

## Changing your vehicle

This Information Guide deals with the regulations and procedures involved in changing the vehicle associated with an SPSV licence. Changes of vehicle are permitted, provided the replacement vehicle meets certain conditions, which are explained in this Information Guide.

In summary, there are three steps involved:

1. Ensure that the replacement vehicle is suitable and properly equipped for operation as an SPSV in the category to which the licence applies.
2. Make sure you have the relevant documents in order.
3. Make an appointment and submit the vehicle for an Initial Suitability Inspection at one of the Authority's Vehicle Licensing Centres.

### The replacement vehicle

The replacement vehicle must meet a number of requirements; the major ones are set out below:

- **Roadworthiness:** An NCT roadworthiness certificate is required for the vehicle, issued no more than 90 days before the date of the Initial Suitability Inspection. (Note: An NCT certificate is not required for a vehicle that is less than three months old *and* that has travelled less than 3,000 kilometres.)
- **Suitability:** The vehicle must meet the requirements for operation as an SPSV in the category specified on the licence. The *Initial Suitability Inspection Manual*, which is available on the Authority's website, gives details of the items that are inspected to verify the vehicle's suitability. They include:
  - All vehicles must have the required safety equipment.
  - All vehicles, except for limousines, need "clear" windows – that is, they must allow at least 70% light transmission (no more than 30% tint). Glass marked with a Roman numeral "V" next to the "E" mark is too dark. Note that a clear windscreen and front side windows are needed for the NCT.
  - Taxis and wheelchair accessible taxis must have a regulation roof sign and a taximeter complete with printer. The meter needs to be calibrated for the vehicle in accordance with the national maximum taxi fare. The vehicle must have the official taxi door signage affixed to both front doors from an authorised supplier: a list of suppliers is available on the Authority's website.
  - Wheelchair accessible vehicles, both taxis and hackneys, must have the required specialised access equipment, such as ramps.
- **Age:** The replacement vehicle must satisfy age requirements, as follows:

Standard taxis and hackneys	Must be less than ten years old.
Taxi licences that have been acquired by transfer from a different person since 7 June 2010	The replacement vehicle must be no older than the one it replaces.
Wheelchair accessible taxis and wheelchair accessible hackneys first issued before 6 April 2014	Must be less than ten years old.
Wheelchair accessible taxis or hackney licences first issued after 6 April 2014	The replacement vehicle must be no older than the one it replaces
Limousines	No age restriction currently applies.

The age of the vehicle is calculated from the *exact date* on which it was first registered (day, month and year). Even if the vehicle was imported, the age is still calculated from the date on which it was originally registered in whichever country it was first registered. Check this date (on the Vehicle Registration Certificate) before applying for a change of vehicle on your licence.

- **Size:** Replacement vehicles for a standard taxi or hackney licence will have to meet requirements for luggage capacity and interior dimensions. The Authority has produced a list (Model Report) for many vehicles indicating whether or not they meet the size requirements. This is available on the Authority's website. Before you purchase a vehicle for use as an SPSV, you should check the Model Report for the vehicle, or, if not listed, contact the Authority for advice.
- **Wheelchair accessible vehicles:** Replacement vehicles for wheelchair accessible taxi and wheelchair accessible hackney licences must meet the standards outlined in the *Initial Suitability Inspection Manual*. A summary of the requirements is provided in *Information Guide G9*. A Technical Assessor's full Report is required certifying that the vehicle meets these standards. It must be dated no more than 60 days before the date of the Initial Suitability Inspection. A template for the

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Technical Assessor's full Report is available from the Authority, and this template must be used. Before purchasing a vehicle, you should check that the vehicle meets the requirements and that this can be verified by a qualified Technical Assessor. Please note that **formal test data is required** and this can only be obtained from the original conversion firm: such data is not obtainable afterwards.

- **Modified vehicles, taxi and hackney:** If the vehicle has been modified from its original specification (for example, a converted van, a vehicle fitted with additional or non-standard seating and/or seat belts), you must obtain a Technical Assessor's full Report for the vehicle, and this must be dated within 60 days of the date of your Initial Suitability Inspection. As above, **formal test data is required** (this can only be obtained from the firm that did the modifications and is not obtainable afterwards) and the template for the Technical Assessor's full Report must be used.
- **Limousines:** The replacement vehicle must be suitable for prestigious or ceremonial use. Where a modified vehicle is proposed (e.g. stretched vehicle or kit replica) then a Technical Assessor's full Report is required, complete with formal test data as above. There is one exception: where the assessor is of the view that the vehicle is "of unique design and construction characteristics" then the Technical Assessor's basic Report may be used. No formal test data is required but the assessor must confirm that the modifications comply with all aspects of the Road Traffic Acts, Construction Equipment and Use regulations and, as applicable, regulations relating to vehicle standards made under the Taxi Regulation Act 2013. A template is again available from the Authority, and this template must be used.

## Required documents

### NCT

An NCT roadworthiness certificate is required for the vehicle dated no more than 90 days before the date of your Initial Suitability Inspection. Using your vehicle registration number the Authority will check your NCT result directly with the Department of Transport at time of booking. You should allow a minimum of 48 hours for the Department's records to be updated.

To book an NCT roadworthiness test, call the NCTS booking line on 01 413 5960.

### Insurance

The vehicle licence holder must insure the vehicle; the policy must be in the name of the licence holder and must cover its use as a small public service vehicle. You must bring the original insurance certificate with you to your Initial Suitability Inspection. The Authority may check your insurance cover directly with the relevant insurance provider and the windscreen disc must match the certificate.

### Tax clearance

Electronic tax clearance certificate must be maintained with Revenue at all times. Using your PPSN, the Authority will check your tax status with Revenue at the time of booking your appointment. You should allow a minimum of 48 hours for Revenue's records to be updated. The name on your licence application and the name on the electronic tax clearance certificate must match exactly. If the name on the electronic tax clearance certificate is not the same as that on the licence, you should contact the Revenue Commissioners.

Examples:

Name on licence application	Name on tax clearance certificate	Suitable for licensing?
James Murphy	Jim Murphy	No
	James Murphy Jnr	No
	James Joseph Murphy	No
	Séamus Ó Murchú	No
	James J. Murphy	No
	James Murphy	Yes

### Modified vehicle documents, including for wheelchair accessible vehicles

The relevant Technical Assessor's Report (plus any supporting test data) must be submitted for review prior to booking the Change of Vehicle Initial Suitability Inspection. Call us on 0761 064 000 for the best way to do this.

### Booking your Initial Suitability Inspection

Once you are satisfied that your vehicle meets the requirements and that you have the necessary documents, as outlined above, then call 0761 064 000 to book your Initial Suitability Inspection. Please note that bookings may not be available on short notice: wherever possible you are advised to consider two weeks as a minimum.

#### What do you need when making a booking?

<b>Security questions</b>	Security questions are asked for all booking and licence-related calls. These will involve standard identification questions such as name, address, telephone number, date of birth and PPS number.
<b>Vehicle ownership</b>	To change the vehicle on a licence, you must be the licence holder and either be the owner of the vehicle associated with that licence or hold the vehicle under a lease- or a hire-purchase agreement. You will be asked to declare your vehicle ownership status at time of booking.
<b>Tax clearance</b>	You must have valid tax clearance before booking your appointment. You should allow a minimum of 48 hours for Revenue's records to be updated.  You do not need to provide any additional information regarding your tax clearance when booking but you should keep your PPS number at hand in case it is required.
<b>NCT roadworthiness certificate</b>	You must successfully complete your NCT roadworthiness test within 90 days before making your appointment. You should allow a minimum of 48 hours for the Department of Transport's records to be updated.  You should keep your vehicle registration certificate at hand in case it is required.
<b>Insurance</b>	You will need your insurance expiry date and be able to declare that you are insured to operate an SPSV. Your insurance information may be shared with the Insurance Federation of Ireland and your insurance disc will also be inspected as part of your vehicle inspection.  If your disc is out of date on the day of inspection your vehicle will fail its inspection.  It is the responsibility of the vehicle licence holder to provide insurance for the vehicle.
<b>Technical Assessor's full Report and test data</b>	Send a copy of the completed Technical Assessor's full Report and accompanying documentary evidence for consideration prior to making a booking. For details of the various ways to do this call 0761 064 000.
<b>Technical Assessor's basic Report (unique modified limousine)</b>	Send a copy of the completed Technical Assessor's basic Report to us as above. Keep a copy to give to the inspector.
<b>Contact details update</b>	You will be required to update or confirm your contact details when renewing your licence.  Future renewal reminders rely on your details being correct: you are obliged to inform us of any changes.
<b>WAV register update</b>	If you are renewing a wheelchair accessible vehicle licence, you must provide the following information when booking your renewal appointment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Times of operation</li> <li>• Area of operation</li> </ul> This information will be published in the Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle Register.
<b>Payment</b>	Payment must be made at time of booking. Payment can be made by credit or debit card. The fee is €170, (€125 licence fee plus €45 Initial Suitability Inspection).  If the vehicle fails the inspection, a re-test fee of €45 is required for each subsequent re-test.

### Changing the vehicle on an expired vehicle licence

If your vehicle licence has expired, you may, within one year of the expiry date, apply to have it renewed and to have it associated with a different replacement vehicle. A licence that has expired for more than one year cannot ever be renewed. After a year, if you wish to license a vehicle, you must submit a new vehicle licence application.

The fee associated with renewing an expired licence depends on the period of time that has elapsed since it expired. In addition, as the renewal fee includes the cost of the Licence Renewal Assessment, this cost is offset against the cost of the Initial Suitability Assessment.

Licences for vehicles under 10 years of age are generally for 12 months.

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Licences for vehicles 10 years of age and over are generally for 6 months (pre 1980 limousine being the exception)

Renewal of SPSV licence for 6 months or less, renewal completed after expiry of the prior licence	€250
<i>Less</i> Offset of Licence Renewal Assessment against Initial Suitability Inspection	(€30)
Refund payable if licence is renewed not more than 10 days after the expiry of the prior licence	(€100)
Renewal of SPSV licence for 12 months or less – renewal completed after expiry of the prior licence	€500
<i>Less</i> Offset of Licence Renewal Assessment against Initial Suitability Inspection	(€30)
Refund payable if the licence is renewed not more than 10 days after the expiry	(€275)
Refund payable if the licence is renewed more than 10 days but not more than 30 days after expiry	(€175)

All fees must be paid at the time of booking the Initial Suitability Inspection, so that the total cost of renewing the licence and changing the vehicle on it may amount to €640 (€500 – €30 + €170).

## What to do with the vehicle being replaced

Before you dispose of the vehicle that you are replacing, you should:

- Remove the roof sign – this can be used on the replacement vehicle once the change of vehicle process has been completed;
- Remove the meter and printer – these can be used in the replacement vehicle, but they must first be calibrated specifically for the replacement car; and
- Remove the tamper-proof discs from the front and rear windows of the vehicle – you **must** bring these with you for the Initial Suitability Inspection of the replacement vehicle.
  - If you do not have the old tamper-proof discs but have some supporting evidence (e.g. Garda report if stolen, windscreen replacement receipt) then download the TP1 Form off the website and bring together with a copy of that evidence
  - If you do not have the old tamper-proof discs and don't have the supporting evidence above then you need to order, and pay for, a TP2 Form. Call us on 0761 064 000.

## Requirements for your Initial Suitability Inspection

When you present the vehicle for Initial Suitability Inspection, you must bring with you:

- A copy of the Technical Assessor's basic Report, or Technical full Assessor's Report, where required; and
- The tamper-proof discs from the previous vehicle, or TP1 Form (and evidence) or TP2 Form.

## Changing your appointment

You can cancel or reschedule an appointment for an Initial Suitability Inspection without charge up to two working days before the appointment.

If you cancel or reschedule on the working day immediately before the appointment, a late cancellation fee is charged.

You cannot cancel or reschedule a vehicle licensing inspection on the day of the appointment – if you do not present the vehicle for inspection at the appointed time, the entire fee is forfeit.

## Operating the replacement vehicle as an SPSV

If your vehicle passes the Initial Suitability Inspection, the licence details are updated on the national register of SPSV licences and the Licensing Inspector applies tamper-proof discs to the front and rear windows of the replacement vehicle. The vehicle may then be operated as an SPSV in the category to which the licence applies. Operating an unlicensed vehicle for reward may result in a fine of up to €5,000.

## Changing your SPSV licence category

The holder of a standard **taxi** licence, when they change their vehicle, may exchange their licence for a wheelchair accessible taxi licence (subject to the replacement vehicle meeting the required standards for a wheelchair accessible taxi in respect of age, under 6 years, and equipment and technical documentation). You are able to keep your current licence number and in future you can exchange back again to a standard taxi licence.

### Licence validity period

At change of vehicle the licence issued starts from the date the Initial Suitability Inspection is passed.

Vehicles that are allowed to operate until their tenth birthday are licensed for one year, unless the tenth birthday occurs within that year, in which case the licence is renewed only up until the vehicle's tenth birthday (that is, the licence may be issued for less than one year).

Vehicles that are allowed to operate until their fifteenth birthday are licensed for one year until the vehicle reaches ten years of age. Thereafter, the licence is issued for six months, unless the vehicle's fifteenth birthday occurs within the six-month period, in which case the licence is renewed only up until the vehicle's fifteenth birthday (that is, the licence may be issued for less than six months).

Licences for limousines are renewed for twelve months if they are less than ten years old, or for six months if they are ten years old or more. An exception to the latter rule applies to vehicles first registered before 1 January 1980 that are licensed as limousines; licences for such 'vintage limousines' are renewed for twelve months.

### When is the best time to change your vehicle?

As no rebate is allowed for any unexpired time on the licence for the vehicle replaced, the Authority recommends that, if possible, you should change your vehicle close to your renewal date in order to minimise your costs.

#### A good example:

Date licence is due for renewal:	1 December 2014
Replacement vehicle bought and equipped. NCT passed. All documentation in order. Initial Suitability Inspection booked for:	1 November 2014
Initial Suitability Inspection passed. Period of validity of licence on replacement vehicle:	1 November 2014 to 1 November 2015
Unexpired time on old licence	<b>1 month</b>

#### A less cost-efficient example:

Date licence is due for renewal:	1 June 2015
Replacement vehicle bought and equipped. NCT passed. All documentation in order. Initial Suitability Inspection booked for:	1 November 2014
Initial Suitability Inspection passed. Period of validity of licence on replacement vehicle:	1 November 2014 to 1 November 2015
Unexpired time on old licence	<b>7 months</b>

**Note:** the above dates are purely for the purpose of illustration

Visit [www.nationaltransport.ie](http://www.nationaltransport.ie) for more information or call 0761 064 000