

May 2009

Welcome to this new edition of *Update*. This edition provides you with an update on a number of issues including a new learning to drive leaflet, illegal instruction, ANI, educational check tests, fee increases, display of licences and a range of other issues.

I hope you find the contents of this edition of *Update* both interesting and informative.

LEARNING TO DRIVE LEAFLET/ILLEGAL INSTRUCTION

Following on from the Minister for the Environment's Christmas news release on the dangers of learner drivers engaging illegal instructors, the Agency has produced a new Learning to Drive leaflet which is being issued with all new provisional licences which advises what steps to take when planning to learn to drive and engaging a driving instructor.

In addition, during March, the Agency ran a two week advertising campaign on the backs of buses to alert learners, whilst they are actually on the road with their instructor, to ensure that their instructor is registered. The campaign covered all of Northern Ireland and we received very positive feedback from the industry who considered the advertisements both informative and eye-catching.

The intention is to raise the profile of Approved Driving Instructors (ADIs) and to raise the public's awareness that there is an approval process that must be gone through before a person can legally charge money for driving instruction. It is hoped that these measures together with the introduction of mandatory display of ADI and Trainee licences later this year will help reduce the incidence of illegal instructors setting up driving schools and obtaining monies by deception from learner drivers.

The Agency continues to be proactive in pursuing cases where there is a suspicion of illegal activity. To this end, we recently assisted PSNI in an investigation about 2 illegal instructors in County Antrim. The primary offender pleaded guilty to 20 charges of deception relating to false representation as a driving instructor and received a custodial sentence in January 2009. The other individual was found guilty of 8 charges of deception and ordered to complete community service.

It is rewarding for all those who work on such cases when a positive result is achieved as it sends out a clear message that the Agency and PSNI will take whatever action is necessary with prolific offenders and it hopefully assures legal instructors that we take such cases extremely seriously.

Anyone with a concern, supported with evidence, about suspected illegal instruction can report the matter to ADI Section or the PSNI. If 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.

A number of cases are currently under investigation and we thank those who have brought these matters to our attention.

ACCESS NI (ANI)

As you know, on 1 April 2008, the carrying out of Criminal Record Checks (CRO) on all ADI applicants became the responsibility of Access Northern Ireland (ANI).

The introduction of these new procedures unfortunately resulted in a delay of some 8-12 weeks for the return of enhanced disclosure certificates. This was due to the unprecedented large volume of applications received by Access NI.

In light of this and to avoid any further delay for applicants, the Agency decided as a temporary measure, to allow the clearance of Part 1 theory test applications and for newly qualified licences and licence renewals to be issued pending receipt of the certificate. There were no trainee licences granted during this period unless a satisfactory disclosure certificate had been received from ANI.

I am pleased that ANI has now addressed their backlog of applications and are processing and delivering enhanced disclosure certificates in line with their original target of 4 weeks.

Therefore, from 1 April 2009, and in accordance with normal procedures, ADI section will not process Part 1 applications, issue newly qualified licences or licence renewals until the Agency is in receipt of a satisfactory disclosure certificate.

Since the introduction of Access NI, DVA has paid the £30.00 fee on behalf of applicants unlike other Agencies/Departments. DVA has carried this cost as long as possible but unfortunately, this is not sustainable long term and we now have to consider the position. However, change is not imminent and we will keep you informed of the position as it develops.

EDUCATIONAL CHECK TESTS

In order to allow a more focused and targeted retraining scheme for driving examiners, the Agency's strategic board recently gave approval for the immediate suspension of the educational check test.

The educational check test is not contained within the legislation governing ADI registration and is not a statutory requirement. The test up until now has been conducted by Supervising Examiners as a 'feedback' session for newly qualified instructors who have been on the register for approximately 8 months before they are invited to their first full test after one year.

New instructors will now be scheduled for a check test within 4 years of entering the register. It is hoped however that resources in future will allow a 1st check test to be conducted some time earlier than this. All tests will now be assessed on a pass/fail basis and re-tests scheduled accordingly.

As ADI section prepares the check test programme a few months in advance there may be some instructors who have already received an invitation to attend for a test. They should attend as normal.

If you require any further clarification on the matter, please feel free to contact ADI section.

FEE INCREASES

On 1 April 2009 a number of vehicle and driver test fees were changed, mainly affecting fees for theory test, driving test, taxi and omnibus vehicle tests. I attach a revised schedule of driver and vehicle test fees for your information.

Revised posters are on display in all test centres. Additionally, the internet and intranet sites have been updated, as has the fees information line.

VEHICLE TEST FEES 1 APRIL 2009

CATEGORY	FULL TEST	RE-TEST
Motor Vehicles		
Class I Light Motor Bicycle	22.00	14.00
Class II Motor Bicycle	22.00	14.00
Class III Light Motor Vehicle	30.50	18.50
Class IV Motor Car & Heavy Motor Car	30.50	18.50
Class V LPCV	41.50	19.50
Class VI Minibus 9-16 seats	41.50	19.50
Class VA LPCV 17-35 seats	65.00	32.00
Class VA LPCV 36+ seats	81.00	44.00
Class V1A Minibus 9-16 seats	53.50	19.50
All categories of Class A test failing on road worthiness item		19.50
Goods Vehicles		
Light Goods 3500kg or less	30.50	18.50
HGV 2-axle	37.50	18.50
HGV 3-axle	48.50	18.50
HGV 4-axle	60.00	18.50
Articulated lorry 2-axle	42.00	19.50
Articulated lorry 3-axle	55.00	19.50
Trailer 1-axle	35.00	19.50
Trailer 2-axle	36.00	19.50
Trailer 3-axle	37.00	19.50

Public Service Vehicles		
Omnibus Class I, II, & III	90.50	19.50
Omnibus Class IA 9-16 seats	102.50	19.50
Omnibus Class IIA 17-35 seats	115.00	32.00
Omnibus Class IIIA 36+ seats	127.00	44.00
All categories of Class A test failing on road worthiness item		18.50
Taxi	138.50	19.50
Other		
Single Vehicle Approval	200.00	45.00
Motorcycle SVA	70.00	-
Vehicle Identity Check (VIC)	38.00	-
Carriage of Dangerous Goods	82.00	-
Reduced Pollution Certificate – not with annual inspection	28.00	17.00 With annual inspection
Certificate of Initial Fitness (COIF)	256.00	32.00

Category		Day Time	Saturday	Extended
A1	Light motorcycle	58.00	71.00	-
A	Motorcycle (over 120cc and not larger than 125cc)	58.00	71.00	116.00
B1	Tricycle/Quadricycle	58.00	71.00	-
B	Motor car	45.50	62.50	91.00
B&E	Motor car & trailer over 750kgs	66.00	99.00	-
C1	Goods vehicle 3500kgs to 7500kgs gross vehicle weight	66.00	99.00	-
C1&E	C1 Goods vehicle and trailer over 750kgs	66.00	99.00	-
C	Large Goods vehicle over 3.5 tonne	66.00	99.00	-
C&E	C goods vehicle & trailer over 750kgs	66.00	99.00	-
D1	Minibus 9-16 passenger seats	66.00	99.00	-
D1&E	D1 motor vehicle & trailer over 750kgs	66.00	99.00	-
D	Motor vehicle with more than 8 passenger seats	66.00	99.00	-
D&E	D Motor vehicle & trailer over 750kgs	66.00	99.00	-
F,G,H, K	Agricultural tractor, road roller, tracked vehicle and mowing machine/ pedestrian vehicle	45.50	-	-
P	Moped	58.00	71.00	-
A, A1,P	Motorcycle Manoeuvres	31.00	43.00	-

DRIVING THEORY TESTS	
A1, A, B1, B, B&E, P	30.00

Large Vehicle Theory Test	35.00
Large Vehicle Hazard Perception Test	15.00

ADI TESTS	
Theory & HPT test	72.00
Test of Driving Ability	130.00
Test of Ability to Instruct	138.00
Trainee Licence	120.00
Registration / Renewal	240.00

Driver CPC		Saturday
Module 2 – CPC Case Studies	30.00	
Module 4 – Practical CPC skills test assessing skills off road	55.00	63.00

APPEALS PROCEDURE/ MANDATORY DISPLAY OF LICENCES

ADI Appeals

The new Legislation governing the Appeals Procedure has been given Ministerial approval. The Agency is hopeful that the Commencement Order for the new appeals provision will be made in Summer 2009. Following this any further Appeals will be referred to the Magistrate's Court.

Display of Licence

Consultation is currently taking place to ensure that the new ADI licence meets all the security requirements. Provided there is no further delay to the legislation becoming operative, the Agency is hopeful that the new ADI/PDI licence will be issued to all ADIs/PDIs by the end of July 2009.

OVERUSE OF DRIVING TEST ROUTES

The Agency has again received complaints from concerned residents regarding the overuse of driving test routes for carrying out driving lessons and we have provided information below about particular 'trouble spots'.

Armagh

A complaint has been received from a concerned resident about the overuse of the Woodford Drive area for driving instruction.

Belfast

Complaints have been received from concerned residents about the overuse of the Mount Merrion Park and Wynchurch Road areas for driving instruction.

The Agency designs its' test routes to minimise inconvenience to residents as far as possible and we expect ADIs to stay off the approved test routes until the latter stages of training. It is fair to say that we all have a responsibility to try and resolve such problems and we would ask you to respond positively to the concerns raised by the residents.

DINAC MEETING

Since the issue of the last edition of *Update* there have been two meetings between the Agency and the Driving Instructors National Association Council (DINAC).

These meetings provide a useful forum for the Agency and the ADI industry to discuss a range of topics of mutual interest. Recent agenda items have included, display of licences, appeals procedure, Road Traffic Order 2007, trainee licence scheme and illegal instruction.

DEAF ASSOCIATION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

The Deaf Association for Northern Ireland has asked the Agency to provide ADIs with information regarding British Sign Language (BSL) courses they are providing.

There are 4,500 deaf sign language users in Northern Ireland who have regular barriers to communication. Learning to drive can be stressful but for deaf people who sign, this stress can be doubled due to lack of communication. If you decide to learn BSL you could be the person to relieve this stress and have deaf people coming to you to learn to drive. At present in Northern Ireland there are no driving instructors who can use BSL. There is a market out there for your service. Are you prepared to take up the challenge?

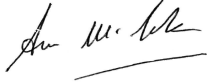
The Deaf Association are offering a two-hour session teaching participants how to carry out a basic conversation in BSL but also tailoring this conversation around learning to drive. This will include signs that you would use in your everyday job of teaching a person to drive.

The cost of the taster session will be £25.00 per person, which includes tuition, a certificate and a BSL gift.

For more information or to book contact Sue Barry at sueb@bda.org.uk or call 028 9043 7480.

COMMENTS

Comments, views or ideas on any of the items mentioned in this *Update* or suggestions for subjects we should cover in future editions would be most welcome. We are happy to receive these by telephone to 028 9068 5206, email to angie.mclenaghan@doeni.gov.uk or by letter to Angie at DVA, Balmoral Road.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann McCabe", with a horizontal line underneath.

ANN McCABE
ADI Registrar