

SPSV Bulletin 2023

August 2024



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
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	<p>An SPSV that can:</p> <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. <p>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.</p>
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.

Introduction



About this SPSV Bulletin

Welcome to the National Transport Authority (NTA) 2023 SPSV 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 NTA?

The National Transport Authority 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 booking services (app, telephone and walk-in).

What regulations cover the SPSV sector?

The sector is regulated under the following acts and regulation:

- 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 Regulations Acts)
- The Taxi Regulation (Small Public Service Vehicle) Regulations 2015
- The Small Public Service Vehicle (Emergency Measure Covid-19) (Expired Licence) Regulations 2021

- The Taxi Regulation (Maximum Fares Order) 2022
- The Small Public Service Vehicle (Cashless Payment Facility) Regulations 2022
- The Small Public Service Vehicle (Fixed Payment Offences and Driver Licence Period) Regulations 2022
- The Small Public Service Vehicle (Contingency Measure - Vehicle Supply) (Maximum Permissible Age) Regulations 2022

Public safety and consumer protection are at the centre of all SPSV regulation. This includes, but is not limited to, providing a public register of all licenced SPSV vehicles and drivers. This allows members of the public to use the register itself, or the free Driver Check App in real-time, to check the details of the vehicle and/or driver to ensure they are fully licenced in accordance with legal requirements and have registered with NTA that they are providing services. Here, “fully licenced” means that

- the vehicle has been inspected, on at least one occasion in the previous year, by
 - the National Car Testing Service for roadworthiness (NCT), as well as
 - NTA for specific suitability to provide taxi, hackney or limousine passenger services, including NTA seeing the relevant SPSV insurance documentation; and
- The taxi, hackney or limousine driver has been background checked and criminally vetted by An Garda Síochána during the last five years at a minimum.

To operate SPSV services, two licences are required:

1. The vehicle must be licensed as a taxi, hackney or limousine having passed the required safety, insurance and suitability inspections; and
2. The driver must have a valid standard driving licence along with a special An Garda Síochána issued SPSV driver licence on foot of a vetting procedure to ensure the driver’s suitability to provide public transport services.

What is NTA’s role in the SPSV Industry?

The legal function of NTA is to regulate the SPSV industry. NTA is 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. These licences are issued for a period of up to one year.

NTA, also, supports the preparatory phase before a person is entitled to apply for a SPSV driver licence from An Garda Síochána which is the licensing authority for the SPSV drivers themselves. NTA provides an information centre and website and manages each SPSV Driver Entry Test. This is an end-to-end process, including a booking facility, test facilities, providing pass certificates and processing the SPSV driver licence application payment for each successful test candidate so that s/he can commence that application directly with An Garda Síochána. NTA also manages SPSV driver licence renewal payments from operators, permitting them to request renewal of their driver licence from An Garda Síochána. Once An Garda Síochána approves a renewal, NTA updates the public register so that the public can check the licence details of drivers and vehicles and issues secure public identification cards containing the driver’s photograph for display on the dashboard of each vehicle, together with the driver’s small smart card licence.

NTA is, also, responsible for:

- associated licensing, inspection and enforcement activities, including imposing fines and taking court prosecutions against non-compliant operators under the Taxi Regulation Acts; and
- reviewing and setting the national Maximum Taxi Fare.

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 has sole responsibility for vetting potential (and renewing) drivers to assess their suitability to provide individual transport services to the public. An SPSV driver licence is issued for a period of up to five years, with a further suitability assessment carried out at each licence renewal application.

Engagement with industry and stakeholders

Throughout 2023, NTA:

- engaged with the industry individually by telephone, email, letter, industry newsletters, at the roadside, at inspection centres, through specific market research and surveys, and through its website, providing advice and assistance on all aspects of compliant transport service provision. Further details of this are provided in section 5 of this report;
- attended the monthly Advisory Committee on SPSVs meetings providing licensing and compliance statistics and other data, as invited;
- completed a taxi user survey with 1,005 consumers in May; and
- replied to 138 individual queries from TDs, Senators, and Councillors, together with answering 62 parliamentary queries from the Dáil and the Seanad and responding to 17 Freedom of Information, four Office of the Ombudsman and two Data Subject Access requests.

2023 Key Updates

Following a slow recovery when the Covid travel and gathering restrictions which had decimated the taxi, hackney and limousine industry were lifted, 2023 saw consistent growth in vehicle and driver licence numbers.

- 896 new taxi, hackney and limousine licences were granted by NTA.
- 52% of those new vehicle licences were wheelchair accessible. The WAV23 Grant Scheme supported the addition of 309 new wheelchair accessible vehicle (WAV) licences to the fleet and 102 existing WAV were upgraded. A further 160 new WAV licences were added to the fleet without grant support.
- NTA has committed to increasing WAV penetration by 25% from 31 December 2021 by the end of 2025. As international supply restrictions on both WAV parts and vehicles eased, the strong growth in 2023 means that NTA is on track to meet this target.
- The eSPSV23 Grant Scheme was similarly successful with 655 grants being issued to enhance the sustainability of the SPSV fleet. This is the second highest number of grants issued in the six years of NTA's administration of the Department of Transport Scheme. Over 10% of the fleet was battery or plug in electric fuelled in 2023, with a further 21% being petrol hybrid vehicles.
- The Local Hackney Pilot 2023 launched, with €6,000 grant aid on offer to support local hackney services in 21 rural locations nationwide. Applications were received for 15 of the 21 locations, with two applicants completing the process and becoming Local Area Hackney operators under the Pilot in 2023.
- 2023 also saw record levels of interest in becoming an SPSV driver, with 7,298 SPSV Driver Entry Tests completed. That was over 30% above the previous highest number of 5,510 in 2019 (pre-Covid).
- Interest in becoming an SPSV driver is also now demonstrably increasing amongst those in their twenties and thirties. In 2014, 111 candidates under 40 years old were successful in passing the test, whereas in 2023, this number increased to 991.
- 2023 also saw the highest number of new driver licences being granted by An Garda Síochána in ten years, at 1,991, reestablishing the upward trend commenced in 2017 after a constant decline since 2008. In fact, SPSV driver numbers in Dublin, Kerry and Limerick exceeded pre-Covid levels at the end of 2023.

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Overall SPSV Fleet



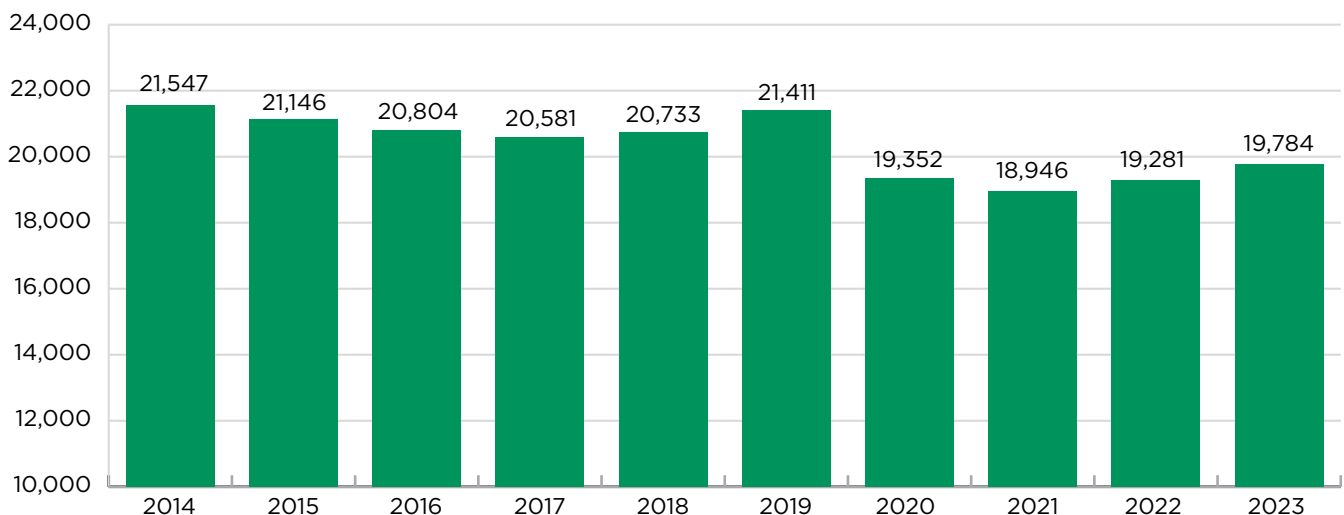
Small Public Service Vehicle Licences

At the end of 2023, there were 19,784 taxi, hackney and limousine licences in the fleet. This represented a 2.6% increase in fleet numbers compared to 2022. Figure 1 illustrates the changes in SPSV licence numbers from 2014 to 2023, with the impact of Covid-19 apparent from 2020.

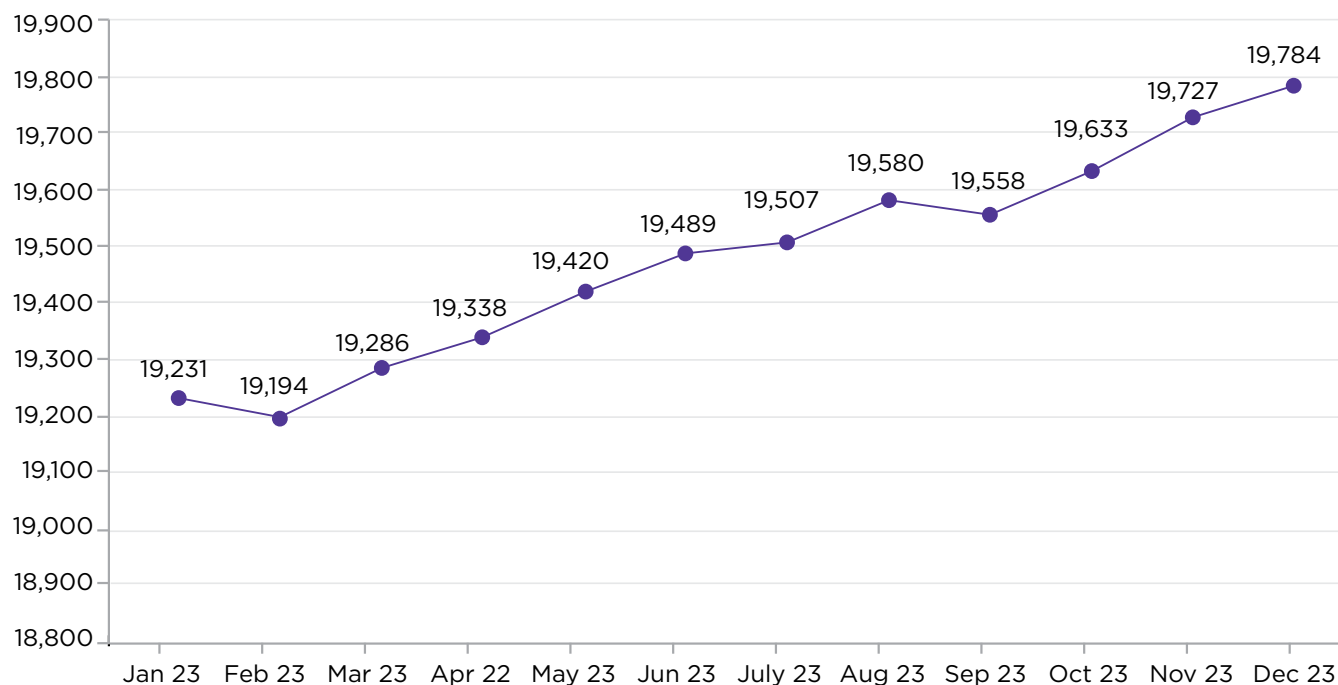
Broadly speaking, all SPSV licences exist in one of three states:

- **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 and 2.
- **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. See Table 1.
- **Abandoned:** 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. See Table 2.

Figure 1: Active Small Public Service Vehicle Licences by Year, 2014 – 2023



SPSV fleet numbers increased throughout 2023 at a steady pace, with nearly all months showing an aggregate increase on the previous month, as demonstrated in Figure 2, despite the level of licences abandoned or let go inactive.

Figure 2: Active Small Public Service Vehicle Licences by Month, 2023

2023 saw a decrease in the number of SPSV licences entering inactive status.

Table 1: Inactive SPSV Vehicle Licences, 2022 - 2023

SPSV Licence type	State	31 Dec-22	31 Dec-23	Difference
Vehicle	Inactive	2,149	1,515	↓30%

2023 saw a decrease in the number of SPSV licences being abandoned.

Table 2: Abandoned SPSV Licences, 2022 - 2023

SPSV Licence type	State	31 Dec-22	31 Dec-23	Difference
Vehicle	Timed out	1,299	1,190	↓8%

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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).

Since June 2010, it has not been possible to apply for a new taxi or a hackney licence unless the vehicle was suitable to carry one person seated in a wheelchair and at least one other person (Taxi Regulation Act 2003 (Grant of Taxi Licences) (Amendment) Regulations 2010).

Figure 3 and Table 3 below reflect the number of new SPSV licences issued from 2014 to 2023. Following from the commencement of the sector recovery post Covid-19, 2023 saw an 83% increase new licences issued compared to 2022. This brings new licences issued close to 2018 figures when the first NTA SPSV industry recruitment campaign took place, despite the significant Covid dip. Further increases following the 2022 industry campaign are expected.

Figure 3: New SPSV Licences Issued by Year, 2014 – 2023

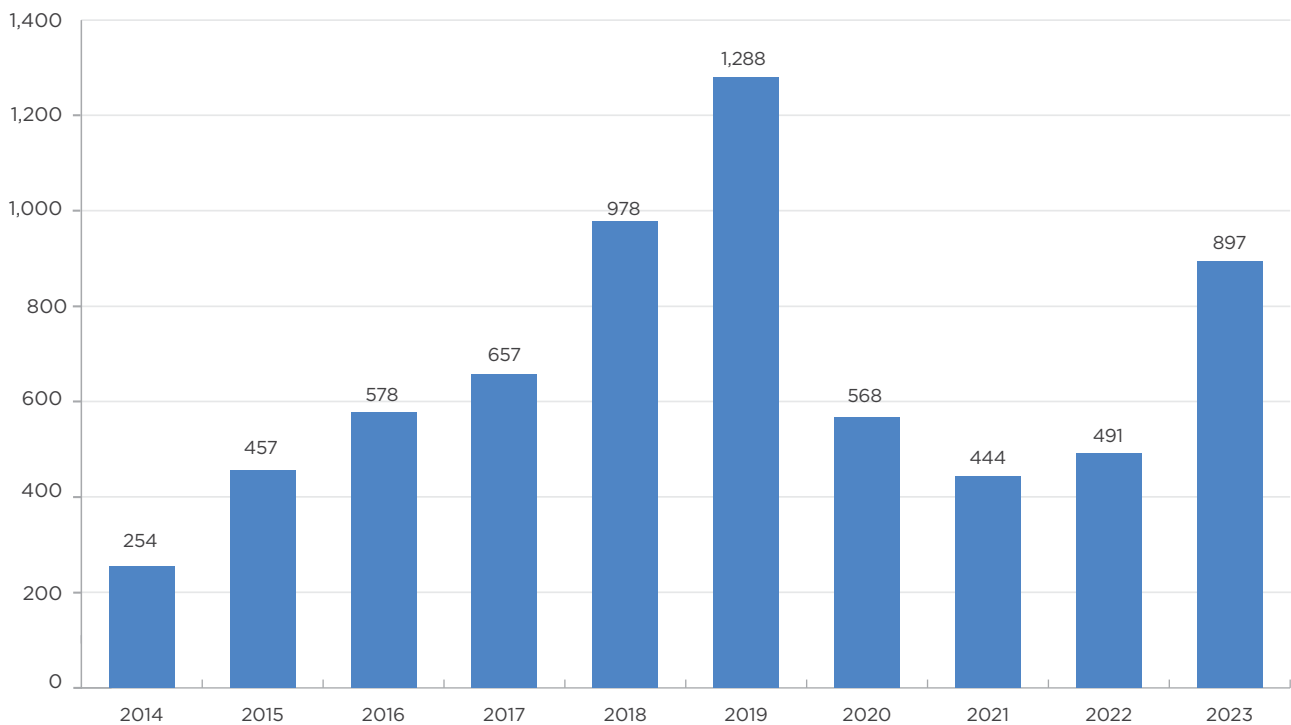


Table 3: New Vehicle Licences Issued by Year and Category, 2014 - 2023

New Vehicle Licences Issued							
Year	Taxi	Hackney	Limousine	Wheelchair Accessible Taxi	Wheelchair Accessible Hackney	Local Area Hackney	Total
2014	0	0	190	52	5	7	254
2015	0	0	269	157	18	13	457
2016	0	0	293	261	22	2	578
2017	0	0	290	345	21	1	657
2018	0	0	236	713	25	4	978
2019	0	0	309	944	28	8	1,289
2020	0	0	146	404	12	6	568
2021	0	0	122	292	27	3	444
2022	0	0	231	231	21	8	491
2023	0	0	427	438	23	9	897

Table 4: New Vehicle Licences Issued by Month, 2019 - 2023

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2019	30	35	83	111	133	132	96	116	120	117	274	42
2020	21	53	81	0	0	49	108	73	76	45	38	24
2021	14	20	14	46	50	45	31	55	50	31	62	26
2022	12	36	33	47	42	39	40	53	49	34	61	45
2023	26	35	99	79	77	87	104	72	60	86	87	85

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SPSV Fleet Profile

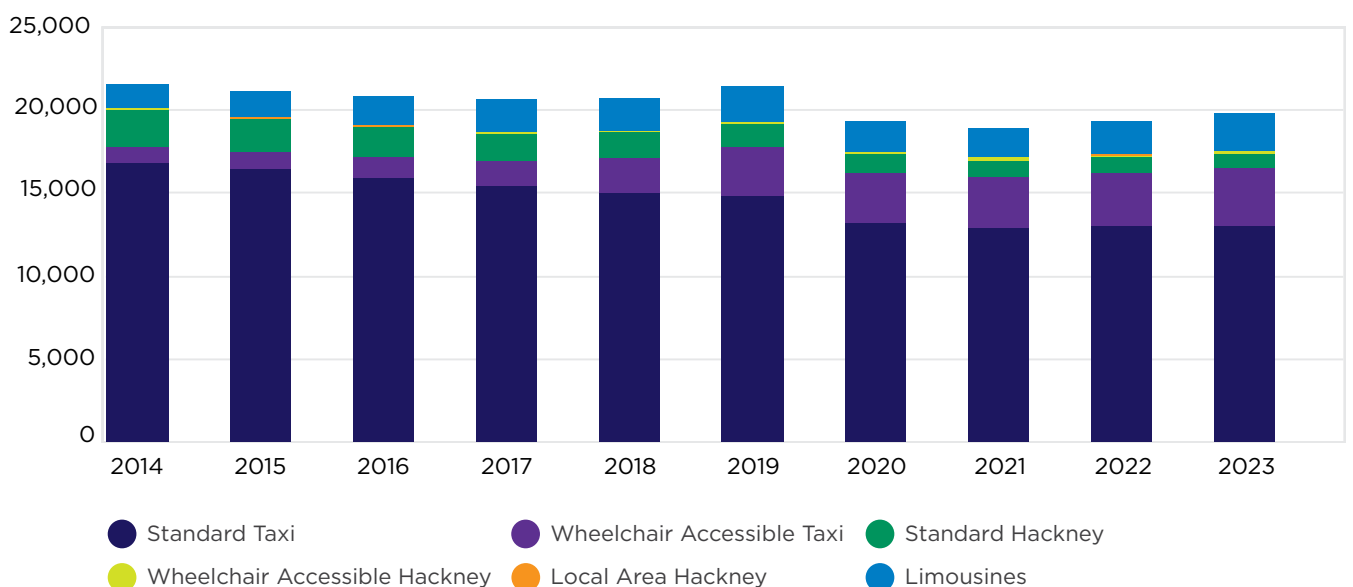


Table 5 and Figure 4 provide a breakdown of the overall makeup of the SPSV fleet from 2014 to 2023.

Table 5: SPSV Fleet by Vehicle Category by Year, 2014 - 2023

	Standard Taxi	Wheelchair Accessible Taxi (WAT)	Standard Hackney	Wheelchair Accessible Hackney (WAH)	Local Area Hackney (LAH)	Limousines
2014	16,899	889	2,281	34	7	1,437
2015	16,460	969	2,081	48	17	1,571
2016	15,961	1,185	1,838	69	10	1,741
2017	15,490	1,471	1,631	84	11	1,894
2018	15,064	2,115	1,477	105	13	1,959
2019	14,863	2,951	1,349	119	19	2,110
2020	13,255	3,015	1,115	118	21	1,828
2021	12,861	3,118	1,025	132	21	1,789
2022	13,014	3,206	949	141	23	1,948
2023	13,028	3,506	861	155	26	2,208

Figure 4: SPSV Fleet by Vehicle Category, 2014 to 2023



In June 2014, wheelchair accessible vehicle (WAV) numbers were at a low of 850 in a fleet of 21,604 SPSVs (4%). New regulations were introduced which reduced the legal size specification for WAVs to enable SPSV operators to provide wheelchair accessible services in smaller vehicles (5-6 passenger seater vehicles, to accommodate one passenger using a wheelchair with just one other passenger, rather than the previous much larger and more expensive 8 passenger seater vehicles). In July of the same year, a user friendly Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle Grant Scheme (WAV14) was launched to assist potential licence holders to purchase a WAV.

The WAV Grant Scheme, which has run each year since 2014, assisted in funding 4,066 new or replacement/upgraded vehicles to year-end 2023. The WAV14 - WAV22 Grant Schemes offered financial aid of up to €7,500 for the purchase or conversion of a new or replacement WAV nationwide. In 2023, NTA increased the maximum grant level from €7,500 to €17,500 per additional vehicle licensed, as the cost of WAVs increased significantly.

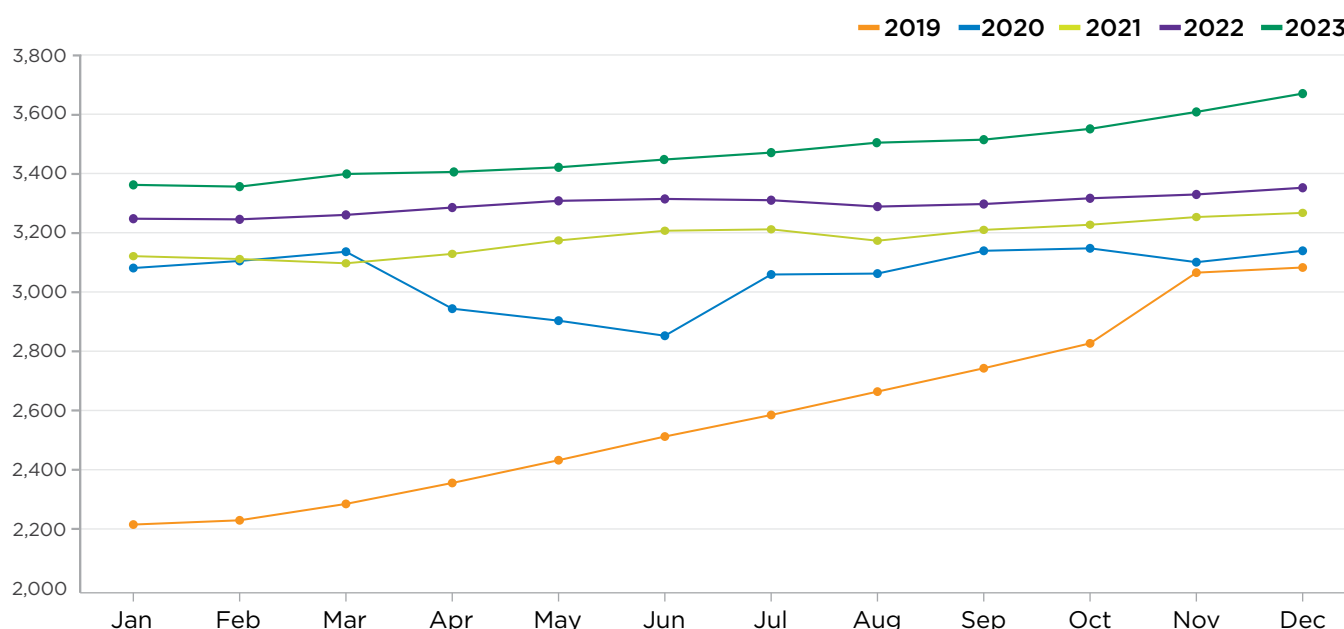
The 2023 WAV scheme opened on 1 January 2023 and 411 grants were paid. Each grant either brought a new vehicle into the fleet (309) or enabled the replacement of an older licenced vehicle (102). 2023 subsequently represented the highest level of overall WAV Grant Scheme support provided to the sector. Table 6 below represents the grants issued each year from 2014 to 2023.

Table 6: Grant Assisted Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles, 2014 - 2023

	Grants	Capital	New WAV to fleet	Replacement of WAV within fleet
2014	128	€819,000	92	36
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

2023 saw the highest number of WAVs active in the fleet each month when compared to the last 5 years, as illustrated in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5: Wheelchair Accessible Licences by Month, 2019 - 2023



At end 2023, WAVs comprised 19% of the total SPSV fleet and 21% of the taxi and hackney fleet. This is high compared to other similarly regulated countries, i.e., those countries where WAV service provision is mandated through the taxi and hackney fleet, rather than only by discrete health or public authority paratransit, contracted or ambulance services. It should be noted that all taxis in Ireland are required to be of a size and specification that they can carry a folded wheelchair in the boot. WAVs are required where passengers travel seated in a wheelchair.

NTA has committed to increasing WAV penetration by 25% from 31 December 2021 (3,250) by 31 December 2025 under the National Sustainable Mobility Policy 2022 - 2025. After a low increase in new WAV licences in 2023, resulting from international limitations on parts and vehicles, 2023 saw strong growth in WAV numbers. NTA is currently on track to meet this target.

In the continued efforts of NTA to improve accessibility for passengers travelling in a wheelchair, NTA's WAV service improvement programme includes, at a high level:

- a prohibition on granting new vehicle licences for taxis or hackneys which are not wheelchair accessible since 2010;
- specific priority at law for passengers travelling in wheelchairs;
- much reduced WAV licence application and renewal fees;
- mandatory and free disability awareness training provision for all WAV grant recipients;
- greatly enhanced WAV grant levels for 2023 (up to €17,500 per vehicle or €42,500 if the WAV model is electric);
- provision of the WAV Register, available on the Transport for Ireland (TFI) website, which shows the contact details for all WAV licence holders by county with their contact details for direct bookings, with a link directly to the NTA Complaints Page for users who experience poor service;
- legislation in 2023 to increase the fine for an unreasonable refusal to provide services to a person with a wheelchair to the maximum permitted under legislation, €250 per offence;
- NTA compliance and enforcement team members with WAV specific experience to conduct investigations and a strong NTA appetite to fine and prosecute non-compliant operators;
- dedicated accessibility group representatives on the Advisory Committee for SPSVs and NTA's Transport Users Advisory Group (TUAG); and
- consistent messaging for industry members on their duties and responsibilities towards passengers with a disability through NTA newsletters and website updates.

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 2023 once again, having originally launched in 2018 by the Department of Transport and administered by NTA. 2023 saw €15 million in funding committed to this scheme by Minister for Transport, Eamon Ryan.

The eSPSV 2023 Grant Scheme proved popular with 653 grant applications receiving funding as outlined in Table 7 below. NTA received 1,874 applications which had contact addresses in 25 counties; 1,148 had contact addresses in Dublin. Only 14 applications were rejected under the terms and conditions of the Scheme, with 37 applications withdrawn by the applicant. The remaining 1,170 applicants chose not to progress their initial application for reasons unknown. Such a high number could indicate that many applications were speculative.

Table 7: Overview of eSPSV Grant Scheme per Year, 2018 – 2023

	Grants	Grants - Finance	New eSPSV	New eSPSV to Fleet - Finance	Replacement eSPSV	Replacement eSPSV to Fleet - 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

Prior to the 2018 scheme, there were five sustainable vehicles (battery electric powered) in the national SPSV fleet. As of 31 December 2023, there were 1,981 fully electric vehicles in the fleet, compared with 1,369 in 2022. This represents a 45% increase. There are also 55 Plug-In Hybrid Electric models and 4,225 petrol hybrid (conventional petrol engine with an internal supporting electric motor) vehicles operating.

Table 8: Low Emission Vehicle (LEV) Numbers as of December 31, 2023

LEV by Fuel Type:	Total Number in fleet:
Petrol/Electric Hybrid	4,225
Electric	1,981
Plug-In Hybrid	55

Vehicle Age Profile

In accordance with Regulation 31 of the Taxi Regulation (Small Public Service Vehicle) Regulations 2015, the “maximum permissible age” of a vehicle means the age of a vehicle beyond which that vehicle may not be licensed as a taxi or hackney. Once a vehicle¹ reaches its maximum permissible age, the licence holder may not apply to NTA for the renewal of a licence on that vehicle. A younger replacement vehicle must be operated, and both a roadworthiness test (NCT) and an SPSV initial suitability test completed.

Under those regulations, for safety, emissions and quality, taxis and hackneys must be less than 10 years old to operate. Wheelchair accessible taxis and hackneys can operate up to 15 years old. No maximum age is set for limousines due to the vintage nature of many of these vehicles, and the reduced mileage they do, due to their ceremonial and prestigious roles. Some limited exceptions, specifically concerning vehicles associated with SPSV licences before the introduction of the Taxi Regulation (Small Public Service Vehicles) Regulations 2015, apply to these timeframes. All vehicles must pass both a roadworthiness and a suitability inspection at least once a year, with vehicles over 10 years being required to pass both every six months.

The financial and supply difficulties of replacing taxis and hackneys which had reached their maximum permissible age was considered by NTA throughout Covid-19. Following public consultations, NTA enacted two temporary, emergency measures in 2020 and another in 2021, as the emergency unexpectedly persisted, which meant that no SPSV would be forced out of the fleet solely due to reaching its maximum permissible age from 13 March 2020 to the end of 2022. From 01 January 2023, all legal maximum permissible age limits were to return to 10/15 years.

However, 2022 brought new and unexpected challenges. End of life taxis and hackneys that were required to be replaced in 2022, were unable to do so due to the severe reduction in global new and used vehicle supply. Following public consultation, NTA enacted the temporary Small Public Service Vehicle (Contingency Measure –

¹ Taxis and Hackneys only. Limousines do not have a maximum age limit

Vehicle Supply) (Maximum Permissible Age) Regulations in November 2022. These Regulations ensured no taxi or hackney associated with a vehicle licence on 18 November 2022 would be legally obligated to exit the SPSV fleet solely because of its age until 2025 at the earliest. The Small Public Service Vehicle (Contingency Measure – Vehicle Supply) (Maximum Permissible Age) Regulations 2022 are a temporary, exceptional, contingency provision in direct response to vehicle supply shortages in the interests of supporting an industry to continue to provide a public transport service. The standard maximum permissible ages, in accordance with Regulation 31 of the Taxi Regulation (Small Public Service Vehicle) Regulations 2015, will be phased back from 2025 and the standard maximum permissible age rules will fully return at the end of 2027.

Table 9: Extensions applied through the Small Public Service Vehicle (Contingency Measure – Vehicle Supply) (Maximum Permissible Age) Regulations 2022

Original Final Operation Date	Extension (Years)	Contingency Final Operation Date
2020*	5	2025
2021	4	2025
2022	4	2026
2023	3	2026
2024	3	2027

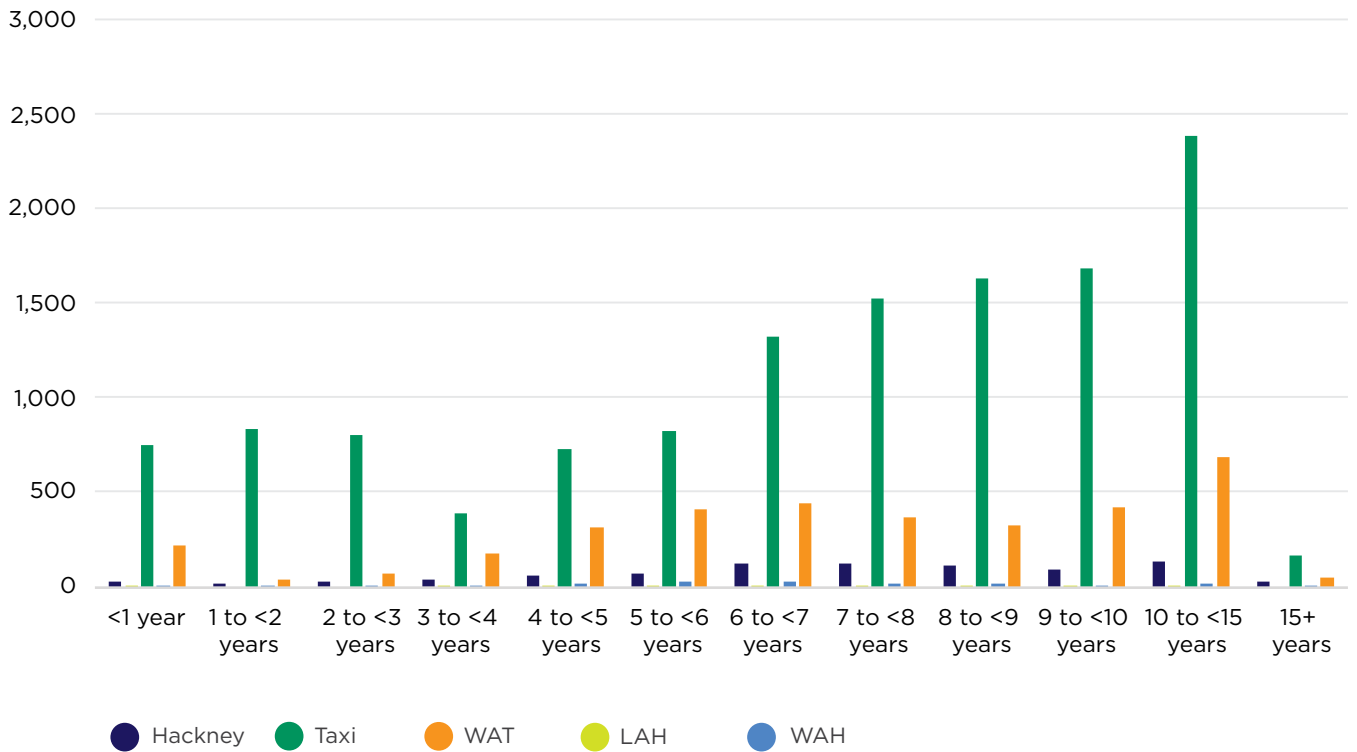
*From 13 March 2020 when the Government commenced the “Stay at Home” policy and travel restrictions.

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Table 10: Age Profile of taxis and hackneys at 31 December 2023

Vehicle Age	Taxi	WAT	Hackney	WAH	LAH	Total
< 1 year of age	752	215	30	7	1	1,005
1 to < 2 years of age	836	43	22	2	0	903
2 to < 3 years of age	802	70	31	10	0	913
3 to < 4 years of age	387	172	36	9	1	605
4 to < 5 years of age	723	312	57	18	1	1,111
5 to < 6 years of age	821	406	74	29	3	1,333
6 to < 7 years of age	1,319	440	118	27	5	1,909
7 to < 8 years of age	1,522	370	126	19	3	2,040
8 to < 9 years of age	1,627	323	109	13	8	2,080
9 to < 10 years of age	1,682	423	96	5	3	2,209
10 to < 15 years of age	2,388	681	134	15	1	3,219
15+ years of age	169	51	28	1	0	249
Total	13,028	3,506	861	155	26	17,576

Figure 6: Age Profile of the Taxi and Hackney Vehicles at 31 December 2023



Under the 2015 SPSV Regulations, taxis and hackneys must be less than 10 years old to operate. The above graph shows that 2,719 taxis and hackneys (15%) were benefitting from exceptional temporary regulations at end 2023.

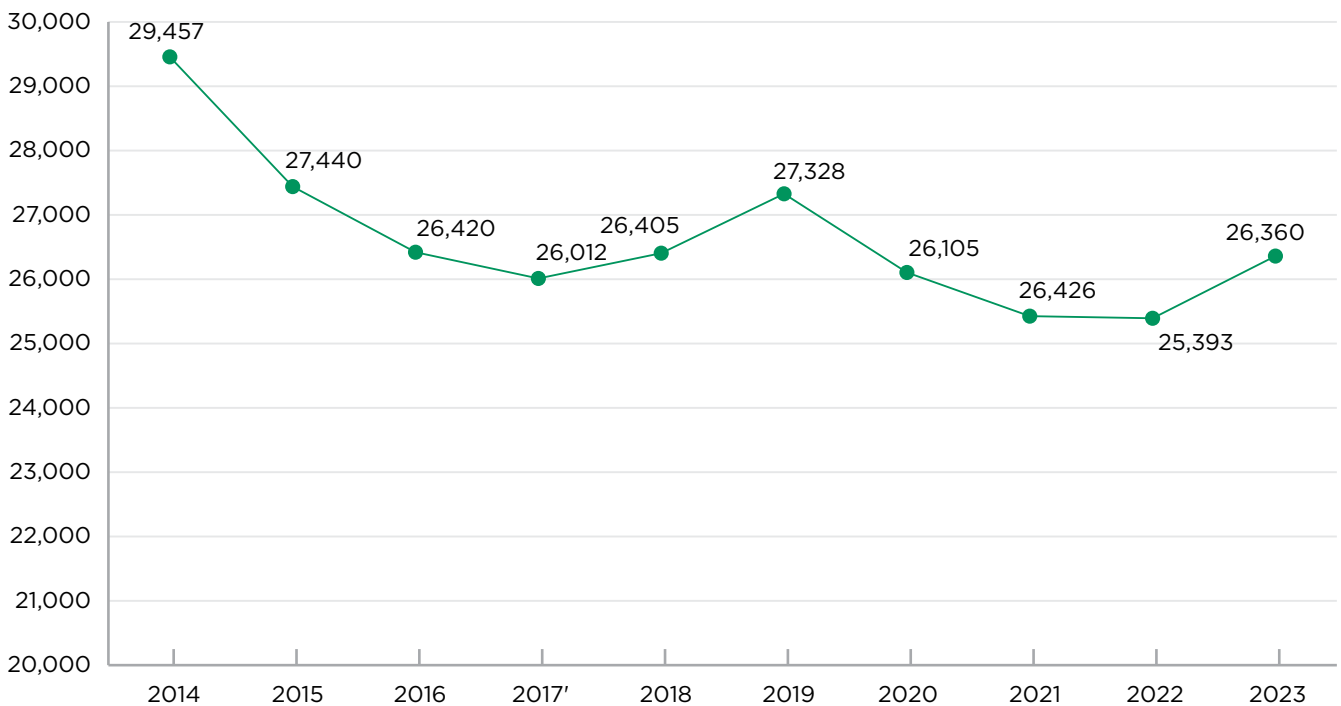
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SPSV Driver Licences



At the end of 2023, the number of SPSV Drivers was 26,360. This represents a 97% return to pre-Covid (March 2020) levels during which 96% of drivers surveyed had stopped operating completely. The population in Ireland has risen by over 6% since 2019 (CSO). Positively, the figures for Dublin, Kerry and Limerick exceeded pre Covid-19 levels by the end of 2023. The majority of drivers (58%) are entitled to stand and ply for hire (can be hailed on street or pick up at a taxi rank) in Dublin.

Figure 7: Active SPSV Driver Licences by Year, 2014 - 2023



SPSV Driver Entry Test

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.

The test has two modules, the Industry Knowledge module and the Area Knowledge module; and comprises 90 randomly generated questions from a large bank of multiple-choice questions. The Industry Knowledge module makes up 54 questions in the test and the content relates to regulations and good practice in the industry, the driver's rights along with the rights of the customer. The Official Manual for Operating in the SPSV Industry, available on the NTA website to download free of charge in print or audio form, is the only required study material for this module. The Area Knowledge module makes up 36 questions in the test and is for the county chosen by the candidate. To pick up passengers on the street drivers must have passed the Area Knowledge Test for that county. It is possible to be licensed for several counties. All information regarding the area(s) a driver is licensed to operate is available for passengers to check via the Transport for Ireland Driver Check App.

Since its introduction in July 2009, 21,039 candidates have attempted the SPSV Driver Entry Test and 76% of candidates have been successful. The average test attempts for those who passed is 2.8, which is reducing year on year, with 38% doing so on the first attempt and 25% on the second in 2023.

To promote working within the SPSV sector, NTA completed an SPSV driver recruitment campaign across radio, press and social media in July 2022. An increased interest in becoming a driver followed throughout 2022 and 2023, as shown below.

2023 saw a 55% increase on the number of individual candidates sitting the SPSV Driver Entry Tests compared to 2019.

Table 11: SPSV Driver Entry Tests Delivered, 2021 - 2022

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2019	434	407	411	403	424	338	421	399	388	462	450	376	4,913
2020	429	420	222	Test centres closed due to Covid-19									1,071
2021	Test centres closed due to Covid-19				183	461	340	292	354	311	336	272	2,549
2022	285	288	357	350	396	470	460	488	535	448	507	413	4,997
2023	618	586	670	545	642	572	512	782	670	669	667	365	7,298

2023 saw 1,991 new SPSV driver licences granted by An Garda Síochána, the licensing authority for SPSV drivers, an average of 166 per month and the highest number issued in the last 10 years. This is a 19% increase compared to 2019, pre-Covid. Of those new licences issued, 64% (1,274) relate to new applications to drive in Dublin.

Figure 8: New SPSV Driver Licences Issued, 2014 - 2023

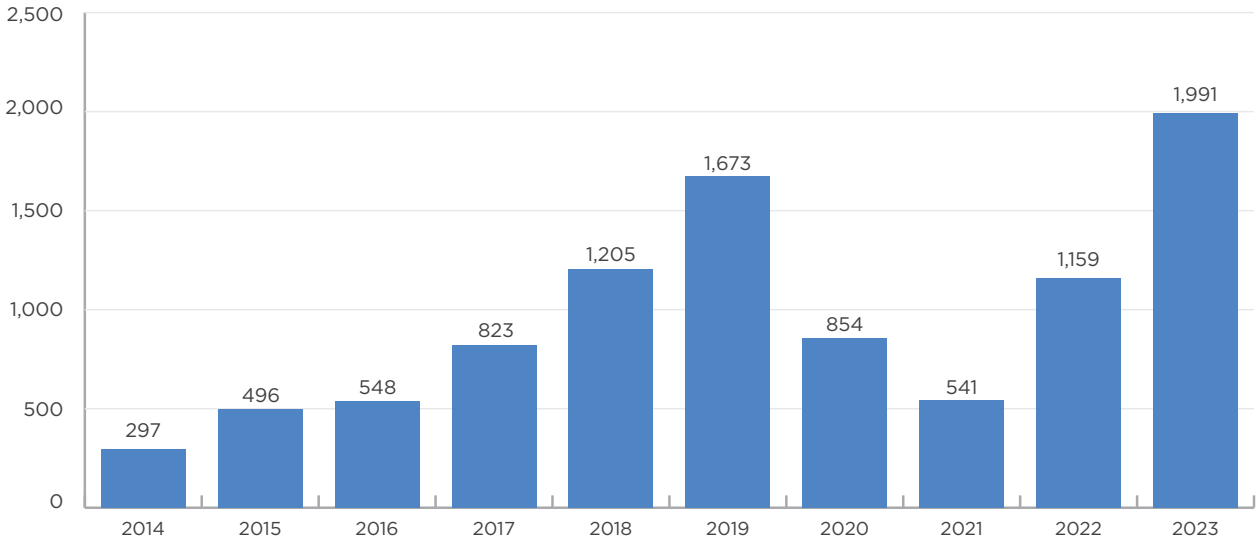
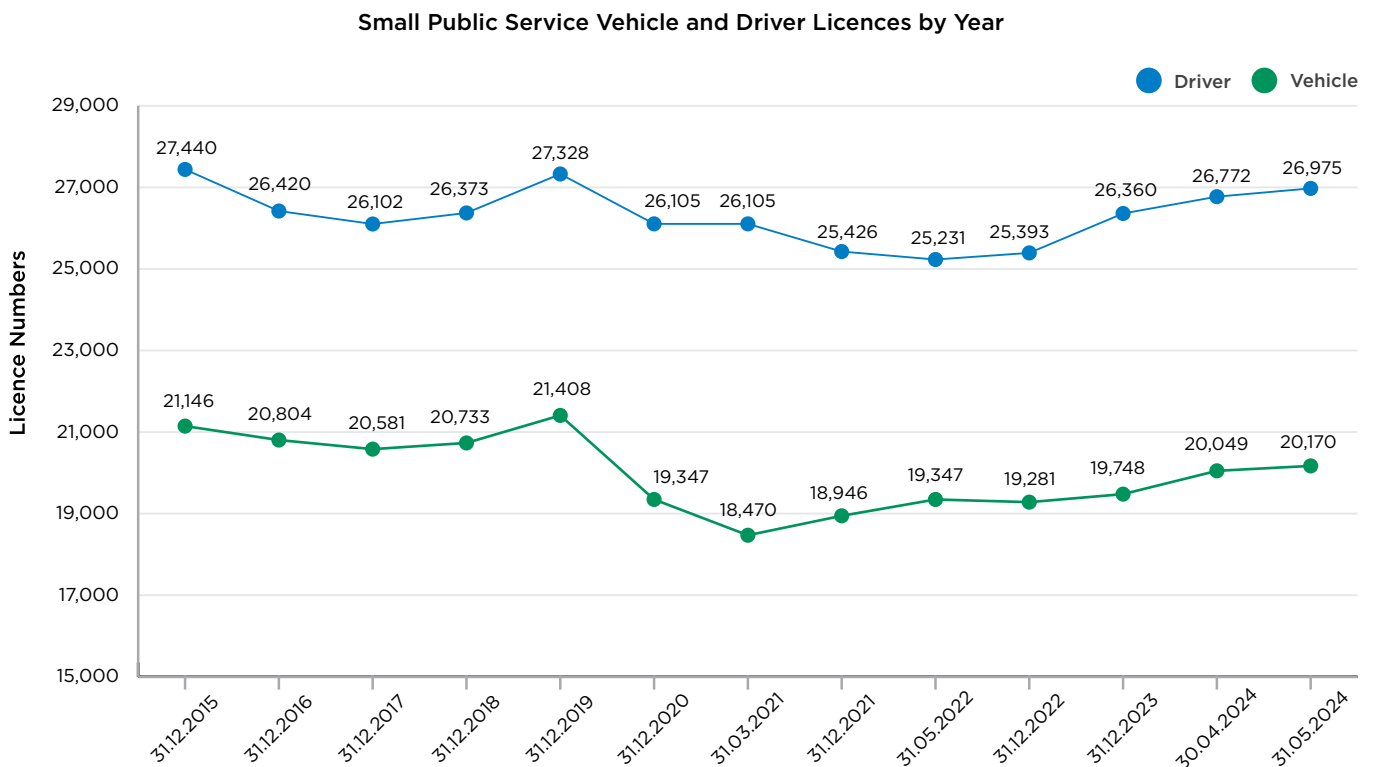


Figure 9 below outlines the overall trends for SPSV vehicle licences and SPSV driver licences from 2014 to 2023. The lowest points in the graphs indicate the point following the impact of Covid-19 when the licence numbers were impacted greatest by existing licence holders leaving the sector. The vehicle licence drop of 13% best illustrates the impact, as SPSV vehicle licences require renewal every year. SPSV driver licences require renewal every 5 years and so less drivers were subject to renewal requirements during the pandemic. SPSVs can also be driven by more than one SPSV driver, so a larger number of SPSV drivers to vehicles is always expected. These factors contributed to a lower impact being evident on SPSV driver licence numbers. Notwithstanding the sudden drop in SPSV vehicle licence numbers, confidence in the recovery of the sector can be seen to have commenced by the end of March 2021, despite the restrictions that remained in place.

Figure 9: Comparison of SPSV Driver and Vehicle Licences 2014-2023

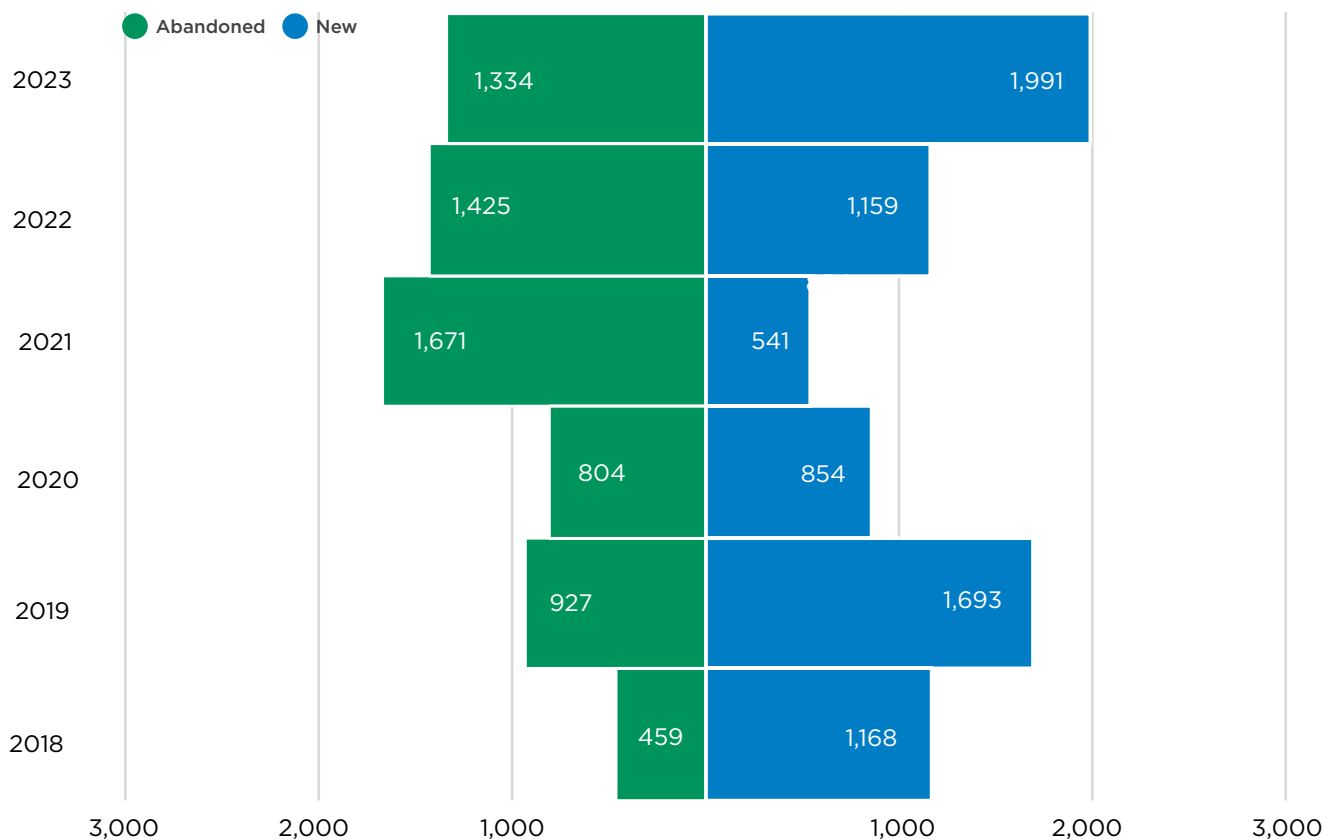


Abandoned Licences – Surrendered or Timed Out

The number of SPSV driver licences actively surrendered by the licence holder doubled in 2023 at 132 compared to 25 in 2022. 1,283 SPSV drivers allowed their licences to expire permanently in 2023 compared to 1,400 in 2022, 1,651 in 2021 and 641 in 2020.

Year	Timed out	Surrendered	Total Abandoned
2020	641	163	804
2021	1,651	20	1,671
2022	1,400	25	1,425
2023	1,283	132	1,415

SPSV Driver Licences: Abandoned Vs New



2023 saw a healthy decrease in the number of SPSV Driver Licences being abandoned with a significant increase in new licences.

Table 12: Timed Out SPSV Driver Licences, 2022 – 2023

SPSV Licence type	State	31-Dec-22	31-Dec-23	Difference
Driver	Timed Out	1,400	1,283	↓ 8%

Inactive Licences (Renewal Pending)

A driver licence can remain inactive (expired but pending renewal) for 12 months after the licence expiry date. When in this status the licence holder cannot operate but can apply to renew for another 5-year period at any point during this time. Table 13 shows that the overall number of inactive licences is decreasing when comparing 2023 to 2022.

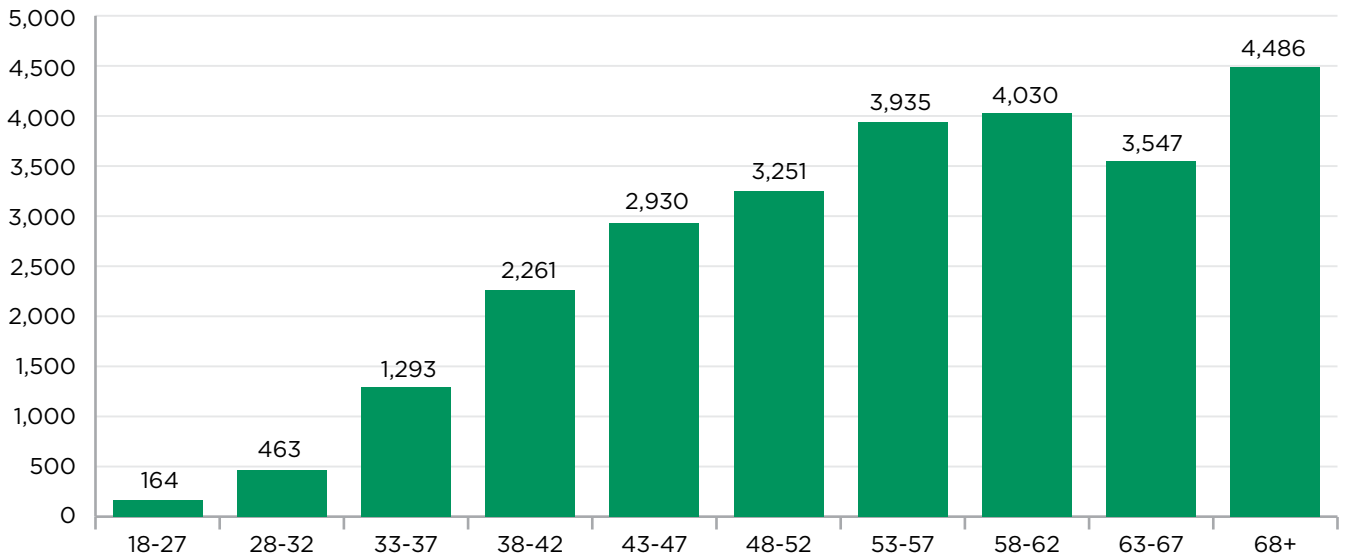
Table 13: Inactive SPSV Driver Licences, 2022 – 2023

SPSV Licence type	State	31-Dec-22	31-Dec-23	Difference
Driver	Inactive	1,333	1,102	↓17%

Driver Age Profile

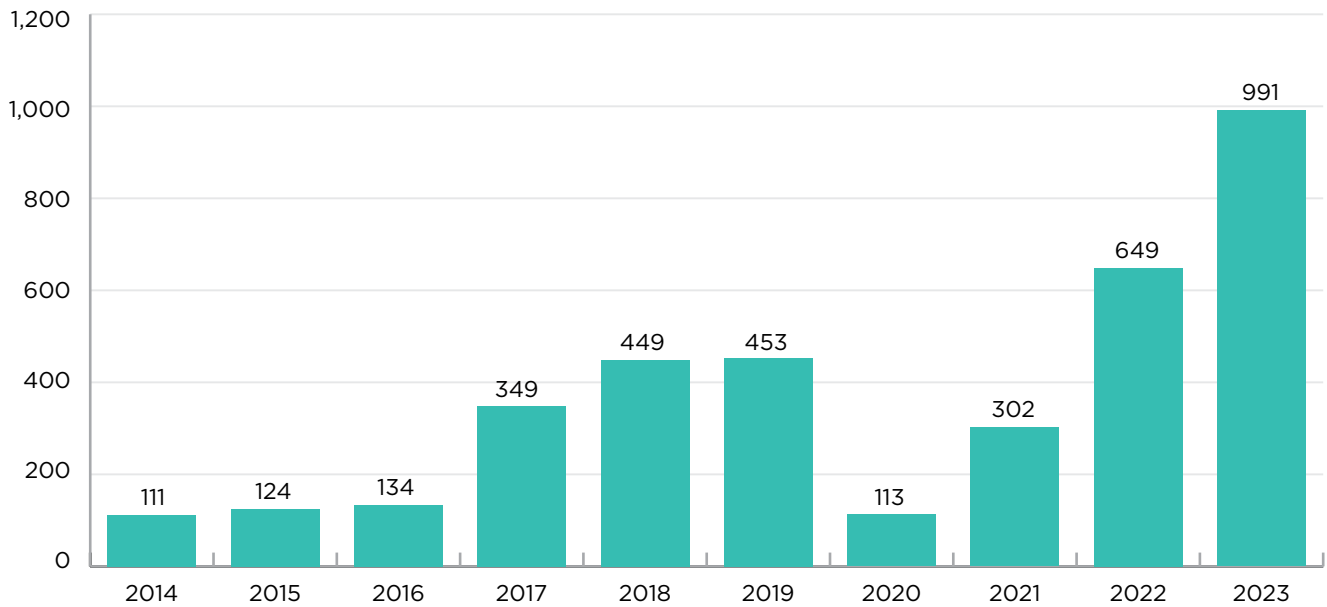
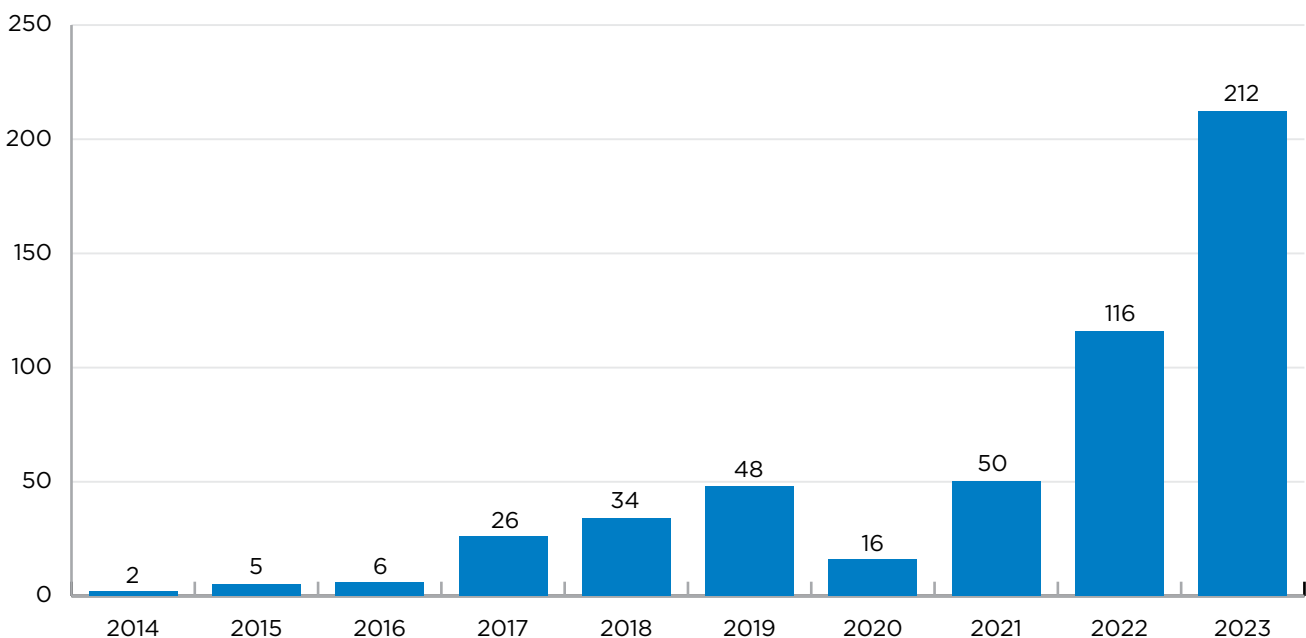
Figure 10 provides the breakdown of the SPSV driver age profile for Ireland at 31 December 2023.

Figure 10: SPSV Driver Age Profile as at 31 December 2023



The majority of drivers are above 50 years old. This continues to indicate that turning to SPSV driving is popular as a career change or second/later career. However, in recent years, there has been noticeable growth in younger candidates for the SPSV Driver Entry Test, signifying a growing interest in the sector by those 39 years of age and under.

In the last decade, the number of candidates who passed the SPSV Entry Test under 40 years of age has doubled. Figure 11 illustrates the number of successful SPSV Driver Entry Test candidates aged 39 and under in 2023. Figure 12 further illustrates the number of successful SPSV Driver Entry Test candidates aged 30 and under in 2023.

Figure 11: Successful SPSV Driver Entry Test Candidates aged 39 and under**Figure 12: Successful SPSV Driver Entry Test Candidates aged 30 or under**

Driver Linking and the Driver Check App

The Driver Check App is a public safety app and is free to download to any smartphone. It allows passengers to receive real-time licensing information, including a photograph of the driver they are about to travel with. If a passenger notices that a driver or vehicle are not showing as registered with NTA when operating, they can report it to NTA through the App. The NTA compliance team then investigates all such reports and takes action as appropriate. The passenger can also use the App to share the licence details (without the driver's photograph) with a friend via email or SMS in real-time.

When an SPSV driver starts operating their vehicle, they are legally required to notify NTA. This is to ensure that their driver and vehicle details as they appear on the online public SPSV Register are on the Driver Check App for the public to view. This is commonly known as 'driver linking' within the industry. A link can be created for as long or as short a period required by the driver. Any link created or broken will update the public SPSV Register in real-time. Therefore, a consumer can see those details immediately via the Driver Check App.

2023 saw a 48% increase in first time app downloads when compared to 2022 following regular public awareness campaigns. Overall active users at year end 2023 also increased by 10% on 2022.

5

SPSV Contact Management



SPSV industry members and consumers can contact NTA in a number of ways including an SPSV Information Line, online forms, email and post. In 2023, NTA issued 870,059 emails, letters and SMS to SPSV industry members regarding licensing notifications (e.g. renewal reminders, booking confirmations), SPSV alerts (e.g. confirmation of a driver to vehicle link being created/broken) and industry news and updates (e.g. the quarterly newsletter, notifications regarding NTA grant schemes, the law and public consultations). This is in line with volumes issued in 2022.

Table 14: Breakdown of Industry Communications Issued, 2023

	Industry Updates	SPSV+ Alerts	Licensing Notifications	Total
Email	98,130	241,016	80,554	419,700
Post	0	355	16,988	17,343
SMS	411,592	21,424	0	433,016
Total	509,722	262,795	97,542	870,059

More than 125,000 telephone calls were received by the SPSV Information Line in 2023. Table 15 and Figure 13 below detail a breakdown of all calls (industry and consumer) for 2014 to 2023.

Table 15: SPSV Information Line Calls Handled by Year, 2014 – 2023

Year	Total calls
2014	132,561
2015	117,401
2016	102,677
2017	105,168
2018	120,071
2019	121,132
2020	93,843
2021	97,103
2022	107,833
2023	125,062

Figure 13: SPSV Information Line Calls by Year, 2014 - 2023

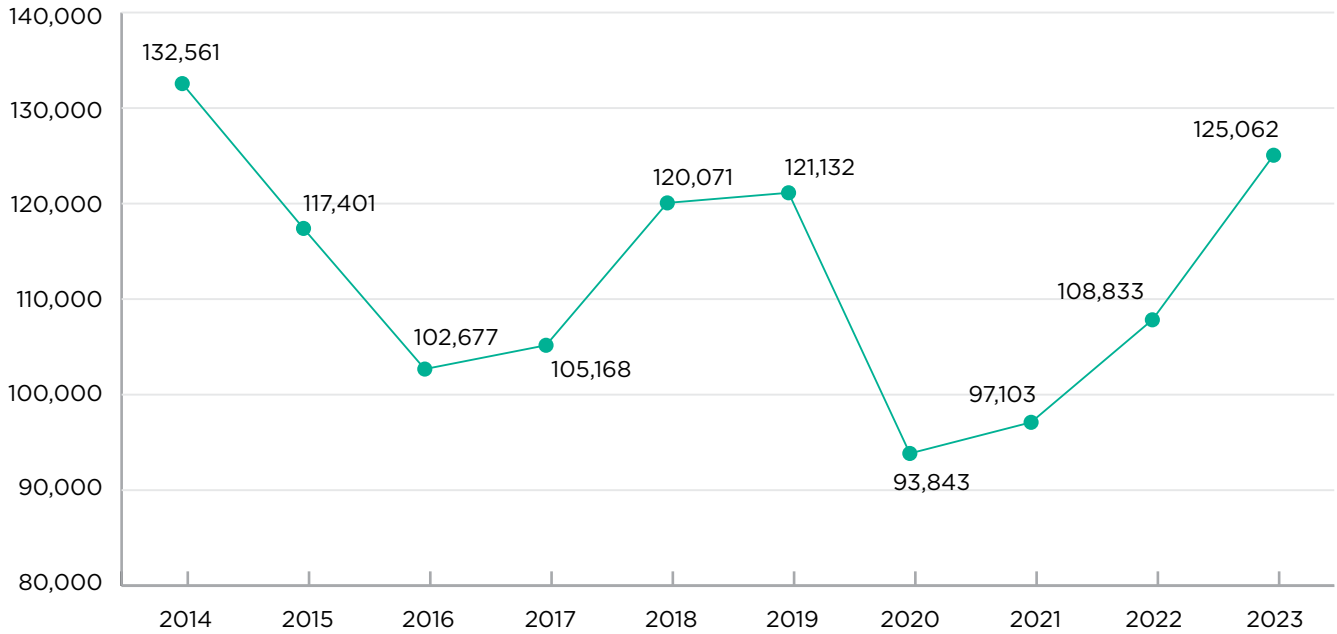
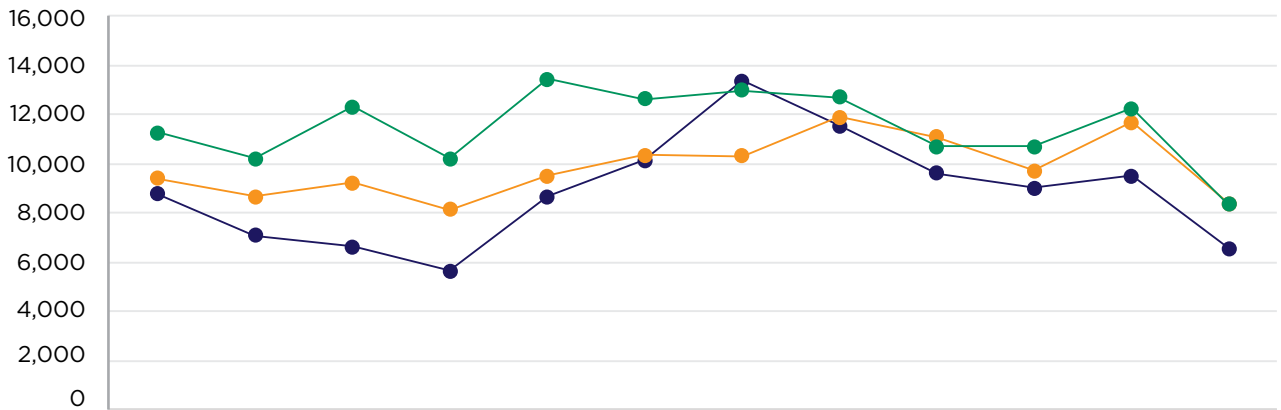


Figure 14 below details the overall call trends in 2023 compared to 2021/2 which includes all calls handled by the SPSV Information Line. Calls increased by 16% compared to 2022, showing an upward trend over both years.

Figure 14: SPSV Information Line Calls Handled Comparison, 2021 - 2023



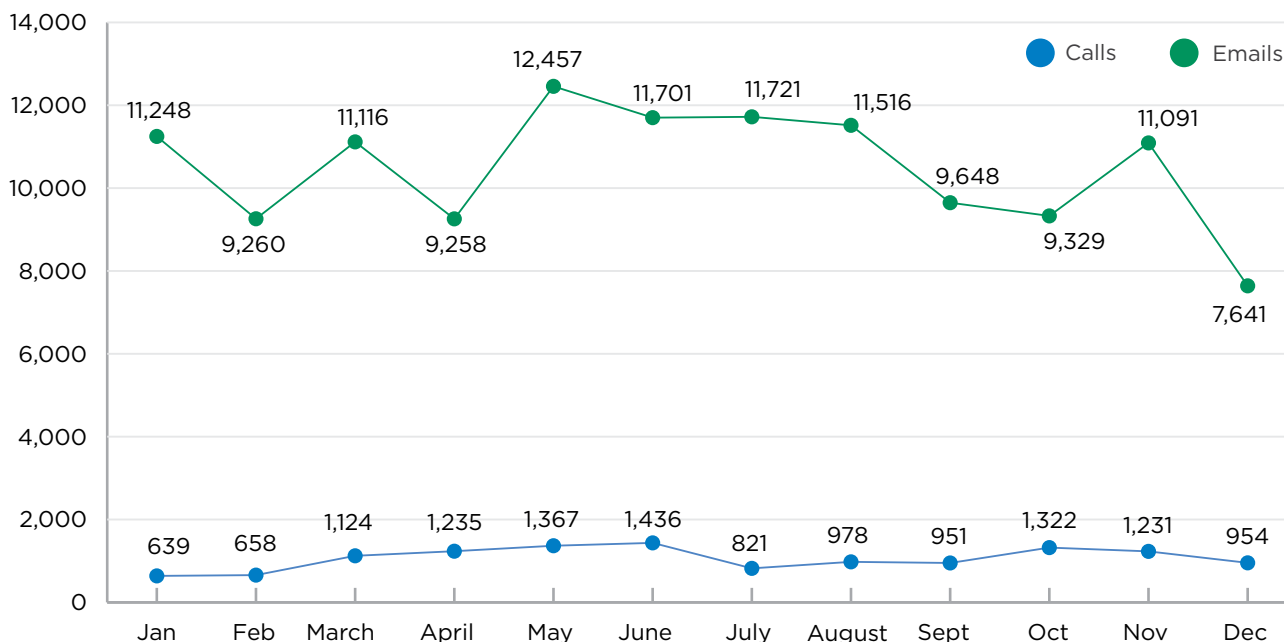
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2021	8,752	7,090	6,608	5,560	8,639	10,136	13,355	11,547	9,616	8,994	9,495	6,650
2022	9,393	8,663	9,230	8,123	9,946	10,338	10,311	11,870	11,076	9,698	11,659	8,370
2023	11,248	10,181	12,293	10,183	13,416	12,607	12,960	12,670	10,677	10,680	12,237	8,332

The top three industry call queries were:

1. Vehicle licence renewal bookings
2. Driver to vehicle link requests
3. SPSV Driver Entry Test bookings

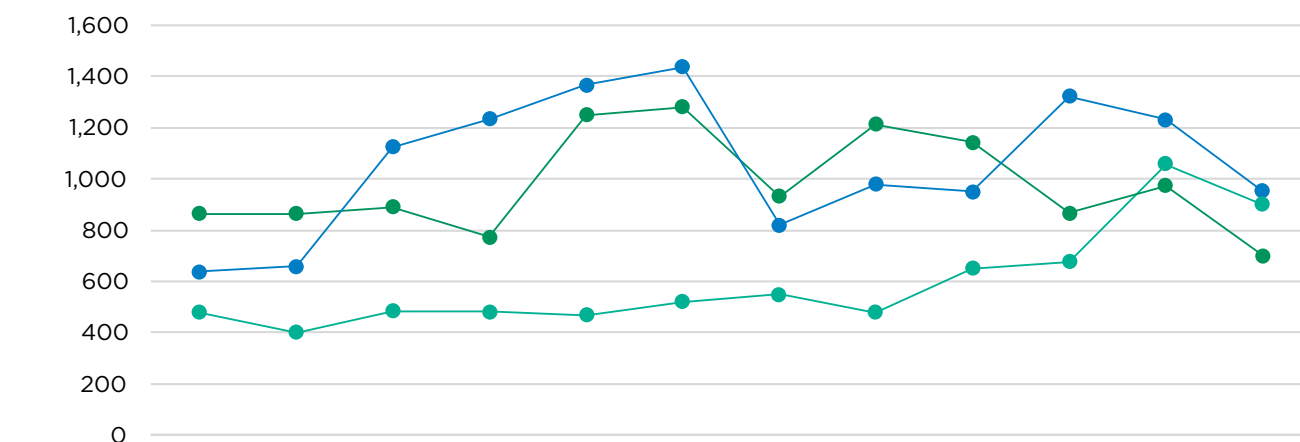
Figure 15 below illustrates the industry communication patterns throughout 2023.

Figure 15: Communications Received by Phone and Email per Month, 2023



2023 emails received increased by 8% compared to 2022. The comparison below shows a steady increase in emails received; with the total 2023 figures 78% higher than 2021.

Figure 16: Comparison of Volume of Emails Received, 2021 -2023



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2021	480	400	484	482	470	521	552	476	650	677	1,058	902
2022	865	864	891	774	1,251	1,280	932	1,213	1,142	868	973	701
2023	639	658	1,124	1,235	1,367	1,436	821	978	951	1,322	1,231	954

6

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. During 2023, NTA's compliance team was made up of an administration team, together with 25 authorised persons (compliance officers). All members of An Garda Síochána are also authorised persons under the Taxi Regulation Acts and can investigate and prosecute all SPSV offences.

How NTA checked that SPSV operators are complying

NTA compliance activities included:

- On street vehicle and driver licensing checks
- Face-to-face roadside vehicle and driver audits
- Covert and overt detection operations
- Investigating consumer complaints
- 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

179,582 on street vehicle and driver licensing checks were carried out during 2023. Operators were checked multiple times throughout the year. 18,325 of these checks were individual vehicles, i.e. 93% of all SPSV licences were seen operating and had their licences and their real-time operating notifications to NTA (linking for the public Driver Check App) checked. Drivers are unaware of these contactless checks while they are providing passenger services.

Compliance Officers also carried out 16,998 face-to-face audits at the roadside, a 34% increase on 2022 and a return to pre-Covid volumes.

As a result of these compliance activities, 707 Fixed Payment Notices (on the spot fines) were issued in 2023 for offences cited in Schedule 8 to the Taxi Regulation (Small Public Service Vehicles) Regulations 2015 as amended. This is an 11% increase on 2022.

Table 16: Fixed Payment Offences

Description of Offence	Fixed Penalty Amount
Refusal to carry assistance dog or guide dog in a small public service	€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.	€150
Standing for hire in a taxi otherwise than at an appointed stand.	€150
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

Table 17: SPSV Checks, Audits and Fixed Payment Notices 2014 – 2023

Year	Contactless checks	Roadside audits	Fixed Payment Notices
2014	N/A	42,722	1,369
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

The top four Fixed Payment Notice offences made up 48% of fines issued in 2023.

1. Fines issued relating to “vehicle standards” made up 13% 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 “fitting and operation of a taximeter” made up 12% of all fines.
3. Fines issued relating to a driver’s “unreasonable refusal to carry a passenger” made up 12% of all fines.
4. Fines issued relating to a driver’s “failure to print and offer a taxi receipt” made up 11% of all fines.

79% of Fixed Payment Notices issued were paid promptly in 2023, with the remainder being referred for court prosecution in the District Courts nationwide.

Criminal Prosecutions

NTA took 222 prosecutions in 2023 of which nearly two-thirds (61%) related to the operation of an unlicensed service. In 2023, 19% of prosecutions taken were for breaches of legislation where the operator declined to pay the fine issued. NTA was successful in 86% of cases presented.

Not all cases when successfully prosecuted result in a criminal conviction being recorded by the Court. The defendant may not receive a formal criminal conviction due to the impact of such a conviction on their life. The Court may decide that the appropriate penalty is a fine or a charitable donation, together with paying all or some of the NTA prosecution costs as well as their own.

In 2023, the Nation’s courts were still affected by the backlogs caused to hearing trials by the Covid pandemic.

Table 18: Prosecutions by Offence Category, 2019 – 2023

Offences		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
		Cases	Cases	Cases	Cases	Cases
Operation of unlicensed SPSV	No driver and no vehicle licence	36	15	14	54	46
	No driver licence	28	18	33	12	40
	No vehicle licence	51	41	13	14	58
	Allow an unlicensed driver/vehicle to operate/failure to keep accurate records	7	16	15	20	38
Overcharging (<i>addition of unwarranted but legal 'extras' to a fare for example adding a booking fee to a fare that was not pre-booked</i>)		3	3	2	2	1
Vehicle condition		2	0	1	0	0
Duties of drivers of SPSVs		0	8	1	1	1
Illegal display of taxi sign/Failure to remove signage from unlicensed vehicle		27	16	16	22	33
Advertising an unlicensed SPSV service		2	3	5	2	2
Exceeding the maximum number of passengers		4	1	0	3	0
Knowingly giving false or misleading information to an authorised person		0	3	5	3	0
Hackney/limousine standing for hire		4	3	0	7	0
		164	127	105	140	219
Additional Prosecutions						
Fixed Payment Notice Offences Prosecutions (see Table 19 below)		93	34	48	6	32
Total		257	161	153	146	251

Table 19: Fixed Payment Notice Offences Prosecutions by Category, 2019 – 2023

Fixed Payment Notice Offence Prosecutions	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
• Failure to comply with vehicle standards	15	2	9	1	5
• Removal of tamper-proof disc from SPSV	0	1	0	0	0
• Failure to display in-vehicle information	0	3	1	0	0
• Failure to comply with taxi roof sign requirements	12	4	8	1	1
• Failure to notify details of SPSV being operated	31	12	12	0	11
• Failure to comply with taximeter requirements	12	1	5	2	10
• Failure to print and offer a receipt	3	1	2	1	0
• Unreasonable refusal to carry a passenger	2	4	2	0	1
• Standing for hire in a taxi otherwise than at an appointed stand	8	6	2	1	1
• Displaying unauthorised sign on a hackney or limousine	0	0	1	0	0
• Standing at appointed stand while vehicle is not available for hire	1	0	1	0	0
• Failure to display driver ID	2	0	2	0	2
• Failure to operate taximeter while taxi is on hire	1	0	1	0	1
• Operating taximeter while taxi is standing for hire or plying for hire	3	0	2	0	0
• Failure of the driver of a hackney/limousine to carry booking record	2	0	0	0	0
• Standing or plying for hire in an area without a licence for that area	1	0	0	0	0
Total	93	34	48	6	32

7 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. Compliments received are highlighted in the quarterly SPSV Industry Updates to licence holders as well as directly to the individuals.

NTA receive complaints and information through reports from:

- Members of the public
- Licenced operators
- An Garda Síochána
- NTA Compliance Officers
- Other agencies

Compliments, complaints and nonregistration reports relating to the SPSV industry are accepted:

- through the TFI online feedback form <https://www.transportforireland.ie/support/taxi-compliments-complaints>;
- through the TFI WAV Register <https://www.transportforireland.ie/getting-around/by-taxi/wheelchair-accessible-vehicle-wav-register>;
- directly via Contact Us <https://contactus.nationaltransport.ie>;
- through the TFI Driver Check App <https://www.transportforireland.ie/getting-around/by-taxi/driver-check-app>;
- by e-mail compliance@nationaltransport.ie;
- by post; SGS Ireland Ltd, Cityeast, Ballybrit Business Park, Galway, H91 D5CN
- on the Industry Information Line; 0818 640000

Every submission received is examined by a member of the Compliance Team to assess if there is evidence to suggest that an offence may have been committed. A complaint must relate to an alleged breach of SPSV legislation, see Table 20 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 20: 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 2023, NTA received the highest number of complaints received in a single year at 1,782 with December representing the highest number of complaints ever received in a single month. See Tables 21 and 22 below.

This is mainly due to the introduction of a new legal requirement in September 2022 for taxi drivers to provide cashless payment facilities to passengers. This resulted in an increase in the number of complaints received for “overcharging and other matters relating to fares”. This complaint category made up 49% of all complaints received in 2023. See Table 22: Complaints by Category.

78% of complaints received in 2023 fell under two categories, “overcharging and other matters relating to fares” and “conduct, behaviour and identification of an SPSV driver”.

Table 21: Complaints by Month 2023

Category	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Condition, roadworthiness and cleanliness of the vehicle	4	5	2	3	4	4	1	6	3	4	8	8	52
Conduct, behaviour and identification of an SPSV driver	21	28	19	28	34	27	19	23	29	40	28	37	333
Overcharging and other matters relating to fares	79	74	101	77	90	106	86	72	95	81	73	99	1,033
Hiring and booking of the SPSV	24	17	15	24	19	36	41	17	22	38	36	71	362
Identification and general appearance of the SPSV	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
Total	128	124	137	132	147	173	147	119	149	163	145	216	1,782

Table 22: Complaints by Category, 2014 – 2023

Category of Complaint	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Condition, roadworthiness and cleanliness of the vehicle	47	53	34	72	50	78	11	31	42	52
Conduct, behaviour and identification of an SPSV driver	465	491	444	445	529	496	204	228	481	333
Overcharging and other matters relating to fares	327	297	348	380	470	529	189	215	793	1,033
Hiring and booking of the SPSV	113	83	172	248	261	277	61	86	308	362
Identification and general appearance of the SPSV	0	0	0	1	2	3	1	0	1	2
Total	952	924	998	1,146	1,312	1,383	466	560	1,625	1,782

34% of complaints concluded with the SPSV operator being issued with a fine, other sanction or a summons for prosecution.

In 53% 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.

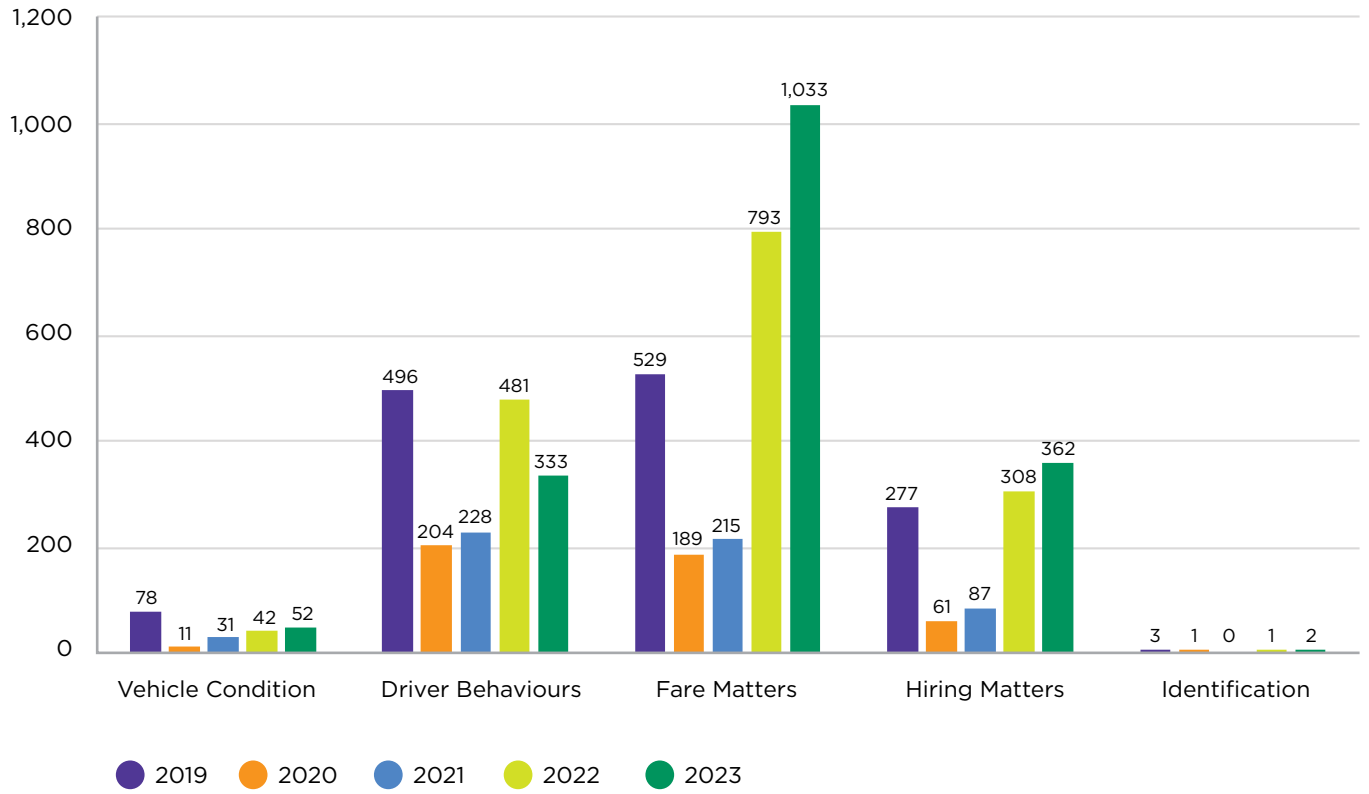
4% of the complaints received in 2023 were referred to other enforcement agencies, following initial investigation including:

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

In another 5% of cases, the complainant was referred to their booking service provider to attempt to resolve the matter through their provider's complaints processes. This often followed a misunderstanding of the legal remit of NTA as opposed to a private contract matter between the booking service provider and the complainant, such as the application of "technology fees" or other service charges.

The remainder of complaints were referred to other agencies or were under ongoing investigation.

Figure 17: Complaints by Category Received, 2019 - 2023



8

Advisory Committee Small Public Service Vehicles



What is the function of the Advisory Committee?

The Advisory Committee on Small Public Service Vehicles is an independent body established and operated under the provisions of Section 72 of the Taxi Regulation Act 2013. In general, its primary function is to provide advice to NTA and to the Minister for Transport, as appropriate, in relation to issues relevant to small public service vehicles and their drivers.

Specifically, section 73 of the Taxi Regulation Act 2013 provides that the Advisory Committee may provide advice from time to time:

- to NTA in relation to:
 - proposals for licensing or regulations or codes of practice related to small public service vehicles and their drivers, submitted by the Authority to the Advisory Committee on Small Public Service Vehicles for advice;
 - matters relating to the delivery of quality services by small public service vehicles and their drivers;
 - the preparation and review of the draft integrated implementation plan under section 13 of the Dublin Transport Authority Act 2008 in relation to issues relevant to the small public service vehicle industry; and
 - any other matters related to the functions of the Authority or which the Authority submits to the Advisory Committee on Small Public Service Vehicles for advice, other than matters related to decisions of the Authority in individual cases,
- and to the Minister in relation to—
 - policy relevant to small public service vehicles and their drivers;
 - proposals for legislation or regulations in relation to the small public service vehicle industry submitted by the Minister to the Advisory Committee on Small Public Service Vehicles for advice;
 - the assignment of specific functions relating to small public service vehicles and their drivers to the Authority; and
 - any other matter which, in the opinion of the Advisory Committee on Small Public Service Vehicles, is relevant to the effective performance by the Advisory Committee on Small Public Service Vehicles or by the Authority of its functions or which the Minister submits to the Advisory Committee on Small Public Service Vehicles for advice.

The Taxi Regulation Act 2013 also states that NTA may consult with or seek the advice of the Advisory Committee on any matter relating to small public service vehicles and their drivers or to the effective performance by NTA of its functions. Additionally, it states that the Minister may consult with or seek the advice of the Advisory Committee on any matter arising in relation to his or her functions with respect to small public service vehicles and their drivers.

What is the Advisory Committee?

The Advisory Committee was established in accordance with Part 9 of the Taxi Regulation Acts. The Committee comprises a chairperson and up to 17 ordinary members. Each ordinary member represents prescribed interests, for example:

- Consumers
- SPSV operators
- Persons with disabilities
- Tourism
- Business
- Older persons
- Or, in the opinion of the Minister for Transport, the ordinary member has a special interest or expertise in matters relating to the functions of NTA, the Advisory Committee or related matters.

Only the Minister for Transport can appoint members to the Advisory Committee and a member may serve a three-year term with only one reappointment permitted. The membership of the Advisory Committee on Small Public Service Vehicles during 2023 is outlined below:

Representing	Ordinary Member
Small Public Service Vehicles	Mr. Alan Cooley, Irish Taxi Drivers Federation
Small Public Service Vehicles	Mr. Shajedul Chowdhury, Taxi driver.
Small Public Service Vehicles	Mr. John Murphy, Procabs Galway.
Small Public Service Vehicles	Mr Francis Doheny, Newbridge and District Taxi Association.
Local Authorities	Mr. Brendan O'Brien, Dublin City Council
An Garda Síochána	Superintendent Thomas Murphy, Deputy head of the Garda National Roads Policing Bureau.
Consumers	Mr. James Cawley (resigned July 2023).
Consumers	Ms Michelle Reid.
Persons with Disabilities	Ms. Joan Carthy, Irish Wheelchair Association.
Business	Ms. Ann Campbell, tourism sector.
Older Persons	Ms. Mai Quaid.
Tourism	Mr. Paul Keeley (appointed in January 2023), Fáilte Ireland.
Special interest or expertise	Mr. James O'Brien, Assess Ireland.
Special interest or expertise	Mr. Noel Ebbs (term ended in July 2023), Lynk Taxis.
Special interest or expertise	Ms. Fiona Brady, FREENOW Ireland.
Special interest or expertise	Mr. Paul Gegan, Irish Chauffeur Tourism Association.

The Advisory Committee met on 10 occasions during 2023 with NTA invited to attend and report on each occasion. The Minister for Transport attended on one occasion. NTA and the Minister for Transport consulted the Advisory Committee on ongoing policy and strategy work throughout the year.

All minutes for these meetings are published online at the following link:-

<https://www.nationaltransport.ie/about-us/advisory-committee-on-spsvs/>

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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