

Minutes of the Advisory Committee on SPSVs Meeting
Video conference, Thursday, 30th September 2021

Present:

Chairperson	Mr. Cornelius O'Donohue
Representing SPSV and driver interests	Mr. John Murphy, Mr. Shajedul Chowdhury, Mr. Francis Doheny
An Garda Síochána	Superintendent Tom Murphy
Consumers	Ms. Michelle Reid
Representing the interests of business	Ms. Ann Campbell
Representing the interests of older persons	Mr. Peter Fleming
Representing the interests of tourism	Mr. Al Ryan
Special interest or expertise	Mr. James O'Brien, Ms. Fiona Brady, Mr. Noel Ebbs

Apologies:

Representing SPSV and driver interests	Mr. Kevin Finn
Representing local authorities	Ms. Mary Henchy
Consumers	Mr. James Cawley
Representing interests of persons with disabilities	Ms. Joan Carthy
Special interest or expertise	Mr. Martin Plummer

NTA Staff in Attendance:

Ms. Wendy Thompson, Director of Transport Regulation (items 3-8), NTA, Ms. Patricia Craven, Head of Taxi Regulation (items 3-8) & Ms. Jackie Mullen (Secretary)

Others in Attendance:

N/A

1. Minutes and Matters Arising.

The minutes of the meeting held on 29th July 2021 were approved with no amendment. The Chair informed the Committee that the NTA had engaged consultants to look at the issue of licence transfer / change in control. Their draft report is due to be submitted shortly and NTA have agreed to share the report with the Committee. It was agreed that the Committee would consider this report before submitting its own report on the issue.

2. Advisory Committee 2021 Work Plan – Roof Signs

The Chair informed the Committee that a review of roof signs carried out in 2016 identified the following issues for consideration:

- Information to be displayed on the sign
- Visibility of the sign information during day and nights hours
- Use of technology including electronic displays
- Consistency of appearance and quality
- Durability
- Attachment of sign to the vehicle
- Supply arrangements and level of supply control

The Committee agreed that the key issues were visibility in relation to hired/available for hire, the use of large sign versus smaller more streamlined models and the current lack of copyright. The NTA need to be able to control the quality of any new sign.

Wendy Thompson and Patricia Craven joined the meeting

NTA view expressed that the licence number must be maintained and fully visible on the roof sign as consumer protection is paramount for the NTA.

The Chair stated that the Committee's view is that the county designation letter on the sign is now superfluous as we now have the app with pre-booking available.

It was agreed that Patricia Craven will share details of the 2016 consultation on roof signs with the Committee.

3. Licence transfer / change in control.

Wendy Thompson informed the committee that the final draft report on licence transfer / change in control is due to be submitted by the consultants next week and this will be shared with Committee members. This report is strictly confidential and for Committee members only.

4. Local Area Hackneys.

Agreed with the Committee that Limatel Consulting will give a presentation on Rural SPSV services including international and domestic experiences to the Committee on the 14th October at 10.00am.

5. NTA Update.

Patricia Craven presented the monthly licencing statistics up to the end of August.

6. Credit Card payments.

NTA informed the committee that 84% of drivers now provide cashless payment facilities. Of the remaining 16% of drivers 84% of this cohort have indicated an intent to make cashless payment facilities available. Covid-19 has rapidly advanced the use of cashless payments among drivers in addition to the reduction in costs to drivers as a result of greater competition among providers. The lowest uptake for cashless payments is among the older, rural and part time drivers. NTA confirmed that grant aid would be provided to appropriate groups to assist in cashless payment device training for those drivers who require same. The NTA will prepare a public consultation on the credit card payments.

7. COVID-19.

Committee informed that the NTA is carrying out a PR campaign to get the public back out and using taxis again. It was suggested that the PR campaign should also be used to encourage drivers back to work.

The Chair stated that he would like to acknowledge that the waiver / refund system for the NCT and motor tax was working very well and he thanked the NTA for their work in this regard.

Wendy Thompson informed the committee that the WAV grant scheme will close for applications at the end of November as planned and a WAV grant scheme will operate next year.

The detail of an electric vehicle grant scheme for next year has yet to be confirmed by the Department of Transport.

Ms. Thompson and Ms. Craven left the meeting

7. AOB.

There were no items raised under AOB.

The next meeting will take place on Thursday, 28th October 2021 (via video conference)

Signed: _____ **Dated:** _____