

**Minutes Advisory Committee on SPSV's  
Remote Meeting**

**Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023 10.30am**

**Present:**

Chairperson	Mr. Cornelius O'Donohue
Representing SPSV and driver interests	Mr. John Murphy, Mr. Shajedul Chowdhury, Mr. Francis Doheny
Special interest or expertise	Mr. James O'Brien
Representing the interests of tourism	Mr. Paul Keely
Representing the interests of business	Ms. Ann Campbell
Representing the interests of Local Authorities	Mr. Brendan O'Brien
Special interest or expertise	Mr. Paul Gregan
Special interest or expertise	Ms. Fiona Brady
Representing the interests of consumers	Ms. Michelle Reid

**Apologies:**

An Garda Síochána	Superintendent Tom Murphy
Representing the interests of persons with disabilities	Ms. Joan Carthy
Representing the interests of older persons	Ms. Mai Quaid
Special interest or expertise	Mr. Noel Ebbs,

**NTA Staff in Attendance:**

Ms. Shauna Duffy (minutes), Mr. Eddie Fullerton (Compliance Manager, Taxi Regulation), Ms. Wendy Thompson (Director of Transport Regulation)

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**1. Introductions**

The Chair introduced the new member of the Committee Paul Keely from Failte Ireland who will be representing the interests of consumers. The Chair advised that an induction session will be organized before the next meeting. All committee members are welcome to attend.

**2. Minutes and Matters Arising.**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 26<sup>th</sup> November were agreed with no amendment.

**3. Traffic Changes in Dublin (Brendan O'Brien)**

Mr. O'Brien gave a brief update on the Metrolink project. He informed the Committee that a Railway Order has been submitted and it is anticipated that the project will commence at the start of 2025.

The Dart+ project will upgrade existing lines and add additional services with enhanced capacity.

The Bus Connects project will overhaul the bus services in Dublin and provide an additional capacity of 50% to the network. A number of new orbital routes will be provided as well as segregated cycle facilities. 6 corridors have been submitted to An Bord Pleanála to date.

The Active Travel Programme/Cycle Connects Core Network details of the proposed routes including traffic free streets is available on the DCC website

There is an ongoing City Centre Transport study between Jacobs and NTA which will be published in the next 2-3 months as a consultation document. It sets out how the city will change to allow for this major public transport upgrade.

The Chair stated that one of the concerns of the Committee was that SPSV would continue to have access/use of bus lanes and ease of access to taxi ranks in the city centre particularly for Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles.

The Committee expressed concern about the disruption such projects will have on the city over a period of time. Mr. O'Brien informed the Committee that all works will be closely managed and staggered over a period of time to help minimize disruption to the city.

The Chair and NTA noted that the communications piece of this is very important and that keeping the SPSV industry informed about how they will be impacted as the projects progress would be most welcome.

#### **4. Next Meeting Update**

The Chair advised that the Minister will be joining the February meeting and suggested that it would be beneficial if the industry representatives could meet in advance to discuss what issues/questions they wanted to put to the Minister at the meeting.

#### **5. Pre-booking Query**

The Chair asked if using an app is okay for pre-booking at an airport and if DAA approval would be needed. Wendy advised that the app is considered as a pre-booking and that it is perfectly legal for a driver to accept a booking on an app at the airport if he is there (having just dropped a passenger off).

#### **6. NTA Update**

Eddie Fullerton presented the NTA update (which was provided in advance of the meeting).

A query was raised in relation to the total number of applications received vs the number of grants issued. NTA informed the Committee that it can be due to a number of factors such as applicants not being tax clear or having previous complaints upheld or deciding to withdraw from the process. However the biggest impact is the supply chain and the ability to source vehicles.

A query was raised regarding the number of complaints/fines received by the NTA. NTA stated that overall the SPSV industry is largely compliant. It is necessary for overall compliance that the NTA receives and acts upon complaints in order to improve the quality of the service provided.

NTA advised that overall compliance levels are good and it is mostly minor issues such as cleanliness of vehicles or the need for new fare cards for example. A number of complaints have been received since the introduction of mandatory cashless payments and this is an area that the compliance team are focusing on. All complaints are looked into and followed up on.

A query was raised in relation to the provision of new information cards. NTA advised that no changes were made to the cards in the last number of years other than updated logos. Fare details are not printed on the cards only information on extras that can be legally charged.

NTA gave an update on initiatives for the SPSV Industry 2023. This included eSPSV 2023, WAV Grant 2023, Local Area hackney Pilot 2023, Driver Check App Campaign, Driver Respect Campaign, Driver Recruitment Campaign and Driver Retention.

A query was raised with regard to some politicians advocating for an unregulated industry, NTA advised that NTA are not advocating for this and do not agree with it. In fact NTA are advocating against this.

A query was raised about communications in relation to the Local Area Hackney Campaign. NTA explained that all local authorities have received communications, radio interviews have been carried out as well as leaflets and visits to the proposed areas.

It was suggested that a partnership between Fáilte Ireland and NTA regarding the local area hackney would be beneficial. NTA and Failte Ireland to discuss further.

## **7. Technology**

Noel Ebbs was unable to attend so the update on Technology was rescheduled for the next meeting. The Chair proposed a separate meeting solely on technology so that this issue can be progressed further.

## **8. AOB**

The Chair suggested Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> or Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> February for an induction session for members. Further details will be sent out by the Secretary of the Committee.

Paul Gregan asked if at a future meeting the Committee could re-examine and put forward proposals to have a three year licence renewal rather than the current one year renewal. Compliance is very high and NTA seem happy with it, so could it be pushed out similar to bus licensing which has a three year licence period.

**Signed:**

**Dated:**