

### FREE INITIAL NCT FOR SPSV RENEWALS – SEPTEMBER 2021

Recently, following engagement with both the NTA and the Advisory Committee on SPSVs, the Minister for Transport, Eamon Ryan, confirmed additional funding for a number of supports to the SPSV industry as it recovers from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

These supports include NTA's implementation of a 12 month Initial NCT Fee Waiver Scheme for SPSV licence renewals (€1.5m). Retests are not covered. It is hoped that the waiver will commence on 1 September 2021. Work is ongoing with the RSA NCT contractor, Applus, to ensure that the necessary IT processes will be finalised by then and further information will be published on NTA's website as soon as possible.

### REFUND FOR SPSV MOTOR TAX PAID FROM SEPTEMBER 2021

A further COVID-19 pandemic support announced involves a 12 month SPSV Motor Tax Refund Scheme. For Motor Tax paid on or after the scheme commencement date, a licence holder may apply to NTA for a refund of that €95. It is hoped that the SPSV Motor Tax Refund Scheme will commence on 1 September 2021. Work is ongoing to ensure that the necessary IT processes will be finalised by then and further information will be published on NTA's website as soon as possible.



### STANDARD RENEWAL FEES WAIVED FOR 2021 AND 2022

The Small Public Service Vehicle (Emergency Measure COVID-19) (Fees) Regulations 2021 were signed into law on 16 July 2021 ensuring that SPSV licence holders will not have to pay standard licence renewal fees for renewals falling in 2022, as well as 2021 through the 2020 regulations of the same name. From 01 January 2023, all fees will return to normal.

### LATE RENEWAL FEES WAIVED UNTIL 30 JUNE 2022

NTA first implemented the total waiver on late renewal fees at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic to assist the SPSV industry. NTA has now extended that total waiver to 30 June 2022. After this date, licence holders will have to pay a fee for a late renewal; however this fee will be the same as the normal standard renewal fee (€150/75/37.50) for the relevant licence category until 31 December 2022. From 01 January 2023, all fees will return to normal.

Please make your bookings early enough to ensure both an NCT and a Suitability Inspection are available. All SPSV licences must be renewed within 24 months of their date of expiry. Legislation is very clear that there is no way to replace a licence after this period has ended.

## EXPIRED LICENCE REPLACEMENT PERIOD EXTENDED TO 2 YEARS

NTA increased the 12 month period that a taxi, hackney or limousine licence may remain in inactive status after its expiry to 24 months. The Small Public Service Vehicle (Emergency Measure COVID-19) (Expired Licence) Regulations 2021 brought about this increase. After 24 months, no licence can be replaced. This is a permanent amendment to the current Regulations.



## PUBLIC CONSULTATION TO EXTEND VEHICLE AGE LIMITS IN 2022

In light of both the ongoing pandemic and the potential impact of the 'Delta variant' on the SPSV industry, NTA proposes to enact another extraordinary time-bound measure which will extend the maximum permissible age of vehicles due to reach their end of life in 2022. The draft emergency regulations will ensure that no vehicle is forced to exit the SPSV fleet during 2022 as a result of SPSV age regulations. A report on the public consultation (closed 11 August) will be brought to the NTA Board for its consideration in September, following which an update will be published on NTA's website.

## RETURN TO WORK

In line with the easing of Government restrictions and the widespread rollout of the vaccination programme, many SPSV operators are now returning to work. Whilst some key points have been set out below, NTA reminds operators that full legal compliance is required at all times.

### MAINTAINING YOUR DRIVER LINK

SPSV operators must ensure they have an active driver to vehicle link when operating an SPSV. Further information on the many ways to do this, including how to register for SPSV Online Services and SMS linking, can be found [here](#) or can be obtained by calling the SPSV Information Line.

### FACE COVERINGS

The mandatory wearing of face covering regulations for SPSV driving and use, currently apply until 9 November 2021– *“a person shall not, without reasonable excuse, use or travel by small public service vehicle within a relevant geographical location without wearing a face covering”*.

Further information on these regulations, including information on exemptions, can be found [here](#).

### SAFETY EQUIPMENT

All SPSV operators have an obligation to carry and maintain safety equipment. A safety equipment checklist can be found on NTA's website which details the required equipment, including the contents of the first aid kit. The contents of the first aid kit must be complete and in-date. Further information can be found [here](#).



## CCSN REMINDER

As you know, NTA introduced a confidential customer service number called a 'CCSN' which is now your unique identifier as a licence holder. The number is included on letters and/or emails from NTA to SPSV licence holders. When contacting the SPSV Information Line please have your CCSN ready as it will be used in our security questions for data protection. This number is exclusive to your SPSV profile and should be kept confidential.

Your CCSN will also be required when registering for SPSV Online Services for maintaining driver links and rental agreements. Information on how to register for SPSV Online Services can be found [here](#).



## SUITABILITY INSPECTION REQUIREMENT - VRC

From 1 September 2021, original vehicle registration certificates (VRC – *still commonly referred to as the log book*) will be recorded as part of all SPSV suitability inspections in the same way as insurance certificates.

This is because regulations 13, 14 and 16 of the Taxi Regulation (Small Public Service Vehicle) Regulations 2015, require that either evidence of vehicle ownership or evidence of legal entitlement to use of the vehicle for a period of not less than 12 months is provided to NTA for licensing. Where a vehicle is held under a hire purchase or lease agreement, NTA will accept written confirmation on letter head paper from the registered owner of the vehicle stating the SPSV licence holder is legally entitled to the use and possession of the vehicle for a period of not less than 12 months. NTA may carry out registered ownership investigations to ensure compliance.



## TAXIMETER VERIFICATION BOOKINGS AND TAMPER PROOF SEAL

NSAI Legal Metrology has confirmed that the green paper 'TTI form' is no longer provided by taximeter installers following repair to, alteration or adjustment of, the taximeter. Instead the installer will submit an online form with the required technical information to NSAI Legal Metrology and Applus in advance of the taximeter verification appointment. Owners will receive an e-mail providing details on the verification booking process.

In addition to changes in the booking process, the traditional tamper proof seal has been replaced with a wire and plastic locking mechanism for all taximeters (except the Cyngus MR 500 and Terola SPT5). Further information can be found [here](#).



## MOVE TO €LECTRIC

In July, funding was **announced** for SEAI's On-Street Charge Points for Electric Vehicles for Local Authorities across counties and towns in Ireland. Minister Ryan Said:

*“There is significant growth in the number of electric vehicles with EVs making up 12% of new car sales from January to May 2021. As more people are making the switch to clean and efficient electric vehicles, it is important that infrastructure keeps ahead of demand.”*

The Government has provided €15m for 2021 to help to “Green the SPSV fleet”, showing taxis, hackneys and limousines as champions for sustainable motoring and the normalisation of electric vehicles. There are substantial individual grants available for both vehicle scrappage\* (vehicles within three years of maximum permissible age or with mileage of 300,000km or greater qualify for increased grants) and for electric vehicle purchase/replacement.

Vehicle Type	Vehicle Age	Electric SPSV Grant	Increased SPSV Scrappage* Grant
Battery electric vehicle (BEV) or Fuel cell electric vehicle (FCEV)	New (<3,000kms and <3 mths old)	€10,000	€20,000
	less than one year of age	€9,000	€18,000
	less than two years of age	€8,000	€16,000
	less than three years of age	€7,000	€14,000
	less than four years of age	€6,000	€12,000
Wheelchair Accessible Battery electric vehicle (BEV) or Fuel cell electric vehicle (FCEV)	New (<3,000kms and <3 mths old)	€12,500	€25,000
	less than one year of age	€11,500	€23,000
	less than two years of age	€10,500	€21,000
	less than three years of age	€9,500	€19,000
	less than four years of age	€8,500	€17,000
Wheelchair Accessible Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle	New (<3,000kms and <3 mths old)	€7,500	€15,000
	less than one year of age	€6,500	€13,000
	less than two years of age	€5,500	€11,000
	less than three years of age	€4,500	€9,000
	less than four years of age	€3,500	€7,000

The eSPSV grants listed above can be combined with WAV grants for eWAV purchase with financing of up to €32,500 per vehicle. Further information can be found [here](#).

## SPSV INFORMATION LINE NUMBER CHANGE

The Commission for Communications Regulation is withdrawing all 0761 numbers at the end of 2021. As a result of this, NTA is required to change its current SPSV Information Line telephone number. The new Information Line number, 0818 06 4000, will come into effect on 1 October 2021.

If you call the current 0761 number on or after 1 October 2021, you will receive an automated response and will be instructed to re-dial the new contact number.

This phone prompt will be in place until 31 December after which time the 0761 number will be completely decommissioned. Like the 0761 number, and subject to individual arrangements with your telephone provider, the 0818 number is charged at standard landline rates. Further information can be found [here](#).

