and 2013. Contracted revenue is revenue paid to RTP companies from agencies such as the HSE or from community groups for the provision of specific bus services.

Table 3A
Annual passenger revenue (€ millions)

Year / Operator	Dublin Bus	Bus Éireann	Rural Transport Programme*
2010	159.40	63.97	-
2011	158.86	62.66	3.07
2012	172.13	66.14	4.00
2013	184.85	69.51	4.66

Note: Figures are in millions and only include PSO and rural transport services.
*Figures include cash fares plus contracted revenue collected.

Table 3B
Percentage change in annual passenger revenue

Year / Operator	Dublin Bus	Bus Éireann	Rural Transport Programme*
2010	-	-	-
2011	-0.3%	-2.0%	-
2012	8.4%	5.6%	30.3%
2013	7.4%	5.1%	16.5%

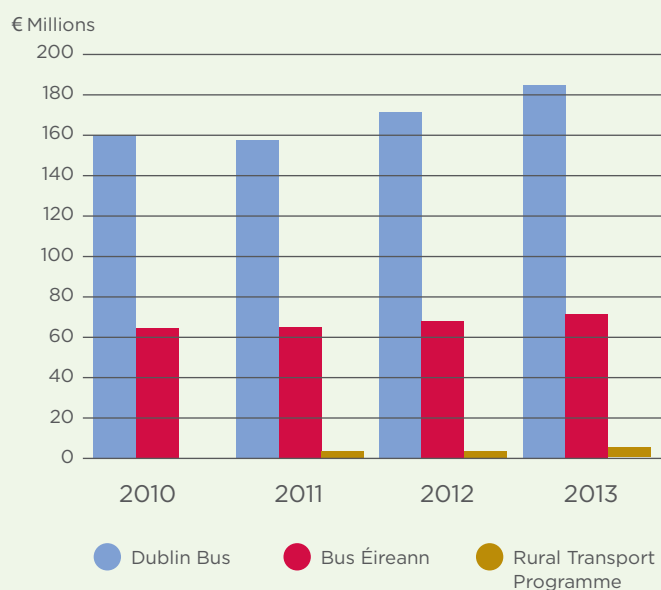
Table 3C
 Bus Éireann Annual passenger revenue
 (€ millions) by segment

Year / Segment	Stage Carriage	Dublin Commuter	Cork City	Galway City	Limerick City	Waterford City	Total
2012	16.82	25.85	14.31	4.58	3.61	0.97	66.14
2013	16.94	26.89	16.05	5.08	3.58	0.97	69.51

Table 3D
 Percentage split of Bus Éireann Annual
 passenger revenue by segment

Year / Segment	Stage Carriage	Dublin Commuter	Cork City	Galway City	Limerick City	Waterford City	Total
2012	25.4%	39.1%	21.6%	6.9%	5.5%	1.5%	100.0%
2013	24.4%	38.7%	23.1%	7.3%	5.2%	1.4%	100.0%

Figure 3
 Annual Passenger Revenues 2010 - 2013



4

Free Travel Scheme Revenue

The Department of Social Protection's Free Travel Scheme is available to all persons aged 66 and over living permanently in the State. Some people under 66 may also qualify such as carers in receipt of a Carer's Allowance and certain other persons in receipt of a Disability Allowance or Invalidity Pension.

Free travel is available on Rural Transport services and Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann PSO bus transport services. Table 4A shows annual Department of Social Protection (DSP) payments for the Free Travel Scheme for PSO and rural transport bus services. Bus Éireann also receives a payment in respect of its licensed commercial bus services, but this is not included in Table 4.

Table 4
Relevant annual DSP Free Travel Scheme passenger revenue 2013

Dublin Bus PSO services	€20.446m
Bus Éireann PSO services	€12.070m
Rural Transport Programme (RTP)	€1.500m

5

Public Service Obligation (PSO) Subsidy

Each year funding is provided for socially necessary but commercially unviable bus services in Ireland. The PSO payments in respect of the bus transport contracts since 2001 are set out in Table 5A.

Dublin Bus, Bus Éireann and M&A Coaches provide these Public Service Obligation (PSO) services under contract to the National Transport Authority. The funding of PSO services is governed by Public Service Contracts between the Authority and the relevant operator, with responsibility for the amount of PSO payments decided by the Authority. Each quarter, 10% of the subsidy payment is dependent on the operator meeting certain performance criteria.

A reduced level of PSO subsidy was available to Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann in 2013. Deductions were made from the available subsidy for the lost service days (when no PSO bus services were provided) that occurred as a result of the industrial action in both companies. The net subsidy amounts are shown in the 2013 figures in Tables 5A and 5B.

The not-for-profit companies (35 number companies in 2013) that provide services under the Rural Transport Programme are grant-aided by the Authority. The RTP grant from 2007 to 2013 is included in the table – the year 2007 is the year that rural transport services moved from initiative status to a regular programme status.

Table 5A
PSO subsidy payments (€ millions)

Year	Dublin Bus	Bus Éireann	RTP Grant	M&A Coaches	Total
2001	€52.38	€23.81	-	-	€76.19
2002	€56.06	€21.77	-	-	€77.83
2003	€53.87	€22.86	-	-	€76.73
2004	€61.81	€24.00	-	-	€85.81
2005	€64.90	€25.20	-	-	€90.10
2006	€69.85	€26.46	-	-	€96.31
2007	€80.08	€36.60	€8.98	-	€125.66
2008	€85.63	€41.85	€9.80	-	€137.28
2009	€83.20	€49.37	€10.97	-	€143.54
2010	€75.79	€45.22	€11.00	-	€132.01
2011	€73.04	€43.41	€10.62	-	€127.07
2012	€74.77*	€36.87	€9.77	-	€121.42
2013	€64.54	€34.36	€9.63	€0.03 [^]	€109.04

Note: Figures are in millions. Source: CIÉ Annual Reports, and Authority statistics from 2010.

* The Dublin Bus 2012 figure includes an additional subsidy payment of €5.33m to address the operations deficit of the company.

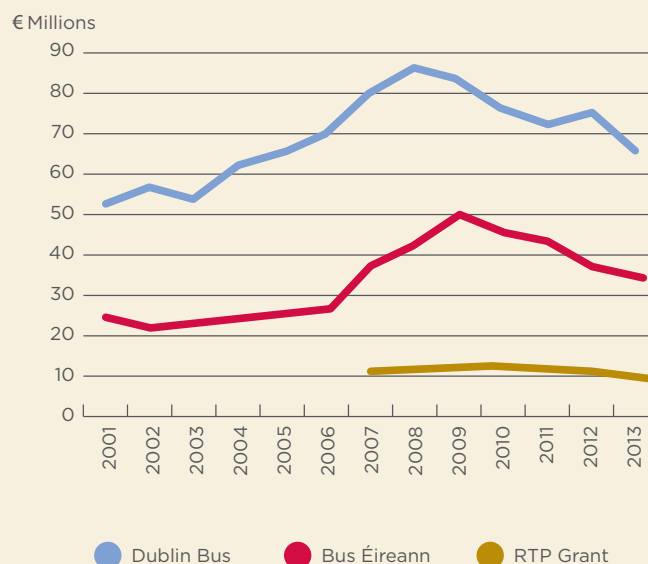
[^] M&A Coaches PSO contracts began in 2013.

Table 5B
Percentage change in PSO subsidy payments

Year	Dublin Bus	Bus Éireann	RTP Grant	M&A Coaches	Total
2001	-	-	-	-	-
2002	7.0%	-8.6%	-	-	2.2%
2003	-3.9%	5.0%	-	-	-1.4%
2004	14.7%	5.0%	-	-	11.8%
2005	5.0%	5.0%	-	-	5.0%
2006	7.6%	5.0%	-	-	6.9%
2007	14.7%	38.3%	-	-	30.5%
2008	6.9%	14.3%	9.2%	-	9.2%
2009	-2.8%	18.0%	11.9%	-	4.6%
2010	-8.9%	-8.4%	0.3%	-	-8.0%
2011	-4.4%	-4.0%	-3.5%	-	-3.7%
2012	3.2%*	-15.1%	-8.0%	-	-4.4%
2013	-13.7%	-6.8%	-1.4%	-	-10.2%

* The Dublin Bus 2012 figure includes the additional subsidy payment.

Figure 4 - PSO Payments, 2001-2013



6

Total Number of Buses

The total number of buses that Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann own and maintain as part of their PSO services is outlined in Table 6 and shows the bus numbers for Quarter 4 of the respective years.

Table 6
Total number of buses

Year/Operator	Dublin Bus	Bus Éireann
Quarter 4 2010	1,023	400
Quarter 4 2011	940	460
Quarter 4 2012	914	443
Quarter 4 2013	907	453

Note: Figures only include PSO services.

7

Age of Buses

The numbers in Table 7 reflect the average age of the bus fleets. It should be noted that the Dublin Bus figures may include a very small element of vehicles used for commercial purposes.

For Bus Éireann the figures for 2010 refer to their PSO fleet, while thereafter the city fleet would be PSO only, whereas the 'services fleet' would include some commercial vehicles.

Table 7
Average age of operator's fleet

Year/Operator	Dublin Bus	Bus Éireann (City fleet)	Bus Éireann (Services fleet)
Quarter 4 2010	6.8 years	4.8 years (PSO fleet)	4.8 years (PSO fleet)
Quarter 4 2011	7.7 years	6.4 years (PSO fleet)	5.5 years*
Quarter 4 2012	7.5 years	5.6 years (PSO fleet)	5.4 years*
Quarter 4 2013	7.5 years	5.4 years (PSO fleet)	6.1 years*

Note: Services fleet* includes Stage Carriage, Dublin Commuter and some Expressway. (Occasionally a vehicle could be used for PSO and commercial purposes and this can affect providing the average age of the PSO fleet only).

8

Operating Fleet with Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) Systems on Board

Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) is the term used for automatically determining the geographic location of a vehicle or number of vehicles. Vehicles are generally tracked by placing a Global Positioning System (GPS) electronic device in or on a vehicle. There are a number of benefits to AVL including that it allows an operator to manage fleet better, know where the vehicle(s) are at any given point and AVL facilitates the provision of real time bus passenger information.

Table 8 shows that 100% of the Dublin Bus fleet and 100% of the Bus Éireann fleet has AVL on board.

Table 8
PSO operating fleet with Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) systems on board

Year/Operator	Dublin Bus	Bus Éireann
2013	100%	100%

9

Operating Fleet with Smartcard Reading Equipment on Board

Public transport smartcards are the technological successor to the older magnetic tickets. Smartcards are generally the size of a credit card and contain a microchip that stores and transmits data. This enables them to communicate with a smartcard reading device without actually touching it, once the card is held close to the device.

The Leap card is the only inter-operable public transport smartcard that has been deployed in the Greater Dublin Area and Cork. Table 9 shows that 100% of the Dublin Bus fleet is Leap enabled and for Bus Éireann the figure is approximately 67% and growing.

Table 9
PSO operating fleet with smartcard reading equipment on board

Year/Operator	Dublin Bus	Bus Éireann
2013	100%	67%

10

Operating Fleet with Wheelchair Accessibility

With low-floor wheelchair accessible buses, access to part or all of the passenger area is direct from the bus stop apron. This enables easier access for wheelchair users and those with limited mobility. Accessing low floor buses can also require that appropriate bus stop infrastructure, for instance kerbs of a specific height, are in place.

Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann’s urban bus fleets are fully wheelchair accessible, as can be seen in Table 10. These fleets comprise single and double decker buses appropriate for short commuter journeys, which are fitted with ramps to facilitate wheelchair users.

Bus Éireann’s rural and intercity bus services primarily use coaches because those services involve much longer journeys for customers. As coaches are designed to have storage facilities close to ground level with seating above that, the only way of facilitating wheelchair users is by the use of a lift. The wheelchair lifts, which raise the passenger above the steps and into the coach corridor area, are not as readily suitable for wheelchair access as low-floor buses, but they still contribute towards the overall accessibility of the fleet.

Table 10
PSO operating fleet that is wheelchair accessible

Year/ Operator	Dublin Bus	Bus Éireann (Regional City fleet)	Bus Éireann (Coach fleet)
2013	100%	100%	56%

Note: Bus Éireann’s coach fleet is wheelchair accessible by the use of a lift.

11

M&A Coaches

Following tender competitions, M&A Coaches of County Kilkenny were awarded two separate public transport service contracts for the provision of bus services between locations from Cashel to Portlaoise.

The Route 828 (the first M&A public service contract in receipt of PSO funding) operates between Portlaoise, Abbeyleix, Durrow, and Johnstown, and only began operating in May 2013. This was later extended to Urlingford to link up with the new 828X.

The 828X service (the second M&A public service contract in receipt of PSO funding), provides an express service linking Cashel, Urlingford and Portlaoise, with onward connections to Dublin at Portlaoise, and on the return journey, onward connections to Cork at Cashel. The service only began operating in late November 2013.

Although both of these M&A services were only operating for part of 2013, we have included the details for those months. As the public service contracts with M&A Coaches involve the return of all fares to the Authority, the subsidy payment in Table 11 is net of all fares received.

Table 11
M&A Coaches PSO Statistics

M&A Coaches May/November to December 2013 data	
Total number of passenger journeys	2,538
Net Subsidy Payment	€31,562.00
Numbers of buses	2
Average age of buses	6.5

Further Information



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