



»» MOVING ON »»

Issue 23, April 2008

The newsletter for HGV and PSV operators

Switch off before you drive off!



Fine increase proves effective in enforcing mobile phone laws.

The number of drivers using a hand-held mobile phone has fallen by 40 per cent* since new laws were introduced last February – bringing with it a £60 fine and three penalty points for the offender. It could also mean possible action by the Traffic Commissioner on the offender's entitlement to driving an HGV or PCV.

To mark the anniversary of the change in penalty, the Department for Transport (DfT) is re-running its high-profile THINK! campaign from 1 February.

The campaign prompts drivers to avoid the distraction of a phone call by:

- using voicemail/message divert while driving and only using their phone when parked in a safe place;
- not using a hands-free phone while on the move as there is little difference in the distraction caused by a hand-held or hands-free phone; and
- encouraging people making or receiving calls to hang up and make/take the call later when not at the wheel.

Visit www.thinkroadsafety.gov.uk or contact your local Road Safety Officer for more information.

*The Mobile Phone Use by Drivers 2005–2007 research was carried out by the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) on behalf of DfT. It is available on the TRL website at www.trl.co.uk/store/report_list.asp?pid=211. Look for LF2103.

Corporate Manslaughter Act – employers read carefully!

With the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007 enforced on 6 April 2008, there is another good reason for employers to take their drivers' mobile phone use seriously. The Act sets out a new offence that makes it easier to prosecute companies and other organisations where a gross failure in the way activities are managed or organised results in a person's death.

If convicted, organisations could be liable for an unlimited fine, and potentially a publicity order, requiring them to publicise details of their conviction and fine. Courts may also require an organisation to take steps to address the failures behind the death (a remedial order). Driving at work needs to be included within existing health and safety policies and employers must ensure that safe and legal driving practices apply within their organisation.



Visit these websites for more information on corporate manslaughter

The Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act – Guidance:
www.justice.gov.uk/guidance/manslaughteractguidance.htm

Driving at Work – guidance for employers, jointly produced by the Health and Safety Executive and the Department for Transport:
www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg382.pdf

Driving for Work website:
www.dft.gov.uk/drivingforwork. A detailed and comprehensive resource for any company wanting to create or enhance a driving for work policy.

Driving for Better Business:
www.drivingforbetterbusiness.com. Advice on legal aspects and the benefits of managing 'at work' driving.



From the editor



Welcome to an action-packed edition of *Moving On...*

We all know that toxic vehicle fumes can set off lung conditions like asthma. Exhaust emissions contain carbon monoxide and nitrogen dioxide, not to mention particulates, all of which are extremely harmful to us. And we are constantly inhaling them at the heart of any city where traffic is heavy.

But picture this: a cleaner and a greener London where there is fresh and clean air to breathe. Well, it is no longer a dream for us now. With the London Low Emission Zone up and running, your green capital is a reality. I know that the costs of the scheme have been significant for many of you, but I am sure Londoners, and those who visit the capital, will soon realise the long-term benefits. Turn to page 8 for more news on that.

And yes, it's official now. There's no getting away with it. Pick up that phone while driving and you are in trouble. See our front page for more.

The commercial vehicle show is here again. So all you wanted to know about drivers' hours, Driver CPC or emissions tests will be up for grabs at the stand. And if you are bored with events close at home, here's a change of flavour with Romania where our colleagues had a brush with Romanian commercial vehicle operations and a great experience in knowledge exchange. All this and more, just turn the pages and get reading...

Sudeshna Sanyal

Keep your letters coming in to **Sudeshna Sanyal, *Moving On*, VOSA, Berkeley House, Croydon Street, Bristol BS5 0DA, or email movingon@vosa.gov.uk.**

News in brief

VOSA drives for better business

VOSA has become a partner in 'Driving for Better Business', a new Government initiative aimed at reducing the number of at-work drivers involved in road crashes. Driving for Better Business aims to build a network of business champions from companies that are committed to reducing their drivers' exposure to crashes. Current champions like Tesco.com and BT will aim to help

businesses of all sizes and from within all industry sectors recognise the benefits of managing work-related road safety. All have saved themselves significant amounts of money as well as becoming legally compliant.

To join the network or for further information, please visit www.drivingforbetterbusiness.com

Ashton Gate test station moves to Avonmouth

Bristol Goods Vehicle Test Station has moved to a new site at Cabot Park, Merebank Road, Avonmouth BS11 0YS. The 40-year-old site at Ashton Gate closed on 19 March 2008 and the new station opened for testing on 7 April 2008.

The site has been split to give a state-of-the-art testing facility with three testing lanes, one training lane and a separate

lane for Single Vehicle Approval, Vehicle Identity Check and Motorcycle Single Vehicle Approval test purposes. The office building incorporates sustainable eco-friendly technology – solar energy to power the lights, passive stack ventilation instead of costly air conditioning and a thermal store making it more energy efficient in the summer and winter months – to ensure a zero carbon footprint.

Fees for 2008/09

VOSA recently consulted on proposals to revise our statutory fees for 2008/09. The consultation closed on 10 March 2008 and we are now considering the responses.

To maintain and continue to develop our services, we need to raise the fees we charge for HGV and PSV services by an average of 5%. Individual fees would vary

to enable all fees to be rounded to the nearest pound.

Because our fees are set in Regulations we will only have about a month's notice of when any changes agreed will come into effect. Keep checking at www.transportoffice.gov.uk and look out for notices in our test stations and offices for the latest news.

LLEZ applications

Applications for LLEZ tests at VOSA sites need to be accompanied by a properly completed checklist/form. If the form isn't completed fully, the test takes much longer

and we may not always be able to fit you in at your appointment time. Details of the form are available on the transport office website or from our national number 0870 60 60 440.

Data cleansing

Thinking of moving on? Please let us know. When you got your licence you gave an undertaking to inform the Traffic Commissioner of any change that affects your licence. Failure to do so may lead to regulatory action being taken against your

licence. If you keep us informed of any changes in circumstance, we can also keep you informed of important news that may affect you. Write to us at VOSA, Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds LS9 6NF or email us at self.service@vosa.gov.uk

Setting the wheels in motion



VOSA will be exhibiting at the Commercial Vehicle Show between 15 and 17 April 2008. The show, which is Britain's largest transport and logistics event, is aimed at operators, fleet managers, transport engineers and maintenance staff.

Providing a great platform to give practical advice to this audience, the show will cover a range of topics including drivers' hours and low emissions testing.

We will also be providing all operators and drivers with information about the need to



equip their vehicles with additional mirrors. This is something that will become testable from April 2009, and will be necessary to comply with impending legislation.

The Driving Standards Agency (DSA) will also be exhibiting at the same stand to provide you with promotional literature. This will include new leaflets on *Initial Qualification* and *Periodic Training* plus posters. These can then be put on the walls of your workplace to promote the importance of Driver CPC.

DSA is especially happy to attend the Commercial Vehicle Show this year, to promote awareness of important developments taking place concerning

Driver CPC with its introduction into the PCV industry this September and for the haulage industries next year.

You will also, if you have not already done so, be able to request the *Guide to Periodic Training* if you are an employer or training provider to the industry and are interested in delivering periodic training for Driver CPC. The guide includes application forms for the approval of training centres and courses.



We look forward to meeting you there.

If you have any enquiries on current issues, come and visit us on stand no 7-060 in Hall 7 at the NEC, Birmingham. You can find out more information about the event at www.cvshow.com/

Meet Alex, VOSA's Chief Operating Officer



VOSA's new COO, Alex Fiddes, looks forward to working closely with the industry.

Alex Fiddes, 45, is VOSA's new Chief Operating Officer in charge of our network of Goods Vehicle Testing Stations, enforcement teams and the central licensing office in Leeds.

Alex began his career in the retail motor industry as an apprentice with Ford Motor Company. Before he joined the Civil Service, he held the post of After Sales Manager for a franchised dealership within the IVECO Ford Truck network.

Alex has worked in a wide range of the industry sectors including large international fleet operations and vehicle leasing. He began his VOSA career in Manchester in 1992 and has risen through the ranks, while carrying out a number of front-line and project roles. He spent two years seconded to the Driver, Vehicle and Operator Group in DfT before returning to VOSA.

He led the team that implemented the MOT Computerisation project, winning two prestigious awards from the computer industry along the way.

Alex was appointed Private Vehicles and Licensing Director in 2005 and recently became Chief Operating Officer.

He says, "In 2008/09 VOSA will be investing in increased roadside activity at hot spots, aimed at the high risk vehicles and drivers. We will also be delivering new electronic services for booking tests and alerts for changes to legislation and standards. There are many more plans aimed at improving customer experience and VOSA's effectiveness which we will let you know about in later editions of this newsletter."

Born in Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, Alex is married with two sons and a grandson. When not busy with his family, he keeps himself occupied with his love of travelling and motorcycling.

VOSA shares its knowledge in Romanian twinning project

VOSA completed a 14-month twinning project with its counterparts in Romania at the end of last year. Neil Barlow, VOSA's Head of Traffic Enforcement Policy and the project leader, shares the knowledge.

The purpose of this EU-funded project (the European Commission offers help to new member states in order to align with the requirements of EU law) was to make sure the Romanian authorities had the required systems in place for licensing, enforcement and testing commercial vehicle operations.

Led by VOSA, it involved a range of GB agencies along with input from the major trade associations.

Practical matters

We adopted a practical approach to try to ensure that new processes were being put into effect not just within government but by commercial vehicle operators and examiners on the front line.

VOSA examiners worked alongside their Romanian counterparts at the roadside, helping examiners with their work and ensuring classroom lessons had been fully taken on board. The sight of VOSA yellow jackets may have caused some confusion for passing UK trucks!

Working together

To help the Romanian authorities in communicating with the trade, VOSA's partnership with the Freight Transport Association (FTA) and Road Haulage Association came into its own. Romanian versions of VOSA and FTA publications and training DVDs were produced and distributed by the Romanian Ministry of Transport and UNTRR, a Romanian Trade Association.

VOSA's sister agencies provided additional support to the Romanian authorities. The Driving Standards Agency helped improve the way driving tests are conducted and create a Driver's Certificate of Professional Competence.

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency provided help with digital tachograph card issue systems, while the Vehicle Certification Agency gave training on testing packages for dangerous goods.

Greater Manchester Police and the Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service provided extra help to ensure all aspects of road safety could be dealt with.

Learning lessons

We are keen to make sure that the benefits of the work in Romania continue to be felt – especially by ensuring that skills have been transferred effectively to the Romanian officials, so the good work can persist beyond the end of the project.

Overall, this project has made a positive contribution to how EU legislation is enforced in Romania – and it will undoubtedly have longer-term benefits in improving the safety of Romanian road transport operations.

Great progress

I am really impressed with the way this project has gone. At all levels within the Romanian Ministry, there has been nothing but a positive approach to making improvements, interest in new ways of working and openness about areas where there currently may be problems.

With this attitude, we should be able to see rapid improvements in Romania. The project has provided a great opportunity for many staff from VOSA to work alongside our partners from the UK, and a great deal has been learnt from Romania.



Above: A Romanian test station

Below: VOSA Traffic Examiners working alongside their Romanian counterparts at a roadcheck in Transylvania



VERONICA

– no, it's not just a pretty name!

*Sorry people, VERONICA is simply a very long acronym that stands for **V**ehicle **E**vent **R**ecording based **ON** **I**ntelligent **C**rash **A**ssessment, and **G**raham **M**artin, Special Projects Manager, has the story!*

VERONICA is a project which is EC sponsored and led by Continental (formerly Siemens VDO) in partnership with other tachograph makers, vehicle manufacturers and CORTE (Confederation of Organisations in Road Transport Enforcement, of which VOSA is a member).

Conducted on behalf of the European Commission, the project is investigating the possibility of requiring the fitment of event data recorders (EDRs – commonly called black boxes) on all new HGVs and PSVs.

Taking stock

This addition to vehicles will enable post-collision investigators to have a better understanding of the moments immediately before and after a serious collision. Typical data requirements would be speed, change in speed (deceleration) and whether or not brakes were applied.

There will be no journey tracking and no journey data recording, and data will only be collected for a maximum of 30 seconds (20 seconds before impact and up to 10 seconds after) when there has been a triggering event – almost always a serious collision.

This data will then be downloaded by designated experts.

Design neutral

VOSA is actively engaged in the project on behalf of the Department for Transport. This phase of the project is defining technical specifications and a draft Directive.

The eventual specification solution will be 'design neutral', which means that the recorder can be embedded either into the vehicle's existing systems or into stand-alone devices such as the tachograph.

No target date has been set for implementation; however, we hope to keep you posted, so watch this space.



A sift tool in use

A lot more than smoke and magic

Is it possible to conduct a smoke test in seconds? Yes, it is, and John Fitch, Head of Research and Development for the project, has just the tool for it.

Under the 96/96 EU Directive, VOSA has a requirement to carry out a metered smoke test on all diesel vehicles. The good news is that, with the introduction of cleaner engines, the smoke test failure rate is reducing every year and now sits at around 0.5 per cent.

The HGV/PSV In-Service Diesel Smoke Sifting project is aimed at reducing the time taken to conduct the statutory emissions test on diesel vehicles from an average of four minutes to around 30 seconds. With the introduction of the sifting tool, we will still maintain a metered test but will need less time for it. The time saved could then be utilised for possible launches of newer test items (for example new mirror checks) without having to increase fees or impact on forward booking times.

How it works

The sift tool will be used to sift out clean engines using green and red indicator lights. If a green light glows, no further action will be required. However, a red light will signify the need for a full smoke test using the original diesel smoke meter (DSM). The sift tool is battery-operated and light to use, and works without providing a print out.

Testing it out

The tool is under trial in two phases. The first is a back-to-back trial to prove that the tool provides consistent results with good correlation against the current smoke meters. It will also help to establish whether the tool is robust and straightforward to use.

The second phase will be a trial conducted in four test stations to ensure the tool does reduce times, is reliable in an operational environment and is easy to handle.

The trials will be completed this spring.



A sift tool

Sorting it out

Sometimes things can and do go wrong. Sally Cranney, Complaints Co-ordinator, provides practical advice on what to do to make it better.

Let's face it. There are occasions when, despite our best endeavours, we do not deliver the services you require to the standard you expect.

If this should happen we need to hear from you as soon as possible – so that we can put things right and use the information you provide to improve our business practices. We aim to respond within 15 working days.

Here is a step-by-step guide to how to go about it.

Step 1:

In the first instance it is best to bring your concerns to the attention of the local Station Manager (SM) and enforcement issues to the Senior Vehicle or Traffic Examiner (SVE/STE). Most problems can be resolved quickly at this stage. If this does not happen, then contact the Area Manager (AM). The names and contact details are available at www.transportoffice.gov.uk or in the reception area of any MOT garage.

Step 2:

If you are unable to resolve the situation satisfactorily with the local staff, contact our Complaints Co-ordinator who will

investigate the issue and provide you with a full response. The Complaints Co-ordinator can be contacted by writing to Berkeley House (you'll find our address on page 2), by telephone on 0117 954 3406, by fax on 0117 954 3303 or by email to complaints@vosa.gsi.gov.uk

Step 3:

If you are still unhappy you can contact the Chief Executive. The Corporate Office will independently review your concerns and provide a detailed response. You can contact the Chief Executive by writing to the Corporate Office at Berkeley House (address on page 2), by telephone on 0117 954 3475 or 3274, by fax on 0117 954 3303, or by email to vosa.corporateoffice@vosa.gsi.gov.uk

Although we hope that by following the steps above you will be able to resolve any issues you have with us, these procedures do not affect your right to ask an MP to refer your complaint to the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman.

Get in touch

Further information about our complaints procedure and contacting the Ombudsman is available at www.transportoffice.gov.uk

A leaflet, entitled *The service we give you*, details the complaints procedure and also tells you what to do if you disagree with the result of a test or with the decision of the Traffic Commissioners. This is available online or by ringing the VOSA national number: 0870 60 60 440.

Please note:

Operator licensing issues should be brought to the attention of the Senior Team Leader for your area. If you are unable to resolve the issue then contact the Deputy Head of Application Services. The names and contact details you need are available at www.transportoffice.gov.uk

Appeals or complaints in relation to the decisions of the Traffic Commissioners **do not** fall within VOSA's Complaints Procedure. Complaints should be addressed to the Traffic Commissioner concerned. For appeals, please see information under 'Get in touch'.

Making it right on the day

We all know that retesting vehicles can be a pain, but is defect rectification possible at our test stations?

You will probably agree with us that if we could avoid retesting vehicles, we would. The retesting of previously failed vehicles clogs up our test sites and diverts our testing resource from the important task of carrying out annual pre-booked tests.

And if we do allow vehicle presenters to carry out straightforward minor repairs to vehicles and trailers following failure at annual test, it will not only benefit our customers but also ensure the efficient operation of our test stations.

So, the big question is: are you allowed to repair your vehicle at VOSA's test stations?

Yes, but...

Well, the short answer is yes, but! We are committed to giving vehicle presenters the opportunity to carry out minor repairs and adjustments, but we need your help.

First of all visitors to our sites need to recognise that there are constraints to what we can and cannot allow. These constraints are driven by what we consider to be a sensible and pragmatic recognition of health and safety issues, designed to ensure that no harm comes to our staff and customers.

Second, we ask vehicle presenters to ensure that if they do wish to carry out a rectification of a defect they should:

- ask permission to be able to carry out the repair/adjustment while the vehicle is still on the test lane;
- have sufficient competence to be able to carry out any minor repair/adjustment;
- have the correct tools, components or materials to enable the repair to be carried out quickly and safely; and



- follow the instructions of VOSA's test lane supervisors.

Making it clear

VOSA has a leaflet telling you more about defect rectification at our test sites. This is freely available to all our customers at www.transportoffice.gov.uk/crt/vehicleowners/vehicletests/vehicletests.htm and provides important information on the type of defect repair that we cannot allow to be carried out at our test sites.

So, although we really do only want to see vehicles presented once a year and we will do all we can to make this happen, there will be times when we will have to ask them back again for a retest.

Seeing clearly into the future

Andy Cattell, Special Projects Manager, shares some 'need-to-know' info on the retrofitting of mirrors.

In December 2007, the EU technical committee discussed how compliance with the retrofitting requirements of blind spot mirrors in accordance with Directive 2007/38/EC should be achieved.

Compliance could be achieved by:

- making some form of physical check of the field of view;
- requiring manufacturers/suppliers of mirrors to provide some form of certification to confirm that mirrors meet the requirements of the Directive; or
- drawing up some form of list to indicate which mirrors and lenses are acceptable for which makes and models of vehicle.

The Commission expressly confirmed that it was a matter for Member States to determine which of these solutions best suited them – and also how the chosen solution could best be implemented.

The fine print

The Commission also confirmed that the practical meaning of the Directive was that HGV operators did not have to have the mirror retrofitted until 31 March 2009; that Member States could not realistically be expected to start checking compliance in periodical tests until 1 April 2009; and that the cycle of checking in tests would not be completed until 31 March 2010.

We are still waiting for confirmation on the following points:

- that the Commission is content that this advice discharges its obligation under Article 4.2 of Directive 2007/38/EC;
- that each Member State would have to accept that vehicles had been checked appropriately for compliance by the State of registration during the period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010; and
- that it would not be necessary for any vehicle operator or driver to carry any documentation to confirm that mirrors did comply with 2007/38/EC.

VOSA will be discussing the alternative methods of ensuring compliance with the Department for Transport and will be reporting back on this.

Moving up a gear with Driver CPC

As many of you will already be aware, Driver CPC comes into effect for bus and coach drivers this year on 10 September and for lorry drivers from 10 September 2009.

drivercpc
GET QUALIFIED. STAY QUALIFIED.

**ARE YOU A BUS, COACH OR LORRY DRIVER?
THEN DRIVER CPC AFFECTS YOU**

The Driver Certificate of Professional Competence is a new qualification which all drivers need to hold to drive professionally. Driver CPC comes into force on the following dates:

BUS AND COACH 10 SEPTEMBER 2008
LORRY 10 SEPTEMBER 2009

All existing drivers will need to complete 35 hours of periodic training every five years and new drivers will take an expanded theory and practical test followed by periodic training.

Find out more at www.transportoffice.gov.uk/cpc

DSA
DRIVING STANDARDS AGENCY
SAFE DRIVING FOR LIFE

An executive agency of the
Department for
Transport

Driving Standards Agency

New drivers wanting to qualify in these careers will have to pass longer theory and practical tests as part of the initial qualification.

Existing drivers

Those already working in the bus, coach and haulage industry at these dates won't have to take the tests; instead, they will have 'grandfather' rights. This means that drivers already holding a vocational driving licence (C, C1, CE, C1E, D, D1, DE, D1E) on the relevant start dates will be deemed to hold Driver CPC, for the first five years only, by acquired right.

To retain Driver CPC, within this five-year period they will need to complete 35 hours of periodic training. This will also apply to new drivers from the date they pass their initial qualification. This cycle continues every five years.

Periodic training

Periodic training is continuing professional development and it carries on throughout a driver's career no matter how infrequently they drive. It is designed to complement the individual driver's work and be relevant to their everyday job. It may include training for environmentally friendly driving, defensive driving, first aid, health and safety, drivers' hours and tachograph training.

Keeping up to date

It's important that enough time is left to complete the training within the five-year period. Taking a one-day course (seven hours) in each of the years may be one way of doing this and would benefit the driver by providing more regular development.

For further information please visit www.transportoffice.gov.uk/cpc or contact our team at the Driving Standards Agency at drivercpc@dsa.gsi.gov.uk or call 0115 901 5938.

Let's clear the air with the abatement device

With the introduction of the London Low Emission Zone, you are probably no stranger to the abatement device. Here's an update on what you need to know about a new service that's been introduced.



A new Abatement Device Fitment Declaration Route service has been introduced for operators who are waiting to have their certified abatement device fitted onto their vehicle. They need to do this in order to meet Transport for London's (TfL's) required emissions standards for vehicles driving within the Low Emission Zone (LEZ).

This new 'declaration route' will give a number of manufacturer-sponsored fitters of certified abatement devices additional powers. They will also be able to carry out a free acceleration smoke test on the same premises immediately after the certified abatement device is fitted. The operator will therefore not need to attend a VOSA site for an inspection or smoke test.

How it's done

If the vehicle passes the free acceleration smoke test and therefore meets the required LEZ emissions standards, the Authorised Examiner will complete a Declaration of Conformity (DoC) and application form.

These will be submitted to VOSA with the current test fee.

Following the examination of the documents and subject to the vehicle meeting the required LEZ emissions standards, VOSA will then issue either a Reduced Pollution Certificate (RPC) or a Low Emissions Certificate (LEC) direct to the applicant.

Keeping informed

TfL will be advised by VOSA of the test results within 10 days of the fitment and inspection. The operator can confirm that their vehicle meets the required emission standards for the LEZ using TfL's on-line vehicle compliance checker.

This can be done at www.tfl.gov.uk/lezlondon or by calling 0845 607 0009.

A list of manufacturer-sponsored authorised examiners can be obtained by contacting the certified abatement device manufacturers directly. You can find their details at www.tfl.gov.uk

The story so far

Transport for London (TfL) implemented the London Low Emission Zone (LLEZ) on 4 February 2008. Operators of diesel-engined heavy good vehicles greater than 12 tonnes now have to meet the required emissions standards of Euro III for particulate matter. Vehicles that do not meet the required emissions standards are now subject to the £200 daily charge if they wish to continue to drive within the LEZ.

The second phase of the LEZ to be introduced on 7 July 2008 will require lighter lorries between 3.5 and 12 tonnes gross vehicle weight, buses and coaches to comply with the same published TfL emissions standards.

In order to give operators who operate in London every opportunity to comply with the LEZ, TfL will issue a warning letter to the operator of a vehicle identified as non-compliant on the first occasion that it is seen in the zone. From the date of issue of the letter operators will have 28 calendar days to take action. During that period operators will not need to pay the daily charge.

Government agency details

Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)

Drivers' enquiries
0870 240 0009
drivers.dvla@gtnet.gov.uk

Vehicle enquiries
0870 240 0010
vehicles.dvla@gtnet.gov.uk

Driving Standards Agency (DSA)
0115 936 6666

Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA)
0117 951 5151

Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA)
0870 60 60 440

www.transportoffice.gov.uk

*An executive agency of the
Department for
Transport*