

SPSV Bulletin 2024

July 2025



Glossary

Booking App	A piece of software on a mobile phone or computer device to allow potential hirers to book SPSV journeys by creating a contract with third-party dispatch operators.
Dispatch operators	Those who provide a booking service or other facility to arrange SPSV journeys.
Electric small public service vehicle (eSPSV)	An eSPSV is an electric vehicle that is also licensed as a small public service vehicle.
Hackney	An SPSV which must be pre-booked and cannot ply for hire on the street or stand at taxi ranks. The fare for the journey must be agreed in advance with the customer. Hackneys may not use bus lanes, have branding, or be fitted with a taximeter or a roof sign.
Limousine	An SPSV which is evidently suited by reason of its style and condition to be used for ceremonial, corporate or other prestige purposes. It must be pre-booked and cannot ply for hire on the street or stand at taxi ranks. The fare must be agreed in advance. Limousines may not use bus lanes, have branding, or be fitted with a taximeter or a roof sign.
Local Area Hackney (LAH)	A hackney licensed only for a designated local pick-up area specifically to address transport deficits that would otherwise not be addressed in certain rural areas, particularly where lack of commercial viability means SPSV services are not provided.
Low Emission Vehicle (LEV)	Low emission vehicles produce fewer emissions than an average diesel or petrol fueled vehicle whilst operating. In Ireland, low emission cars are those with CO2 exhaust emissions of 50 g/km or less.
Maximum Permissible Age (MPA)	The maximum permissible age of an SPSV refers to the age of a vehicle beyond which that vehicle may not be licensed to operate as a taxi or hackney.
SPSV	Small Public Service Vehicle (Taxi, hackney or limousine).
Taxi	An SPSV that can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ply for hire (be hailed on the street); and • stand for hire at taxi ranks; and • be pre-booked by or for a passenger. It must carry prescribed branding on its front doors and be fitted with a taximeter, printer and roof sign. It can use bus lanes when hired.
Wheelchair Accessible Hackney (WAH)	A hackney which meets several additional vehicle specifications designed to allow use by at least one person seated in a wheelchair with at least one other passenger.
Wheelchair Accessible Taxi (WAT)	A taxi which meets several additional vehicle specifications designed to allow use by at least one person seated in a wheelchair with at least one other passenger.
Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle (WAV)	An SPSV which meets several additional vehicle specifications designed to allow use by at least one person seated in their wheelchair with at least one other passenger.

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1

Introduction



About this SPSV Bulletin

Welcome to the National Transport Authority (NTA) 2024 SPSV Information and Statistical Bulletin on the small public service vehicle (SPSV) sector. This document focuses on statistics for all SPSV categories (taxis, hackneys and limousines) and SPSV drivers, along with NTA's activities as a regulator.

What is a small public service vehicle (SPSV)?

In Ireland, SPSVs are public transport vehicles with seating for up to eight passengers in addition to the driver. There are three categories of SPSV:

- Taxi (standard and wheelchair accessible). An SPSV that can:
 - ply for hire (be hailed on the street); and
 - stand for hire at taxi ranks; and
 - be pre-booked by or for a passenger.

It must carry prescribed branding on its front doors and be fitted with a taximeter, printer and roof sign. It can use bus lanes when hired.

- Hackney (standard, wheelchair accessible and local area). An SPSV which must be pre-booked and cannot ply for hire on the street or stand at taxi ranks. The fare for the journey must be agreed in advance with the customer. Hackneys may not use bus lanes, have branding, or be fitted with a taximeter or a roof sign.
- Limousine. An SPSV which is evidently suited by reason of its style and condition to be used for ceremonial, corporate or other prestige purposes. It must be pre-booked and cannot ply for hire on the street or stand at taxi ranks. The fare must be agreed in advance. Limousines may not use bus lanes, have branding, or be fitted with a taximeter or a roof sign.

Who is The National Transport Authority?

The National Transport Authority (NTA) is a statutory non-commercial body, which operates under the control and guidance of the Department of Transport. It was established by the Minister for Transport on 1 December 2009. It has a very wide public transport investment, planning and implementation remit, including a statutory function to develop and maintain a regulatory framework for the control and operation of SPSVs and their drivers and associated services such as those provided by dispatch operators (booking app, telephone and walk-in).

What regulations cover the SPSV sector?

The sector is regulated under the following acts and regulations:

- The Taxi Regulation Acts 2013 and 2016 (a consolidation of the Transport Regulation Act 2013 and The Public Transport Act 2016 referred to as the Taxi Regulation Acts)
- The Taxi Regulation (Small Public Service Vehicle) Regulations 2015
- The Small Public Service Vehicle (Emergency Measure Covid-19) (Expired Licence) Regulations 2021
- The Small Public Service Vehicle (Cashless Payment Facility) Regulations 2022
- The Small Public Service Vehicle (Fixed Payment Offences and Driver Licence Period) Regulations 2022
- Small Public Service Vehicle (Contingency Measure – Vehicle Supply) (Maximum Permissible Age) Regulations 2022
- The Taxi Regulation (Maximum Fares Order) 2024

What is NTA's role in the SPSV Industry?

NTA is the regulator for the SPSV industry and the licensing authority for taxi, hackney and limousine vehicles (not drivers). It also licenses dispatch operators (booking service providers). NTA's role includes granting, renewing, refusing and revoking licences for each vehicle and dispatch operator. NTA also provides administrative support to An Garda Síochána in its role as the licensing authority for the SPSV drivers.

What is An Garda Síochána's role in the SPSV Industry?

An Garda Síochána is the licensing authority for taxi, hackney and limousine drivers and, in that capacity, grants, renews, refuses and revokes SPSV driver licences. An Garda Síochána is responsible for vetting SPSV drivers to assess their suitability to provide individual transport services to the public. All members of An Garda Síochána are also Authorised Persons under the Taxi Regulation Acts and can investigate and prosecute all SPSV offences alongside NTA Authorised Officers.



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2024 SPSV Updates



Information Campaigns, Surveys and Consultations

Education and Training: Safeguarding and Disability Awareness Professional Development Course

To promote high quality services for passengers with diverse needs, NTA launched a free, online, professional development course for new SPSV Driver Applicants in January 2024. The objective of this Safeguarding and Disability Awareness course is to provide information to these professional drivers to enable them to provide a better service to vulnerable or disabled passengers through raising awareness in this area.



Safeguarding and Disability Awareness

Learn how to help vulnerable people who may be experiencing abuse or neglect, and how to support people with disabilities.



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SPSV Operator Information Campaign: Options to Operate in the SPSV Industry

All SPSV operators are self-employed and choose their own business models (e.g. renting or owning the SPSV they operate). To ensure applicants are sufficiently and accurately informed of their options, from January 2024, NTA placed new “Options to Operate in the SPSV Industry” information leaflets in successful SPSV Driver Entry Test candidate packs. As taking the SPSV Driver Entry Test is typically the first step in the process of entering the industry, the objective of this information campaign was to highlight relevant information to applicants as early as possible in their application process, to ensure they can make the best business decisions for their own circumstances.

Surveys: Taxi Consumers & Drivers

NTA completed a taxi consumer and driver survey in the first quarter of 2024. The core objectives of surveys were to gain a nationally representative view of taxi usage and operating costs in Ireland. The results are available to view on the Taxi/SPSV section of the NTA website.

Customer Information Campaign: Taxi Fares

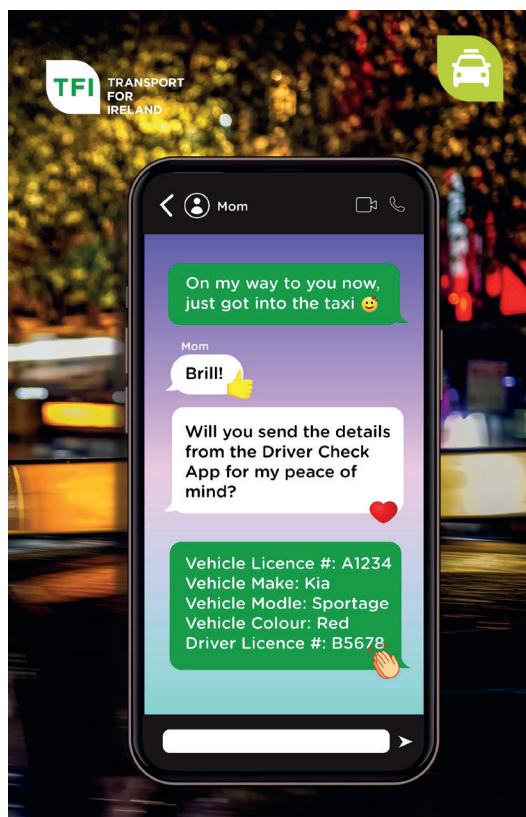
In October 2024 NTA launched a campaign to increase customer awareness regarding taxi fares. This ran across social media, radio and posters in public spaces. This campaign detailed consumer rights and the breakdown of the fare with possible additional charges. The full suite of campaign information is available to the public at www.taxifares.ie.

Surveys: Taxi Driver Operating Hours

In November of 2024, NTA surveyed over 1,600 SPSV drivers on whether they chose to work during the peak, weekend hours. The survey results indicated that newer SPSV driver licence holders are more likely to work these hours. With the recent, large increases in SPSV driver numbers as shown in this report, this would indicate the weekend nighttime economy is being increasingly served by SPSV drivers.

Public Consultations: The National Maximum Taxi Fare Review

In accordance with its legislative requirements, NTA regularly undertakes a review of the National Maximum Taxi Fare to ensure that the cost of providing the service to the public is reflected in the fares charged by SPSV drivers. In 2024, the outcome of the National Maximum Taxi Fare review resulted in an average 9% increase in the fare. This increase was applied to taxi fares from the 1st of December 2024. In an effort to increase the number of taxi operators providing journeys during the hours of peak demand, late night at weekends, the increase was weighted towards these time periods.



Consumer Information Campaign: TFI Driver Check App

At the end of 2024 NTA launched a customer campaign for the NTA Driver Check App. This ran across social media and in Dublin airport. The Driver Check App allows customers to confirm the taxi they intend to use is licenced. It also allows customers to share their journey with a friend.

Key Statistics Updates

The key statistics provided in the remainder of this Bulletin are summarised in this section. For more information, please refer to the Tables and Figures indicated.

SPSV (vehicle) Licences: New

2024 saw 1,199 new vehicle licences being granted by NTA, the second highest number granted in the last 10 years. See Figure 2 for more information. This included 346 non-grant aided and 372 grant aided wheelchair accessible taxis and hackneys.

SPSV (vehicle) Licences: Total

At the end of 2024, the number of SPSVs was 20,564, a 4% increase on 2023. See Figure 1 for more information.

SPSV Driver Licence Numbers: New

2024 saw 2,087 new driver licences being granted by An Garda Síochána, the highest number granted in the last 10 years. See Figure 7 for more information.

SPSV Driver Licence Numbers: Total

At the end of 2024, the number of SPSV Drivers was 27,643, the highest seen in the last 10 years, and a 4.8% increase on 2023. See Figure 6 for more information.

Accessibility: Highest Number of Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV) in the SPSV Fleet

Under the Government's Sustainable Mobility Policy 2022 – 2025 Action Plan, NTA has committed to a 25% increase in wheelchair accessible vehicles in the SPSV fleet (3,250 at the end of 2021), by the end of 2025 (a target of 4,062). NTA achieved this target in September 2024, and by the end of 2024 the fleet comprised 4,213 WAVs. See Figure 4 for more information.

Sustainability: Highest Number of Electric Small Public Services Vehicle (eSPSV) Grants

One of NTA's strategic objectives is to transition the SPSV fleet to lower/zero emission technologies in line with the Department of Transport's National Sustainable Mobility Policy Action Plan 2022 – 2025. The Department of Transport Electric Small Public Services Vehicle (eSPSV) Grant Scheme 2024, administered by NTA, saw the highest number of grants issued (753) since its launch in 2018. See Table 5 for more information.

Sustainability: Highest Number of Low Emission Vehicles (LEV) in the SPSV Fleet

2024 saw 2,638 fully electric vehicles in the fleet, a 33% increase on 2023. See Table 6 for more information.

Compliance and Enforcement: Fixed Payment Notices

NTA issued 904 Fixed Payment Notices (on the spot fines) in 2024. This is a 30% increase on 2023. 79% of Fixed Payment Notices issued were paid promptly in 2024, with the remainder being referred for court prosecution in the District Courts nationwide. See Table 11 for more information.

Compliance and Enforcement: Prosecutions

NTA took 156 prosecutions in 2024 of which almost half (47%) related to the operation of an unlicensed service. NTA was successful in 81% of cases presented.

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SPSV (Vehicle) Licensing



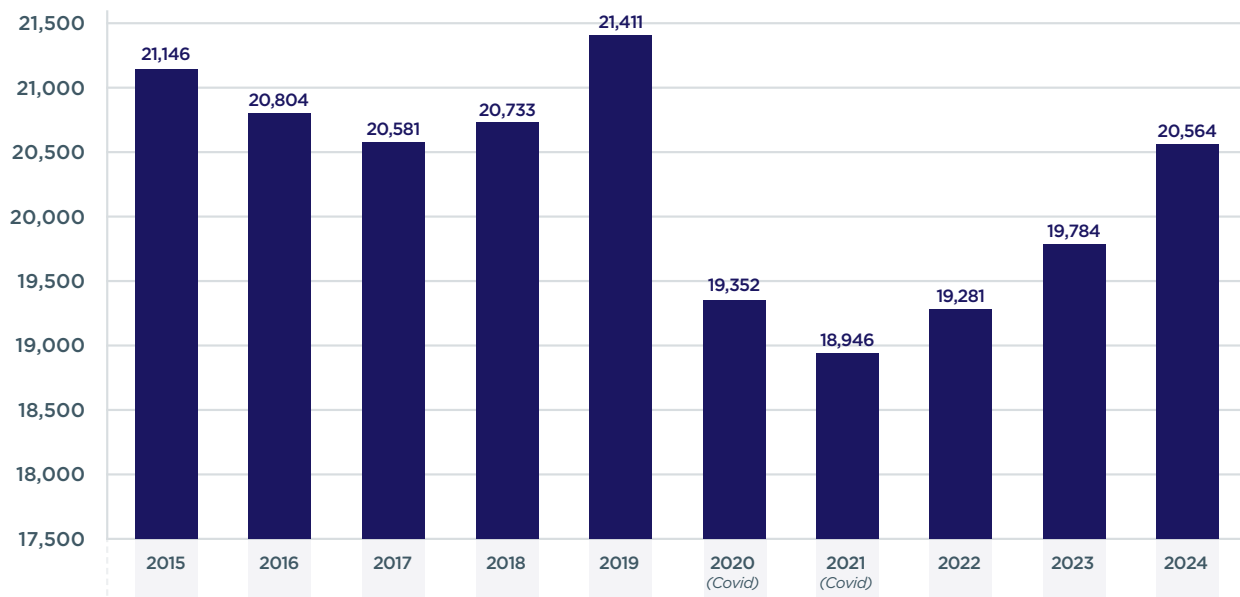
Small Public Service Vehicle Licences

Broadly speaking, all SPSV licences exist in one of three states:

- **Active:** Where SPSV licences are active, the associated vehicles are licensed and may be used for the carriage of passengers for hire or reward (all other regulatory requirements being met). See Figures 1.
- **Inactive:** This means that the SPSV licence has expired. However, the licence holder is entitled to apply for a replacement to recommence providing transport services, within 24 months of the expiry date.
- **Timed Out:** The SPSV licence can no longer be replaced having been actively surrendered or passively allowed to expire. A new licence application must be made to provide transport services.

At the end of 2024, there were 20,564 active taxi, hackney and limousine licences in the fleet. This represented a 4% increase in fleet numbers compared to 2023. Figure 1 illustrates the changes in SPSV licence numbers from 2015 to 2024.

Figure 1: Active Small Public Service Vehicle Licences by Year, 2015-2024



Inactive status

A licence moves to Inactive status if not renewed before its expiry date. An SPSV vehicle licence holder then has 24 months to apply for a replacement of the vehicle licence. Between 7% and 8% of vehicle licences have historically been recorded in Inactive status, reflecting licence holders renewing late, taking a break from operating (particularly for holiday periods) or where rental agreements expire. This inactive number was higher during Covid but has reduced to normal levels since 2023.

Table 1: Average % of Inactive SPSV Licences, 2020-2024

Year	Average % of Inactive SPSV Licences
2020	11.7%
2021	14.8%
2022	13.4%
2023	8.4%
2024	7.1%

Vehicle Licences Issued

New SPSV licences can be granted for a Wheelchair Accessible Taxis (WAT), Wheelchair Accessible Hackneys (WAH), Limousines and Local Area Hackneys (LAH) only. Figure 2 and Table 2 below reflect the number of new SPSV licences issued from 2015 to 2024.

Figure 2: New SPSV Licences Issued by Year, 2015-2024

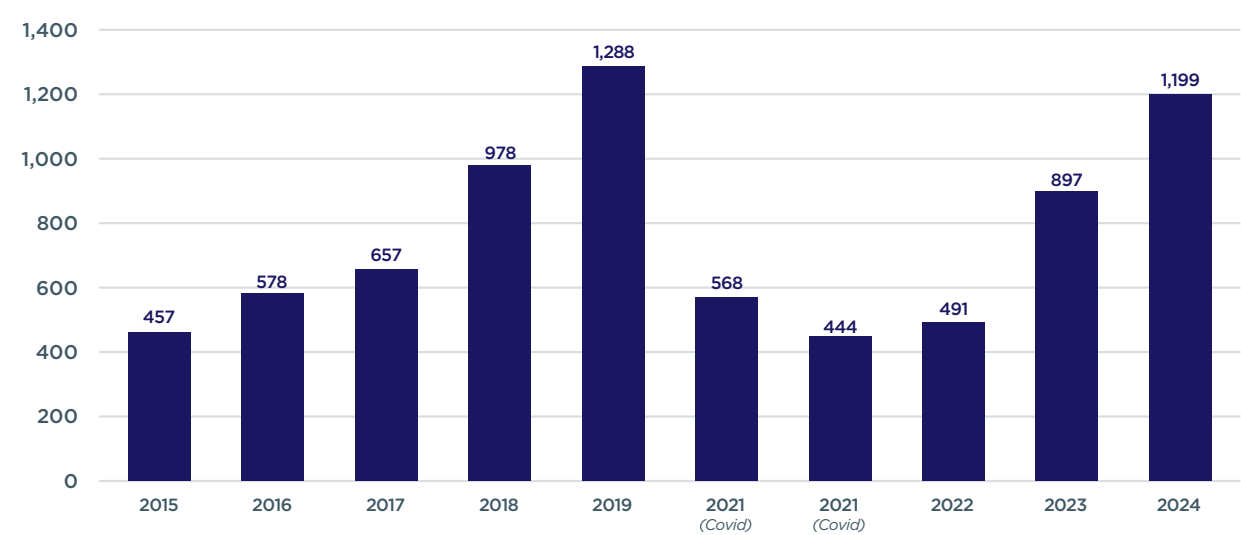


Table 2: New Vehicle Licences Issued by Year and Category, 2015-2024

Year	Limousine	Wheelchair Accessible Taxi	Wheelchair Accessible Hackney	Local Area Hackney	Total
2014	190	52	5	7	254
2015	269	157	18	13	457
2016	293	261	22	2	578
2017	290	345	21	1	657
2018	236	713	25	4	978
2019	309	944	28	8	1,289
2020	146	404	12	6	568
2021	122	292	27	3	444
2022	231	231	21	8	491
2023	427	438	23	9	897
2024	475	701	17	6	1,199

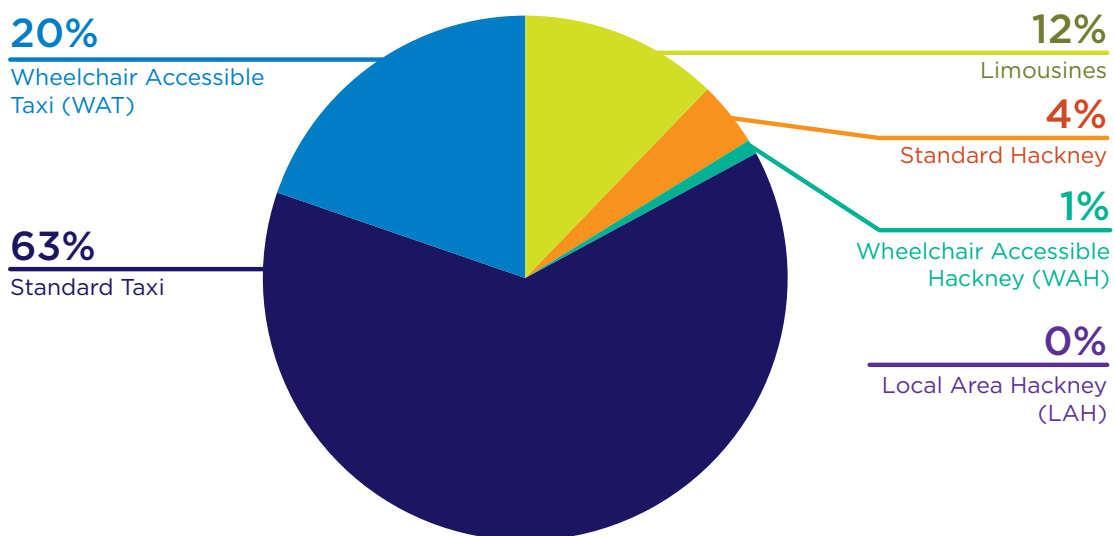
SPSV Fleet Profile

Table 3 and Figure 3 provide a breakdown of the overall makeup of the SPSV fleet from 2015 to 2024.

Table 3: SPSV Fleet by Vehicle Category by Year, 2015-2024

Year	Standard Taxi	Wheelchair Accessible Taxi (WAT)	Standard Hackney	Wheelchair Accessible Hackney (WAH)	Local Area Hackney (LAH)	Limousines	Total
2015	16,460	969	2,081	48	17	1,571	21,146
2016	15,961	1,185	1,838	69	10	1,741	20,804
2017	15,490	1,471	1,631	84	11	1,894	20,581
2018	15,064	2,115	1,477	105	13	1,959	20,733
2019	14,863	2,951	1,349	119	19	2,110	21,411
2020	13,255	3,015	1,115	118	21	1,828	19,352
2021	12,861	3,118	1,025	132	21	1,789	18,946
2022	13,014	3,206	949	141	23	1,948	19,281
2023	13,028	3,506	861	155	26	2,208	19,784
2024	12,984	4,055	825	158	24	2,518	20,564

Figure 3: SPSV Fleet Percentage by Vehicle Category, 2024



Accessibility

Under the Government's Sustainable Mobility Policy 2022 – 2025 Action Plan, NTA has committed to a 25% increase in wheelchair accessible vehicles in the SPSV fleet (3,250 at the end of 2021), by the end of 2025 (a target of 4,062). NTA achieved this target in September 2024, and by the end of 2024 the fleet comprised 4,213 WAVs.

In 2024, 346 new wheelchair accessible taxi and hackney licences were added to the fleet without grant support, showing strong interest and growth in the sector.

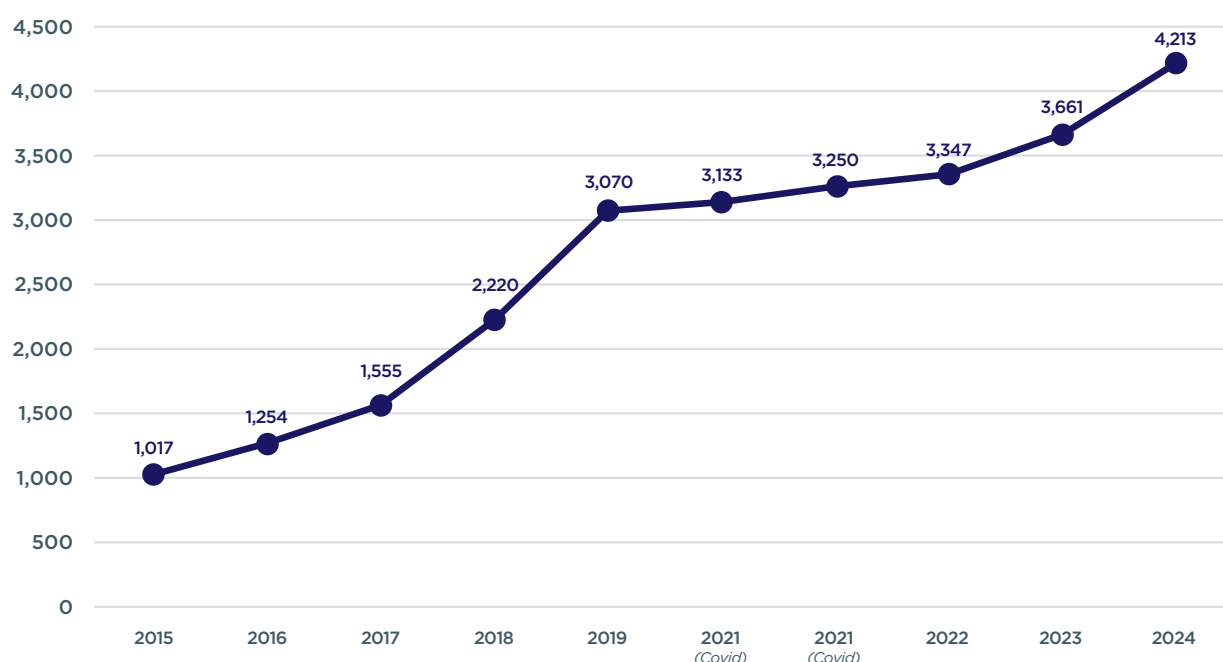
To support the accessibility of the fleet, the NTA Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle (WAV) Grant Scheme was established in 2014. Since then, the Grant Scheme has assisted in funding 4,504 new or replacement/upgraded vehicles to year-end 2024. The 2024 WAV scheme opened on 2 January 2024. 438 grants were paid in 2024, a 6.6% increase on 2023. Each grant either brought a new vehicle into the fleet (372) or enabled the replacement of an older licenced vehicle (66). Table 4 below represents the grants issued each year from 2015 to 2024.

Table 4: Grant Assisted Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles, 2015-2024

Year	Grants	Capital	New WAV to fleet	Replacement of WAV within fleet
2015	153	€871,000	134	19
2016	335	€1,987,500	284	51
2017	284	€1,747,500	233	51
2018	761	€3,366,000	679	82
2019	1,039	€4,420,000	907	132
2020	264	€1,240,500	227	37
2021	379	€1,605,500	271	108
2022	312	€1,320,500	231	81
2023	411	€5,452,500	309	102
2024	438	€6,220,000	372	66

2024 saw the highest number of WAVs ever active in the fleet. At end 2024, WAVs comprised 20% of the total SPSV fleet and 23% of the taxi and hackney fleet. Figure 4 below illustrates the growing number of WAVs in the fleet from 2015 to 2024.

Figure 4: Wheelchair Accessible Licences by Year, 2015 – 2024



In addition to steps previously taken by NTA to improve accessibility for passengers travelling in a wheelchair (see 2023 Bulletin for more information), in 2024 NTA's also introduced free online Safeguarding and Disability Awareness Training for all new industry members. Further information is provided in Chapter 4, 'SPSV Driver Licensing'.

Sustainability

One of NTA's strategic objectives is to transition the SPSV fleet to lower/zero emission technologies in line with the Department of Transport's National Sustainable Mobility Policy Action Plan 2022 – 2025. To do this, NTA aims to increase the number of sustainable vehicles in the SPSV fleet. The Electric Small Public Services Vehicle (eSPSV) Grant Scheme was available in 2024 once again, having originally launched in 2018 by the Department of Transport and administered by NTA. 2024 saw €13.5 million in funding committed to this scheme by Minister for Transport and the highest number of grants issues (753) since its launch. Each grant either brought a new vehicle into the fleet (28¹) or enabled the replacement of an older licenced vehicle (725). Table 5 below represents the grants issued each year from 2018 to 2024.

¹New eSPSV licences here can comprise only electric wheelchair accessible taxis, electric wheelchair accessible hackneys, or electric limousines

Table 5: Overview of eSPSV Grant Scheme per Year, 2018-2024

Year	Grants	Grants - Finance	New eSPSV	Finance	Replacement eSPSV	Finance
2018	46	€279,000	3	€12,000	43	€267,000
2019	35	€189,000	2	€8,500	30	€180,500
2020	20	€159,000	0	€0,000	20	€159,000
2021	689	€13,332,500	1	€20,000	688	€13,312,500
2022	636	€11,900,000	4	€50,500	632	€11,849,500
2023	653	€12,009,500	16	€185,000	637	€11,824,500
2024	753	€13,388,500	28	€282,500	725	€13,106,000

As of year-end 2024, there were 2,638 fully electric vehicles in the fleet, a 33% increase on 2023 with each year showing a steady growth as represented in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Low Emission Vehicle (LEV) Numbers, 2020-2024

LEV by Fuel Type:	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Diesel/Electric	0	0	0	0	28
Petro/Electric	2,341	2,763	3,494	4,225	5,087
Electric	78	674	1,369	1,981	2,638
Plug-In-Hybrid	35	37	45	55	143
Total	2,454	3,474	4,908	6,261	7,896

Vehicle Age Profile

Under the 2015 SPSV Regulations, taxis and hackneys and local area hackney must be less than 10 years old to operate. Wheelchair accessible taxis and wheelchair accessible hackneys must be less than 15 years old to operate. Emergency regulations enacted in 2022 provided for limited extensions to these terms. Such extensions will fall away from the 1st of January 2028. There is no maximum permissible age set for limousines due to the vintage nature of many of these vehicles.

Table 7: Age Profile of Taxis and Hackneys at 31 December 2024

Vehicle Age	Taxi	WAT	Hackney	WAH	LAH	Total	Percentage
< 1 year of age	823	249	23	9		1,104	6.1%
1 to < 2 years of age	837	282	39	8		1,166	6.5%
2 to < 3 years of age	930	88	31	4		1,053	5.8%
3 to < 4 years of age	997	140	44	10	1	1,192	6.6%
4 to < 5 years of age	641	253	47	11	1	953	5.3%
5 to < 6 years of age	1,008	413	69	20	2	1,512	8.4%
6 to < 7 years of age	992	462	74	26	4	1,558	8.6%
7 to < 8 years of age	1,254	447	109	24	4	1,838	10.2%
8 to < 9 years of age	1,236	368	110	17	6	1,737	9.6%
9 to < 10 years of age	1,065	311	80	12	4	1,472	8.2%
10 to < 15 years of age	3,049	992	175	15	2	4,233	23.5%
15+ years of age	152	50	24	2	0	228	1.2%
Total	12,984	4,055	825	158	24	18,046	100.0%

4

SPSV Driver Licensing



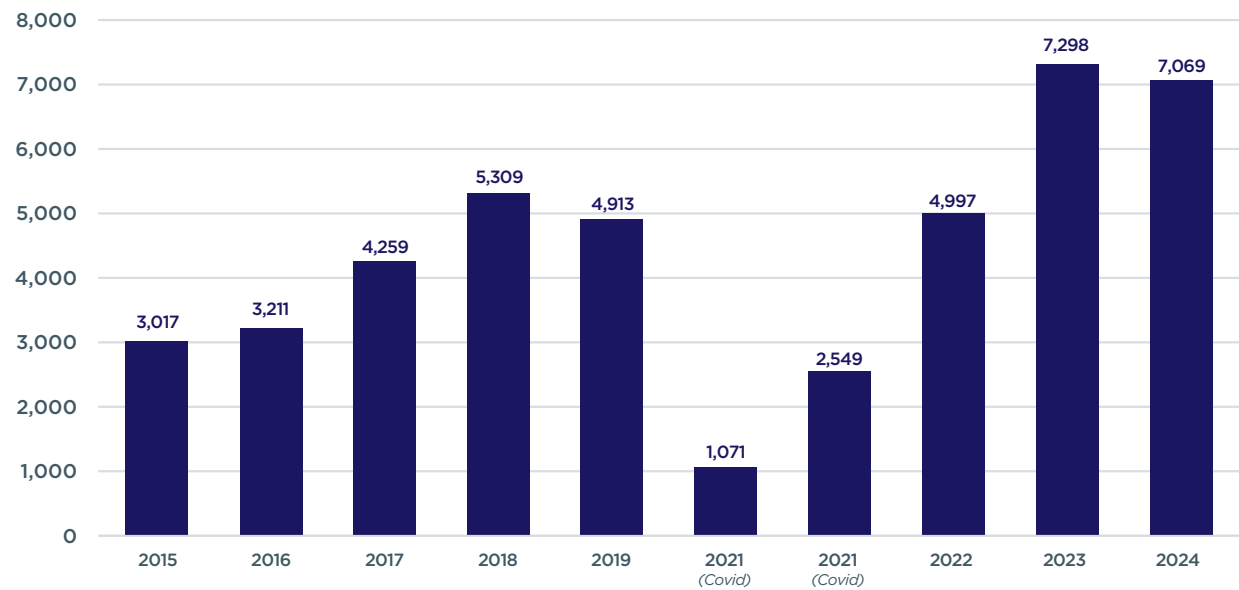
The first step in becoming an SPSV Driver is to pass the SPSV Driver Entry Test. The purpose of the national SPSV Driver Entry Test is to offer any potential licenced driver the tools needed to provide an effective and efficient service to the public. The Test is designed to verify that all new entrants to the industry:

- are familiar with the regulatory framework in which the SPSV industry operates as outlined in The Official Manual for Operating in the SPSV Industry; and
- have a good working knowledge of the county in which they wish to operate taxi services.

Since its introduction in July 2009, 23,623 candidates have attempted the test with 71.2% of candidates passing. The average test attempts for those who passed remains 2.8, with 36% doing so on the first attempt and 25% on the second in 2024.

2024 saw 7,069 individual SPSV Driver Entry Tests completed, this is an average of 591 tests per month.

Figure 5: SPSV Driver Entry Tests Delivered, 2015-2024



Safeguarding and Disability Awareness Professional Development Course

In January 2024 NTA launched a new professional development course for new SPSV Driver Applicants. This is a free, online course about Safeguarding and Disability Awareness. The objective is to provide information to professional drivers to enable them to provide a better service to vulnerable or disabled passengers through raising awareness around the area of safeguarding and disability. New SPSV Driver Applicants are invited to complete the free online training after they have successfully passed the SPSV Driver Entry Test.

In 2024 1,618 candidates completed this online module.



This course will
be mandatory
from the 1st of
January 2024

Starting your SPSV Driver Licence application?
**Don't forget to complete the new Safeguarding and
 Disability Awareness e-learning course!**

This **FREE 30 minute** course can be completed on your computer or mobile device. The course will help you:

- Enhance interpersonal skills
- Make sound decisions
- Ensure customer comfort and safety



Disability Awareness

- ✓ Offer equal, inclusive transport
- ✓ Recognise types of disabilities
- ✓ Demonstrate disability awareness
- ✓ Understand issues faced by those with disabilities

Safeguarding

- ✓ Recognise different types of abuse
- ✓ Notice signs of abuse/neglect
- ✓ Identify vulnerable/high risk individuals
- ✓ Prevent and help those at risk

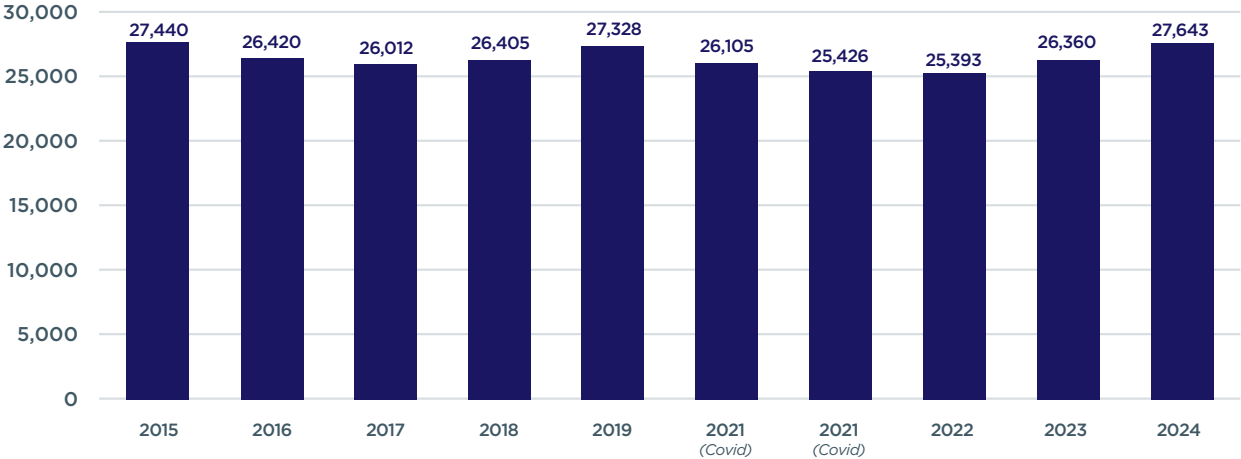


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 0818 064 000

SPSV Driver Licensing

At the end of 2024, the number of SPSV Drivers was 27,643, the highest seen in the last 10 years, and a 4.8% increase on 2023. The majority of drivers (61%) are entitled to stand and ply for hire (can be hailed on street or pick up at a taxi rank) in Dublin. On the condition that a journey is prebooked, a taxi driver can operate anywhere in the country. NTA's 2024 taxi user surveys tell us that 64% of journeys are now prebooked – by telephone or online/app.

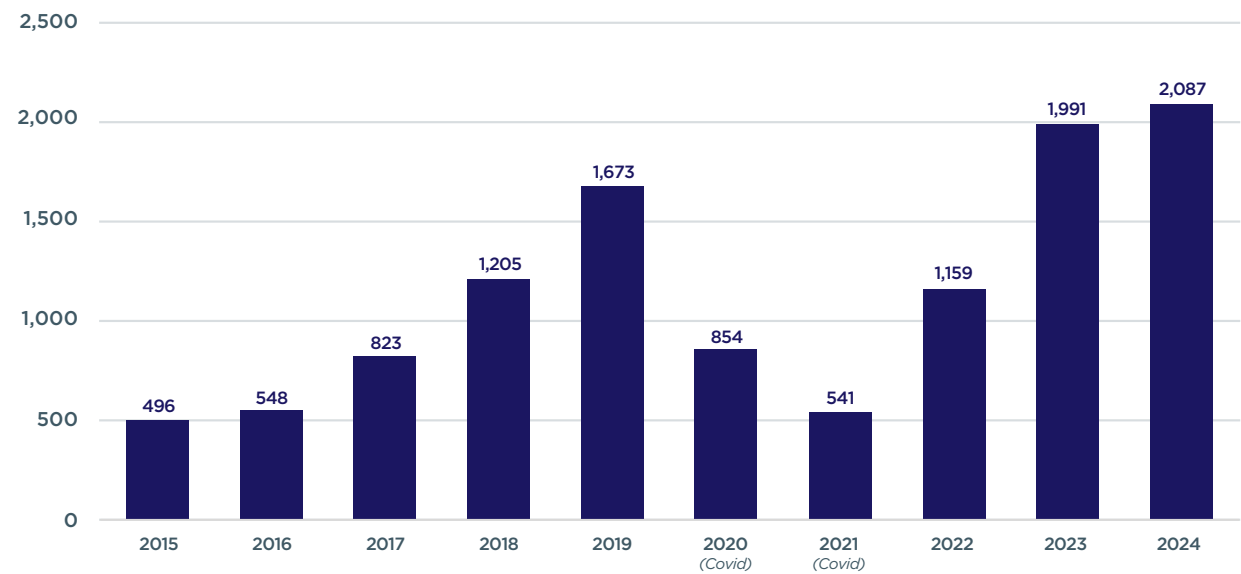
Figure 6: Active SPSV Driver Licences by Year, 2015-2024



New SPSV Driver Licences

2024 saw 2,087 new SPSV driver licences granted by An Garda Síochána, the licensing authority for SPSV drivers, an average of 174 per month and the highest number of new licence issued on record. Of those newly added SPSV driver licences, 63% relate to new applications to drive in Dublin.

Figure 7: New SPSV Driver Licences Issued, 2015-2024.



SPSV Driver Licence Renewals

The SPSV driver licence is issued for up to five years and therefore, every year will facilitate a certain number of renewals of those licences. The table below illustrates this cycle, where renewal rates year on year are generally comparable to the number of licences expiring at the five-year point; thus a 2015 licence falls to be renewed in 2020, 2016 in 2021 and so on. As can be seen from the table below, approximately 80-90% of all SPSV Drivers renew their 5-year licence with An Garda Síochána. 2024 saw this increase to 93% from 84% for the previous year.

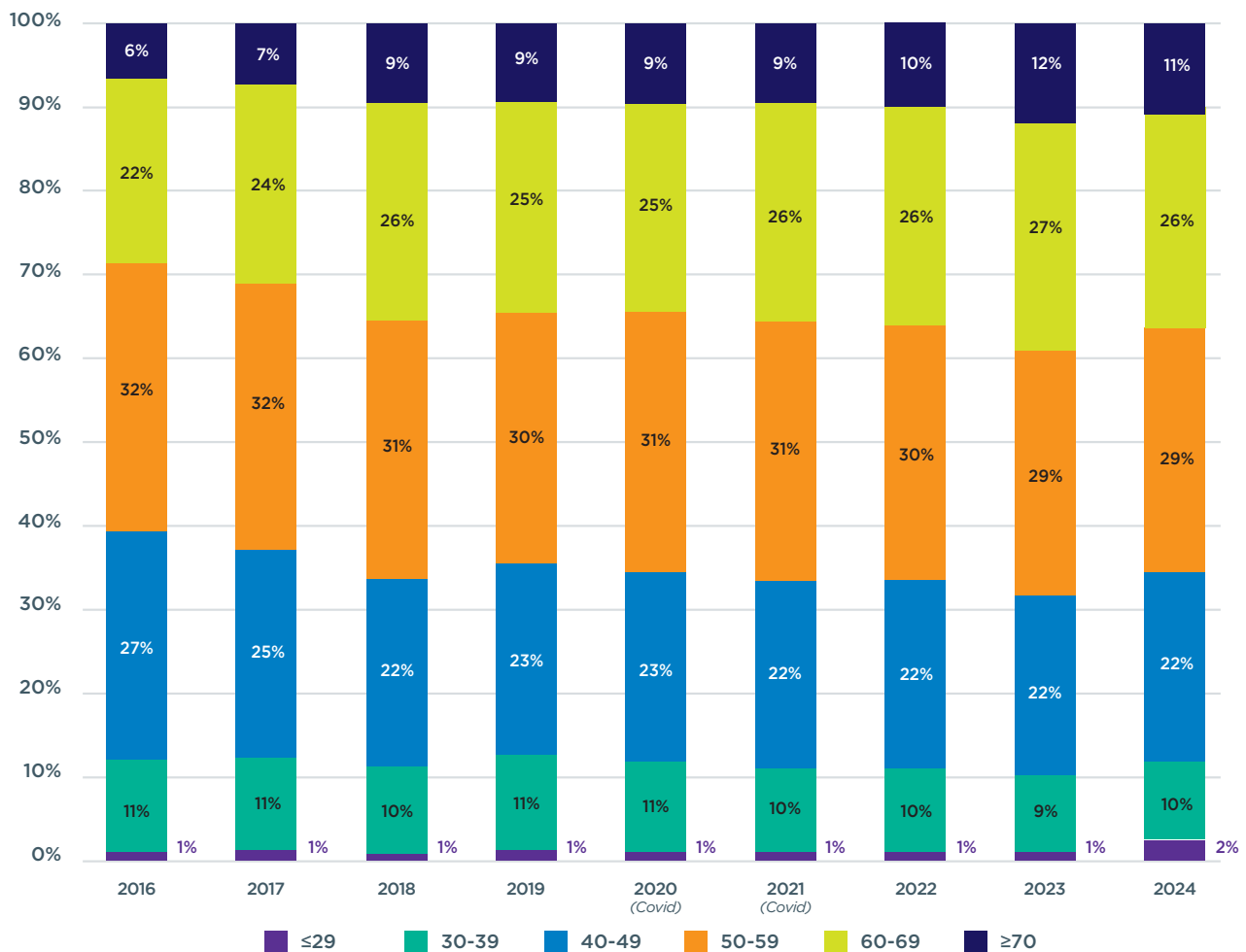
Table 8: SPSV Driver Percentage Renewals, 2020-2024

Year	Total Renewals Due	Total Renewals Actual	% that renewed
2020	8,319	6,679	80%
2021	5,915	4,724	80%
2022	5,322	4,618	87%
2023	5,179	4,341	84%
2024	4,094	3,799	93%

Driver Age Profile

Figure 8 provides the breakdown of the SPSV driver age profile for Ireland from 2016 to 2024.

Figure 8: SPSV Driver Age Profile, 2016-2024



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SPSV Contact Management



In 2024, NTA provided responses in relation to SPSV queries to:

- A) 118 individual queries from TDs, Senators, and Councillors;
- B) 34 parliamentary queries from the Dáil and the Seanad;
- C) 25 Freedom of Information requests;
- D) 8 Office of the Ombudsman requests; and
- E) 3 Data Subject Access requests.

NTA engaged with the industry by telephone, email, letter, industry newsletters and SMS, providing advice and assistance on all aspects of SPSV licensing and regulations. A full breakdown on these contacts, which totalled 987,677 in 2024, is provided in Table 9 below. Further to these methods NTA also provided advice and assistance to the industry at the roadside, at inspection centres, through specific market research and surveys, and through its website.

Table 9: Breakdown of Industry Communications Issued, 2024

	Industry Updates	SPSV+ Alerts	Licensing Notifications	Total
Email	228,380	277,333	79,112	584,825
Post	0	338	14,247	14,585
SMS	388,267	20,324	0	388,267
Total	616,647	277,671	93,359	987,677

More than 130,000 telephone calls and 16,000 emails were received by the SPSV Contact Centre in 2024. Table 10 below details a breakdown of all calls and emails received for 2019 to 2024.

Table 10: SPSV Information Line Calls Handled by Year, 2019-2024

Year	Total calls handled	Emails Received
2019	121,132	6,121
2020	93,843	16,087
2021	97,103	7,152
2022	107,833	11,754
2023	125,062	12,716
2024	132,223	16,179

2024 calls received increased by 6% and emails received increased by 27% compared to 2023.

6

SPSV Compliance



Through a focus on education, deterrence, and enforcement measures, NTA continues to maintain high levels of compliance by SPSV operators with the regulatory framework.

How NTA checks that SPSV operators are complying

- On street vehicle and driver licensing checks
- Face-to-face roadside vehicle and driver audits
- Covert and overt detection operations
- Investigating consumer complaints
- Dispatch Operator Audits
- Multi Vehicle Licence Operator Audits
- Multi-agency compliance operations, for example, with:
 - An Garda Síochána (National Roads Policing Bureau and National Immigration Bureau)
 - Revenue
 - The Department of Social Protection

Contactless Checks, Face-to-Face Audits and Fixed Payment Notices

NTA Compliance Officers complete enforcement checks within the SPSV industry via many methods throughout the year. Contactless checks refer to those completed via the NTA enforcement app, with drivers unaware of these checks being carried out while they are providing passenger services. 18,618 of these checks were individual vehicles, meaning 90% of all SPSV licences that were observed operating and had their licences and their real-time operating notifications to NTA (linking for the public Driver Check App) checked with most vehicles checked multiple times.

As a result of these compliance activities, 904 Fixed Payment Notices (on the spot fines – **See Appendix A**) were issued in 2024 for offences cited in Schedule 8 to the Taxi Regulation (Small Public Service Vehicles) Regulations 2015 as amended. This is a 30% increase on 2023.

Table 11: SPSV Checks, Audits and Fixed Payment Notices 2015-2024

Year	Contactless checks	Roadside audits	Fixed Payment Notices
2015	29,123	11,765	692
2016	90,243	12,012	1,099
2017	151,561	10,959	1,512
2018	199,369	17,610	1,878
2019	196,868	14,589	1,600
2020	102,773	3,707	494
2021	185,585	5,068	157
2022	204,795	12,688	655
2023	179,582	16,998	707
2024	166,865	15,924	904

The top five Fixed Payment Notice offences made up 65% of fines issued in 2024 (see Table 12):

1. Fines issued relating to “vehicle standards” made up 23% of all fines. This is a wide-ranging fine, which includes, for example, the requirement to carry boarding aids and restraints for wheelchairs, the cleanliness and condition of all vehicles and official taxi vehicle signage.
2. Fines issued relating to the “failure to notify details of the small public service vehicle being operated” made up 14% of all fines.
3. Fines issued relating to a driver’s “failure to comply with taxi roof sign requirements” made up 10% of all fines.
4. Fines issued relating to a driver “standing for hire in a taxi otherwise than at an appointed stand” made up 9% of all fines.
5. Fines issued relating to a driver’s “failure to comply with the requirements in relation to the calibration of taximeters” made up 9% of all fines.

79% of Fixed Payment Notices issued were paid promptly in 2024, with the remainder being referred for court prosecution in the District Courts nationwide.

Table 12: Fixed Payment Notice Offences Prosecutions by Category, 2019-2024

Fixed Payment Notice Offence Prosecutions	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Failure to have cashless payment device in vehicle/accept cashless payment	-	-	-	4	9
Failure to comply with vehicle standards	2	9	1	5	8
Removal of tamper-proof disc from SPSV	1	0	0	0	1
Failure to display in-vehicle information	3	1	0	0	0
Failure to comply with taxi roof sign requirements	4	8	1	1	6
Failure to notify details of SPSV being operated	12	12	0	11	13
Failure to comply with taximeter requirements	1	5	2	10	9
Failure to print and offer a receipt	1	2	1	0	1
Unreasonable refusal to carry a passenger	4	2	0	1	3
Standing for hire in a taxi otherwise than at an appointed stand	6	2	1	1	0
Displaying unauthorised sign on a hackney or limousine	0	1	0	0	0
Standing at appointed stand while vehicle is not available for hire	0	1	0	0	0
Failure to display driver ID	0	2	0	2	4
Failure to operate taximeter while taxi is on hire	0	1	0	1	0
Operating taximeter while taxi is standing for hire or plying for hire	0	2	0	0	0
Failure of the driver of a hackney/limousine to carry booking record	0	0	0	0	0
Standing or plying for hire in an area without a licence for that area	0	0	0	0	1
Total	34	48	6	32	55

Criminal Prosecutions

NTA took 156 prosecutions in 2024 of which almost half (47%) related to the operation of an unlicensed service. NTA was successful in 81% of cases presented.

Table 13: Prosecutions by Offence Category, 2019-2024

Offences		2020 (Cases)	2021 (Cases)	2022 (Cases)	2023 (Cases)	2024 (Cases)
Operation of unlicensed SPSV	No driver and no vehicle licence	15	14	54	46	36
	No driver licence	18	33	12	40	10
	No vehicle licence	41	13	14	58	17
Allow an unlicensed driver/vehicle to operate/failure to keep accurate records		16	15	20	38	10
Overcharging (addition of unwarranted but legal 'extras' to a fare for example adding a booking fee to a fare that was not pre-booked)		3	2	2	1	2
Vehicle condition		0	1	0	0	1
Duties of drivers of SPSVs		8	1	1	1	5
Illegal display of taxi sign/Failure to remove signage from unlicensed vehicle		16	16	22	33	18
Advertising an unlicensed SPSV service		3	5	2	2	1
Exceeding the maximum number of passengers		1	0	3	0	0
Obstruction of/failure to comply with requirements of a compliance officer		3	5	3	0	1
Hackney/limousine standing for hire		3	0	7	0	0
		127	105	140	219	101
Additional Prosecutions						
Fixed Payment Notice Offences Prosecutions (see Table 19 below)		34	48	6	32	55
Total		161	153	146	251	156

7

SPSV Complaints



Investigating complaints helps to ensure that the standards in the SPSV industry remain high. It also protects the compliant majority of the SPSV industry and provides a level playing field for all industry members.

Every submission received is assessed by NTA to assess if there is evidence an offence may have been committed. A complaint must relate to an alleged breach of SPSV legislation, see Table 14 below. NTA cannot consider complaints that are not within the remit of NTA, for example, road traffic offence allegations, revenue or social welfare fraud allegations or assault allegations, which are primarily dealt with under other legislation. In such cases, the complainants are referred to the appropriate enforcement agency.

There are five categories of complaint which can be dealt with by NTA under Section 64 of the Taxi Regulation Acts. Table 14 below sets out these five categories alongside sample complaints.

Table 14: Complaint Categories

Category	Sample complaint
Condition, roadworthiness and cleanliness of the vehicle	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interior or exterior dirt• Staining, malodour• Rubbish
Conduct, behaviour and identification of an SPSV driver	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Failure to prominently display the required driver identification• Acting in a manner that is perceived to be a nuisance or a danger to any person• Malodour or poor hygiene
Overcharging and other matters relating to fares	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Failure to accept a cashless payment• Failure to issue a receipt• Overcharging or no change• Route selection• Taximeter not working or not used
Hiring and booking of the vehicle	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unavailability of wheelchair accessible vehicles• Refusal of fare, typically due to the short nature of the intended journey• Poor service from a dispatch operator• Late arrival of pre-booked vehicle
Identification and general appearance of the vehicle	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Location of logos, stickers or advertisements• Content of logos, stickers or advertisements, leaflets or other advertising matter

In 2024, NTA received 1,713 complaints with December representing the highest number, 229, of complaints in a single month. See Table 14 below.

Table 15: Complaints by Category, 2015-2024

Category of Complaint	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Condition, roadworthiness and cleanliness of the vehicle	11	31	42	52	92
Conduct, behaviour and identification of an SPSV driver	204	228	481	333	315
Overcharging and other matters relating to fares	189	215	793	1,033	944
Hiring and booking of the SPSV	61	86	308	362	356
Identification and general appearance of the SPSV	1	0	1	2	6
Total	466	560	1,625	1,782	1,713

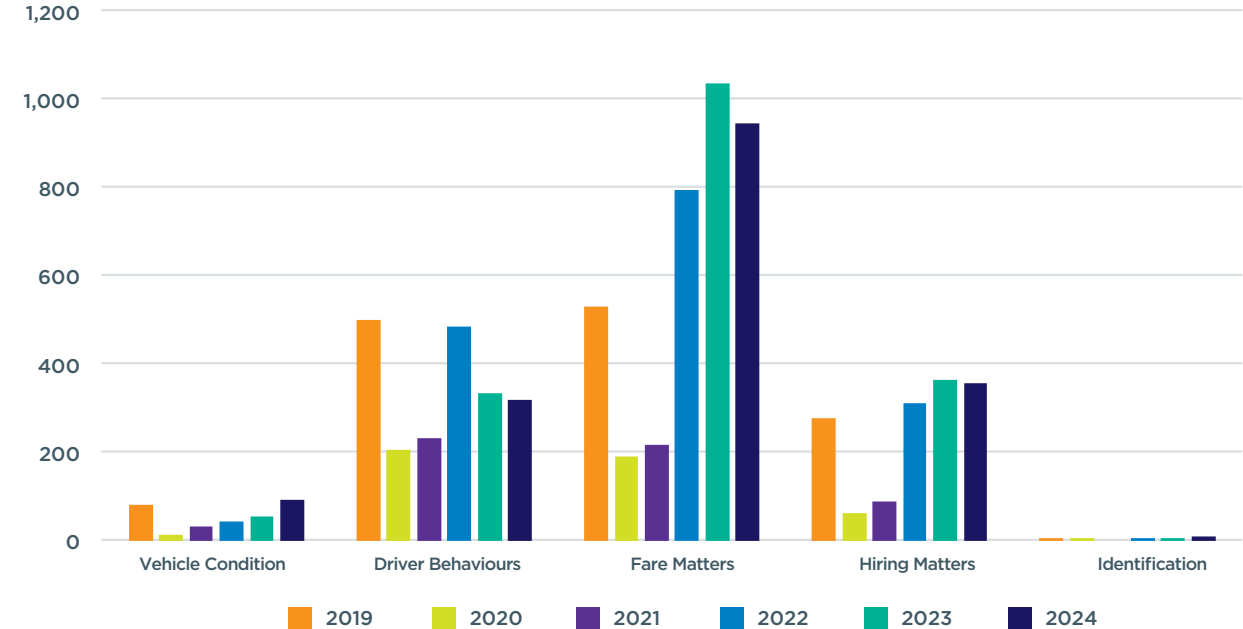
28% of complaints concluded with the SPSV operator being issued with a fine, other sanction or a prosecution. In 70% of cases, no further action was deemed necessary or possible following the initial investigation. The reasons for this included:

1. No evidence of any offence on the part of the operator;
2. Mistake or misunderstanding of the legal requirements on the part of the complainant;
3. The complainant decided not to pursue the complaint on contact by the compliance team;
4. The complainant did not provide their correct contact details and couldn't be reached;
5. Unable to identify operator due to incorrect details or none.

2% of the complaints received in 2024 were referred to other enforcement agencies, following initial investigation including:

- An Garda Síochána
- The Department of Social Protection
- Revenue

Figure 9: Complaints by Category Received, 2019-2024



Appendix A

Description of Offence	Fixed Penalty Amount
Refusal to carry assistance dog or guide dog in a small public service vehicle	€ 250
Failure to comply with the requirements in relation to the calibration of taximeters	€ 250
Failure to have prescribed signage affixed to the front doors of taxi or wheelchair accessible taxi.	€ 250
Refusal by the driver to carry a passenger in a wheelchair.	€ 250
Standing or plying for hire in an area without a licence to stand or ply for hire in that area.	€ 200
Failure to notify details of the small public service vehicle being operated.	€ 200
Failure to display prominently the required valid SPSV Driver Display Card so as to be clearly visible.	€ 200
Failure to carry a functioning cashless payment device.	€ 200
Failure to accept cashless payment.	€ 200
Operating taximeter while taxi is standing for hire or plying for hire.	€ 150
Failure to operate taximeter while taxi is on hire	€ 150
Failure to comply with the requirements in relation to the fitting and operation of a taximeter.	€ 150
Removal, attempted removal, damage or interference with a small public service vehicle tamper-proof disc.	€ 150
Failure to display valid tamper-proof discs.	€ 150
Unreasonable refusal by the driver to carry a passenger.	€ 150
Failure to display the required in-vehicle information.	€ 100
Standing for hire in a taxi otherwise than at an appointed stand.	€ 100
Failure to print and offer a taximeter receipt in the prescribed form to a passenger upon completion of a journey in a taxi.	€ 100
Failure to make available a receipt in the prescribed form to a passenger upon completion of a journey in a hackney or limousine.	€ 100
Failure to comply with taxi roof sign requirements.	€ 100
Applying a booking fee in respect of a taxi which is engaged while applying for hire or standing for hire or without having been booked in advance by the consumer.	€ 100
Failure to comply with the vehicle standards and requirements applicable to the relevant licence category.	€ 100
Standing or parking at appointed stand while vehicle is not available for hire.	€ 80
Displaying on a hackney or limousine a sign or advertisement other than one approved in writing by the National Transport Authority.	€ 80
Standing with a taxi on part of the public road adjoining or in proximity of an appointed stand when the appointed stand is full.	€ 80
Failure of the driver of a hackney or limousine to carry the required booking record in respect of a hire.	€ 80

When you hire a taxi



No booking fee applies at ranks



**Always get a legal printed
taximeter receipt**



**Journeys under 30km
may not be refused**



**Cashless payments
must be accepted**

**If you wish to give a compliment or make a complaint,
you must provide the roof sign number and visit:**

www.transportforireland.ie

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TFI's Driver Check App helps keep us all safe and sound.



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