

May 2003

Welcome to the latest edition of *Update*. This paper includes updates on the ADI Review, Booking Services Project, MOT2, Hazard Perception Test and the EC 2<sup>nd</sup> Directive on Driver Licensing. I hope that you find the contents of this edition of *Update* both interesting and informative.

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

The planned introduction of the new computerised ADI Part I test was delayed a little and the first tests took place on 28 April 2003. Following some minor set up difficulties the new test is now up and running and of the 11 candidates who have sat the test since 28 April, 4 have passed. This is quite a good result given the introduction of the Hazard Perception Test.

While candidates are invited to complete a customer survey, and we will obtain feedback about the new test from this source, any comments which you have about the test would be most welcome and should be directed to Deirdre Walsh or Angie McClenaghan at Balmoral Road, Belfast. Angie's telephone number is 028 9054 7933. You can also write to Deirdre or Angie at DVTA, Balmoral Road, Belfast.

### **ADI REVIEW**

It now looks as though it may be the autumn before the proposed legislative changes arising from the ADI review will be implemented. This includes the changes to be made to the Trainee Licence Scheme. Work is continuing on the other issues which either don't require legislation or which need further consultation or consideration.

### **ADI EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

A small number of responses was received to the ADI Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) consultation paper which was issued to a number of ADI groups and other interested parties in early March. The key objectives of an EQIA were explained in the last edition of *Update*. The responses received will now be analysed and the Agency will have to decide if alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity are needed. The results of the EQIA will issue within the next month. The scheme will thereafter be monitored for adverse impacts which may occur in the future. The EQIA results will be issued to key groups and will be placed on the Agency's internet site. More detail of the analyses of responses will be contained in the September *Update*.

## **INFORMATION TO BE RELEASED TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

Thanks to everyone who returned the request for details which could be issued to members of the public, posted on the internet, etc. We now have quite a lot of work to do to update our database so that we only release information to the groups indicated by you. We are also updating our list of ADIs willing to give instruction. Apologies to any of you who are not yet on the list. We hope to have this work completed by mid - June.

## **LEARNING TO DRIVE LEAFLET**

The revised Learning to Drive leaflet is attached for your information. This is to be sent to all applicants for provisional licences and copies will also be available at DVTA practical and theory test centres. The content of the leaflet is largely in response to what you - the ADI industry - told us you wanted. We have highlighted the need for learner drivers and parents of learner drivers to be guided by ADIs about the amount of instruction that is required. We have suggested that it may be much longer than they had anticipated and that they should be looking to their driving instructor to provide them with the skills to drive safely for life and not just to pass the driving test.

The leaflet was showcased at the recent Balmoral Show where we met many young people approaching their 17<sup>th</sup> birthday; who assumed that they would pass their driving test following a 'couple' of lessons. Clearly there is a substantial challenge to ADIs to persuade these people that this may not be possible. We are hopeful that the leaflet goes some considerable way to helping you get this message across.

## **WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP**

The Agency's wish is to work in partnership with ADIs to help to reduce road casualties especially amongst the young. The new leaflet outlined above effectively underscores the professionalism, skills and competencies of Approved Driving Instructors, albeit that we know that there is a mixture of styles, experiences and methods within the ADI industry.

By the same token it would be very much appreciated if ADIs would demonstrate their professionalism, when presenting candidates for test, particularly in the waiting areas of test centres. While ADIs are at liberty to have views about examiners and to express these views where and when they wish, I would ask that you don't express them in the driving test waiting area, in the presence or hearing of either your own or other candidates.

It would seem that some instructors are in the habit of 'warning' their driving test candidates about the 'perils' of being tested by certain Driving Traffic Examiners. It is questionable enough for an ADI to do this with their own candidates, but unfortunately we have found that some instructors have been witnessed scare-mongering candidates who are accompanied by parents or friends. Clearly any such action is bound to have a detrimental effect on the confidence of someone about to take the driving test. Apologies to any of you who would not engage in anything of this nature, but I'm sure you will all have witnessed such instances. Clearly, your good will and co-operation in this respect would be much appreciated. Obviously if there are genuine grounds for a complaint against any member of staff there are procedures in place to deal with these.

## **IMPROVEMENTS TO BOOKING SERVICES**

The new booking system is now operational in Ballymena, Craigavon, Mallusk, Newry and Omagh centres. Initially a number of problems were encountered with the transition to the new system, and some performance issues were experienced. As a result the roll out to other centres has been postponed pending resolution of these issues.

We hope to restart the roll out within the next few weeks, and, if so, it is anticipated that the remaining centres will have the new system installed by the autumn. ADIs may still encounter a slight delay at the counter as the system is installed at each centre, as staff become familiar with the new procedures, but generally normal service resumes fairly quickly after installation.

The telephone booking system was introduced on a pilot basis for Ballymena centre only during March. Following successful completion of the pilot, the service has been extended and is now available for booking standard car and motorcycle 'L' tests each of the five centres listed above. This service will be further extended to all other centres in line with the roll out of the new booking system.

The telephone service is presently operating during normal office hours but will be extended in due course. Feedback on any issues specifically relating to the telephone service would be welcome.

## **MOT2**

The refurbishment of DVTA's 15 vehicle testing centres is continuing. This work should be completed by September 2003 as planned.

Londonderry and Newtownards (Phase II) test centres have now re-opened following their temporary closure for the installation of the new equipment while Omagh test centre is currently closed for vehicle testing. Mallusk centre closed on 17 May 2003 while Newry centre re-opened for vehicle testing on 19 May 2003. Cookstown centre (Phase II) is due to close for HGV testing on 28 June 2003.

DVTA test centres at Mallusk and Cookstown (Phase II) will be closed for approximately 12 weeks, while refurbishment takes place. (Note - Only HGV testing is affected at Cookstown centre).

Whilst those centres close for vehicle testing, they will remain open for practical driving tests, both booking and testing. Centre refurbishment at these centres should continue to have little effect on ADIs: driver testing will in most cases proceed as normal, though parking may be restricted. Centre reception areas will remain open to deal with test applications and driving test appointments and to provide advice to customers on problems they may have in obtaining a vehicle test.

As detailed in the last edition of *Update*, an explanatory leaflet on vehicle tests is 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 web site [www.mot2-ni.gov.uk](http://www.mot2-ni.gov.uk) and a telephone Helpline (0845 6014094) are also available.

## **EC 2<sup>ND</sup> DIRECTIVE ON DRIVER LICENSING**

Attached to this edition of *Update* is a separate news sheet setting out the arrangements to implement new standards for driver practical and theory tests arising from Annexes to the EC 2<sup>nd</sup> Directive. The changes will be introduced by 30 September 2003.

Although the ADI qualifying process and certain other categories of driving test are not covered by the EC 2<sup>nd</sup> Directive, it would seem to make sense to bring these tests into line with the other test categories. A consultation paper will be issued shortly which will include applying the more detailed theory test syllabus, plus the vehicle safety check procedures into the practical tests, for

- those seeking entry to the Register of Approved Driving Instructors (ADIs); and
- those seeking a full licence to drive agricultural & forestry tractors, road rollers, track-laying vehicles steered by their tracks and vehicles controlled by a pedestrian.

## **MINIMUM VEHICLE TEST STANDARDS**

Subject to legislation, new minimum test vehicle standards will be introduced with effect from 30 September 2003. Test vehicles used for the first time on or after this date must comply with new European standards. These standards are designed to ensure that candidates are tested in vehicles that are more representative of the vehicles used on the road. Further information on the new standards can be obtained from the Agency's Web site at [www.doeni.gov.uk/dvta](http://www.doeni.gov.uk/dvta).

## **HAZARD PERCEPTION TEST**

In the last ADI Update we informed you that there would be staged increases in the pass mark for the Hazard Perception component of the theory test over the next few months. By way of a reminder, here is a summary:

From 1 April 2003	Car & Bike	From 38 to 40
	LGV & PCV	From 44 to 46
From 1 June 2003	LGV & PCV	From 46 to 48
From 1 July 2003	Car & Bike	From 40 to 42
From 1 Sept 2003	Car & Bike	From 42 to 44
	LGV & PCV	From 48 to 50

## **THEORY TEST MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS**

An updated *Official theory test book for Car drivers and motorcyclists* is available from The Stationery Office and all good bookshops from mid May.

## **NEW THEORY TEST VIDEO**

A limited number of the Theory Test Information videos are still available. This short information video, which was produced by the DSA, has a running time of 18

minutes. It provides information about both the Multiple Choice Questions and the Hazard Perception Test components of the Theory Test. It is not available in the shops.

The Agency is keen to distribute these videos to ADIs. They will be given out on a 'first come, first served' basis and will be limited to two videos per ADI. As there will be no charge for the video, we want to avoid distribution costs. The videos will therefore be made available, following requests, for collection from local test centres.

To request the videos please telephone Johanne McCullough, DVTA HQ, Balmoral Road, Belfast BT12 6QL Tel: 028 9054 7910 or contact her by e-mail at [johanne.mccullough@doeni.gov.uk](mailto:johanne.mccullough@doeni.gov.uk). Johanne will arrange for the videos to be available for collection from a centre of your choice.

### **DRIVING TEST WAITING TIMES**

We are very conscious that that we are not meeting our driving test waiting time target at present. The current situation has arisen as a result of staffing shortages, combined with pressure on vehicle test waiting times as a result of the closure of centres and staff being trained on the new equipment. We expect to have an additional 8 driving examiners in post by the end of July and as the roll out of the new vehicle test equipment comes to a close, it will be possible to transfer additional resource to driving tests. We regret the inconvenience caused to our candidates and ADIs but remain optimistic that the position should improve in the medium term.

### **DISABILITY ACTION OPEN DAY**

Disability Action has asked the Agency to let you know that they are holding an Open Day for Approved Driving Instructors on Tuesday 10 June 2003. The theme for the Open Day is teaching a person with a disability to learn to drive and what a driving assessment is.

Two sessions will be held: one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Anyone interested in attending should contact Disability Action's Mobility Centre direct, telephone 028 9029 7877.

They are also planning to hold three further Open Days: one each in Londonderry, Dungannon and Newry. Anyone interested in attending these Open Days should contact Disability Action on the above number.

Finally, comments on any of the contents of this *Update* are very welcome.



**R J CROSBY**  
Registrar