

Taximeter areas and taxi fares



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Mission

To achieve a first class, professional, efficient, safe and accessible, customer-friendly service, for passengers and service providers.

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Glossary of terms

Like many other areas taxis, hackneys and limousines tend to have a language of their own. Many of the terms used are complex. This glossary is an attempt to simplify and explain some of the terms used in this document.

Advisory Council The Advisory Council to the Commission for Taxi Regulation was established under Part 4 of the Taxi Regulation Act 2003 to advise the Commission in relation to matters pertaining to Small Public Service Vehicles (SPSV's).

changeover speed Taxi fares can be calculated by either distance travelled or time elapsed, but not both. The changeover speed is the speed at which the calculation moves from distance to time, or vice versa.

Commission Where the term Commission is used in this document, it refers to the Commission for Taxi Regulation, an independent public body established under the Taxi Regulation Act 2003, responsible for the regulation of taxis, hackneys and limousines. It should also be noted that the terms *Commission for Taxi Regulation*, *Taxi Regulator* and *Commissioner* are one and the same and tend to be used interchangeably.

extras These include a range of additional charges for items, such as, additional passengers, luggage or telephone bookings.

fare card This sets out how the fare in the relevant taximeter area is calculated. Fare cards must be displayed in all taxis.

fare rate This is the actual amount which is charged for each of the components that make up the fare structure.

fare structure This refers to the various components that, taken together, make up the method by which a taxi fare is calculated.

hackney A Small Public Service Vehicle (SPSV) licensed to carry up to eight passengers which must be booked privately and cannot ply for hire on the street or at taxi ranks. As a hackney is not subject to fare control, the fare must be agreed in advance by the customer.

hiring charge The initial charge for hiring a taxi. It is often combined with a charge for an initial distance travelled. The two together are known as the minimum fare.

Legal Metrology Service The Legal Metrology Service is part of the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) and is the body responsible for enforcing laws in relation to measuring instruments, including the taximeter, which calculates the fares in taxis.

maximum fare This is the maximum amount which can be charged by a taxi driver while operating in a taximeter area. To date, the maximum fare has been set by local authorities. However, this power transferred to the Commission for Taxi Regulation on 26th September 2005.

mileage-thereafter The rate per mile or kilometre charged for trips that exceed the basic allowance for time and distance incorporated in the minimum fare.

minimum fare This is a term used to indicate the amount charged for hiring the vehicle and sometimes includes an initial distance charge. It is the amount that appears on the meter when a taxi is first engaged. Taxis are not required to charge any minimum fare, in the sense of a legal minimum charge.

ROADMAP document This is the second consultation paper published by the Commission for Taxi Regulation – *ROADMAP – Towards a new national code of regulation for taxis, hackneys and limousines in Ireland*.

shared hire This refers to a situation where a number of people agree to use the services of a taxi for separate journeys in the same general area.

Small Public Service Vehicles (SPSV's) The term Small Public Service Vehicle (SPSV) is used to refer collectively to taxis, hackneys and limousines.

taxi fares To date, the maximum which a taxi can charge when operating in a taximeter area has been set down by local authorities. It is called the maximum fare. It is calculated on the basis of time and distance by a meter installed in the vehicle which has been programmed with the appropriate maximum fare. When a journey goes outside a taximeter area, the maximum fare does not apply and the driver is not obliged to calculate the fare on the meter. Instead he or she must agree the fare, or the method of calculation, with the customer in advance.

taximeter A device used to measure, calculate and display a taxi fare, based on the duration travelled, or the distance and a number of other factors.

taximeter areas These are areas which to date, have been designated by local authorities where taxis can operate. When an area has been designated a taximeter area taxis can ply for hire on the street, or stand for hire at taxi ranks, where they exist. Taximeter areas in Ireland currently tend to be based on city or town boundaries. The Commission for Taxi Regulation will designate new taximeter areas in 2006.

taxis A taxi is a Small Public Service Vehicle (SPSV) licensed to carry up to eight passengers which can ply for hire on the street, or stand for hire at taxi ranks, or be called out or be pre-booked by a passenger.

unsocial hours A premium, usually applied to charges at night and during holidays.

waiting time A fare, typically based on variation of mileage-thereafter with time, to compensate the driver for time spent waiting for passengers.

2

Introduction

2.1 Background

The principal function of the *Commission for Taxi Regulation (Commission)* is the development and maintenance of a national, regulatory framework for the control and operation of small public service vehicles (SPSV's) and their drivers. SPSV's include taxis, hackneys and limousines. The Commission proposes to make changes in relation to taximeter areas and taxi fares that will come into effect in 2006. For this reason it is important to note that this Consultation Paper relates only to taxis, taximeter areas and taxi fares.

The Commission was established by the *Taxi Regulation Act 2003* (2003 Act) from where it derives its powers.

The Commission has, to date, carried out a *National Review of Services and Vehicle Standards in Taxis, Hackneys and Limousines in Ireland* and published two Consultation Papers in relation to developing a new National Code of Regulation for Taxis, Hackneys and Limousines in Ireland.¹

The second Consultation Paper *ROADMAP – Towards a New National Code of Regulation for Taxis, Hackneys and Limousines in Ireland*, sets out, in broad measure, the changes the Commission proposes to make in respect of the designation of *taximeter areas* and *taxi fares*. The response to the proposed changes in relation to taxi fares and taximeter areas, as set out in the *ROADMAP* document, was generally positive. The Commission now proposes to put in place a new fare structure and rate for taxis throughout the country and to put in place new taximeter areas throughout the country as outlined in more detail below. The purpose of this

Consultation Paper is to afford the Advisory Council to the Commission for Taxi Regulation (Advisory Council), local authorities, An Garda Síochána, the Legal Metrology Service, taxi users, drivers and service suppliers, an opportunity to put forward views and suggestions, in relation to taxi fare structure and rates, and taximeter areas.

The deadline for receipt of submissions on this Consultation Paper is Monday, December 19th at 5.00pm.

2.2 Consultation Process for Taximeter Areas

Section 41 of the Taxi Regulation Act, 2003 (Appendix 1) provides that the *Commission for Taxi Regulation* may declare any area to be a *Taximeter Area* in which a taxi may operate for the carriage of a passenger for reward within the area and extend or otherwise alter the boundary of an existing taximeter area.

Before declaring a taximeter area, the Commission is required to consult with the Advisory Council, the Garda Commissioner and any local authority in whose functional area the taximeter area is located, and to publish a notice in one or more newspapers circulating in the relevant area, indicating any proposals to make such a declaration, and stating that representations in relation to the proposed declaration may be made in writing to the Commission.

A copy of the advertisement placed by the Commission in relation to this consultation process is included at Appendix 7.2.

¹ These documents are available on the Commission for Taxi Regulation's website – www.taxiregulator.ie or directly from the Commission.

2.3 Consultation Process for Taxi Fares

Section 42 of the Taxi Regulation Act 2003 (Appendix 1) empowers the Commission to make an order (*Maximum Fares Order*) fixing the maximum fares in respect of any taximeter area that may be charged by the driver of a taxi. It provides that different maximum fares may be set in respect of single hire or shared hire or for different circumstances or times and for different taximeter areas.

The Act requires that before fixing maximum fares, the Commission shall consult with any local authority within whose functional area the taximeter area exists, the Advisory Council to the *Commission for Taxi Regulation*, the Legal Metrology Service and requires the Commission to publish a notice in one or more newspapers circulating in the taximeter area indicating that it is proposed to exercise the function and stating that representations in relation to the proposal may be made, *in writing*, to the Commission.

2.4 The Next Steps

The Commission is proposing fundamental reforms across a broad range of areas in the SPSV sector to improve the quality of service. These reforms will be put in place on a phased basis commencing from 2006. As a first step, the Commission intends to put in place new taximeter areas and new taxi fare structures and rates in 2006. It is essential that this results in taximeter areas that allow for maximum access to a taxi service and taxi fares that give value for money, encourage taxi use, reflect taxi operating costs, develop greater knowledge for passengers and drivers, and provide service providers with an element of certainty to encourage investment and balance supply and demand.

This Consultation paper sets out the current situation and the Commission's objectives in relation to taximeter areas and taxi fares. We are now seeking your views on these issues. When all submissions have been considered, the Commission will put in place new fare structures and rates throughout the country that will become operational in 2006.

3

How to submit your views

Throughout this Consultation Paper, a series of questions are included to assist you to identify the issues and options available. These are summarised in Section 6. The questions are not exhaustive and you are invited to put forward your views and to be as innovative as possible in suggesting improvements for consumers and service suppliers. Please note it is not a requirement that you answer all or any of the questions. They are merely included to assist you through the issues. All views expressed in writing are welcome and will be considered.

Comments and submissions in relation to fares and taximeter areas should be clearly marked **Response to Consultation Paper No. 3** and forwarded, in writing, to the Commission electronically at: commission@taxiregulator.ie or by post to:

Response to Consultation Paper No.3
Commission for Taxi Regulation
35 Fitzwilliam Square, Dublin 2

Submissions should arrive no later than **5.00 p.m.** on **Monday 19th December 2005**

Further copies of this document together with copies of *The National Review of services and vehicle standards in taxis, hackneys and limousines in Ireland* and the document *ROADMAP – Towards a new national code of regulation for taxis, hackneys and limousines in Ireland* are available on the Commission's website:

www.taxiregulator.ie
or from the Commission's offices at:
Commission for Taxi Regulation
35 Fitzwilliam Square, Dublin 2
Phone: (01) 659 3800

Large print copies of these documents are also available at these locations.

4

Taximeter areas

4.1 Background

Until recently, local authorities were empowered to declare their functional area, or a specific part of it, to be a taximeter area. With the commencement of *Section 41 of the Taxi Regulation Act of 2003* on the 26th of September 2005, this power transferred to the Commission for Taxi Regulation

A taximeter area is a designated area within which taxis can operate. Taxis can ply for hire on street within the taximeter area and stand at taxi ranks, where the latter are provided.

While taxis are operating within a taximeter area they must not charge more than the maximum fare which they are obliged to calculate by using a meter. The meter indicates the maximum fare chargeable at the end of the trip. Under current regulations if a trip takes the taxi beyond the taximeter area, the driver is not obliged to use the meter, as the trip effectively becomes a private hire. In this instance, the fare or method of calculation should be agreed at the commencement of the hiring. If a trip involves a taxi travelling into an adjoining taximeter area, the fare must be calculated on the meter. However, a taxi driver is currently not obliged to carry a passenger outside his or her taximeter area. Taxis are not permitted to ply for hire, or stand at ranks outside of their own taximeter area.

4.2 Current Taximeter Areas

When local authorities had the power to declare taximeter areas it was on a discretionary basis. Accordingly not all urban areas are taximeter areas and in some cases large urban areas do not have a taxi service.

The National Review identified 34 taximeter areas in operation across Ireland. Table 4.1 on page 9 indicates the cities and towns that have designated taximeter areas. They are mapped on page 10 in Figure 4.1.

The table also gives an indication of the local populations. It is sorted by size of population, although it should be noted that this is not an indication of the size of the actual taximeter area, or indeed the number of taxis in operation. Although the majority of areas with designated taximeter areas have populations of 10,000 or more, some smaller towns with populations of fewer than 7,500, such as Thurles, Tipperary Town, Mhuinbeag and Tullow also have designated taximeter areas. It is important to note that hackneys and limousines operate in all areas, but the Commission is of the view that the consumer should have maximum choice and that competition should be encouraged by making it possible for taxis to operate in all areas.

The Commission believes that the manner in which certain taximeter areas throughout Ireland have been designated and the lack of taximeter areas in other areas is not in the best interest of consumers and prohibits competition.

4.3 Scale of Taximeter Areas

When a taximeter area is designated, reasonable boundaries should be set that allow maximum fare control to be applied. To date, the maximum fare that a taxi operating within a taximeter area can charge is the fare as set by the local authority in that area and calculated by the meter. Currently there is no requirement on the driver to continue to use the meter on leaving the taximeter area.

The boundaries of a number of existing taximeter areas have not evolved at the same pace as local development. As a result, there are taximeter areas that are so small in relation to their locality that the majority of trips go beyond the area and therefore the maximum fare does not apply to them. Examples of this can be seen in Carlow town, Naas and Mallow, where the taximeter areas are just 2.4 kilometres (1.5 miles) in radius. The populations of these towns are 18,487, 18,288 and 8,937 respectively. In other areas, such as Castlebar, Drogheda and Tralee, the taximeter areas are even smaller in size and do not in any way reflect the actual settlement footprint of the town. Castlebar has a population of 11,371 and a taximeter area radius of 0.264 kilometres (0.16 miles), Drogheda has a population 31,020 and a taximeter area radius of 0.2 kilometres (0.12 miles). Tralee, another significant town of 21,987 people, has a taximeter area radius of just 0.09 of a kilometre or 100 yards.

The impact of an inadequately designated taximeter area is that the majority of trips will go beyond the area and so maximum fares will not apply. In these situations the only real impact of declaring a taximeter area was that taxis can ply for hire on street and stand at ranks where available within the taximeter area.

Table 4.1: Populations of towns and cities with taximeter areas

Towns/cities	Population
Greater Dublin Area	1,004,614
Cork city	186,239
Limerick city	86,998
Galway city	66,163
Waterford city	46,736
Westmeath rural Westmeath excluding Athlone and Mullingar	40,301
Dundalk	32,505
Drogheda	31,020
Bray	30,951
Longford county excluding Longford town	23,511
Ennis	22,051
Tralee	21,987
Kilkenny town	20,735
Sligo town	19,735
Navan	19,417
Carlow town	18,487
Naas	18,288
Wexford	17,235
Athlone	15,936
Mullingar	15,621
Letterkenny	15,231
Killarney	13,137
Portlaoise	12,127
Castlebar	11,371
Cobh	9,811
Ballina	9,647
Mallow	8,937
Longford town	7,557
Dungarvan	7,452
Thurles	7,425
Tipperary town	4,964
Mhuinbeag	2,728
Tullow	2,417
Donegal	2,453

Note: Population figures include the suburbs or environs of each town.

Source: Department of Transport and Census 2002 (CSO).

Figure 4.1: Towns with taximeter areas



4.4 Issues For Consideration

Taximeter Areas

From Table 4.1, it may be deduced that 70.6 per cent of existing taximeter areas are located in towns or cities of 10,000 people or more. There are a number of other towns in Ireland that have populations of over 10,000 people, but that have not yet had a taximeter area designated. There is a clear need to extend taxi services to the towns that do not have a designated taximeter area.

For many towns that do have taximeter areas, the geographic area which is delineated as a taximeter area is either too small or does not reflect the local population settlement pattern, or both. This means that a majority of taxi trips have origins or destinations outside the taximeter area and are thus not fare controlled. This situation can lead to confusion and disputes regarding fares.

Currently, drivers have the right to refuse to carry passengers beyond the limit of their taximeter area. In the event of this changing, or an extension to taximeter areas, it would be necessary to afford drivers the right to refuse fares over a certain distance, as it would be unsafe and unfair to expect drivers, at all times, to undertake journeys of unlimited distance.

The Commission is of the view that:

- Future designations of taximeter areas should reflect the needs of consumers and assist the provision of a good quality, consumer focused, responsive taxi service.
- All fares should be maximum controlled (or subject to a price cap) and charged on the meter based on the distance travelled;
- All areas throughout the country should be able to benefit from taxi services;
- Drivers should have the right to refuse to carry out trips over a specified distance;
- Including all parts of the country as part of a taximeter area would greatly help to address the problems set out above.

We are now seeking your views on these matters. To assist you in giving us feedback we have set out the following questions:

Taximeter Area Question 1

Should all areas have the potential to access taxi services by having their area declared a taximeter area?

Taximeter Area Question 2

There are a number of ways in which taximeter areas can be designated. Which of the following do you believe is most appropriate?

- a) Make the whole country one taximeter area?
- b) Continue to base taximeter areas on towns and cities in line with the current arrangement, which has generally used town or city administrative boundaries, with taximeter areas declared mostly in the larger towns?
- c) Base taximeter areas on City and County Administrative areas; in this scenario should:
 - i The four Dublin local authority areas remain as one taximeter area?
 - ii Should Cork City and County be one or two taximeter areas?
 - iii Should Limerick City and County be one or two taximeter areas?
 - iv Should Galway City and County be one or two taximeter areas?
 - v Should Waterford City and County be one or two taximeter areas?
 - vi Should the County be the taximeter area for all other areas?

Taximeter Area Question 3

In the event of taximeter areas being expanded significantly it would be necessary to give drivers the right to refuse very long journeys. After what distance do you believe a driver should have the right to refuse to carry a passenger?

Taximeter Area Question 4

Should taxi drivers be allowed to ply for hire, pick up or stand at ranks, in more than one taximeter area?

5

Taxi fares

5.1 Background

Maximum fares apply to taxis while operating within taximeter areas in Ireland. Prior to the 26th of September 2005, maximum fares for taxis were set by the relevant local authority for each taximeter area and published in the form of a fare card. These fare cards set out how the fare is calculated, and must be displayed in the taxi.

Typical taxi fares in Ireland include a number of different elements, some of which apply to all journeys and some of which only apply under certain conditions. All elements are set out separately below. However, the primary elements of taxi fares are those that are dependent on distance and time. At any one point in a journey, these elements are being charged according to either distance or time – but not both.

At low speeds, or when the vehicle is stationary, a fare is calculated by time. This rewards the driver for waiting for passengers who have reserved his or her services but are not yet ready to travel, or for the costs of operating in periods of traffic congestion. Once the vehicle exceeds a certain speed (known as the changeover speed) the fare is calculated according to the distance travelled. If the speed falls below the changeover speed, then the charge will be incurred according to time.

The fare structure is programmed into the taximeter and the meter indicates the fare relevant to any given journey. Fares outside taximeter areas, i.e. fares outside all cities and most towns, are not fare controlled and therefore are not charged on the meter.

With the commencement of Section 42 of the Taxi Regulation Act 2003 on the 26th of September 2005, the function of setting taxi fares across the country transferred to the Commission for Taxi Regulation. The Commission believes that in order to protect consumers, there is a need to continue to regulate maximum taxi fares and is carrying out this consultative process to allow the widest possible input into the fare-setting process.

The Commission's National Review² showed a significant diversity between Ireland's taximeter areas in relation to fares. However, the principal issue the Commission was concerned with was the actual range of charges faced by the consumer.

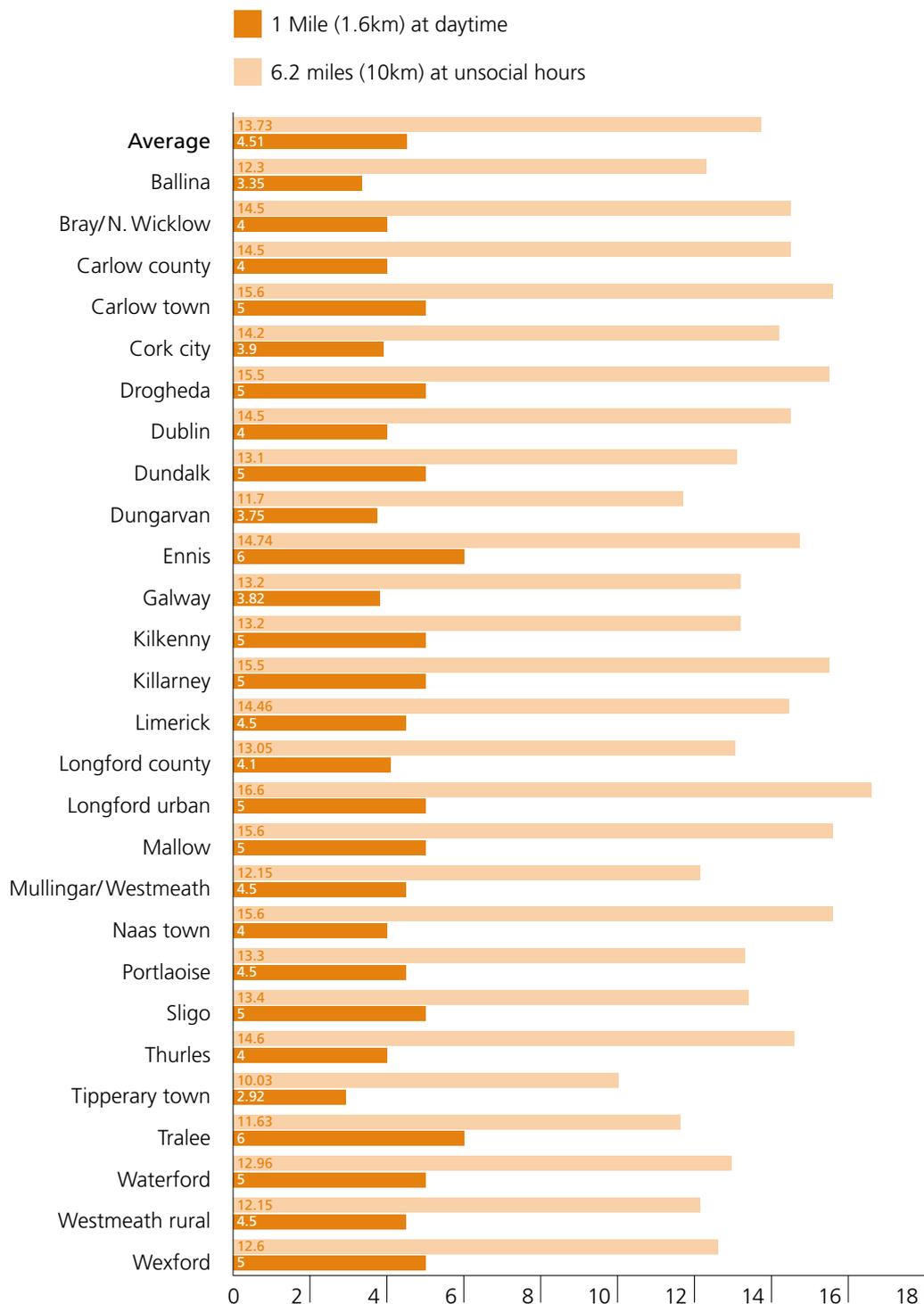
In order to determine and illustrate this, a calculation was made of the actual fare that would be charged for taxi trips over four distances during both daytime and unsocial hours based on the fares applying in each taximeter area. This allows meaningful comparisons to be made between taximeter areas.

Table 5.1 on page 13 shows the results of the comparison of fares for what one might expect to be the cheap and expensive trips: a 1.6km (1 mile) daytime trip and a 10km (6.2 mile) trip during unsocial hours. Many short trips incur a charge that is a rounded number (e.g. €5.00); this is because the fare charged equates to the 'minimum' fare, where the distance allowance has not been exceeded. The cheapest areas over this distance are those with a relatively low minimum fare level and a correspondingly low distance allowance. Areas that are relatively low-cost over short distances can end up being amongst the most expensive over longer journeys e.g. Naas. However, some areas, like Tipperary, represent consistently good value for all journey lengths at all times reflecting the lower than average 'minimum' or 'hiring' charge.

² Commission for Taxi Regulation (2005), National Review of Services and Vehicle Standards in Taxis, Hackneys and Limousines in Ireland, available at www.taxiregulator.ie

Table 5.1: A comparison of fares by taximeter area

Fare (€) for a lone travelling passenger with no extras.



Source: National Review of Services and Vehicle Standards in Taxis, Hackneys and Limousines in Ireland 2005.

Note: The fares illustrated above are calculated using time-based charges and do not allow for congestion.

Table 5.2: Ranking of typical fares by taximeter area

Ranking by cost (lowest first)	Short trips by day	Long trips by day	Average trip by day	Short trips unsocial hours	Long trips unsocial hours	Average trips unsocial hours	All trips
1	Tipperary town	Tipperary town	Tipperary town	Tipperary town	Tipperary town	Tipperary town	Tipperary town
2	Ballina	Wexford	Dungarvan	Dungarvan	Dungarvan	Dungarvan	Dungarvan
3	Dungarvan	Dungarvan	Ballina	Carlow county	Wexford	Mullingar/Westmeath	Ballina
4	Mullingar/Westmeath	Waterford	Wexford	Ballina	Mullingar/Westmeath	Westmeath rural	Mullingar/Westmeath
5	Westmeath rural	Ballina	Mullingar/Westmeath	Mullingar/Westmeath	Westmeath rural	Ballina	Westmeath rural
6	Thurles	Mullingar/Westmeath	Westmeath rural	Westmeath rural	Tralee	Wexford	Wexford
7	Portlaoise	Westmeath rural	Galway	Dublin	Ballina	Dundalk	Galway
8	Galway	Galway	Waterford	Bray/N. Wicklow	Dundalk	Tralee	Portlaoise
9	Cork city	Dublin	Portlaoise	Dundalk	Waterford	Portlaoise	Waterford
10	Dublin	Bray/N. Wicklow	Dublin	Thurles	Portlaoise	Galway	Dundalk
11	Bray/N. Wicklow	Portlaoise	Bray/N. Wicklow	Galway	Sligo	Carlow county	Dublin
12	Longford county	Limerick	Cork city	Cork city	Galway	Sligo	Bray/N. Wicklow
13	Naas town	Kilkenny	Longford county	Portlaoise	Kilkenny	Longford county	Longford county
14	Waterford	Tralee	Limerick	Average	Longford county	Average	Sligo
15	Dundalk	Longford county	Kilkenny	Sligo	Average	Waterford	Cork city
16	Sligo	Cork city	Dundalk	Longford county	Carlow county	Dublin	Tralee
17	Carlow county	Dundalk	Sligo	Limerick	Cork City	Bray/N. Wicklow	Kilkenny
18	Wexford	Sligo	Average	Wexford	Dublin	Thurles	Average
	Average	Average	Thurles	Naas town	Bray/N. Wicklow	Kilkenny	Thurles
19	Kilkenny	Thurles	Tralee	Tralee	Thurles	Cork city	Limerick
20	Limerick	Carlow county	Carlow county	Killarney	Limerick	Limerick	Carlow county
21	Carlow town	Naas town	Naas town	Drogheda	Ennis	Ennis	Naas town
22	Mallow	Carlow town	Carlow town	Kilkenny	Killarney	Killarney	Carlow town
23	Drogheda	Mallow	Mallow	Ennis	Drogheda	Naas town	Drogheda
24	Longford urban	Ennis	Drogheda	Waterford	Naas town	Drogheda	Mallow
25	Tralee	Drogheda	Ennis	Carlow town	Carlow town	Carlow town	Ennis
26	Killarney	Killarney	Killarney	Mallow	Mallow	Mallow	Killarney
27	Ennis	Longford urban	Longford urban	Longford urban	Longford urban	Longford urban	Longford urban

Areas where the fare is within less than 10% of the average.

Areas where the fare is within 10% to 15% of the average.

Source: National Review of Services and Vehicle Standards in Taxis, Hackneys and Limousines in Ireland 2005.

Table 5.2 opposite ranks each taximeter area according to the fare charged to a lone passenger over short distances (1 and 2 miles) and longer distances (5km and 10km) at different times. Areas shaded dark orange are within 10 per cent of the average fare for the country. Areas shaded light orange are within 10 to 15 per cent of the average fare. Clearly, there is already a convergence in fares charged between most areas.

The setting of fare levels should be based on the needs of the Irish market, rather than a comparison with other jurisdictions with very different taxi markets. However, in order to establish baseline data and put Irish fares in an international context, a survey was undertaken by the Commission of the fares applicable in a number of major European cities, as well as other smaller towns and cities. The structure of fares in many parts of continental Europe is different to that in Ireland. Most significantly, many European cities include no allowance for a preliminary distance within the minimum fare. In these cities the

minimum fare is frequently equivalent to a simple hiring charge.

In addition, in cities such as Paris, the rates change not only according to distance or time, but also to whether one is travelling in the city-centre, the suburbs or beyond. Where such tariffs apply in a taximeter area, it has been assumed for comparative purposes that the journey undertaken was divided equally between the two zones.

This international comparison of taxi fares shows that fares in Dublin are below those in many European cities, but above those in low-cost countries such as Spain, Portugal and Greece. A similar comparison reveals that fares in Irish towns tend to be lower than those in equivalent towns in Britain.

Table 5.3 below shows a variety of daytime fares for a lone passenger in Dublin, and in comparable European cities, while Table 5.4 overleaf presents a comparison of Dublin with average fares in Europe during unsocial hours.

Table 5.3: Average daytime fares in major European cities (€)

Distance	1 mile (1.6km)	2 miles (3.2 km)	5 km	10 km	Average
Athens	1.60	1.67	2.15	3.55	2.24
Lisbon	2.44	3.00	3.63	5.38	3.61
Seville	2.81	3.33	4.52	8.02	4.67
Madrid	2.89	4.16	5.50	9.45	5.50
Paris	5.00	5.00	6.20	10.40	6.65
Dublin	4.00	5.50	7.00	11.50	7.00
Vienna	4.10	5.90	7.70	12.10	7.45
Rome	4.09	5.75	7.51	12.68	7.51
Leipzig	3.84	5.76	7.80	13.80	7.80
Brussels	4.29	6.11	8.05	13.75	8.05
Manchester	4.09	6.14	8.18	14.02	8.11
Liverpool	4.38	6.43	8.47	13.44	8.18
Edinburgh	4.13	6.15	8.84	15.56	8.67
Sheffield	4.67	6.72	8.76	14.90	8.76
Munich	4.97	7.29	9.75	16.25	9.56
London	5.55	8.47	11.39	20.45	11.47

Source: National Review of Services and Vehicle Standards in Taxis, Hackneys and Limousines in Ireland 2005.

Table 5.4: Average fares in major cities during unsocial hours (€)

Distance	1 mile (1.6km)	2 miles (3.2 km)	5 km	10 km	Average
Athens	2.18	3.03	3.93	6.58	3.93
Lisbon	2.92	3.62	4.41	6.61	4.39
Leipzig	3.05	3.75	4.50	6.70	4.50
Seville	3.57	3.57	4.76	8.26	5.04
Madrid	3.13	4.62	6.20	10.85	6.20
Paris	5.00	5.50	7.30	12.60	7.60
Dublin	4.50	6.50	8.50	14.50	8.50
Vienna	4.60	6.80	9.00	14.00	8.60
Rome	6.67	3.42	10.09	15.26	8.86
Sheffield	5.40	7.45	9.49	15.63	9.49
Munich	4.97	7.29	9.75	16.25	9.56
Edinburgh	5.32	7.36	10.05	16.77	9.87
Brussels	6.15	7.97	9.91	15.61	9.91
Manchester	4.97	7.60	10.23	17.53	10.08
Liverpool	5.55	8.11	10.66	16.87	10.30
London	7.01	11.39	16.07	29.22	15.92

Source: National Review of Services and Vehicle Standards in Taxis, Hackneys and Limousines in Ireland 2005.

Table 5.5 provides a comparison of fares for other cities and towns and compares Irish taximeter areas in general and Cork in particular with a number of British cities and towns of comparable size.

Fare prices in other Irish cities and towns compare even more favourably to prices in Britain during unsocial hours, as shown in Table 5.6 overleaf. This suggests that the premium applied in many Irish taximeter areas is modest by comparison to those applied abroad.

Table 5.5: Average daytime fares in selected Irish and British cities and towns (€)

Distance	1 mile (1.6km)	2 miles (3.2 km)	5 km	10 km	Average
Hartlepool	3.07	3.94	4.82	7.60	4.86
Kings Lynn	3.51	5.27	7.36	12.83	7.24
Cork	3.90	5.50	7.30	12.30	7.25
Warrington	3.36	5.26	7.45	13.51	7.40
Average Irish town or city	4.51	5.50	7.35	12.63	7.50
Cambridge	4.97	7.01	9.64	16.65	9.57

Source: National Review of Services and Vehicle Standards in Taxis, Hackneys and Limousines in Ireland 2005.

Table 5.6: Average fares in smaller Irish and British cities and towns during unsocial hours (€)

Distance	1 mile (1.6km)	2 miles (3.2 km)	5 km	10 km	Average
Hartlepool	4.09	5.84	7.89	13.59	7.85
Average Irish town or city	5.25	6.31	8.22	13.73	8.38
Cork	4.80	6.60	8.60	14.20	8.55
Kings Lynn	5.26	7.91	11.04	19.24	10.86
Cambridge	6.43	8.47	11.10	18.11	11.03
Warrington	4.75	7.60	10.88	21.18	11.10

Source: National Review of Services and Vehicle Standards in Taxis, Hackneys and Limousines in Ireland 2005.

The Commission believes that the considerable variations in fares throughout Ireland, and in some cases inconsistencies in both fare structure and rates, are unnecessary and unhelpful to consumers.

We also believe that the convergence in actual fares charged raises the possibility of applying a standard approach to fare setting across the country. A particular concern for many passengers is where journeys extend beyond taximeter areas and therefore are not fare controlled, or charged on the meter leading, in many cases, to confusion and disputes. The Commission is of the view that, to avoid this problem, all fares should be maximum controlled by having a price cap and charged on the meter. We also believe that simpler and more unified fare structures across the country would benefit all and we are now seeking your views on these issues. To assist you in giving us feedback we have included some questions on taxi fares below.

Taxi Fares Question 1

Should all taxi fares in Ireland be controlled by having a price cap (maximum fare) that can be charged for all trips and accordingly, charged on the meter?

Taxi Fares Question 2

Should the taxi fare structure (i.e. the method by which the fare is calculated) be the same throughout the country or should there be regional or local variations?

Taxi Fares Question 3

Should the taxi fare rates (i.e. the actual amount charged for various components of the fare) be the same throughout the country or should there be regional or local variations?

Taxi Fares Question 4

Are there any issues in relation to taxi fares that require special consideration for people with disabilities?

Taxi Fares Question 5

The 2003 Act provides that different maximum fares may be set in respect of single hire or shared hire. Is taxi sharing something that should be regulated for, and if so, what issues need to be considered in relation to fare setting?

5.2 Current Composition of a Typical Irish Taxi Fare

Currently the fares that apply to taxi travel in Ireland vary from one taximeter area to another. This is because to date the elected members of local authorities set fares and they take into account not only the taxi operating characteristics within their area, but also the views of stakeholders. The local authorities reviewed the rates from time to time, typically upon submission of a request from taxi representatives.

The Commission for Taxi Regulation will in future carry out systematic and regular taxi fare reviews. We believe that the fare setting process should arrive at a fare that gives value for money, encourages taxi use, reflects taxi operation costs, develops greater knowledge for passengers and drivers and provides service providers with an element of certainty in order to encourage investment and balance supply and demand. Fare reviews should also seek to minimise compliance costs and assist in the presentation and dissemination of fare information for passengers. A reliable system of information gathering must be put in place to assist future fare reviews.

Taxi Fares Question 6

What issues should be taken into account by the Commission when setting maximum fares?

Taxi Fares Question 7

How can information on taxi fares best be distributed to consumers, including people with disabilities, both in cabs and in general?

Table 5.7 on page 19 lists the elements that can be found in Irish fare cards. Some elements of the fare card will be incurred on all journeys (e.g. what is generally termed the 'Minimum Fare'), while others, generally termed extras (e.g. a luggage charge), will only be incurred under certain conditions.

The primary elements of taxi fares are those that are dependent on distance and time. At any one point in a journey, these elements are being charged according to either distance or time – but not both. At low speeds, or when the vehicle is stationary, a fare is calculated by time. This rewards the driver for waiting for passengers who have reserved his or her services but are not yet ready to travel, or for the costs of operating in periods of traffic congestion. Once the vehicle exceeds a certain speed (known as the changeover speed) the fare is calculated according to the distance travelled. If the speed falls below the changeover speed, then the next incremental charge will be incurred according to time. In Ireland, the changeover speed averages

16.9 km/hr (10.5 mph), but can be as high as 29 km/hr (18 mph). The Commission believes that it is necessary to retain time and distance charges and to review the changeover speeds.

Taxi Fares Question 8

What is the most appropriate changeover speed and what factors should be taken into account in arriving at the changeover speed?

5.3 The 'Minimum Fare'

The Commission's Review showed that all taxi fares contain the two fundamental elements of a metered system: the 'minimum fare'³ and the charge for 'mileage-thereafter'.⁴ Based on our research we believe that the greatest scope for improving Irish taxi fare structures relates to the minimum fare which is currently applied inconsistently throughout the country in many very similar environments.

The minimum fare in some areas includes an initial allowance to travel a certain distance – this distance varies between taximeter areas from 0.8 km to 4.8 km, and is 2.2 km on average. This initial charge tends to be known as the minimum fare. The cost of the minimum fare also varies from €2.40 to €6.00, with higher fares typically including an allowance to travel longer distances without incurring extra charges. Some towns with a high minimum fare also allow a second passenger to travel at no extra cost. The Commission believes that high minimum fares applying over short distances are a deterrent to use of taxis over those distances

As stated above the minimum fare can be regarded as consisting of two distinct elements: the hiring charge and an initial allowance for distance which is charged at a fixed, flat price. The minimum fare does not quote the price of these two components separately, but the cost of both can be inferred. In Ireland, mileage is charged between €0.73 and €1.25; the hiring charge varies from €0.90 to €3.75. Furthermore, the length of the distance allowance, as well as the rate at which it is charged, varies significantly. Further variety is introduced in some areas by including an allowance for a second person to travel free within the minimum fare.

³ The term 'minimum fare' is used to indicate the amount charged for hiring the vehicle and sometimes includes an initial distance charge. It is the amount that appears on the meter when the taxi is first engaged. Taxis are not required to charge any minimum fare in the sense of a legal minimum charge. It is the Commission's intention to change this term as it gives rise to confusion.

⁴ The term 'mileage-thereafter' is used to indicate the charge per mile/kilometre for distances travelled beyond any distance included in the minimum fare.

Table 5.7: Typical fare card structure

Item	Components	Example
Daytime Minimum Fare This structure is designed to incorporate a hiring charge, as well as an allowance to travel up to a specified distance, or elapse of time, at no additional charge. If the initial allowance for distance is exceeded, further charges are applied to the excess distance travelled; this further charge is known as 'mileage thereafter'.	Cost Distance Allowance Time Allowance	€4.50 2 km 300 seconds
Daytime Mileage Thereafter A time- and distance-related charge that applies to trips that exceed the basic allowance for time and distance incorporated in the Minimum Fare	Rate for distance and time	Expressed on a fare card in the increments through which the taximeter rises and the cost is incurred e.g. 20c/30secs and 20c/0.2km
Unsocial Hours: Minimum Fare A premium is usually applied on top of the daytime charges during unsocial hours, i.e. at night and during holidays. The allowance included for distance and time is sometimes reduced.	Cost Distance Allowance Time Allowance	€5.00 1.5 km 250 seconds
Waiting Time A fare typically based on the variation of mileage thereafter with time that compensates the driver for time spent waiting for passengers	Rate for time	40c/minute
Unsocial Hours: Mileage Thereafter A premium can be applied to the mileage thereafter during unsocial hours. In Ireland, this is found only in the cities, and is typically only applied when the premium applied to the minimum fare during unsocial hours is modest.	Rate for distance and time	25c/0.25km 25c/30 secs
Extras These include a range of additional charges for items such as additional passengers, luggage or telephone bookings. They are typically a flat rate, and not time- and distance-related. Furthermore, most taximeter areas only charge for some of these items.	Extra passengers Stops Booking Luggage Premium rank Soiling charge Animals	50c per extra adult passenger €1 per stop €1.50 for radio/ phone booking 50c/item €1.50 at Dublin Airport €75.00 50c/animal: guide dogs free

In towns that have a high distance allowance within the minimum fare, most journeys within the boundary of the town incur the minimum fare. This is because the distance allowance is not exceeded. Thus, most trips in that market are effectively subject to the same flat fee, irrespective of the distance travelled.

In order to correct these imbalances the Commission believes it is necessary to put in place a hiring charge that provides a sufficient return to the service provider on short trips and ensures that any combination of the hiring charge and allowable distance should not result in a high charge for very short trips that would prove to be bad value for the passenger and also deter demand.

Taxi Fares Question 9

Should there be a standard hiring charge throughout the country?

Taxi Fares Question 10

Should the hiring charge include an amount for an initial distance travelled or should it be lower and start to charge for distance as soon as the journey commences?

Taxi Fares Question 11

What hiring charge would prove good value to passengers while at the same time provide sufficient return to encourage supply?

Taxi Fares Question 12

How should a driver be compensated for time spent waiting for passengers?

5.4 Rate Charged Per Kilometre

There is considerable variation in the rate applied to the minimum fare and the charge for mileage-thereafter. Costs vary between €0.73 per kilometre and €1.25 per kilometre. The critical issues with regard to the mileage-thereafter rate is not only the absolute value, but the proportion of a typical trip that will be metered according to this rate, as opposed to the initial distance allowance of the minimum fare. For this reason, a direct comparison of the mileage-thereafter rates does not accurately indicate the relative level of charges between taximeter areas.

The minimum fare and mileage-thereafter are incurred according to the passing of time and distance – except in three taximeter areas. In Dungarvan, Drogheda and County Carlow the charge is solely distance dependent; time-related charges are not applied.

The Commission intends that all future distances should be calculated in metric measure. We also believe that all fares should be calculated on the meter based on time elapsed or the distance travelled without reference to any taximeter, city, county or other boundaries crossed. Making these changes will make it essential that the maximum rate per kilometre set by the Commission is the appropriate one.

Taxi Fares Question 13

If taxi fares are to be charged on the basis of a rate per kilometre travelled for all journeys, including very long journeys, should this rate go up in stages to compensate drivers for the lack of a return passenger? If so should there be two or three stages and over what distance should these stages apply?

Taxi Fares Question 14

Should the rate charged per kilometre be the same throughout the country? (When considering this please remember a separate time-based charge can be used to allow for traffic congestion).

Taxi Fares Question 15

What charge per kilometre would prove good value to passengers while at the same time provide sufficient return to encourage supply?

5.5 Unsocial Hours Fare

Almost all Irish taxi fares include a premium added to the minimum fare during unsocial hours. The premium applied averages 16 per cent, but some towns have higher rates, and four areas (County Carlow, Ennis, Killarney and Tralee) apply no premium during unsocial hours. In some cases a premium is applied to the mileage-thereafter rate during unsocial hours.

This charge is primarily designed to encourage supply at peak times of demand and currently operates mainly in Irish cities. In Dublin, this is the primary mechanism for applying a premium during unsocial hours, with the rate for mileage thereafter increasing by 33 per cent between daytime and night-time. In this instance, the same distance rate is applied to the distance allowance within the minimum fare.

The definition of what constitutes unsocial hours is inconsistent. The time of evening that hours become unsocial begins as early as 8 p.m. in Cork, Galway, County Longford, Waterford, Kilkenny, Ballina and Tipperary; and as late as 12 p.m. in Thurles. The evening rate typically runs through the night and ends early the following morning. In Tipperary, County Longford and Ballina, the definition of unsocial hours does not fit the typical structure: a first phase of unsocial hours begins at 8 p.m. and attracts a premium of 50c, but between midnight and 5 a.m. the premium rises to €1. The fare then drops to the lower rate for unsocial hours between 5 a.m. and 8 a.m.

Some local authorities define unsocial hours as including all day on Sunday; others define only Sunday evening and night as unsocial, which is consistent with the definition for night rates for the rest of the week. The definition of unsocial hours during public holidays tends to define them as relating to the whole day. However, Carlow does not define these days as unsocial,

and Mallow, Thurles and Portlaoise define unsocial hours only in the evenings and nights. In some cases, the premium relating to public holidays exceeds the normal premium applied to unsocial hours on other days.

The premium applied to unsocial hours should have the effect of ensuring an adequate supply of taxis during these hours. In some cases the current premium applied does not take into account the fact that a taxi travelling a long journey incurs higher driver costs than a taxi travelling a short distance. Currently, mileage-thereafter rate adjusted for unsocial hours is applied only in the major conurbations. In taximeter areas in towns, a flat premium is applied during unsocial hours, regardless of the distance travelled. The Commission believes it is important to continue to provide incentives to encourage supply at peak times.

Taxi Fares Question 16

At what times, if any, do incentives need to be provided to encourage taxi supply?

Taxi Fares Question 17

What incentives would encourage maximum supply at peak times?

Taxi Fares Question 18

Should any premium for unsocial hours or peak times be applied to the hiring or minimum charge?

Taxi Fares Question 19

Should any premium for unsocial hours or peak times be applied to the rate per kilometre travelled, as well as to any distance allowance within the hiring or minimum fare?

Taxi Fares Question 20

Should any premium for unsocial hours or peak times be applied in the same manner throughout the country?

5.6 Fixed Price Elements (Extras)

Applied to Irish Fares

In Ireland, there is general consistency in the rates that are charged for most extras. Some inconsistency lies in the fact that in some taximeter areas there are no charges imposed for certain extras.

5.6.1 Charges for Extra Passengers

Some taximeter areas, usually those with a high minimum fare, do not charge for extra passengers; but most do. In almost all cases, the charge is 50c per extra adult passenger, with two children counting as one adult.

Taxi Fares Question 21

Should there be a separate charge for additional passengers (in excess of the fare paying passenger)? What if any is the appropriate rate which should be charged for additional passengers?

5.6.2 Extra Stops

Some taximeter areas charge for extra stops, either to deliver and pick up goods or passengers before travelling onwards. Most areas that include this charge do not employ a charge for extra passengers.

Taxi Fares Question 22

Should there be a separate charge for additional stops? What, if any, is the appropriate rate which should be charged for additional stops?

5.6.3 Call-out Charge

A growing number of people arrange their trips by telephone, SMS, E-mail and other communications methods. This practice should be encouraged as it provides distinct benefits for the customer, the operator and society generally. It is important that fares reflect this and incentivise this method of operation. This is generally achieved through a call-out charge which is added to the fare to compensate the driver for the time and distance travelled to pick up the passenger.

The four largest cities in the State (Dublin, Cork, Galway and Limerick), along with Dundalk, Ballina and Tipperary, all carry a charge of €1.50 for making bookings by telephone. In County Longford the charge is 50c and in Killarney it is €1.20. The charge does not apply elsewhere.

Taxi Fares Question 23

Is a call-out charge the most appropriate way to incentivise the provision of a high quality demand responsive taxi service and if so how much should the call-out charge be?

5.6.4 Luggage

The four largest cities in the State, along with Killarney, Thurles, Ballina and Tipperary, have a charge for items of luggage that exceed a certain size. The typical charge is 50c per item.

Taxi Fares Question 24

Should there be a separate charge for luggage, and if so, how much should it be?

5.6.5 Animals

Dublin, Bray, Galway, Limerick, Cork, Ballina, Tipperary and County Longford charge 50c for each animal carried (guide dogs are carried free). Longford town charges €1 per animal, Killarney charges 60c and the charge is €3 in Thurles. In all other areas, no charge applies.

Taxi Fares Question 25

Should there be an extra charge for animals and if so, what should it be? Please note the Commission will not allow charges in respect of guide dogs or mobility aids.

5.6.6 Soiling Charge

This charge is found in all areas and is designed primarily to discourage staining of the cab, due to accidents with food, drink and related issues that would force the cab out of service until the vehicle had been cleaned and valeted. The charge for this 'extra' ranges from €25 to €100. The Commission proposes to continue to allow this charge and believes that it should be sufficient to recover the actual costs incurred and act as a deterrent.

Taxi Fares Question 26

How much should the soiling charge be and on what basis and circumstances should it apply?

5.6.7 Premium Pick-up Points

In Dublin, there is an extra charge of €1.50 for being picked up at Dublin Airport. In Dungarvan, any pick-up that is not at a rank carries a charge of 75c. This charge is not found elsewhere.

Taxi Fares Question 27

Should there be a premium pick-up charge and on what basis, and in what circumstances, or at what locations should it apply? How much should any premium pick-up charge be?

6

Summary of questions

Throughout this consultation paper a series of questions are set out to assist those wishing to put their views forward. They are carried in the section to which they relate and summarised here for ease of reference. The document is not intended to be a questionnaire and people responding are not required to answer all or any of the questions. All written submissions received by the Commission will be considered before new regulations are put in place.

Taximeter Area Questions

Question 1

Should all areas have the potential to access taxi services by having their area declared a taximeter area?

Question 2

There are a number of ways in which taximeter areas can be designated. Which of the following do you believe is most appropriate?

- a) Make the whole country one taximeter area?
- b) Continue to base taximeter areas on towns and cities in line with the current arrangement, which has generally used town or city administrative boundaries, with taximeter areas declared mostly in the larger towns?

c) Base taximeter areas on City and County Administrative areas; in this scenario should:

- i The four Dublin local authority areas remain as one taximeter area?
- ii Should Cork City and County be one or two taximeter areas?
- iii Should Limerick City and County be one or two taximeter areas?
- iv Should Galway City and County be one or two taximeter areas?
- v Should Waterford City and County be one or two taximeter areas?
- vi Should the County be the taximeter area for all other areas?

Question 3

In the event of taximeter areas being expanded significantly it would be necessary to give drivers the right to refuse very long journeys. After what distance do you believe a driver should have the right to refuse to carry a passenger?

Question 4

Should taxi drivers be allowed to ply for hire, pick up or stand at ranks, in more than one taximeter area?

Taxi Fares Questions

Question 1

Should all taxi fares in Ireland be controlled by having a price cap (maximum fare) that can be charged for all trips and accordingly, charged on the meter?

Question 2

Should the taxi fare structure (i.e. the method by which the fare is calculated) be the same throughout the country or should there be regional or local variations?

Question 3

Should the taxi fare rates (i.e. the actual amount charged for various components of the fare) be the same throughout the country or should there be regional or local variations?

Question 4

Are there any issues in relation to taxi fares that require special consideration for people with disabilities?

Question 5

The 2003 Act provides that different maximum fares may be set in respect of single hire or shared hire. Is taxi sharing something that should be regulated for, and if so, what issues need to be considered in relation to fare setting?

Question 6

What issues should be taken into account by the Commission when setting maximum fares?

Question 7

How can information on taxi fares best be distributed to consumers, including people with disabilities, both in cabs and in general?

Question 8

What is the most appropriate changeover speed and what factors should be taken into account in arriving at the changeover speed?

Question 9

Should there be a standard hiring charge throughout the country?

Question 10

Should the hiring charge include an amount for an initial distance travelled or should it be lower and start to charge for distance as soon as the journey commences?

Question 11

What hiring charge would prove good value to passengers while at the same time provide sufficient return to encourage supply?

Question 12

How should a driver be compensated for time spent waiting for passengers?

Question 13

If taxi fares are to be charged on the basis of a rate per kilometre travelled for all journeys including very long journeys, should this rate go up in stages to compensate drivers for the lack of a return passenger? If so should there be two or three stages and over what distance should these stages apply?

Question 14

Should the rate charged per kilometre be the same throughout the country? (When considering this please remember a separate time-based charge can be used to allow for traffic congestion)?

Question 15

What charge per kilometre would prove good value to passengers while at the same time provide sufficient return to encourage supply?

Question 16

At what times, if any, do incentives need to be provided to encourage taxi supply?

Question 17

What incentives would encourage maximum supply at peak times?

Question 18

Should any premium for unsocial hours or peak times be applied to the hiring or minimum charge?

Question 19

Should any premium for unsocial hours or peak times be applied to the rate per kilometre travelled, as well as to any distance allowance within the hiring or minimum fare?

Question 20

Should any premium for unsocial hours or peak times be applied in the same manner throughout the country?

Question 21

Should there be a separate charge for additional passengers (in excess of the fare paying passenger)? What if any is the appropriate rate which should be charged for additional passengers?

Question 22

Should there be a separate charge for additional stops? What, if any, is the appropriate rate which should be charged for additional stops?

Question 23

Is a call-out charge the most appropriate way to incentivise the provision of a high quality demand responsive taxi service and if so how much should the call-out charge be?

Question 24

Should there be a separate charge for luggage, and if so, how much should it be?

Question 25

Should there be an extra charge for animals and if so, what should it be? Please note the Commission will not allow charges in respect of guide dogs or mobility aids.

Question 26

How much should the soiling charge be and on what basis and circumstances should it apply?

Question 27

Should there be a premium pick-up charge and on what basis, and in what circumstances, or at what locations should it apply? How much should any premium pick-up charge be?

7 Appendices

Appendix 7.1 Sections 41 and 42 of the Taxi Regulation Act of 2003

Section 41

(1) The Commission may—

- a declare any area to be a taximeter area in which a taxi may operate for the carriage of a passenger for reward within the area, and
- b extend or otherwise alter the boundary of a taximeter area.

(2) Before making a declaration under *subsection (1)*, the Commission shall—

- a consult with the Council, the Garda Commissioner and the local authority in whose functional area the taximeter area is located,
- b publish a notice in one or more newspapers circulating in the area to be declared to be a taximeter area or where an existing taximeter area is to be extended or otherwise altered—
 - (i) indicating that it is proposed to make such a declaration, and
 - (ii) stating that representations in relation to the proposed declaration may be made in writing to the Commission within a period of one month from the publication of the notice,
- c consider any observations made by the Council or the Garda Commissioner or a local authority under *paragraph (a)* and any representations made subsequent to the publication of the notice referred to in *paragraph (b)*.

(3) An area declared before the commencement of this section to be a taximeter area under article 7(1) of the Regulations of 1995, or regarded to be a taximeter area under article 7(3) of the Regulations of 1995, is deemed to be a taximeter area for the purpose of this section and may be extended or altered by the Commission in accordance with this section.

(4) A licensing authority (within the meaning of the Regulations of 1995) shall not, upon the commencement of this section, declare, extend or alter a taximeter area under the Regulations of 1995.

Section 42

(1) The Commission may make an order ('maximum fares order') fixing the maximum fares in respect of any taximeter area that may be charged by the driver of a taxi.

(2) In this section—

'shared hire' means a hire which is engaged jointly by more than one person at the same time, not necessarily terminating at the same location, from an appointed stand which has been designated for shared hire purposes by a local authority;

'single hire' means a hire which is engaged by one person on that person's sole behalf or on behalf of that person and additional persons.

(3) Different maximum fares may be fixed under this section—

- a in respect of hires engaged on a single hire basis and on a shared hire basis,
- b for different circumstances or times, and
- c for different taximeter areas.

(4) Before fixing maximum fares under this section the Commission shall—

- a consult with—
 - (i) any local authority within whose functional area the taximeter area exists,
 - (ii) the Council,
 - (iii) the Legal Metrology Service,
- b publish a notice in one or more newspapers circulating in the taximeter area—
 - (i) indicating that it is proposed to exercise the function, and
 - (ii) stating that representations in relation to the proposal may be made in writing to the Commission before a specified date (which shall be not less than one month after the publication of the notice), and
- c consider any observations made by the Council, the Legal Metrology Service, any local authority consulted under *paragraph (a)* and any representations made pursuant to *paragraph (b)*.

(5) Where maximum fares are fixed under this section by the Commission, details of the fares fixed shall be published by the Commission in one or more newspapers circulating in the taximeter areas in respect of which the maximum fares have been fixed.

(6) The Commission may amend or revoke a maximum fares order.

(7) An officer of the Commission may issue a certificate that on a specified day specified fares were the maximum fares fixed for a taxi in respect of a particular taximeter area.

(8) A certificate purporting to be issued under *subsection (7)* that on a specified day a specified fare was the maximum fare fixed for a taxi in a particular taximeter area shall, without proof of the signature of the person purporting to sign it or that he or she was the proper person to issue it, be evidence until the contrary is shown of the matters certified in the certificate.

(9) Any maximum fares fixed for particular taximeter areas in accordance with article 27 of the Regulations of 1995 and in force immediately before the commencement of this section shall, after such commencement, continue in force as if fixed under this section and may be amended or revoked accordingly.

(10) Section 84 (inserted by section 15(1) of the Act of 2002) of the Act of 1961 is amended by inserting after subsection (1)(d) the following:

‘(dd) designating appointed stands for the purpose of shared hire,’.

(11) The driver of a taxi who charges or attempts to charge a fare for a hire, in respect of a journey in a taximeter area to which a maximum fares order applies, that is greater than the maximum fare that may be calculated in accordance with the order is guilty of an offence.

Appendix 7.2 Advertisement for Taximeter Areas and Taxi Fares Consultation process

**Taxi
Regulator**  Commission for Taxi Regulation
An Coimisiún Um Rialáil Tacsaithe

www.taxiregulator.ie

Declaration of Taximeter Areas & setting of Maximum Fares for Taxis

The power to declare Taximeter Areas and set Maximum Fares transferred from local authorities to the Commission for Taxi Regulation on 26 September 2005 under the Taxi Regulation Act 2003.

Section 41 of the Act provides that the Commission for Taxi Regulation may declare any area to be a taximeter area in which a taxi may operate for the carriage of a passenger for reward within the area and extend or otherwise alter the boundary of an existing taximeter area.

Section 42 of the Act provides that the Commission for Taxi Regulation may make an order fixing the maximum fares in respect of any taximeter area that may be charged by the driver of a taxi.

The Commission now proposes to exercise the functions outlined above nationally by declaring Taximeter Areas and setting the maximum fares that apply to taxis. Representations in writing are invited in relation to Taximeter Areas and Maximum Fares throughout the country.

A consultation paper on the Commission's proposed changes is available from the Commission's website www.taxiregulator.ie Alternatively a copy can be requested by telephoning the Commission on **(01) 659 3800**.

The closing date for receipt of written representations is **5:00pm on December 19th 2005**.

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