

September 2010

Welcome to this new edition of *Update*. This edition provides you with information on mandatory display, trainee licence scheme and a range of other issues.

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

MANDATORY DISPLAY OF LICENCES

I am delighted that after some considerable delay the legislation making it mandatory to display ADI licences became operative on 2 August 2010.

The introduction of display is a positive development as, it will not only raise the professionalism of the industry, but help the general public including parents and guardians of learners to establish the status and validity of driving instructor's registration prior to purchasing driving lessons. It will also assist with the enforcement and detection of unregistered instructors and help to deter illegal instruction

Most of you by now should have received your new style licence which can be worn around the neck or displayed in the vehicle in a prominent position whilst giving instruction.

If anyone has still to forward photographs, I would request that you do so immediately so that your new licence can be issued to you to ensure that you are compliant with the new regulations.

Please note in accordance with the new regulations, it is now a requirement to display or wear the new licence when undergoing a check test.

Whilst the new legislation makes it mandatory to display ADI Certificates there is no similar requirement for PDI Licences. However, like qualified instructors trainees will be issued with a new style licence, appropriately endorsed, and encouraged to display it.

TRAINEE LICENCE SCHEME

When the current trainee licence scheme was introduced it was considered fit for purpose, had the support of the industry and served the industry and the Department well.

However, changes in traffic volumes, road conditions and the economic climate have changed the learning to drive environment and the Department is proposing to consult on the modernisation of driver training later this year but in the interim has made some changes.

To coincide with the introduction of mandatory display on 2 August 2010 the policy relating to trainee licences also changed. From that date, applicants who join the qualifying process will be issued with a total of two trainee licences, irrespective of the number of times they re-enter the process.

This change in policy will prevent the possibility of individuals becoming what is known as 'serial' trainee licence holders with no intention of investing in the substantial training required to pass the test of instructional ability.

I trust this change will be welcomed by the industry at large and will go some way in addressing the understandable concerns that have been voiced to the Agency by ADI Associations over recent times.

OVERUSE OF TEST ROUTES FOR DRIVER TRAINING

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.

During the past few weeks the Minister has received a number of letters from public representatives about the overuse of routes especially in the South Belfast area and in particular Upton Park, Ormonde Park, and Maryville Park. Approved Driving Instructors have been asked by the Agency in the past to limit the amount of time they spend instructing along recognised test routes and we have again written to ADI's in this area requesting that they refrain from overuse as it is causing unnecessary inconvenience to residents.

Throughout the process of driver training the majority of ADIs and PDIs will use a wide selection of roads with varying traffic situations to ensure the pupil receives adequate instruction on how to deal with different situations. The practice of using a varied number of roads at different locations is accepted as best practice as it helps to better prepare the candidate for post test conditions.

During training it is likely, and acceptable, at the final stages for instructors to introduce the pupil to the actual test routes. There are times when examiners' arrive at an approved manoeuvre site which is occupied by an instructor training. Generally this is not a problem as the majority of instructors identify that a test is in progress and move on to another area. This action is very much appreciated not only by the driving examiner but by the candidate.

However occasionally some ADI's / PDI's do not move on and this has caused problems for both the examiner and the pupil. Whilst we appreciate ADI/PDIs would not intentionally hold up a driving test, and accept it is not always apparent as to whether it is a test or another ADI on a lesson, it would be appreciated if instructors, when using

designated manoeuvre locations, were vigilant and gave precedence to the driving test as we are keen to make the test as stress free as possible for candidates.

Your continued co-operation on this matter is very much appreciated.

ON LINE PAYMENT FACILITY

In keeping with the NI Executive's Programme for Government target " *to deliver modern, high quality and efficient public services*" through enhanced electronic delivery of services and improved customer service, a new on line payment facility is now available for ADI's and PDI's. From 1 July 2010 applicants who wish to use this method of payment are required to have a valid credit or debit card. The payment method provides the same level of security as banks and other financial institutions during and after the transaction.

INDEPENDENT SAFEGUARDING AUTHORITY (ISA)

In our February edition we gave some information on a new vetting and barring scheme that was to be introduced that would impact on driving schools who employ ADI's. The scheme has not been introduced as the current Government is currently carrying out a review on a wide range of policies including this one. We will keep you informed of developments in future editions.

DINAC MEETING

Since the issue of the last edition of *Update* there has been one meeting between the Agency and the Driving Instructors National Association Council (DINAC). At the meeting Brian Morrison Chief Driving Examiner NI gave a presentation on AMI/CBT.

Since formed, DINAC has provided an excellent forum for the industry to liaise directly with the Department in a constructive way. Therefore if any of you have any questions or concerns please contact any member of the group who will raise it, on your behalf, with officials.

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.mcclenaghan@doeni.gov.uk or by letter to Angie at DVA, Balmoral Road.



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