

UPDATE

A. D. I. NEWSLETTER

February 2003

Welcome to the first edition of *Update* of the New Year. I hope that all of you have had a good start to the year. This paper includes updates on the Booking Services Project, MOT2, Vehicle Identity Check Scheme, Hazard Perception Test, EC 2nd Directive on Driver Licensing and details on the appointment of the Agency's new Chief Executive. There are also details of a DOE Road Safety Education Training Programme which may be of interest to you. Probably of most immediate relevance to yourselves, however, is Deirdre Walsh's report on the outcome of the ADI Review consultation exercise which took place last year. The report is attached and sets out in detail the number of responses, the proportion of these who responded to each of the questions asked, and the numbers who were for or against proposals.

The report is quite lengthy but I hope you will take the time to read it as it contains important information about what you – the ADI Industry – has decided is the right way forward for your profession. You will see from the report that the Agency has agreed to take forward as many proposals as possible which gained support from consultees. In turn it has decided not to proceed with proposals which did not receive support. Some of the questions generated suggestions and ideas which will need further analysis, and which may take some time and a considerable amount of further work, to progress. This work is on-going, together with work on new issues arising as a result of new EU directives and other developments within the learner driver industry.

I think that the report demonstrates that your input to the consultation process influenced the outcomes and hope that it will encourage you in future to respond to consultation exercises about the learner driver and ADI industry.

NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Following the retirement of Brian Watson on 30 November 2002, Stanley Duncan was appointed to the post of Chief Executive on 13 January 2003. Stanley has been with the Agency since June 1995 in a number of posts. He will be known to many of you as he was responsible for the Register of Approved Driving Instructors between August 1996 and August 2001.

ADI CUSTOMER SURVEY

Usually, at this time of year the ADI customer survey is issued to all ADIs. Last year the survey issued along with the ADI review consultation paper. There was a particularly low response to the survey and it was thought that the fact that we were asking you to complete two lengthy questionnaires at the same time lowered the response rate to (the more routine) survey. The difficulty with a low response rate to a survey is that it makes the results more difficult to validate. For this reason, and given that we have asked for your response on another issue – covered later in this *Update*, - we have decided to defer the survey until the beginning of 2004.

This does not mean that we don't want to hear what you think of the service provided to you. Quite the reverse, it means that we want to get meaningful feedback from you in a way that it easy for you to communicate to us. You can, of course, at any time contact me, Deirdre Walsh, Angie McClenaghan or anyone else in the Agency to express your view of how we do things. In the meantime though, we are going to look at the survey questions, their relevance, the value gained from the answers and how we can encourage a higher response to the survey. Any ideas are welcome.

ADI PART I - WRITTEN TEST

A total of 85 candidates sat the last examination, which was held on 30 September 2002 at Stranmillis College, Belfast. The pass rate was 54% with 46 candidates successful and now eligible to take the Part II Test of Driving Ability. The most recent written examination took place on 4 February and the results of this test will be available for the next *Update*. This will be the last Part I test conducted in a pen and paper format at Stranmillis College.

CONVERSION OF PART I TEST TO A COMPUTER BASED TEST TO INCLUDE HAZARD PERCEPTION TESTING

Readers of *Update* will know that the Agency had been planning to convert the ADI written test to a computerised test. The change will take place in March. The test will be carried out in two parts and an additional element – the hazard perception test - will be included. Applicants who missed the last pen and paper test on 4 February are being issued with an information leaflet to advise them what they can expect from the new test. A meeting was held in December with trainers of people aiming to undergo the ADI qualifying process and they were briefed about the changes. Information packs and videos have also been issued to all ADIs.

The new test will be available at the six theory test centres throughout Northern Ireland, instead of at just one location as is currently the case. Also, while the current system provides for only three Part I tests per year, the new test will be available more readily (subject to availability of slots). The cost of the test - £72.00 -will not increase.

Application will be made to DVTA as normal and once the necessary checks are carried out candidates will be advised in writing that they may apply by telephone for a date for the test. Information regarding the location of test centres will be given in the notification letter.

After arriving for test there will be the option for candidates to work through a practice session lasting 15 minutes to help get used to the system before starting the test. As with the pen and paper test there will be 100 questions split into four bands. For every question there will be **four** possible answers. The questions can be answered by touching the computer screen to select the answer from the options shown. To pass the test, at least 85 questions must be answered correctly with a minimum of 20 correct answers in each band. This part of the test will last one and a half hours excluding the practice session.

After an optional break of up to 3 minutes the hazard perception part will begin with a tutorial video showing a sample of test clips and a recorded explanation of how the test works. This session can be repeated once if desired.

The test will consist of 14 video clips, each lasting about 1 minute and containing at least 1 hazard. The clips feature normal driving situations which involve other road users. Each test contains 15 hazards. A score of up to 5 marks can be gained for each developing hazard. The marking for each scoreable hazard depends on how early in the clip the hazard is detected. If the mouse is continually pressed arbitrarily throughout the clips in the hope of getting some points, a warning message will appear advising that the candidate has responded to the clip in an unacceptable manner and a score of 0 points will be given.

A score of at least 53 out of 75 must be achieved on the Hazard Perception test and both it and the multiple choice part of the test must be passed at the same time

The result will be given to candidates once they have completed both parts and have returned to the waiting room. The candidate may apply either for the Part I again (in the case of a fail) or the Part II (if successful). The appropriate forms will be available at the theory test centre, but application must be made to DVTA as usual.

Any queries relating to the new Part I test can be put to Angie McClenaghan in ADI section who can be contacted at angie.mcclenaghan@doeni.gov.uk, or at 028 9054 7933. You can also write to Angie or me at the DVTA, Balmoral Road, Belfast.

CHANGES TO THE PASS MARKS FOR THE HAZARD PERCEPTION TEST

The hazard perception test was successfully introduced into the driving theory test on 6 January and candidates appear to be coping well with the new test.

When the hazard perception component of the theory test was introduced it was intended that there would be a staged increase in the pass mark over a number of months. The Agency is planning to introduce the first of those increases on 1 April 2003 when the pass mark for all categories of theory test will be increased by two marks. The pass mark for cars and bike tests will increase from 38 to 40 and for LGV and PCV tests from 44 to 46. The next change for cars and bikes will be on 1 July 2003 when we plan to increase the pass mark from 40 to 42 with the final change from 42 to 44 on 1 September 2003.

NEW DRIVING EXAMINERS

The Agency's recent recruitment drive for new driving examiners is now completed. The recruitment process has taken a number of months and included a written test with those successful moving to the interview stage. The top applicants then had their driving assessed and if successful they were offered a post. However, it does not finish there, each applicant must pass a week's driver training course (pre-Cardington) before they can progress to the final stage which is a 4-week course in Cardington. Only if they pass this course will their post be confirmed. To date six applicants have been offered posts, four of which commenced their week's driver training on 24 January 2003.

A shortlist of successful applicants currently exists and they may be called for driver assessment if additional posts need to be filled.

EXTERIOR MIRRORS

It would appear that some vehicles being used for driving tests have their nearside mirror incorrectly adjusted thus reducing the road safety benefits. Mirrors are one of the keys to defensive driving and if adjusted properly will allow the driver to keep up to date with what's behind and to the side of the vehicle. It is therefore important for instructors to teach their pupils how and why mirrors are adjusted correctly. Pupils should also be advised that they should not just look into the mirrors they must act safely and sensibly on what they see.

PARKING WITHIN TEST CENTRES

While most ADIs observe the parking restriction within test centres, some centre managers have reported that disabled parking bays, yellow boxes and yellow lines are used to park vehicles while awaiting driving test. These areas should not be used (unless in the case of disabled parking bays, you are accompanied by a disabled candidate). I would appreciate if you would assist centre managers with the traffic management of their centres by using only the designated areas.

ADI EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is being carried out on the ADI scheme and a consultation paper will shortly issue to all interested parties. The purpose of an EQIA is to assess all aspects of a scheme to determine if there are differing impacts on any of the nine social groups identified in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. These are persons of different: religious belief, political opinion, race, age, marital status, sexual orientation, men and women generally, people with and without disability and people with and without dependants. The Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires **active** promotion of equality of opportunity. If the EQIA on the ADI scheme finds that there are different impacts on any of these social groups action will be taken by the Agency where possible to mitigate any negative equality impact.

The key objectives of an EQIA are:

- To measure to what extent a policy differentially affects groups or individuals
- To assess how any differential impacts can be resolved and;
- To assess how the promotion of equality throughout society can be maximised

The Equality Commission considers that an equality impact assessment requires seven separate elements (or stages):

- Consideration of available data and research
- Assessment of impacts
- Consideration:
 - Of measures which might mitigate any adverse impact;
 - Alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity
- Formal consultation
- Decision by the public authority
- Publication of results of equality impact assessment
- Monitor for adverse impact in the future and publication of the results of such monitoring

The consultation paper will not be issued to all ADIs but will be sent to the umbrella associations. Anyone wishing to obtain a copy of the paper can do so by requesting it from Deirdre Walsh or from the Agency's internet site at www.doeni.gov.uk/dvta. It will be available from 11 February 2003.

EC 2nd DIRECTIVE ON DRIVER LICENSING

Over the next few months we are proposing to make further changes to the Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1996. These amendments are necessary to ensure that these Regulations continue to meet the EC 2nd Directive on Driver Licensing. The first of these changes, which comes into effect on 1 April 2003 will only affect candidates taking a category C or D driving theory test.

From that date, the body of knowledge on which candidates sitting their theory test require to be tested, will be expanded to include the following topic areas:

- Vehicle and transport documents required for the national and international carriage of goods and passengers;
- The precautions to be taken during the removal and replacement of wheels;
- Loading and unloading goods and the use of loading equipment (lorries only);
- The principles of the construction and functioning of internal combustion engines and fuel, electrical, ignition and transmission systems;
- Lubrication and antifreeze protection;
- The principles of the construction, fitting, and correct use and care of tyres;
- The principles of the types, operation, main parts, connection, use and day to day maintenance of brake fittings, speed governors and coupling systems and the use of anti-lock brakes;
- Methods of locating causes of breakdowns;

- Preventative maintenance of vehicles and necessary running repairs;
- The drivers responsibility in respect of receipt, carriage and delivery of goods in accordance with the agreed conditions (lorries only);

The new item banks from which the theory test questions will be taken will be published in the appropriate DSA Official Theory Test Books. These books are due to be published on 24 February 2003.

As you will be aware it was the intention to increase the hazard perception test pass rate incrementally in order to arrive at the target pass rate over time. In line with the theory test in GB we are going to raise the pass mark for the hazard perception component of the category C and D theory test from 44 to 46 on 1 April 2003. Furthermore, we plan to raise the pass mark from 46 to 48 on 1 June 2003 and from 48 to 50 on 1 September 2003.

IMPROVEMENTS TO BOOKING SERVICE

The new booking system is now operational in Ballymena, Craigavon, Mallusk, Newry and Omagh centres. We recognise that this has resulted in some additional delays at the counter at these centres and apologise for the inconvenience caused. We have encountered a number of problems with the transition to the new system and have experienced some performance issues with the new system.

The rollout to other centres was postponed temporarily in January pending resolution of these issues but it is anticipated that the remaining centres will have the new system installed at the rate of about one per week between now and the end of March. ADIs may still encounter a delay at the counter as the system is installed at each centre, as staff get familiar with the new procedures, but generally normal service resumes fairly quickly after installation. Once the system has been installed at all centres, staff will be able to offer an improved service.

This delay has affected the introduction of the telephone booking system. It is now hoped that the new service will be offered on a pilot basis before the end of March and extended to all centres as soon as possible thereafter.

MOT2

DVTA's planned Rollout programme for replacing all vehicle-testing equipment at test centres is on target for completion in September 2003 as planned.

Belfast, Downpatrick and Omagh centres have re-opened following their temporary closure for the installation of the new equipment, while Londonderry is currently closed for vehicle testing and Newtownards for HGV testing. Each of the remaining DVTA test centres will close **temporarily** for about 12 weeks over the next 8 months, including Newry in February and Omagh in April. In most cases this will have **little effect on driving tests**, (parking may be more restricted) which should in general continue as normal, except possibly for LGV/PCV tests in Omagh, which may need to be taken elsewhere during centre closure.

Centre reception areas will open as usual to deal with test applications driving test appointments and to provide advice to customers on any problems they may have in obtaining a vehicle test.

An explanatory leaflet on vehicle tests is being issued to all households in Northern Ireland shortly before their local centre closes, giving further information and advice including how to obtain a vehicle test at an alternative centre if necessary. A dedicated website (www.mot2-ni.gov.uk) and a telephone helpline (0845 6014094) are also available.

VEHICLE IDENTITY CHECK SCHEME (VIC)

On 7 April 2003 new legislation will come into force which aims to help combat vehicle crime; in particular, to help prevent criminals from swapping the identity of a vehicle they have stolen with that of a written-off or scrapped vehicle (the illegal practice known as vehicle ringing). When a vehicle is stolen, some or all of its genuine identity markings are removed and replaced with that of the identity taken from the donor (salvaged) vehicle. Thus the stolen vehicle assumes the identity of the donor vehicle. The main purpose of VIC is to prevent vehicle-ringing crime.

The new VIC check will mean that before a written-off or scrapped vehicle can legally go back on the road, DVLNI will have to be satisfied that it is not a stolen vehicle. DVLNI will not issue new registration documents for such vehicles unless they have successfully passed a vehicle identity check. DVTA will carry out the vehicle identity check in Northern Ireland at two purpose built test halls at our existing Lisburn and Londonderry centres.

CHANGES TO THE EYESIGHT TEST

An amendment to legislation will be made on 10 March 2003 which will change the dimensions for the test of eyesight which takes place as part of the ADI driving ability test. The amendment will (a) correct an error regarding height of figures and letters on number plates in relation to the eyesight test; and (b) provide for a shortened distance for the eyesight test where the number plate has the new reduced character width.

The change will mean that the candidate should be able to read in good daylight with the aid of glasses or contact lenses if worn, a motor vehicle registration mark containing letters and figures—

- (a) 79 millimetres in height and 50 millimetres wide at a distance of 26.5 metres; or
- (b) 79 millimetres in height and 57 millimetres wide at a distance of 27.5 metres.

INFORMATION TO BE RELEASED TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

As you know the Agency may be asked by learner drivers for lists of instructors in their area. We are also sometimes approached by commercial organizations for information but have not disclosed it. Data Protection laws require that we get specific permission from individuals in order to release any information about them. I have attached a return slip for you to complete. If you choose not give us the

necessary permissions we will no longer be able to release your name to potential clients and this could result in a loss of business for you. We would also like to post contact details of ADIs on our Internet site. This is entirely for the purposes of helping you promote yourselves.

Also, last year we asked if you could provide email addresses for yourselves, so that we could send material to you electronically, e.g. issues of general interest such as the *Update*, rather than any formal mail about check test appointments, etc. Only a handful of ADIs provided email addresses. I would ask you again if you would provide these to us. A space is available on the pro-forma. An SAE is provided so that you can return the slip to us at no cost to yourself. I would appreciate if you could return the form as soon as possible.

DRAFT CODE OF PRACTICE FOR ADIs

As agreed by you in the ADI review consultation process, a draft Code of Practice for ADIs to sign on a voluntary basis has been drawn up for consideration by yourselves. We had hoped to issue it with this *Update* but I'm sure you will agree that there is already quite a lot to absorb in this edition, and we don't want to make it any lengthier. Instead we aim to send the draft code to all of the ADI associations known to us so that it can be debated with members, and comments returned to us. This code does not need to replace any existing codes which are already in use but can supplement these and underline the principles which you wish to put across. Anyone who does not belong to an association can call Deirdre Walsh to obtain a copy or get it from the Agency's Internet site.

DOE ROAD SAFETY EDUCATION TRAINING PROGRAMME

Would you be interested in helping the Department's Road Safety Education Officer Service deliver a Driver Training programme to students? The programme will be designed to teach the correct attitude and high degree of skill that is required by present day drivers.

Presently the training course offered by the Department is delivered to 2 students per car; each student drives for 6 hours and observes for 6 hours. All training is delivered during school hours. The students pay a fee of £90.00 directly to the ADI and the Department pays a grant of £5.50 per hour for each of the students completing the 12 hours training.

Over the past few years various changes to the driving test have affected the method and delivery of training students to learn to drive. The Road Safety Officer Service acknowledges that the current scheme does not fully meet the needs of the students.

Consultation has now begun with DVTA HQ in improving the current scheme. The review will include, the fee paid to the ADI, the course content, the duration of the course and, the student's ability to learn and retain information, etc. If you would be interested in helping the Department deliver this programme which is due to begin in September 2003 please contact your nearest Road Safety Education Office at the following: -

Armagh 028 3752 5353
Belfast 028 9050 8181
Ballymena 028 2564 4311
Hydebank 028 9025 3123 (Covering Co Down)
Londonderry 028 7131 9319

NIADIA AGM

The NIADIA has asked me to advise you that their Annual General Meeting will be held on 24 February 2003, at the Fitzwilliam Hotel, Aldergrove. Registration is at 6.30pm and the meeting will begin at 7.00pm. A number of speakers will be in attendance including DVTA staff.

ENCLOSURES

The NIADIA has asked me to enclose the attached leaflet. The Agency is prepared to use the *ADI Update* mailing as a means of circulating material likely to be of interest to ADIs from any of the Associations throughout Northern Ireland. Such circulation should not necessarily be taken as an endorsement of the views of the organization concerned or the views expressed in a particular circular or leaflet.

DVTA & NIADI MEETING APRIL 2003

The next meeting between DVTA and NIADIA will be held at DVTA headquarters at 10.30am on 7 April 2003 and I look forward to meeting some of you there.

I hope that the information in this edition of *Update* has been relevant and of interest to you. If you have any comments about the *Update*, or any other matters which you would like to discuss please let me know by writing to me at DVTA Headquarters or call me at 028 9054 7987.



R J CROSBY
Registrar

DATA PROTECTION ACT 1998

I give permission to DVTA to disclose the following details to anyone interested in learning to drive.

Please tick which of the information highlighted in bold that you would like to have issued by which method – if not all three.

	Telephone	Mailed List	Internet
Name	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tel. No.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Email:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I do/do not (delete as appropriate) want this permission to extend to ADI associations requesting my details.

I do/do not (delete as appropriate) want this permission to extend to companies requesting my details for commercial purposes, eg, Insurance companies, advertisers etc,

Signed

ADI number:

Date: