

May 2007

This edition of *ADI Update* comes at a time of significant change for this Agency in terms of how we are organised and the work that we do. For the most part they will not interfere with the way that ADI services are delivered, but one significant change that you will be interested in, is that John Crosby has left the Agency on promotion to go and work in another Department and his role as Registrar will for the time being be filled by Deirdre Walsh. John very much enjoyed his period as Registrar particularly all of the contact that he had with the industry; not just in the many lively seminars and meetings attended, but also in the individual contacts with ADIs and PDIs. He extends his best wishes to all of you for the future both personal and professional. We have more detail about the Agency changes later, along with information about the Road Traffic (NI) Order 2007, CPC, fees and changes to the theory tests. We are also delighted to report that the Agency has managed to substantially reduce driver and vehicle test waiting times and I trust that this has helped you to return your services to your customers to a more normal level. Hopefully you will find all of interest.

### **DVTA MERGER WITH DVLNI**

In 2006, Secretary of State Peter Hain announced that a new Agency would be formed to bring together Driver and Vehicle Licensing Northern Ireland (DVLNI) and Driver & Vehicle Testing Agency (DVTA). Both Agencies merged on 1 April 2007 and we are now known as the Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA). DVA's new Chief Executive is Brendan Magee (formerly Chief Executive of DVLNI) and Stanley Duncan who was the DVTA Chief Executive has moved on to head up Road Safety Division in the Department. ADI and other testing services will be delivered as normal from our test centres. A number of other staffing changes have been and are due to be made to ensure that a seamless service continues to be delivered to testing and licensing customers. Our Agency website has been updated to reflect our new branding and ADI information can now be accessed at [www.dvani.gov.uk](http://www.dvani.gov.uk) and clicking on Driver and Vehicle testing and then Approved Driving Instructors.

### **THE ROAD TRAFFIC (NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 2007**

On 22 March 2007 the Road Traffic (Northern Ireland) Order 2007 became law. As you may know from previous briefings and seminars the Order contains a number of instructor related powers. It makes provision for improved appeals arrangements, additional registers including motorcycle instructors and better regulation of training and training providers. The priority of the new measures has not yet been agreed but all new provisions will be consulted upon before anything new is introduced. The Order also contains other provisions relating to road traffic offences and enforcement, driver licensing and driver and vehicle testing.

## **NO SMOKING IN PUBLIC PLACES AND PLACES OF WORK**

You will no doubt be aware that a No Smoking ban in public places and in the work place was introduced on 30 April 2007. The legislation requires that most enclosed vehicles which are used by the public or used for work purposes are to be smoke-free also and require designated no-smoking signs. ADI vehicles used for instruction and/or testing should therefore be smoke free. You should familiarise yourself with, and ensure full compliance with the new legislation including the display of an appropriate 'No Smoking' sign. Regulation 3 of the Smoke-Free (Signs) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007 states that:

*'(1) Any person with management responsibilities for a smoke-free vehicle shall be under a duty corresponding to that in Article 7(1) of the Order to make sure that at least one no-smoking sign is displayed in a prominent position in each compartment of his vehicle.*

*(2) In paragraph (1) –*

*“compartment” includes each part of a vehicle which -*

*(a) is constructed or adapted to accommodate persons; and*

*(b) is, or may from time to time be, wholly or partly covered by a roof;*

*“roof” includes any fixed or moveable structure or device which is capable of covering all or part of a compartment, including any canvas, fabric or other covering, but where a vehicle is engaged in conveying persons, it does not include any fixed or moveable structure or device which is completely stowed away so that it does not cover all or any part of a compartment.*

*no-smoking symbol” means a symbol which consists of a graphic representation of a single burning cigarette enclosed in a red circle of at least 75 millimetres in diameter with a red bar across it;*

The Agency has taken the view that as long as the sign is visible and in a prominent position, which does not compromise the driver or examiners' vision we can leave it to the discretion of the ADI. Our examiners will not be checking for the existence or otherwise of an appropriate 'No Smoking' sign. Compliance with the regulations will be the ADI's responsibility.

## **COMPULSORY TRAINING DIRECTIVE/CHANGES TO THE LGV/PCV THEORY TEST**

On 2 April 2007 the number of multiple choice questions for LGV and PCV theory tests increased from 35 to 60. The intention is to develop higher standards and maximise the test's potential for road safety and other benefits. The pass mark for the multiple choice part also increased to 51 out of 60. Due to the increased duration of the theory test the fee is now £32.00 for bookings made on or after 2 April. This change is as a result of the Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) directive affecting LGV and PCV drivers which will come into effect from 10 September 2008 for PCV drivers and from 10 September 2009 for LGV drivers. For more information on these changes please visit: <http://www.dvni.gov.uk/legislation/compulsorytraining.asp>

It has been agreed that the Sector Skills Councils will form a joint approval body and will approve training schools throughout the UK to deliver periodic training, which will have to

be taken by any driver who wishes to retain their CPC. Guidance will be issued for training schools shortly. Approval of training centres will not be required until 2008 but training schools will be able to begin to work towards the requirements of approval and consider their course content. Application forms will be issued with the guidance.

## **TAXI DRIVING TEST**

Some time ago a DOE consultation exercise highlighted the need to re-introduce the taxi driver test in Northern Ireland. DVTA (as was) issued a consultation paper on the format of the test which was issued to ADI associations. The document contained proposals relating to theory and practical test content, minimum test vehicle requirements and periodic training for taxi drivers. It also addressed additional requirements for drivers of accessible taxis and American Stretched Limousines. The paper can be accessed on [www.dvni.gov.uk /consultations](http://www.dvni.gov.uk/consultations). Next steps remain to be agreed.

## **DATA PROTECTION ISSUES**

We would like to remind instructors who keep personal information about any person (name, address, date of birth etc) that they should be registered for Data Protection purposes. Anyone about whom you keep information is a data subject and data subjects have defined rights under the Data Protection Act including the right to know what data is being recorded about them, for what purpose and for how long. Typical data subjects for ADIs are learner drivers but driving examiners may also be data subjects for you if you keep information relating to driving tests which identifies the examiner who carried out the test. For more information about data protection, please have a look at the Information Commissioner's website which you can access at [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk).

## **INTERNET BOOKING**

On 31 January 2007 we launched an internet booking service for practical driving tests and MOTs. The service, which was successfully piloted during January, represents a further improvement in our service to customers by increasing the range of booking options available. Feedback on the service has been exceptionally positive. Customers can now choose to book their driving test or MOT online, using a valid credit/debit card, on the DVTA website at [www.dvni.gov.uk](http://www.dvni.gov.uk).

## **TELEPHONE BOOKING SERVICE**

The telephone booking service continues to operate on the extended hours (see below). Demand is increasing with peak periods usually from 9am to 10:30am each morning.

**Telephone Booking**

**08452472472**

**Hours of Service**

**8.00am – 7.00pm (Mon-Fri)**

**9.00am – 1.00pm (Sat)**

## **ILLEGAL DRIVING INSTRUCTORS – ENFORCEMENT**

Anyone with a concern about suspected illegal instruction can report the matter to ADI Section or the PSNI. Where you have a concern we need to have as much information as you can give us, eg why you believe a person to be illegally instructing, where/when they have been sighted, registration numbers and anything else of substance that you think might be of use.

We take the issue of illegal instruction extremely seriously but we cannot act upon information given anonymously, even from callers who have paid the person for instruction. If someone is not willing to go on the record with their complaint, they are even less likely to make a statement to the PSNI to say they paid for lessons. Consequently, there will be no evidence with which to pursue a case.

As a public body, we have a duty to be careful about alarming, annoying or defaming someone who is legitimately using their vehicle, unless we are told why the person is suspected. A number of cases are currently under investigation and we thank those who have brought these matters to our attention for doing so.

## **FEES**

Some test fees changed on 2 April 2007. The ADI fees and the learner driver test fees have **not** changed.

## **ADIs OPERATING IN REPUBLIC OF IRELAND**

We are grateful to ADIs in the North West who brought it to our attention that they were being prevented by the Gardai from instructing whilst in the Donegal area. We have checked the legal position and the NI provisional licence is not valid in the south which means that it is not legal for a NI learner driver to take lessons on ROI roads (regardless of who they are being taught by). This will be news to many of you who live in border counties and we hope it prevents you from running into any further difficulties with the ROI authorities.

## **2006 CUSTOMER SURVEY**

The results of the DVTA 2006 Customer Survey have been received. A total of 10629 customers were surveyed; 5315 customers who had sat driving tests, and 5314 customers who had presented a vehicle for testing. The survey sought customer opinion on the quality of service provided by the Agency and addressed issues such as booking arrangements, telephone contact, the Agency's counter service and overall test procedures. The main findings of the survey are listed.

- **Satisfaction With Booking Arrangements.** The level of customer satisfaction with booking arrangements was recorded at 93% overall. Satisfaction with booking arrangements for vehicle tests was 95%, compared with 90% for driver tests.
- **Satisfaction With Test Procedures.** Overall satisfaction with test procedures was recorded at 92%. Satisfaction with test procedures among vehicle customers was 95%, with 89% of driver customers satisfied.

- **Satisfaction With Counter Service**

Overall satisfaction with the Agency's counter service was recorded at 93%, with 94% of vehicle customers satisfied and 92% of driver customers satisfied.

- **Satisfaction With Telephone Contact**

Overall satisfaction with telephone contact was 95%, with 97% of vehicle customers satisfied compared with 94% of driver customers.

The Agency is pleased with these results which are a considerable improvement on the 2005 survey.

#### **E:MAIL CONTACT**

The Agency has found that email contact with ADIs can be very useful. Can those of you who have supplied email addresses please remember to update us when you change your provider or if you have recently obtained access to email.

**DEIRDRE WALSH**

ADI Registrar