

# FORECOURT & RETAIL NEWS

THERE IS LIGHT  
AT THE END  
OF THE TUNNEL  
KEEP CONNECTED  
GETTING READY FOR  
RE-OPENING



## REVALUATION UPDATE

HOW READY ARE WE FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLES (EVS)?

UK MOVES TO E10 PETROL IN SEPTEMBER

IS A GLOBAL BAN ON PETROL AND DIESEL CARS IMMINENT?

AND MUCH MORE...

# Welcome to Forecourt & Retail News

## THE THEME OF THIS EDITION IS KEEP CONNECTED – GETTING READY FOR RE-OPENING

It has been a very difficult twelve months for all retailers and with fuels sales down up to 50% we are all looking forward to getting back to normal business. There is hope, and with the roll out of the vaccine we should see a swift increase in consumer activity by the end of the summer.

In this edition we feature the redevelopment of Johnny Brady's Site in Coolquay with its state of the art car wash and bespoke fresh food service; it clearly has the wow factor and is worth a visit.

We feature a payment system linked to a customer's smart phone which enables payment to be made from inside the vehicle without the need to insert plastic cards (see feature from Astro Baltics). We strongly recommend that our members look at this type of service and or payment at the pump as it generates a substantial increase in sales.

Gerard O'Toole gives a revaluation update. With the postponement for 12 Months of the revaluation of Kerry Galway, Mayo, Clare and Donegal he examines the implications for service station operators and opportunities to minimise the liability for commercial property rates.

David Blevings from IPRA talks EV with ESB ecars and Simon Acton from the Irish Electric Vehicle Owners Association and gives an update on availability and the future of forecourt charging.

Geraldine Herbert, Sunday Independent and Newstalk journalist examines the implications of a global ban on petrol and diesel cars.

IPRA continues to lobby on issues that affect our membership, and we continue to grow from strength to strength. We welcome your continued support to assist your business.



*Michael Griffin*  
Irish Petrol Retailers Association

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**Forecourt & Retail News** - the leading industry magazine is sent to all Irish Service stations and suppliers to the forecourt sector. It is widely read and if you wish to feature in the next issue please contact us at: [office@ipra.ie](mailto:office@ipra.ie) or call Michael on **087 254 6512**.



PUBLISHED BY THE IRISH PETROL RETAILERS ASSOCIATION



# REVALUATION UPDATE

■ **REVALUATION 2021 HAS BEEN DEFERRED FOR 12 MONTHS. GERARD O'TOOLE, DIRECTOR TUOHY O'TOOLE - VALUATION SURVEYORS, EXAMINES THE IMPLICATIONS FOR SERVICE STATION OPERATORS AND OPPORTUNITIES TO MINIMISE THE LIABILITY FOR COMMERCIAL PROPERTY RATES.**



The National revaluation process commenced in South Dublin in 2005 continues to be rolled out across the State. With much of the country now completed, Reval 2021 provides for the revaluation of all rateable properties along the western seaboard in counties Clare, Donegal, Galway, Kerry and Mayo. On completion the only area in the State not subject to revaluation will be Cork City and County. New valuations were scheduled to determine liability for commercial rates in 2022. However due to Covid-19, the Valuation

Office recently announced the deferral of Reval 2021 for a period of 12 months with valuations to take effect for rates purposes in 2023 and thereafter.

From the outset it is important to note that this process, is in itself, not an increase in commercial rates. It is essentially a rebalancing exercise where an entirely new system of calculating rateable values is introduced replacing an old and often misunderstood rates

system which has long since needed updating. Our experience to date suggests that some rate payers will end up actually receiving lower valuations, some higher and many will remain largely the same. However, those with increases have in some instances seen substantial increases. These arise most often in certain sectors and frequently based on the operating value of the business.

The legal basis for the revaluation is set out in the Valuation Acts 2001 to 2015. The valuation of a property or "net annual value" is an estimate of the annual rental value of a property. Valuers in the Valuation Office analyse rental evidence and the financial & trading information available for service stations. A valuation scheme is developed which is then applied to assess the valuations for all service stations. The application of the valuation scheme should result in an assessment in line with the annual rental value of the property.

The rates liability is calculated by multiplying the valuation by the annual rate on valuation (ARV). For example, a Service Station in county Roscommon with a valuation of €60,000 and an ARV of 0.2250 has a rates liability of €13,500. While the revaluation exercise is revenue neutral for local authorities, the service station sector has seen significant increases in rates liability post revaluation. This has created considerable debate within the sector in terms of the appropriateness of the valuation approach adopted by the Valuation office where it is sometimes felt may disadvantage those with retail business attached to filling stations as opposed to standalone grocery retailers which are assessed differently. This debate continues and many of you will be aware the IPRA produced a white paper on this and have lobbied the Valuation Office. However, this is the accepted approach and I see little prospect of this being successfully challenged.

Many operators within the Filling Station sector will have seen their rates rise and in some instances may have been very substantial. This reflects the fact that the old valuation approach adopted for such properties was outdated and did not take into account the underlying trading business. In addition, modern filling stations are often large purpose built retail properties and distinctly different from the small roadside facilities many of us would have grown up with. Many of these proposed rateable valuations have been challenged with a number being referred to the Valuation Tribunal. However, given the lengthy backlog of cases yet to be decided, there is a lack of tribunal decisions which can be reviewed.

Despite the deferral announced for Reval 2021 counties, now is not a time for complacency as valuations fixed at revaluation determine rates liability for a period up to 10 years. During the revaluation process operators have an opportunity on receipt of a "Proposed Valuation Certificate" to make "Representations". This is an informal appeal process and provides an opportunity to

ensure the valuations are fair and take account of all circumstances. Following consideration of representations, the Valuation Office issue "Valuation Certificates". There is a right of "Appeal to the Valuation Tribunal", an independent body with formal rules, procedures and fees. Both the right to make representations and Appeals to the Valuation Tribunal are strictly time limited with 40 days for representations and 28 days for appeals.

Outside of the revaluation process there is no automatic right to make representations and to appeal a valuation. It is possible to go through the "Revision of Valuation" procedure but there is first a requirement for a "material change of circumstances" to have occurred to the property. This in general terms corresponds to the erection of a new

building, demolition of part of a property, subdivision, amalgamation, etc. There are significant delays in the operation of the revision system with delays running to years common. Applications for Revision of Valuation also come from the local authorities to take account of alterations and additions to properties throughout the State.

An operator of a service station in receipt of a Proposed Valuation Certificate or a Valuation Certificate arising from revision or revaluation should immediately review and assess the implications for rates, and where appropriate, make representations and/or appeal to the Valuation Tribunal.

Operators can make representations and appeal on their own behalf or may wish to appoint an agent with specialist expertise. However with tens of thousands of properties subject to the latest revaluation locating an agent at short notice may prove difficult so it is best to be proactive.

Proposed Valuation Certificates in Reval 2021 counties and in Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown are projected to issue in February / March 2022. As with many events, preparation is key to ensuring a successful outcome. The Valuation Office have a very good web site which contains lots of useful information and is worth reviewing for any ratepayer. [www.valoff.ie](http://www.valoff.ie).

So in summary, I would advise all business owners in the retail and forecourt sector who have yet to receive their Valuation Certs, be aware that this process is delayed but will be undertaken next year. Be proactive but if you are unsure of what to do contact the Valuation Office or seek professional assistance. When in due course you receive your draft valuation cert and in the event you are unhappy with it, be assured there is a two stage appeal process which in my experience is fair and transparent.

*Gerard O'Toole  
BSc, Dip Proj Man, Dip Plan & Env Law, MSCSI, MRICS, ACI Arb  
Director of professional services and advisory - Tuohy O'Toole.*



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on fuel station maintenance cost & payment equipment rent. To start using Cloudics, the station must have a wet stock, dispenser and working internet connection. Not to worry about the technical part, our specialists will connect the station's forecourt equipment with our cloud controller. This enables the management all the station's work from Cloudics back-office system. For testing, Cloudics can be used in one dispenser, keeping the existing system working as before.



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**FOR TESTING OR SALES INQUIRIES CONTACT**



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 patrick@cloudics.eu

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 Tel: +372 507 0199  
 priit@cloudics.eu

Read more Future is on the other page

# THE FUTURE OF FUEL RETAIL - TODAY

Astro Baltics has for over 23 years provided services for petrol and fuel stations. We have been responsible for the development and supply of systems for **fuel station payments, forecourt equipment maintenance and POS systems** and this has given us an understanding of the issues both from the owner/operator and retail customer points of view.



## INNOVATION IN FUEL AND PETROL STATIONS

Astro Baltics has developed systems which are innovative for both owners and operators of fuel stations, and also for retail customers—some of which are particularly relevant in the time of Covid-19. These systems were initially developed for fast and efficient refuelling of agricultural and construction equipment but have now been introduced into the retail fuel and petrol station market.

## CLOUDICS – THE NEWEST TECHNOLOGY FOR FUEL STATION PAYMENTS & MANAGEMENT

Cloudics is our fuel station management and Mobile payment system developed for retailers to control all the fuel station devices through a forecourt cloud controller. It allows retailers to do maintenance and updates over the internet. For that, we offer our customers Cloudics back-office system which gives an overview of the current situation of all the stations (if there are a number of petrol stations on the system) or all devices (if only one station) from one location. Cloudics includes three important key features. Cloudics Forecourt Cloud Controller – for connecting station equipment, Back-office – for managing equipment and getting real-time data, Cloudics mobile app – for fuel payments by customers inside a vehicle.



**SAVE UP TO 150 000€  
PER YEAR ON FUEL  
STATION MAINTENANCE**

**START ACCEPTING  
MOBILE PAYMENTS IN  
YOUR STATION**



## FROM THE OWNER/OPERATOR POINT OF VIEW CLOUDICS BENEFITS ARE:

- **Fuel stations** can be managed remotely without the need for forecourt device controller at pumps, wet stock or retail Points of Sale (POS)
- **Remote management** of forecourt equipment with LIVE DATA
- **The set up of a new station** has never been easier, only wet stock, dispenser & Internet connection is required
- **Simplified maintenance**, no card readers, printers, screens that might wear off or break

## FROM THE RETAIL CUSTOMER POINT OF VIEW:

A payment system linked to a customer's smartphone enables payment from inside a vehicle, without the need to insert plastic cards, use a pin-pad, or go to a sales point. In times of Covid, this can reduce substantially possible sources of infection.

## ALREADY PROVEN TO BE SAFE AND RUNNING!

Cloudics solution is already used in different fuel stations across Europe and can be installed in a station in a day! For multiple locations, adding new sites has been never been easier and can be done with the push of a few buttons. This way a station can have its own mobile payment application without developing it themselves. Payment App development can be very expensive and choosing an already working solution could save your company around 300 000€. **Cloudics can be branded as your own application with our white-label option.**

**With Cloudics you will benefit from updating, continual maintenance, manpower backup, client requests, and reaction times.** Having mobile payments in your fuel station brings enormous and mutual benefits for Customers and Fuel Station Owners alike.

**TRY FOR THREE MONTHS WITH NO COST**

The easy application and adaption of this solution is that the implementation can be done from a distance!

## WHY WAIT ANOTHER YEAR, TAKE THE STEP AND TRY OUT OUR CLOUDICS NOW!

We offer you an opportunity to try Cloudics at no monthly cost for three months! It is possible to test it with only one pump and you will see how your end-customers adopt the new mobile payment solutions and how it works with your current IT-infrastructure. As a bonus, you will also get the opportunity to see all the station statistics and try our Cloudics back-office system.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT



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NEW  
CONCEPT**





## HOW READY ARE WE FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLES (EVs)?

The Government has declared a clear direction of travel in relation to Climate Change. In a nutshell, we need to seriously reduce greenhouse emissions to reach carbon net zero by 2050. The Climate Action Plan is not just about transport, it targets power generation, agriculture, heating, and transport.

The mainstay of the plan to ‘decarbonise’ transport is to move consumers from petrol and diesel vehicles to EV’s. Laudable, if most of our electricity comes from renewable sources and there are enough charging points to make journeys painless and easy... The plan sets a target of increasing the number of EVs on the roads to 1 million by 2030. At the end of 2020 estimates suggested that the number of EV’s on the road was just over 10,000 – that’s less than half of 1 per cent of the 2.7 million internal combustion

vehicles in the country now. To reach the Government’s target we need to see an increase of 990,000 or over 100,000 EV’s a year for the next nine years – a big ask.

IPRA sat in on an EV workshop during March 2021 which was run by ESB networks. Participants included ESB Networks, along with representatives from Dublin City council and the EV car owner’s association.

The consensus after a positive debate on the pros and cons of EV’s was that a clear roadmap was required to define how and where public charging facilities would be available for EV users as the network expands. In addition, most agreed that most of the charging (up to 90%) would likely be done at home overnight with charging

en route limited to quick top ups (requiring fast chargers) and these are likely to be at busy motorway services or major conurbations along major traffic routes.

So, what about EV’s in rural areas? ESB are testing the feasibility of using EV’s in rural areas and have recently established a test in Dingle where ten users are testing the practicalities of daily living with an EV. This will no doubt influence future upgrading of LV networks and making the required power available outside the major conurbations.

IPRA queried the issue of power availability away from major towns as this appeared to be the major issue that fuel retailers have met to date when enquiring about electric charging facilities. If you are in the East of the island and near Dublin, the likelihood is you will have access to sufficient power to allow you to install a fast charge facility but ESB say that if you are working off a local transformer, they can provide a 150/50kw unit that will accommodate most consumers’ needs – this is good news.

For this article we asked Simon Acton, Chairman of the Irish EV Association for his view on the future of motoring.

“The Irish Electric Vehicle Owners Association (IEVOA) was established in 2015 to support

and represent the needs of electric vehicle owners, both current and future. We currently have over 1,500 members and 5,000+ contributors on our Facebook group. A big part of our work is liaising with government departments, local authorities, public charging network operators and other stakeholders to ensure that the necessary policy, incentives, and infrastructure is being put in place to support the ambitions for electric vehicle adoption laid out in the Climate Application Plan. The increase in electric vehicles on our roads is now accelerating exponentially, indeed uptake has bucked the trend of declining car sales elsewhere in the industry during the COVID pandemic. 2021 is set to be a breakout year for EVs in Ireland with vastly increased model variety and driving range compared with only a couple of years ago.

It is clear also that most car manufacturers are now focused on an electric future with many announcing an end to combustion vehicle production as soon as 2025. For many consumers and businesses EVs are already a compelling choice and by 2025 EVs will be the obvious choice for the vast majority of new car buyers. Many of these vehicles will charge at home or workplaces, but there will always be a need for public charging, and forecourts are an obvious location for these chargers as EV owners like to avail of complementary services while they are charging. So, there is a good opportunity for forecourts to become an important part of the EV adoption story as already seen in many other European countries.

Currently the big EV infrastructure players such as ESB ecars, EasyGo, Ionity and Tesla Superchargers dominate the market, but we also see the likes of retailers and large forecourt operators such as Applegreen starting to provide their own chargers. For any forecourt operator considering installing EV chargers either Irish owned EasyGo or ESB ecars are a good place to start since both are currently looking for new locations”.

### SO, IF YOU ARE A RETAILER HOW CAN YOU GET STARTED AND WHO CAN YOU CONTACT TO SEE IF YOUR SITE IS SUITABLE FOR A CHARGING POINT?

ESB Ecars were the historical provider and probably a good place to start. IPRA spoke to Seamus Ryan in ESB ecars and he said, “ESB launched ESB ecars in 2010, building an infrastructure of 1,100 electric vehicle charge points across the island of Ireland and we continue to upgrade and expand the public charging network to help meet the continued growth of electric vehicles in the coming years. As part of the ESB Group, we share in the vast experience and capacity to innovate as part of a proven world-class company. ESB is committed to leading the transition to a reliable, affordable, low carbon energy future.

ESB is involved in all recognised electric vehicle charging infrastructure market segments – rapid, residential, workplace, destination, and depot. We can deliver full end-to-end solutions tailored to meet the specific needs of our partners. We are currently working on a nationwide project to roll out charging solutions at motor services locations”.

In conclusion, there is no doubt that over the next decade, the number of electric vehicles on the road will grow but there is a huge amount of work to do so the infrastructure for charging is widely available and at a cost that makes consumers ditch the internal combustion engine. For the author, the jury is still out on whether electric is the future or a stop gap before hydrogen comes on stream and we have not ruled out a zero-emission diesel from the major manufacturers in the next ten years as technology continues to advance at a rapid pace.

*If you would like to explore the potential of your motor service site, contact [ecars@esb.ie](mailto:ecars@esb.ie) and for further information on the EV owner’s association see <https://www.irishevowners.ie>*

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- ✓ Grease trap maintenance
- ✓ Preparation of site report and compliance paperwork

## Forecourt Maintenance

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# applegreen offering

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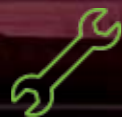
at the forecourt...



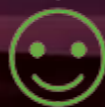
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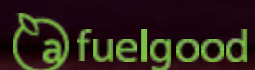
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\*Based on an average of all dealer sites over a 6 year period.

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Our Irish owned and operated company, has 559 forecourt sites across Ireland, the UK and America. As retail fuel market disrupters we are constantly evolving and adapting to overcome the challenges which face the future of the forecourt. We are particularly focused on climate change and the arrival of electric vehicles. Our skilled team of professionals are passionate about helping you drive your business forward. Dealer partners are supported by a team of specialists from forecourt construction, to marketing, operations, finance, and business management, along with the wider Applegreen retail operations.

*“Our dealer team work hard on creating a unique relationship with our dealer partners and as we move forward we are looking for new ways to add value to our existing partnerships. We are particularly proud to say that 90% of our dealer partners decide to stay with us at the end of their term.”*

– Maria Herrera,  
Dealer Manager

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# UK MOVES TO E10 PETROL IN SEPTEMBER

■ IT'S OFFICIAL. THE UK GOVERNMENT IS INTRODUCING E10 TO ITS PETROL PUMPS IN THE AUTUMN.



For some years now the policy process there has been about when and not if they'd do it, and the when has finally arrived.

This follows an increase in January this year in the UK, in the cost to fuel suppliers of buying out a biofuels cert instead of actually using biofuel, from 30 pence per litre to 50 pence.

E10 petrol is petrol with 10% bioethanol in it, up from the current 5% blend (E5) which UK and Irish drivers having been running on for years. Bioethanol is pure alcohol, and it's made by fermenting the sugars in grains, beet or cane. As well as displacing oil in transport, bioethanol is the basis of most hand and surface sanitising products, as well as some popular beverages and an endless list of indispensable industrial products. It is, after water, mankind's most useful, versatile and sustainable liquid.

The position of Ireland's department of the environment on E10 has always been the same as the UK: when and not if. The Irish government, with Eamon Ryan in charge of climate and energy, has yet to react one way or the other to the UK decision. The department is traditionally very accessible and we have sent them an invite for a briefing on the UK move and its implications for Ireland. We engaged actively with the UK Department for Transport during the period they were evaluating E10, and they even visited Ireland on a couple of occasions on our initiative, to engage with Irish stakeholders. We believe we contributed valuable evidence to them in support of E10 and their ultimate decision in favour of it.

Ireland's fuels industry, represented by Fuels For Ireland, is keen to follow the UK, and introduce E10 here simultaneously this year. It has called on the government to mandate the use of E10 from 2021 onwards. From a technical and standards perspective there's

**ETHANOL IS A FUEL WHICH, ON A JOULE-FOR-JOULE BASIS, RESULTS IN ABOUT 75% LESS GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS THAN TRADITIONAL PETROL, WHEN THE FULL LIFECYCLE IS CONSIDERED. FACTOR IN THAT ETHANOL HAS A SLIGHTLY LOWER ENERGY DENSITY THAN PETROL, AND A 10% BLEND OF ETHANOL BY VOLUME RESULTS IN E10 BEING 5% OR 6% LESS CARBON INTENSIVE THAN CONVENTIONAL PETROL WITH NO BIOETHANOL IN IT.**

nothing to stop the fuels industry from going ahead and doing it piecemeal, regardless of what the government does or doesn't do, but apparently there are commercial and logistics challenges which are best overcome by everyone moving in unison. The Irish and UK supply chains are closely related, so it makes sense for them to stick close. All refineries can and do make both E5 and E10 grades so that's not the question. It's actually the distribution and depot systems that need to be considered, because handling two distinct blends separately in the system, where before there was just one dominant blend, would be understandably unwieldy, especially where some parts of the distribution system are used by competing companies.

Fuel retailers won't experience any change whatsoever, apart from a simple change to the pump labels, with the lettering E5 replaced by E10. There are no compatibility or fuel mixing issues as E10 means any ethanol blend petrol, from 0% up to 10%, so consignments of E5 and E10 petrol can be mixed together perfectly happily in any ratio at any time.

Likewise our drivers won't experience any change. Just as the switch to E5 was imperceptible to them nearly ten years ago, so too will the switch to E10 now. Their cars will perform a bit better and emit less particulate matter from the tailpipe because ethanol is both an excellent fuel in its own right and an excellent enhancer of traditional fuel, allowing engines operate leaner and cleaner. Virtually all petrol cars on Irish roads were designed expressly to be at their optimum performance point on E10, and not on E5, and EU engine and emissions tests are referenced to E10.

Which brings us to the crux of the matter, which is why E10 was a good idea in the first place.

Ethanol is a fuel which, on a joule-for-joule basis, results in about 75% less greenhouse gas emissions than traditional petrol, when the full lifecycle is considered. Factor in that ethanol has a slightly lower energy density than petrol, and a 10% blend of ethanol by volume results in E10 being 5% or 6% less carbon intensive than conventional petrol with no bioethanol in it. This may seem modest, but bearing in mind that Ireland has a million petrol cars on the roads, E10 is the equivalent to taking 50,000 of them out of service, in terms of carbon emissions reductions. We would need around 100,000 electric vehicles to achieve the same progress. Clearly Ireland needs both EVs and E10, but the point is that E10 brings that climate progress within the existing vehicle fleet, in an instant, and at no cost to the consumer or the exchequer. France is rolling out 85% Superéthanol-E85 (requiring a discrete little €100 tuning adapter fitted to the engine) for the same reason, while many other countries have E15, E20 and E25 blends in the market.

Bioethanol is an anchor product for a biorefinery, so at our biorefinery in Hungary ([www.pannoniabiobio.com](http://www.pannoniabiobio.com)), for every kilo of ethanol we make, there is also a kilo of protein rich GMO-free animal feed coming out of the process, plus some corn oil, biogas, fibre and some specialty biomaterials. The protein animal feed on its own would be worth the effort, because if such feed is not coming from sustainable operations such as ours it's virtually guaranteed to be coming from out-of-sight soy meal operations in the Americas. In addition, the business assures much needed long term income stability for the farm sector and many thousands of quality jobs inside and outside the plant. Collectively, the EU biofuels sector brings over 6 billion in incomes to EU farmers annually, which is equivalent to about 15% of the CAP programme (which is a great!).

**ANY DOWNSIDES? NO, NONE WHATSOEVER - BIOETHANOL IS ALL GOOD.**

The European Commission did introduce a blanket 7% cap on all biofuels made from crops in 2017, for fear that biofuels would grow to the point of being a danger rather than a good. In the case of domestic European biofuels that fear was an abstract notion and not connected to any real world scenario. In reality volumes of domestic biofuels could double, treble or quadruple and still be overwhelmingly more of a good thing than a danger. Ireland is so far within the crop cap that the question is totally moot for us, so no matter what way you look at it E10 is the right way to go.

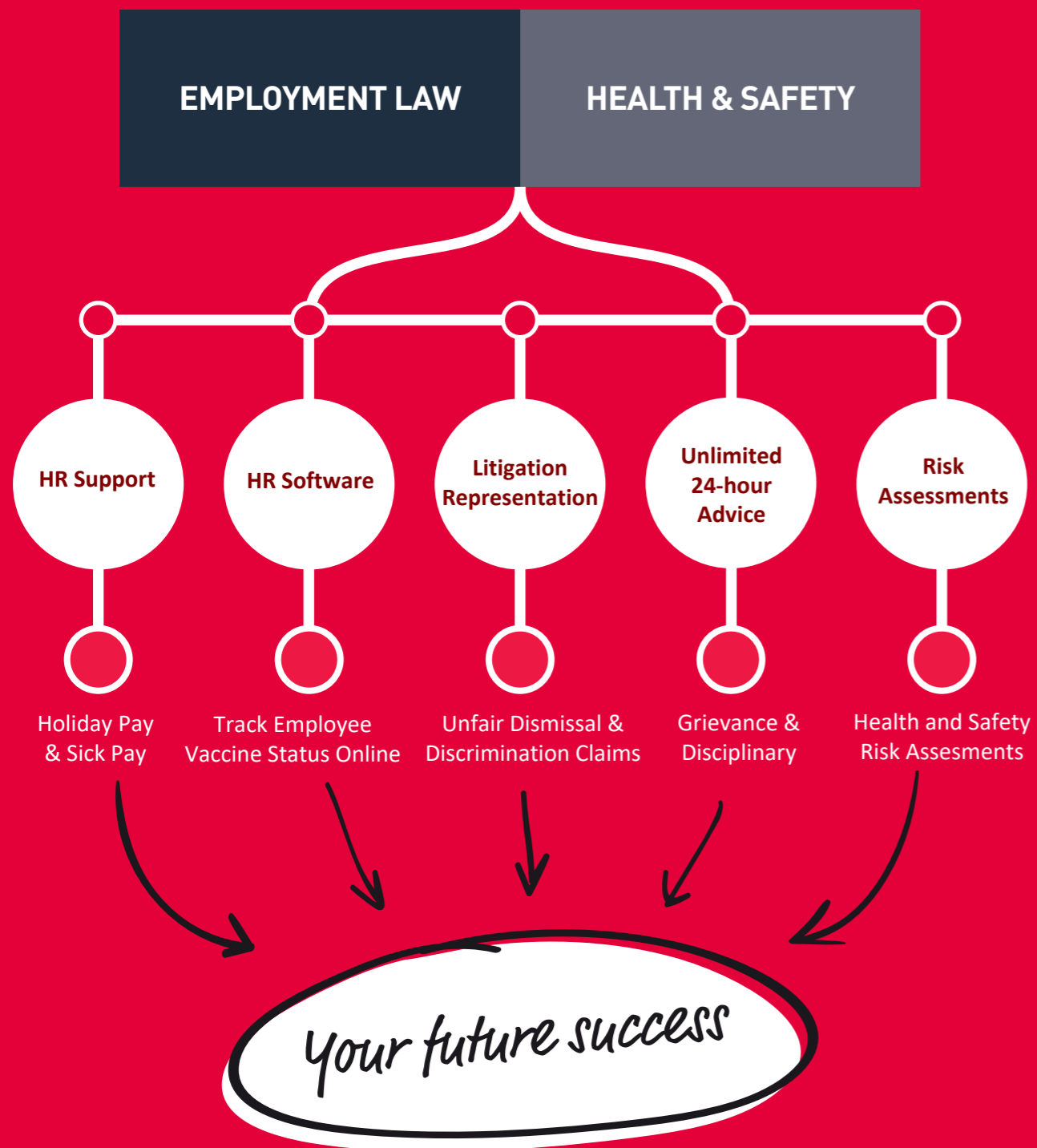
In the UK the RAC issued a caveat that a small percentage of cars were built before E10 became a world standard, and that the drivers of such cars should check for compatibility. But there's no need to check. The USA has been using E10 in all of its 250 million petrol vehicles - of every conceivable type - for many years and not a single incident has ever been reported to the fuel suppliers, the car makers or the regulators. Likewise a half dozen EU countries. Just as importantly, no amount of technical analysis or engine and lab testing has ever resulted in evidence that might be a concern. My advice is that it's simply not an issue and that all cars, of every make, model and age run perfectly well on E10.

The bottom line is that E10 petrol is coming to the UK this year, it's simple, easy and a win-win all round, and with a bit of luck it will arrive here too.



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PENINSULA

# EMPLOYER FAQs: COVID-19 VACCINE FOR STAFF

The rollout of COVID-19 vaccinations will extend to more and more cohorts of the Irish workforce in the months ahead. Surveys suggest that a good majority of workers will take up the offer of the vaccine once it becomes available to them. From an employer's perspective, there are more concerns about managing the minority of staff who don't wish to take the vaccine. Here we take a look at some of the most frequently asked vaccine-related questions business owners seek our advice on:

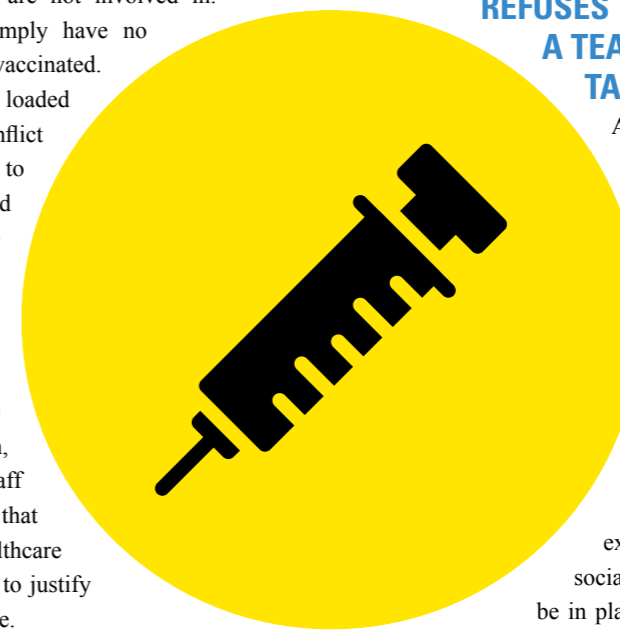
## WHAT IF ANY OF MY STAFF REFUSE TO BE VACCINATED?

Engage with the employee and seek to fully understand their reason for refusing the vaccine. Staff may have health, religious or other grounds for refusing the vaccine. It is also to be expected that some staff may simply be hesitant to take the vaccine. If you cannot address the employee's concerns, you may have to consider alternative work arrangements like remote work or redeployment if this is the only way to remove a health and safety risk.

## CAN I REQUIRE MY EMPLOYEES TO HAVE THE VACCINE?

The short answer is no you can't. The vaccine rollout is a public health operation that employers are not involved in. As matters stand, employers simply have no legal basis to require staff to be vaccinated. Mandatory staff vaccination is loaded with legal risks as there is a conflict between the employer's duty to provide a safe place of work and the employee's rights under the Constitution, data protection and employment equality legislation. It's also worth noting that the Government has not made it mandatory for citizens to get the vaccine. As a useful comparison, the HSE has not mandated its staff to take the vaccine which suggests that employers operating in non-healthcare environments will find it difficult to justify mandating staff to have the vaccine.

## WHAT CAN WE DO IF AN EMPLOYEE REFUSES TO RETURN TO WORK AS A TEAM MEMBER WILL NOT TAKE THE VACCINE?



As matters stand, the vaccine remains one component of a multi-layered approach to health and safety in the workplace. It is also not yet clear if the vaccine will eliminate the risk of transmission of the virus in the workplace. In this scenario, try to reassure the reluctant team member that all necessary precautions are being taken in line with health and safety legislation and the Work Safely Protocol. The existing health and safety measures like social distancing, masks and screens will be in place until the impact of the vaccine on transmission is better understood.

## IS IT SUITABLE TO ASK EMPLOYEES IF THEY ARE ACCEPTING/REJECTING THE VACCINE TO ASSIST WITH PLANNING?

Employers have a duty to ensure that the return to the workplace is safe. Likewise, employees have a duty to cooperate with their employer with regard to health and safety at work. Asking employees what their intentions are regarding the vaccine is therefore a reasonable step to take as part of health and safety management. Our new VaccTrak software allows business owners to record vaccinations which helps reassure staff and customers that the workplace is safe.

Irish Petroleum & Retail Association members can speak to the employment law and health & safety specialists here at Peninsula Ireland who will be happy to discuss your situation and offer insights into the best options available to you.

Call Tony Kerins today on 086 7737928 or email [Tony.Kerins@peninsula-ie.com](mailto:Tony.Kerins@peninsula-ie.com). Alternatively you can also visit our website at [www.peninsula-ie.com](http://www.peninsula-ie.com)

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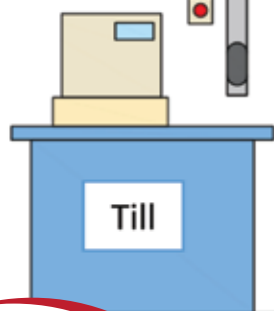


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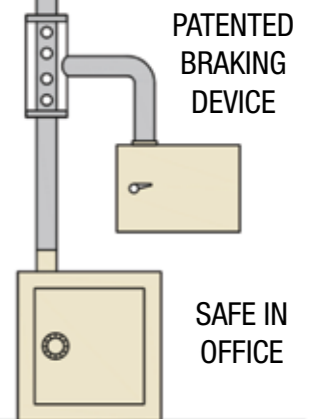
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# MERCEDES-BENZ E-CLASS REVIEW

Launched back in 2016, the current generation of the Mercedes-Benz E-Class is widely regarded as a leader, the epitome of style, comfort, and technology. With over 14 million E-Class Saloon and Estate models delivered since 1946, the E-Class is the best-selling model series in the history of Mercedes-Benz and considered by many as the ‘heart of the brand’.

It’s also the bestselling model for Mercedes-Benz in Ireland. In 2020, the brand launched a refreshed version of this executive classic, while also using the opportunity to launch two ‘EQ Power’ plug-in hybrid models on the Irish market – the E 300 e (petrol electric hybrid) and the E 300 de (diesel electric hybrid).

The latest E-Class has had a few styling tweaks but retains its stately presence on the road. The refresh includes a slight redesign of the front grille and headlamps for a more youthful appearance

in line with other models in the Mercedes-Benz range. At the back, there’s a new bumper, split tail lamps and a new boot lid. Full LED headlights and taillights are fitted as standard. Subtlety is the name of the game here.

Inside comes a well-appointed interior that is still a class example of modern contemporary luxury, something Mercedes-Benz does so well these days. Cabin finish is impeccable as you would expect of a high-flyer like the E-Class. There are new trims for the interior too and a new steering wheel design. Supportive seats with leather upholstery come as standard, ideal for settling in for a long motorway cruise.

The latest-generation MBUX and ‘Hey Mercedes’ multimedia and voice-activated assistance systems also feature. Displayed on two large, high-resolution multimedia screens, both come housed



beneath a shared glass cover that creates a widescreen cockpit effect. It’s simply stunning.

Mercedes-Benz Ireland expects the focus for the Irish market to be the tried and tested E 200d and 220d diesels, and the new E 300 e/ E 300 de plug-in hybrids. I can attest to the success of the E 220d from previous experience, with diesel still being a reliable choice for power and economy in this class of vehicle.

Yet times are changing with electrification becoming the default way for car manufacturers to bring down emissions and offer customers more flexible, environmentally friendly options.

Powered by a 2.0-litre, four-cylinder petrol engine, combined with a 13.5 kWh battery and electric motor, the new Mercedes-Benz E 300 e puts out a healthy 320 hp and 700 Nm of torque. CO2 emissions are just 37g/km so this model qualifies for motor tax of just €140.

On the road the E-Class shows exactly why it’s still a benchmark in its class with excellent comfort and refinement, making it an absolute pleasure to drive. It soaks up the motorway miles, moving over the tarmac like the big, elegant saloon it is. There’s a pleasantly positive delivery of power by the E 300 e, made all the more special by the knack of the electric motor to give smooth, linear acceleration, while the 9-speed automatic gearbox never misses a beat. It is beguiling how quiet this car is to drive around town.

The E-Class might look the business but it’s not the most dynamically exciting car in its class. Yet rear wheel drive agility still makes it an interesting large saloon to drive.

While diesel has typically been the go-to in the large premium saloon segment, the new Mercedes-Benz E 300 e returns some impressive economy. Over a week of driving, with some motorway runs included, my average fuel consumption was between 6 – 6.4 l/100km.

The beauty of this car is that because it’s a plug-in hybrid you can experiment with charging it and driving it on electric power alone, for example when driving around town or on short commutes. In this scenario, there’s up to 50 km of range available. With an on-board charge port with a capacity of 7.4 kW, the battery can be charged

in 1.5 hours using a wallbox or in five hours using a conventional domestic power socket.

Unfortunately boot space suffers in the hybrid to accommodate the battery, down from a very respectable 540 litres - in a diesel E-Class for example - to 370 litres in the E 300 e, with an awkward step in the boot.

Pricing starts from €53,645 for the E 200 d, while the E 300 e plug-in hybrid range starts from €61,830 with a high level of standard equipment. The E 300 de diesel plug-in hybrid range starts from €63,755.

The Mercedes-Benz E-Class is a fine car and highly desirable for its comfort, refinement, and high-end cabin experience. The updates for 2021 bring a healthy digital and technology upgrade to the car making for an even more glamorous cabin.

The new E 300 e is a wonderful execution of Mercedes-Benz values – electrified. However, the diesel E-Class is also a highly capable vehicle with great returns on economy. So, whether buyers are ready to pay the premium for new plug-in hybrid technology, and start their own journey to electrification, remains a very personal matter. But either way the E-Class is a magnificent car.



*Caroline Kidd is a motoring journalist and jury member for Irish Car of the Year. She is the editor of Changing Lanes, one of Ireland’s leading motoring blogs. Visit her blog at [www.changinglanes.ie](http://www.changinglanes.ie)*

**Model Tested:** Mercedes-Benz E 300 e Plug In Hybrid  
**Price:** €61,830  
**Engine:** 2.0-litre petrol electric hybrid  
**Power:** 320 bhp  
**Torque:** 700 Nm  
**0-100km/h:** 5.7 seconds  
**Top Speed:** 250 km/h  
**CO2 Emissions (WLTP):** 37 g/km  
**Motor Tax:** €140 per year

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# BRADYS AT COOLQUAY

## ■ CAROLINE KIDD VISITS THE RECENTLY REDEVELOPED BRADYS AT COOLQUAY, A LEADING EXAMPLE OF MODERN FUEL AND CONVENIENCE RETAILING.

Situated in North County Dublin near the border with County Meath, Bradys at Coolquay, The Ward, offers first class convenience retailing and the largest, most advanced car washing in Ireland. With a unique range of bespoke, in-house developed food concepts, as well as partnerships with trusted brands like Top Oil, Spar, Insomnia Barista and Smooch, there is undeniable ambition, innovation, and dedication at work here.

As I come off the M2 motorway to meet owner and manager Johnny Brady for a tour of the new facility, I quickly find myself in more rural North Dublin surroundings. Bradys at Coolquay is very much a local convenience store serving nearby residents, local businesses, as well as passing traffic for over 30 years at this site.

But with a range of new services like state-of-the-art car washing, unique fresh food offerings, online ordering, food collection and home delivery, Bradys at Coolquay looks set to attract even more new customers.

Johnny bought some extra land to enlarge the site and planning permission was received for the new plans. The site was closed for 6 months in 2020, the old store was levelled to the ground, and a new modern facility built on the site, with ample parking and the exciting new Platinum Auto Wash.

The redevelopment at Coolquay was needed as the site was small making it difficult to trade with limited parking. But passion was also a driving force behind the decision. “When you are in a place for this long you get a certain loyalty to it and the people it serves,” says Johnny. “There is a lot of activity in the area and I had the attitude ‘build it and they will come’. That seems to be working.”

The new Platinum Auto Wash at Coolquay is in itself a sight to behold with a new purpose-built tunnel and over 12 wash stations that can see about 40 cars washed per hour at maximum capacity. It is the only car wash of its kind and scale in Ireland.

Cars move through the wash tunnel on a double chain conveyor with a series of wash stations that result in excellent wash quality. Top of the range cleaning agents prepare the paint for drying, delivering a superior shine, and lasting protection for the vehicle’s paint. The whole process takes about 3.5 minutes, with add-on services available like waxing and underbody wash. Then each customer has complimentary access to an area with 16 indoor high-pressure professional vacuums to clean the interior of the car.

Inside Bradys at Coolquay, visitors will find original food franchises like The Burger Project and Sorrento Pizza, along with the Spar deli counter and fresh food offering, Insomnia coffee, Smooch frozen yoghurt and Flavour House Chicken. “A lot of work has gone into creating the new brands, sourcing ingredients, developing menus, tasting and testing,” says Johnny. “We are a small team but everyone has played their part in it.”

The quality and originality of what results is truly inspiring. Having independence in the fresh food side of the business was a key driver. The Burger Project - ‘Tasty by Design’ – uses 100% Irish Black Angus Beef, farm-fresh ingredients, and fresh brioche buns, with all burgers cooked to order. Sorrento Pizza specialises in authentic

Italian pizzas, handmade to a traditional, artisan recipe and stone-baked in an authentic Italian oven on-site.

Customer feedback has been excellent so far. “It’s Level 5 lockdown and we haven’t traded in normal times yet but there is word of mouth and new customers are still coming in every day because they have heard what we are doing. So it’s very positive,” says Johnny. “It’s going to be very busy when things open up again.” Bradys at Coolquay look forward to welcoming customers back to enjoy in-store dining once things open up again.

Johnny is looking ahead and work is ongoing to tweak the food offerings at Coolquay and embrace technology even more to improve efficiency and the customer experience. He’s also got an eye on his second site at Spawell Road, Templeogue, for a similar revamp.

“It’s not for everyone what we are doing here. There is a risk involved. But we have roots here and a well-established business, and are building on what we had here already,” says Johnny. “We have crammed a lot into the one site. Because of our location we have to become a destination and we are doing that in spades.”



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# IS A GLOBAL BAN ON PETROL AND DIESEL CARS IMMINENT?

■ COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD PLAN TO BAN ICE CARS IN A BID TO CURB CARBON EMISSIONS WRITES GERALDINE HERBERT.

Growing concerns regarding air pollution and climate change have reinforced the need to transition to alternative fuels. Transportation is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions and one of only a few sectors where emissions are still rising. In a bid to curb these emission countries worldwide have announced plans to ban sales of internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles. While gaining momentum the pace of change differs considerably across the globe.

## EUROPE

More than a dozen countries in Europe have set a deadline for the ending of sales of petrol and diesel cars; they range from 2040 in France, Ireland in 2030 to Norway and the Netherlands who plan to bring in a ban as early as 2025. After initially setting a target of 2040 for the phase out the UK has since announced a deadline of 2030. Last month a nine-country coalition led by the Netherlands and Denmark and including Austria, Belgium, Greece, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg and Malta called on the European Commission to set a phase-out date for the sale of internal combustion engines. There are many who argue that European bloc-wide measure is what is needed to meet its climate targets rather than allowing countries to act independently as such an initiative would not only lower the cost of electric vehicles as it would offer an incentive to invest in research and development but it would also protect against the possible negative impact of an increase of used vehicles previously registered in another EU Member State or third country.

## NORTH, SOUTH & CENTRAL AMERICA

When California set 2035 as a goal for all new passenger vehicle sales to be zero-emission it was the first policy of this kind in the US and to date there is still no Federal ruling on this issue. Shortly after the Californian Governor Newsom announced the ban New Jersey declared a similar plan that also calls to reduce state emissions by 80% by 2050 followed by Massachusetts who has pledged it too will ban sales fossil fueled-powered vehicles by

2035. With more than 270 million vehicles registered in the US it is hoped this ban will be introduced in other states and set the US on course for a green transportation future. In Canada, as part of an array of measures aimed at reducing emissions Quebec intends to introduce a ban in 2035 and to have 1.5 million electric vehicles on the road by 2030. British Columbia has adopted binding regulation requiring carmakers to gradually increase the sales share of new zero-emission passenger cars and light commercial vans to 10% by 2025, 30% by 2030, and 100% by 2040.

In Central and South America the transition from fossil fueled vehicles is occurring at a much slower rate. Only 2 countries Costa Rica and Colombia have committed to a targeted phase out of ICE vehicles. Columbia are aiming to electrifying their public transport fleets from at least 10% in 2025 to 100% in 2035 while in Costa Rica the National Decarbonization Plan has proposed that 100% of sales of new light vehicles for the transport of people and goods shall be zero-emission by no later than 2050.

## ASIA

India has committed to end the sale of fossil-fuel-powered vehicles by 2030 while Indonesia, South Korea, and Singapore are joining the EU and other countries in setting a net-zero target and to this end have plans to ban sales of conventional cars by 2040. By 2035, all new vehicles sold in China must be powered by 'new-energy', the Chinese authorities have said. Half of them must be electric, fuel cell, or plug-in hybrid – the remaining 50%, hybrid vehicles. In Japan the Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga has publicly committed to transition Japan to a decarbonized, zero-emission industrial production model and has pledged to achieve economy-wide carbon neutrality by 2050 however with no concrete plans in place to ban the sale of ICE vehicles the government has been criticised for allowing the production and sale of fossil fueled hybrid vehicles to continue indefinitely. Israel will seek to ban all petrol and diesel new vehicle sales in the country starting in 2030.



## AUSTRALIA

In stark contrast to Europe, Australia has implemented no policies to regulate vehicle emissions and with no targets and no significant purchase incentives sales of Electric Vehicles are considerably lower than in other parts of the world. While Australia's current government has pledged to improve the transition to EVs industry experts warn Australia may fall even further behind the global transition to clean transport and will struggle to catch up with other nations as many car makers will be discouraged from bringing more affordable electric cars to market.

## AFRICA

Apart from the island state of Cape Verde who plan to prohibit the import of ICE vehicles from 2035 no African country has set a hard deadline for a ban. Of greater concern in the continent of Africa is the lack of emission regulation. As a result, many African countries rely on cars as old as 25 years, those no longer able to meet the strict emission standards of rich industrialised countries, to provide affordable transport as the percentage of cars on the road is increasing. Meanwhile the lack of a charging infrastructure and the high purchase price of electric cars are major challenges to overcome to achieve significant electric vehicle penetration in Africa.

**MANY COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD HAVE MADE ANNOUNCEMENTS REGARDING FUTURE RESTRICTIONS ON NEW SALES OF ICE CARS. FEW COUNTRIES HOWEVER HAVE TAKEN LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND IN MANY CASES WHAT IS IN PLACE IS NON-BINDING AND ARE IN EFFECT SIMPLY TARGETS AND PLEDGES.**

Many countries around the world have made announcements regarding future restrictions on new sales of ICE cars. Few countries however have taken legislative action and in many cases what is in place is non-binding and are in effect simply targets and pledges.

And while many are considering ICE sales bans as a means to address air pollution and mitigate rising transport emissions, the pace of this change differs significantly around the world and there is still a considerable cohort that is unwilling to commit to a defined phase-out target. Governments and co-ordinated international actions play a key role in ensuring that Electric vehicle targets are met and therefore given how global the car industry is each country that makes the decision to implement a ban has an impact worldwide. That said we are still a long way off global meaningful action.

*Geraldine Herbert is Contributing Editor and Motoring correspondent for the Sunday Independent and the founder and editor of Ireland's first motoring website for women [www.wheelsforwomen.ie](http://www.wheelsforwomen.ie)*

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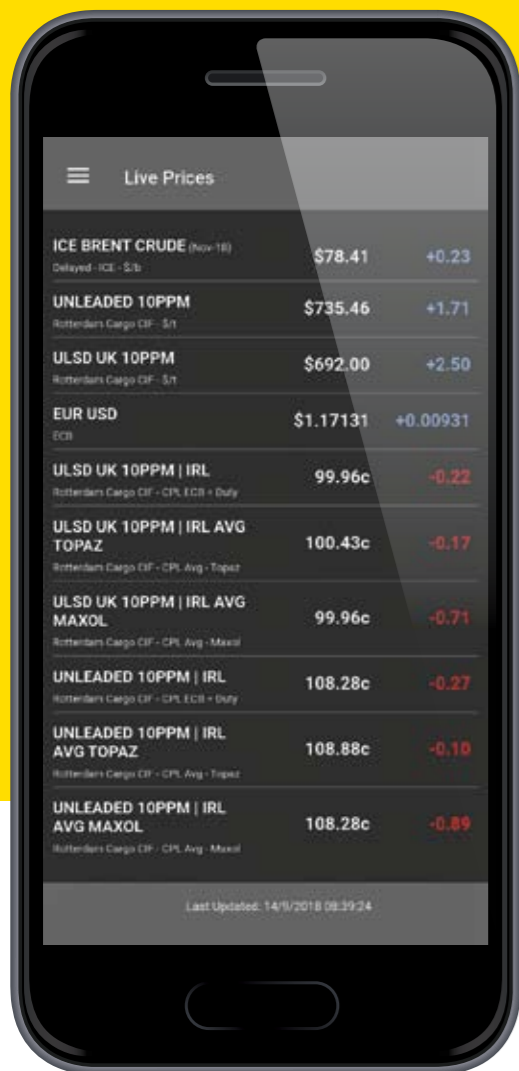
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**Forecourt:** Any uneven surfaces or cracks in the Forecourt should be repaired. A significant amount of Slip, Trip and Fall accidents occur on Forecourts because of these defects. If there is a delay in repairing such hazards it would be recommended that these areas are cordoned off. Items of Stock such as Flowers and Solid Fuel which are normally kept on the Forecourt should be stored in a tidy manner. They should never form an obstacle that will prevent people from entering or exiting your premises.



**Floors:** Floors should also be free from any obstacles and clutter. A change in floor level on the Shop Floor should be clearly marked.



**Spillage Procedure:** If there is a spillage in any of the flooring areas there should be a procedure in place to ensure that all spills are cleaned up immediately.



**CCTV:** In the event of an incident which could give rise to an insurance claim, CCTV will allow you to view the event carefully. In some instances, this footage could be used in defence of a false insurance claim. CCTV footage should be kept for 30 days, however footage specific to an incident should be immediately copied onto a disc & retained in a safe place. This could hold the key to successfully defending a claim made against your business.



**Lighting:** All areas of the site should be adequately lit making it easy to navigate around the site in a safe manner.

If you have any questions about our services or if you would like a quotation please call:

**Gearoid Fitzgerald: 086 896 9234**  
or you can call the Arachas head office on  
**01 2135000**

Alternatively, you might prefer to email us at **insure@arachas.ie** and we will get back as soon as possible.

Take Care and Stay Safe from all of us at Arachas – Protecting You & Yours



## Let Us Look Out For You

Protect your business with reliable insurance solutions for all your Petrol Retail Insurance needs

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T: 01 213 5000 E: [insurance@arachas.ie](mailto:insurance@arachas.ie) W: [www.arachas.ie](http://www.arachas.ie)



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# DSA LICENSE APPLICATION - DO YOU NEED HELP?

Worried about the paperwork, certificates, reports & site works that are required for the application process? Don't be! Why not let us take all the hassle & worry away from you, so you can spend time running your retail business.

DW CONSULTING provides a One-Stop-Shop - Step-by-Step Solution for your forecourt which includes:

- TOPOGRAPHIC LAYOUT SURVEY
- RISK ASSESSMENT SURVEY
- PETROL VAPOUR RECOVERY CERTIFICATE
- ELECTRICAL SAFETY CERTIFICATE
- EXPLOSIVE PROTECTION CERTIFICATE
- DISPENSING EQUIPMENT CERTIFICATE
- PUMP TO TANK MAPPING
- TANK & PIPEWORK TESTING CERTIFICATE
- INTERCEPTOR & DRAINAGE CERTIFICATE
- EXTRA COMPLIANT SITE WORKS IF REQUIRED

We complete and submit the application forms for the DSA and Vapour Recovery License and will deal with your local Fire Officer on your behalf until the DSA license has been issued.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, OR TO REQUEST A QUOTATION FOR THIS SERVICE, PLEASE CONTACT DW CONSULTING**



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, OR TO REQUEST A QUOTATION FOR THIS SERVICE PLEASE CONTACT:

EMAIL: [watson.david@outlook.com](mailto:watson.david@outlook.com) | MOBILE: +353 87 987 2385

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