

- **Minister Donohoe launches Ireland's first automated red light camera system to minimise collisions at the junction of Blackhall Place and the Luas Red Line**
- **Drivers breaking the red light will automatically receive three penalty points**

Ireland's first automated Red Light Camera System was launched today by the Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, Paschal Donohoe TD, at the Blackhall Place / Benburb Street junction in Dublin 7. The new system will see motorists who break the red traffic lights and put themselves, and passengers and drivers of passing Luas trams at huge risk, automatically receive three penalty points for commission of the offence.

An Garda Síochána's PULSE system is now linked to the new red light cameras at this junction, automating the process of issuing fixed charge notices for this particularly dangerous road traffic offence. Breaking red lights incurs 3 penalty points and a fine of up to €120 on payment of the fixed charge. This technology may be applied to other junctions in Dublin, and in other parts of the country, where motorists breaking red lights is particularly problematic.

This automated Red Light Camera System results from an innovative partnership between five key agencies in the city working together with one aim – to reduce collisions and make the roads safer for all users. An Garda Síochána, the National Transport Authority (under the auspices of the Department of Transport), the Railway Procurement Agency, the Department of Justice and Dublin City Council have worked together to develop, install and extensively test this Red Light Camera System which forms part of An Garda Síochána's enforcement, feeding information directly into the PULSE system. Breaking red lights at any junction is a high risk offence that puts other road users in danger. The system captures images of motorists breaking red lights, their licence plate numbers and other data allowing An Garda Síochána to pursue offenders under the Road Traffic Acts. The installation of this camera system and its ongoing operation and maintenance has been funded by the National Transport Authority.

Speaking today at the Blackhall Place Luas Junction, Minister for Transport, Tourism & Sport, Paschal Donohoe TD, said: 'The RPA is continually looking at and introducing new

initiatives to ensure that all those who use the Luas remain safe. Working together with other relevant stakeholders, including the NTA who has primary responsibility for the delivery of this new system, a system has been developed that is expected to reduce the number of incidents at this junction in the weeks and months ahead. As a result of motorists not properly adhering to the rules of the road, the junction at Blackhall Place and the Luas Red Line was deemed one of the problem Luas junctions, recording one of the highest numbers of road traffic collisions to date. This has been endangering those who not only use the service but other vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and passers-by. The ability now for An Garda Síochána to monitor the situation and automatically issue penalty points for offences will act as a strong deterrent for reckless drivers while helping to minimise the number of collisions in this part of the city'.

Aidan Reid, Chief Superintendent, Head of the DMR Traffic Division of the Gardaí said "Drivers who take chances by breaking red traffic signals put themselves and others at huge risk. This initiative will assist us in enforcing road traffic legislation while improving the safety of all those using the road".

Anne Graham, CEO of the National Transport Authority said: "We are delighted that all the agencies involved have worked so well together to bring about this new safety-focussed technology. It is our sincere hope that we will see an immediate reduction in the numbers of drivers breaching the red lights here at this important junction in the city".

Rory O'Connor, Acting CEO of the Railway Procurement Agency welcomed this launch and all the related efforts of the various agencies involved saying "Luas remains an extremely safe system however with increased traffic in Dublin we have seen an increase in road traffic collisions and we know that over half of these incidents are due to motorists breaking red lights at Luas junctions. Luas safety is our highest priority and we welcome this innovative new driving offence enforcement."

Brendan O'Brien, Head of Technical Services (Traffic), Dublin City Council, said: "Dublin City Council believes that this initiative will make an important contribution to road safety in the city. The Council, and all of the agencies involved, are confident that it will also result in a reduction in traffic incidents at this location".

All the partners are motivated by preventing collisions, reducing the risk of serious injury to motorists and reducing the disruption to Luas passengers that collisions cause. It is hoped,

subject to funding, that these systems will be rolled out at more junctions with a history of collisions, including those along the Luas lines.

Motorists can see for themselves the images An Garda Síochána will use to pursue motorists breaking the Red Light at Blackhall Place on the Luas Website and Social Media;

www.luas.ie

www.facebook.com/Luas

Notes to the Editor

Breaking red lights carries 3 penalty points and fine of up to €120 on payment of the fixed charge. On court conviction the number of penalty points awarded increases to 5.

To date in 2015, there have been 12 incidents between motorists and Luas trams.

In 2014 there were 37 collisions between motorists and trams.

In 2013 there were 38 collisions between motorists and trams.

Over a number of years RPA identified a pattern of road traffic collisions at some Luas junctions. The junction of Blackhall Place and the Luas Red Line had one of the highest number of road traffic collisions to date with a consistent trend continuing. A number of extra safety measures had been introduced by RPA at the location but these proved ineffective thus this junction was selected for installation of a pilot Red Light Camera System.

Since Luas opened in 2004 there have been over 284 million Luas passenger journeys. In 2014 there were 32.4 million Luas passenger journeys. That's over 88,000 passenger journeys per day on average.

Trams operate on both lines from early morning to late at night, with an increase in frequency of tram movements at morning and evening peak times:

- In 2013 there were over 3.9 million km travelled by Luas.
- Between 2005 and 2013 there were over 30.75 million km travelled by Luas.

There are over 37km of Luas lines:

- Luas Red Line (Tallaght / Saggart - Connolly / The Point) 21km long.
- Luas Green Line (Brides Glen - St. Stephen's Green) 16km long.

There are 62 Junctions controlled by Traffic Lights on the Luas lines:

- 48 on the Luas Red Line
- 14 on the Luas Green Line

On a weekday a tram on the Luas Red Line passes through over 800 Junctions controlled by Traffic Lights in a single day of operations.

5.5 km of the Luas Red Line runs through busy city streets between Heuston and Connolly stops and 16 junctions on this section are controlled by Traffic Lights.

The top 4 junctions where a vehicle-tram collisions are likely to happen on the Red Line between Heuston and Connolly are;

- Benburb Street / Queen Street
- Benburb Street / Blackhall Place
- Abbey Street / Jervis Street
- Mary's Abbey / Capel Street

From 2005 to date there have been 338 road vehicle / tram collisions

- 54% at junctions controlled by traffic lights
- 11% at junctions without traffic lights
- 35% where road vehicles and trams share the road

From 2005 to date there have been 338 road vehicle / tram collisions

- 95% of road vehicle / tram collisions happened on the Luas Red Line.
- 5% of road vehicle / tram collisions happened on the Luas Green Line.