

Minutes of the meeting of the Taxi Advisory Committee held on Thursday,

28th January 2016

Attendees:

Mr. Pat Byrne	Chairman
Mr. David McGuinness	TTnH
Mr. Shane Hogan	National Disability Authority
Mr. Gerard Macken	Ordinary Member
Mr. Joe Herron	Taxi Federation
Mr. Michael Kilcoyne	The Consumer Association of Ireland
Mr. Martin Plummer	N.C.D.A.
Mr. Bobby Lynch	Allied Cork Taxi Council
Mr. Al Ryan	Irish Hotels Federation Association
Supt. Cornelius O'Donohue	An Garda Siochana
Mr. Mike Jones	Dublin Chamber

Apologies:

Ms. Mairead Hayes	Ordinary Member
Mr. Stephen Cluskey	Ordinary Member
Mr. Declan Wallace	Dublin City Council

1. Minutes of meeting held on 10th December 2015

The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed by Mr. Martin Plummer and seconded by Mr Gerard Mackin.

Mr. Hugh Creegan and Ms. Wendy Thompson then joined the meeting.

2. Electronic certification of tax clearance for PSV renewal

It was agreed by the committee that the current difficulties have been caused by a technical difficulty (IT issues) on the Revenue side.

The onus is on the driver to demonstrate that they are tax compliant. Drivers need to take a screenshot once they have entered their tax clearance acceptance number and print this off. Gardaí need the paperwork for verification as Revenue's link with the agencies is not working at present. The NTA will give details of how to renew in the newsletter at the end of February.

3. Update on recent consultations

Roof Signs

- **To elicit views on the appetite for introducing a smaller taxi roof sign design, together with introducing restricted availability through authorised suppliers only.**

Wendy Thompson informed the committee that 2,565 submissions had been received.

97.3% did not consider that a new design of taxi roof sign was required

2.7% considered that a new design of taxi roof sign was required

Finance, fuel consumption and size were the core issues cited.

Requirement for Mandatory safety equipment

- **Should there be a requirement for the mandatory provision of certain driver safety equipment in taxis. Potential options include:**

In-vehicle security cameras;

A partition separating the driver front seat area from the remainder of the vehicle;

A locational alert system; or

Other new technology based options

2,649 submissions were received.

97.3% did not consider that introducing a requirement for the mandatory provision of certain driver safety equipment in taxis was required.

2.7% considered that the introduction of a requirement for the mandatory provision of certain driver safety equipment was required

Finance, customer relations privately financed vehicles, monitoring and surveillance were the core issues cited.

A concern was raised that the outcome was based on a vote rather than a consultation. Consumer representative groups were treated as one submission and not the views of many individuals.

Hugh Creegan stated that the consultation was not a popular vote and there was considerable detail behind the figures. The consultation was advertised in national newspapers seeking the public's views. It was agreed the detailed analysis would be circulated.

4. Control and Management of Rickshaws

The committee agreed that rickshaws were causing serious problems in Dublin and Cork. There must be a requirement for them to be licenced.

Dublin City Council is aware of the issues and has said that bye laws are required. They are currently pursuing the matter. The committee requested a full update for the next meeting.

5. Taxi statistics and compliance activity report

There were a total of 27,440 Driver licences in 2015 and 21,146 vehicle licences. The peak year for Driver licences was 2009 with a total of 47,529 licences. The peak year for vehicle licences was 2008 with 27,429 licences

Compliance:

There are on average 4,855 compliance checks per month. A total of 980 full audits per month are carried out resulting in approximately 692 fixed payment notices.

There were a total of 138 unlicensed detections nationwide in 2015 penalties for such an offence can include seizure of the roof sign up to a vehicle being seized. The NTA have been involved in a number of successful multi-agency operations this year.

Customer complaints totalled 928 in 2015 across a range of topics such as driver behaviour, vehicle condition, hiring and fares matters.

In 2015 253 cases were prosecuted by the Authority, compared to previous years 50 – 80 on average. 61% of cases taken in 2015 were for non-payment of a fixed penalty notice

67% of all cases taken were successful

20% of summons drawn did not proceed. Serving of summons in Dublin can be difficult.

6 AOB

The 2016 WAV grant scheme will be launched on 1st April

A concern was raised regarding the NCT and Licence renewal. These are now separate processes which have resulted in delays. The NTA advice is for individuals to book well in advance.

A concern was raised regarding an email issued by Hailo stating that Uber drivers will be permitted to operate the car share app. In response the NTA stated that no decision has been taken to change the legislation in Ireland at present. The NTA will issue an email to all drivers confirming this.

The next meeting of the committee will take place on Thursday 25th February at 10.30 in the NTA offices

