

## FAQ Note on Small Public Service Vehicles (SPSV's)

**What is an SPSV?** An SPSV is a 'small public service vehicle' that can carry up to 8 passengers and is used for hire or reward. Examples include; taxis, hackneys, wheelchair accessible taxis and wheelchair accessible hackneys and limousines.

**Do I need a special licence to drive and operate an SPSV?** Yes. Both the vehicle and the driver need a licence. Please contact the [National Transport Authority](#) ("NTA") for more information.

**How are taxis and other SPSVs regulated in Ireland?** Under the [Taxi Regulation Act 2013](#), the National Transport Authority is the regulator of all SPSVs in Ireland.

**Is an NCT required for SPSVs?** Yes. SPSVs under 10 years of age must be tested every year, and those 10 years or older must be tested every 6 months. The NTA cannot grant an SPSV licence without a valid NCT certificate less than 90 days old. A vehicle under 3 months of age that has travelled less than 3,000km does not need an NCT. The frequency of SPSV licensing requires a similar frequency of NCT testing. Please see the NTA [website](#) for more information.

**What is the difference between an NCT and a suitability test for SPSVs?** The NCT is a basic check on the roadworthiness of the vehicle whereas the suitability test examines whether or not the SPSV is suitable to carry passengers. For example, is it clean, is it a suitable size to carry passengers, is all the relevant passenger information displayed etc.

**Are child restraint systems required in Taxis?** No. There is no legal requirement for SPSVs to carry child car seats.

**Are first aid kits required in taxis?** Yes. All SPSVs are required under legislation to carry a number of pieces of safety equipment. For further details on what safety equipment is required please see the SPSV Initial Suitability Inspection Manual on the Forms and Guides page of the NTA website.

**Are dark windows permissible in taxis?** General road traffic law requires that the front windscreen and front door side glass is "clear". For limousines, the remaining glass may be dark. All other SPSV windows next to a passenger must be clear, i.e. allow at least 70% light transmission. See the SPSV Initial Suitability Inspection Manual on the Forms and Guides page of the NTA website for examples of how to check this.

**Safety of wheelchair accessible ramps on taxis.** Wheelchair accessible taxis and wheelchair accessible hackneys are SPSVs that are able to carry a person travelling in his or her wheelchair. Strict standards are in place in relation to the specialist equipment, the structural integrity and the space provided. Prior to licensing, all vehicles must be certified by a qualified Technical Assessor. For more details see the Forms and Guides page of the NTA website.

**Is Advertising in Taxis permissible?** There are restrictions on advertising permitted on all types of SPSV licence, see the SPSV Initial Suitability Inspection Manual on the Forms and Guides page of the NTA website for more details. From a road safety perspective, if any advertising apparatus is fitted to a vehicle it should be such a weight and size and attached securely to the vehicle so that no danger is liable to be caused and that there is no interference with the stability of vehicle. In addition, it is illegal to have any inessential object on a vehicle that is in a position where it is likely to strike any person in the event of a collision and cause injury. Finally, if the driver's view of the road and other traffic – either to the front or side of the vehicle - is limited or distorted by advertising signage that prevents him/her from driving safely, then this is illegal and should be removed.

**By law, does an SPSV need to have a full size spare tyre?** No. SPSVs are required to be fitted with whatever system the manufacturer originally supplied; this may be a spare wheel/tyre, a spacesaver or an inflational sealant kit.

**Do all four tyres on an SPSV have to be the same?** There is no difference between an SPSV and a private car: see the NCT Manual for details [here](#). A vehicle will fail the NCT if the two tyres on the one axle are not the same size or type (e.g. radial vs. cross-ply). For best performance, it is recommended that the same type of tyre should be fitted in all four wheel positions.