



Taxi Statistics for Ireland



Bulletin Topics:

- Overall SPSV fleet numbers
- Licences issued since 2010
- SPSV fleet profile since 2010
- Driver licence numbers
- Calls to information line
- Enforcement figures

Introduction

This statistical bulletin is a publication of the National Transport Authority of Ireland (“the Authority”). It focuses on statistics for taxis and other small public service vehicles.

In Ireland, small public service vehicles (SPSVs) are those with seating for up to eight persons. There are currently five categories as follows:

- Taxi,
- Wheelchair Accessible Taxi,
- Wheelchair Accessible Hackney,
- Hackney, and
- Limousine.

Most of the SPSV fleet is made up of taxis, with the majority of the taxi fleet operating in the Dublin area.

The National Transport Authority is solely responsible for licensing vehicles, which includes processing licence applications, grant and renewal of relevant licences, and all associated enforcement. The operation of an SPSV vehicle not only requires that the vehicle is licensed as an SPSV but that the driver is the holder of a valid SPSV driver’s licence.

An Garda Síochána is the licensing authority for SPSV driver licences and sets out the SPSV driver licensing conditions. However, the Authority administers aspects of the process, including the conducting of the driver entry test and the issue of driver identification cards. An active SPSV driver licence allows the holder to drive all categories of SPSVs.

The Commission for Taxi Regulation was dissolved on 1st January 2011 and was subsumed into the Authority on that day. Since then, the Authority has been the SPSV regulatory body.

Glossary of Terms

SPSV	This stands for Small Public Service Vehicle. It is a generic term, covering the five categories of public service vehicle with seating capacity for up to eight passengers, excluding the driver – taxis, wheelchair accessible taxis, hackneys, wheelchair accessible hackneys, and limousines.
WAV	Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle i.e. a vehicle specially adapted to carry a wheelchair and accompanying passengers
SPSV driver licence	The licence required to drive an SPSV
Vehicle licence	The licence that allows a vehicle to be operated as an SPSV within a specific SPSV category
Active licence	Relates to the status of both a vehicle and driver licence. It is defined as ‘currently licensed to operate’.

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Overall SPSV Fleet Numbers



Table 1 and Figure 1 illustrate the change in the numbers of SPSVs since 2008.

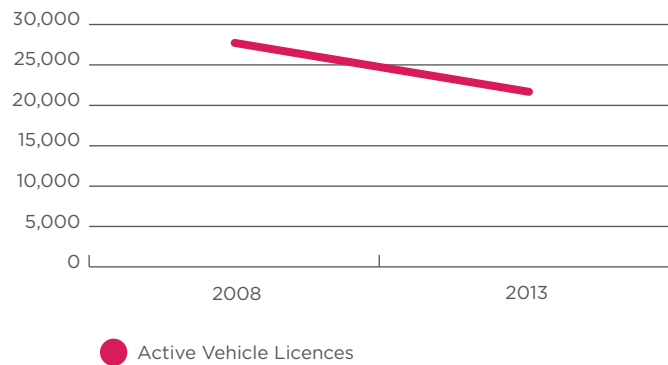
The years following liberalisation of the SPSV industry in 2000 saw an increase in the number of vehicle licences, to a peak of 27,429 in 2008.

Since then, the overall fleet size has decreased by 20% to present totals of 21,900 active vehicle licences (as of December 2013).

Table 1

Year	Active Vehicle Licences
2008	27,429
2013	21,900

Figure 1
Active Vehicle Licences



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Licences Issued Since 2010



In 2010, the Commission for Taxi Regulation ceased issuing standard taxi and hackney licences.

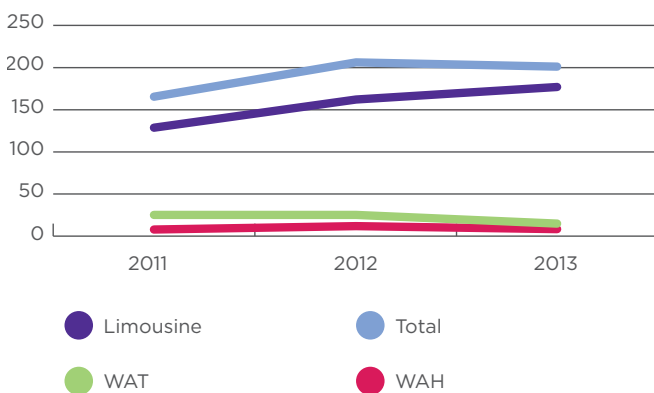
From 8th June 2010 the only licence categories available for issue have been limousine and wheelchair accessible vehicle (WAV) licences. From 2010 to 2013, 564 new limousine and WAV licences (i.e. hackney and taxi WAVs) were issued.

Table 2 and Figure 2 below give the yearly licence issue figures.

Table 2

Year	Taxi	Hackney	Limousine	Wheelchair Accessible Taxi	Wheelchair Accessible hackney	Total
2011	0	0	130	28	4	162
2012	0	0	164	28	11	203
2013	0	0	177	16	6	199

Figure 2
New Vehicle Licences Issued



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SPSV Fleet Profile Since 2007



Table 3 and Figure 3 show the change in the number of active vehicle licence numbers across each SPSV category since 2007.

Standard hackney licences have declined from 4,914 vehicles in 2008 to a level of 2,532 at the end of 2013, a reduction of 48%. Limousine numbers remained relatively stable.

Table 3

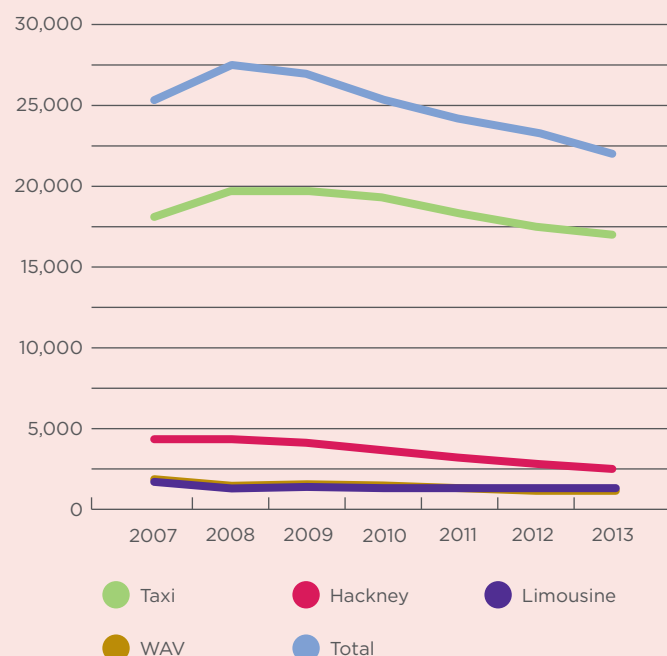
Year	Taxis		Hackneys		Limousines	Total
	Standard	Wheelchair Accessible	Standard	Wheelchair Accessible		
2007	17,992	1,504	4,868	n/a	1,331	25,695
2008	19,577	1,600	4,914	n/a	1,338	27,429
2009	19,565	1,570	4,497	n/a	1,305	26,937
2010	18,920	1,401	3,772	n/a	1,216	25,309
2011	18,101	1,227	3,241	4	1,204	23,777
2012	17,750	1,077	2,866	14	1,257	22,964
2013	17,136	898	2,532	18	1,316	21,900

From the peak in December 2008, there has been a reduction of 20% in the overall fleet, down from 27,429 vehicles to 21,900 vehicles at the end of 2013.

The total number of taxis (standard taxis and wheelchair accessible taxis) has declined from 21,177 vehicles in 2008 to 18,034 vehicles at the end of 2013, a reduction of 3,143 vehicles or 14.8%.

The decline in wheelchair accessible vehicles (wheelchair accessible taxis and wheelchair accessible hackneys) is even more significant, down 42.8% from a peak of 1,600 vehicles in 2008. Overall, wheelchair accessible vehicles constitute only 4.2% of the overall small public service vehicle fleet.

Figure 3
New Vehicle Licences Issued



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Driver Licence Numbers



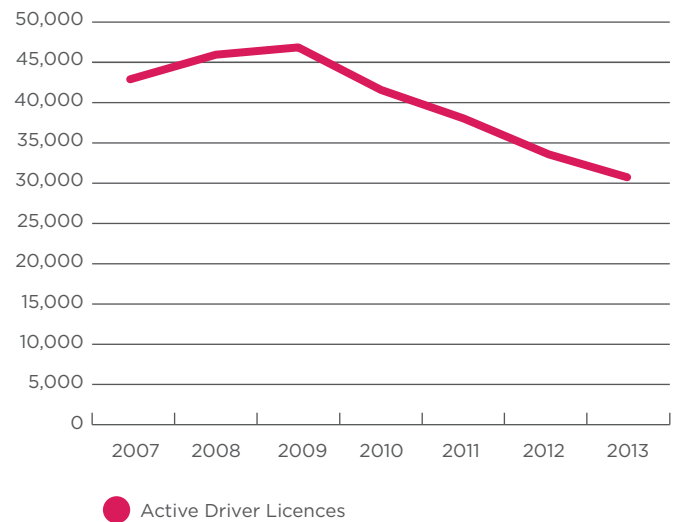
The number of active driver licences has reduced by 34% from the peak of 47,529 in May 2009 to a level of 31,186 at the end of 2013. This is illustrated in Table 4 and Figure 4.

Furthermore, there has been a decline in the number of new drivers entering the SPSV industry, with only 1,076 new driving licences issued in 2013.

Table 4

Year	Active Driver Licences
2007	43,262
2008	46,845
2009	47,222
2010	42,605
2011	38,499
2012	34,678
2013	31,186

Figure 4
Driver Licence Profile



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Calls to SPSV Information Line



The National Transport Authority operates an information line for SPSV industry members and consumers.

Almost 283,000 calls were received by this service over the past 3 years, the bulk of which were from industry members.

Table 5 below shows the split between industry and consumer calls from 2011.

Table 5

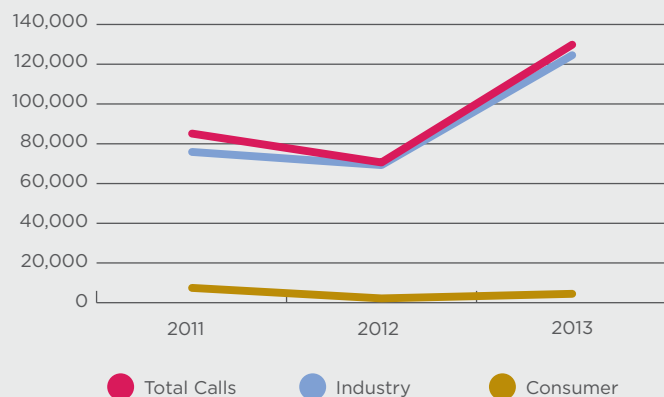
Year	SPSV Information line, call totals	Industry	Consumer
2011	83,252	77,186	6,066
2012	73,527	71,760	1,767
2013	126,659	123,340	3,319
Totals	283,438	272,286	11,152

Approximately 11,152 calls were made to the consumer line in the past 3 years. The top three consumer queries for 2013 were: lost property, complaints, and general enquiries. Consumer calls have dropped by 45% since 2011.

Industry members use the information line for driver and vehicle licensing questions. Some 272,286 calls were made to the industry line in the past 3 years. The top three industry queries for 2013 were: assistance with driver to vehicle links, transfer of SPSV vehicle licences and payments for driver licensing applications. Industry calls in 2013 were substantially higher than in previous years reflecting the new requirements for driver to vehicle links.

Figure 5 below shows the yearly calls.

Figure 5
SPSV Information Line



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Enforcement



The licensing system is the first link in ensuring compliance. As part of the annual vehicle licensing process, vehicles are inspected for SPSV suitability, NCT certification is checked, and current tax clearance certificates are verified as mandatory requirements.

Enforcement involves checking at the roadside for driver and vehicle licence compliance, issuing fixed charge penalty notices, and undertaking prosecutions in the Courts.

Compliance operations are carried out nationally on a regular basis. Certain members of the Authority's staff are designated as authorised officers and travel throughout the country to investigate complaints and as part of structured operations. The Authority works closely with An Garda Síochána and other bodies, such as the Revenue Commissioners and the Department of Social Protection, to ensure full compliance with SPSV regulations, and to share data.

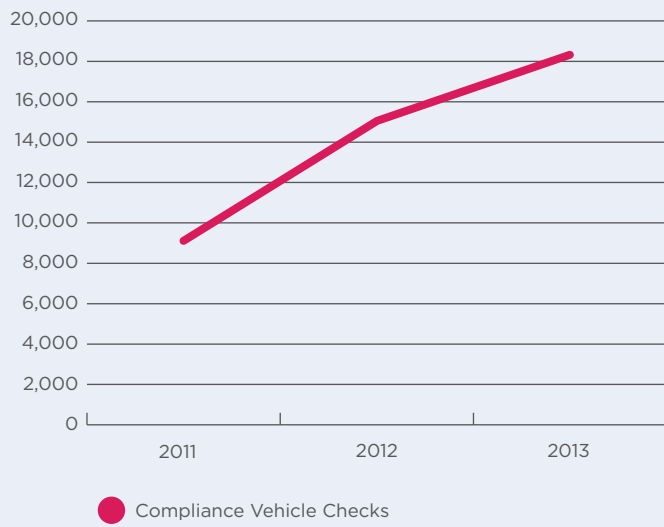
Table 6A and Figure 6A illustrate the number of vehicle checks carried out by the Authority since 2011.

Using a specially developed smartphone app, the authorised officers can check at roadside on licensing status. Also the officers check a range of items including: valid driver identification cards, that the taximeter is operating, and that receipts are provided.

Table 6A

Year	Roadside Vehicle Checks
2011	9,477
2012	15,142
2013	18,103
Total	42,722

Figure 6A
Compliance Vehicle Checks



The Authority's authorised officers are empowered to issue on the spot penalties for a wide range of offences under SPSV regulations.

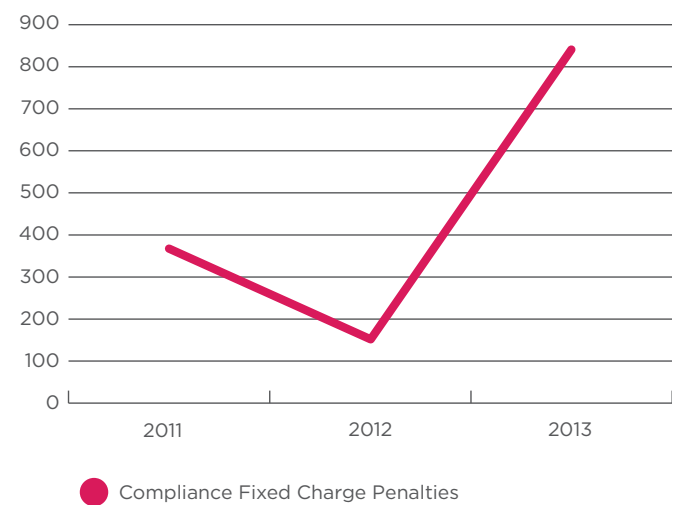
There are 26 fixed charge penalties with penalties ranging from €40 to €250.

Prior to the introduction of the revised set of fixed charge penalties in January 2013, there was a single penalty amount of €250. A decision was taken in 2012 to phase out the single penalty fine as it resulted in overly high penalties for minor offences. Pending the creation of new regulations, the Authority used other forms of sanctions for the minor offences such as warnings and vehicle re-checks to achieve compliance. The statistics in Table 6B and Figure 6B reflect the transition of the single penalty structure to the more proportionate graduated structure of 2013.

Table 6B

Year	Fixed Charge Penalties
2011	386
2012	165
2013	836

Figure 6B
Compliance Fixed Charge Penalties





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