

MINIMUM TEST VEHICLE SPECIFICATION

Dear Trainer,

WHY ARE WE WRITING TO YOU?

The purpose of this note is to remind you that the Minimum Test Vehicle Specification (MTV) for category B+E and all categories in C and D will change on 1 July 2007 in order to comply with European Directive 2000/56. We also wish to update you on other issues surrounding the category B+E and vocational tests and clarify some other points concerning the use of certain types of vehicle for test.

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE PAST?

You will remember that in September 2003 the MTV specifications changed for the above categories. You will no doubt also recall that in order to allow the training industry time to re-equip, vehicles which were first used (registered) before 30th September 2003 were allowed to continue in use until 1 July 2007. Any vehicles first used (registered) after 30th September 2003 had to comply with the new MTV rules immediately.

WHAT WILL BE THE POSITION FROM 1ST JULY 2007?

From 1st July 2007 all vehicles in the above categories will have to fully comply with the new MTV specification and additional requirements in order to be suitable for use on driving test. The requirements are summarised below.

B+E

A combination of a minimum test vehicle for category B and a trailer having a maximum authorised mass of 1,000 kilograms, capable of a speed of at least 100 kilometres per hour on the level, which does not fall within category B; the cargo compartment of the trailer shall consist of a closed box body which is at least as wide and as high as the corresponding dimensions of the tractor vehicle; the closed box body may also be slightly less wide than the tractor vehicle provided that the view to the rear is only possible by use of the external rear-view mirrors of the tractor vehicle.

C1

Any vehicle in sub-category C1 having a maximum authorised mass of 4,000 kilograms, with a length of at least five metres and capable of a speed of at least 80 kilometres per hour on the level; fitted with anti-lock brakes and equipped with recording equipment as defined by Regulation (EEC) No. 3821/85; The cargo compartment shall consist of a closed box body which is at least as wide and (when in position) as high as the cab.

C1+E

A combination of a minimum test vehicle for sub-category C1 and a trailer having a maximum authorised mass of 2,000 kilograms; this combination shall be at least eight metres in length and capable of a speed of at least 80 kilometres per hour on the level; the cargo compartment of the trailer shall consist of a closed box body which is at least as wide and at least as high as the corresponding dimensions of the tractor vehicle; the closed box body may also be slightly less wide than the tractor vehicle provided that the view to the rear is only possible by use of the external rear-view mirrors of the tractor vehicle.

D1

Any vehicle in sub-category D1 having a maximum authorised mass of 4,000 kilograms, with a minimum length of five metres and capable of a speed of at least 80 kilometres per hour on the level; fitted with anti-lock brakes and equipped with recording equipment as defined by Regulation (EEC) No.3821/85.

D1+E

A combination of a minimum test vehicle for sub-category D1 and a trailer having a maximum authorised mass of 1,250 kilograms and capable of a speed of at least 80 kilometres per hour on the level; the cargo compartment of the trailer shall consist of a closed box body which is at least two metres wide and at least two metres high.

C

Any vehicle in category C other than an articulated goods vehicle having a maximum authorised mass of 12,000 kilograms, a length of at least eight metres, a width of at least 2.40 metres and capable of a speed of at least 80 kilometres per hour on the level; fitted with anti-lock brakes, equipped with a gearbox having at least eight forward gears and recording equipment as defined by Regulation (EEC) No. 3821/85; the cargo compartment shall consist of a closed box body which is at least as wide and at least as high as the corresponding dimensions of the cab.

C+E

(a) an articulated goods vehicle combination having a maximum authorised mass of 20,000 kilograms, a length of at least 14 metres and a width of at least 2.4 metres, and which is capable of a speed of 80 kilometres per hour on the level, or

(b) a combination of a minimum test vehicle for category C and a trailer having a length of at least 7.5 metres (each having a width of at least 2.4 metres), a maximum authorised mass of 4,000 kilograms, and which has, in aggregate, a maximum authorised mass of 20,000 kilograms and an overall length of 14 metres and which is capable of a speed of 80 kilometres per hour on the level. The relevant cargo compartment of the articulated goods vehicle combination or the trailer shall consist of a closed box body which is at least as wide and as high as the corresponding dimensions of the cab or tractor vehicle.

D

Any vehicle in category D having a length of at least 10 metres, a width of at least 2.40 metres and capable of a speed of at least 80 kilometres per hour on the level; fitted with anti-lock brakes and equipped with recording equipment as defined by Regulation (EEC) No. 3821/85.

D+E

A combination of a minimum test vehicle for category D and a trailer having a maximum authorised mass of 1,250 kilograms, a width of at least 2.40 metres and capable of a speed of at least 80 kilometres per hour on the level; the cargo compartment of the trailer shall consist of a closed box body which is at least two metres wide and two metres high.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

The regulations state that as well as meeting the above requirements, the vehicle must be reasonably representative of the class to which it belongs. In particular, the specification for category C states that an articulated goods vehicle may not be used. As a general rule, all vehicles used for driving test purposes must also comply with construction and use regulations.

The closed box body which makes up the cargo compartment must be permanently mounted on the vehicle or trailer and be of a design which places the vehicle clearly in the category for which a licence is being sought. It is not acceptable to temporarily mount a box body construction of any type, by any means, as a substitute for a body designed to form an integral part of the vehicle or trailer.

Therefore, from 01 July 2007 it will be no longer possible to allow the use for driving test purposes of an articulated goods vehicle as a basis for mounting a body. These vehicles are constructed primarily to allow the partial superimposition of a trailer which is itself designed to carry goods. Also, the wheelbase of articulated goods vehicles can sometimes be somewhat less than the wheelbase of the normal vehicle driven by licence holders in category C and in this respect are also not representative of the class.

It is important to remember that the whole point of having MTV specifications for driving test is to ensure that drivers prove their competence in a vehicle which closely resembles the type of vehicle their full licence will authorise them to use after their test. I am sure you will agree this is important for road safety. It also enables newly qualified professional drivers to show prospective employers they have experience in a type of vehicle which closely resembles those used by industry.

WHAT IS MEANT BY AT LEAST EIGHT FORWARD GEARS?

The MTV specification for category C states that the vehicle must have at least eight forward gears. This requirement can be met in a number of ways;

For example, by using a gearbox with eight gears and no enhancements, although we understand these are not common.

By the use of a gearbox fitted with a range change (high and low), effectively giving at least eight gears in total.

By the use of a gearbox mated to a two speed back axle which gives at least eight gears in total.

By the use of a splitter on each gear (half gear) which gives at least eight gears in total.

Of course the choice of using a vehicle fitted with an automatic gearbox remains for all categories but as usual will result in full entitlement to automatic vehicles only on passing the test.

We refer here to eight forward gears as “normal gears” not crawler gears, as we would not normally expect the use of crawler gears during the test.

HOW SHOULD THE COUPLING BE CHECKED ON A B+E OR C1+E TEST?

When the trailer is re-coupled to the drawing vehicle on the above tests the candidate must demonstrate to the examiner the most appropriate method of checking that the re-coupling has been successful and the vehicle combination is safe for use on the road. The method will vary according to the type of coupling.

However, if the coupling is of the ball and socket type and a jockey wheel is fitted, it is appropriate to attempt to lift the trailer off the ball hitch by using the jockey wheel to apply some pressure. We do not expect excessive pressure, but enough to prove that the coupling is secure.

ARE THERE ANY OTHER CHANGES IN JULY 2007?

Yes, there are two further health and safety policy requirements being introduced on 01 July 2007. These changes were introduced in Great Britain on 1st April 2006.

Firstly, any vehicle used for a practical test in category C1, C1+E, C, C+E, D1, D1+E, D or D+E must be fitted with properly anchored and functioning two or three-point seat belts for any seat which is used by the person conducting the test and any seat used by any person authorised by the Department to attend the test for the purpose of supervising it or otherwise.

Secondly, any vehicle used for a practical test in category B+E, C1, C1+E, C, C+E, D1, D1+E, D or D+E must be fitted with an exterior nearside mirror and an exterior offside mirror providing adequate rearward vision from the seat occupied by the person conducting the test.

WHAT HAPPENS IF MY VEHICLE DOES NOT COMPLY WITH THE NEW SPECIFICATIONS?

From 01 July 2007 if the vehicle presented for test does not meet the new health and safety policy requirements or MTV specifications, the test will not proceed and the fee will be lost. The Agency must comply with the law in respect of the MTV specifications and at the same time ensure that health and safety requirements are kept up to date for the protection of its' examiners.

I NEED TO UPGRADE MY VEHICLE, ARE THERE ANY MORE CHANGES PLANNED IN THE NEAR FUTURE?

Yes, you may have heard that from 2010 practical tests in category **B+E, C1, C1+E, C, C+E**, will be conducted in a laden vehicle. However, the terms "laden vehicle" or "laden testing" are somewhat misleading. It is more accurate to say that vehicles in these categories will have to meet a "Real Total Mass" requirement from 14 September 2010 as a minimum test vehicle requirement as well as complying with the requirements for Maximum Authorised Mass. This is the final change to minimum test vehicles required under European Directive 2000/56.

***(RTM) Real Total Mass = the actual weight of the vehicle presented for test.**

**** (MAM) Maximum Authorised Mass = the legal permissible weight of the vehicle including any load carried, as shown on the manufacturers plate. (This is sometimes referred to as Gross Vehicle Weight).**

The objective with this change is to address the concerns held in the haulage industry and elsewhere that novice drivers are not sufficiently prepared by training and testing to take up employment driving loaded vehicles.

Some vehicles/vehicles and trailers may need a "certificated ballasted load" (load verified by a weighbridge for example) to meet the "Real Total Mass" requirement. Others will comply by virtue of their constructed weight alone (weight without a load).

It goes without saying that the weight of the vehicle/vehicle and trailer, when loaded, must not exceed any of the plated axle weights or plated maximum authorised mass. The attached tables take account of all the changes mentioned in this paper and illustrate what we understand will be the criteria for minimum test vehicles from 2010. **Please read these in conjunction with the text contained in this note for a full picture.** Hopefully this information will help you plan ahead, not only to meet the changes due on 01 July 2007 but also those due in 2010.

CATEGORY B+E

MAM**	Length (metres)	Width (metres)	Speed km/h	Ratios	Suitable mirrors	Seat belts
1,000 kg trailer	N/A	N/A	100	N/A	Yes	Yes
ABS	Tachograph	Cargo compartment/trailer	RTM *			
No	No	Closed box body trailer.	800 kg for the trailer			

CATEGORY C1

MAM**	Length (metres)	Width (metres)	Speed km/h	Ratios	Suitable mirrors	Seat belts
4,000 kg	5	N/A	80	N/A	Yes	Yes
ABS	Tachograph	Cargo compartment/trailer	RTM *			
Yes	Yes	Closed box body.	N/A			

CATEGORY C1+E

MAM**	Length (metres)	Width (metres)	Speed km/h	Ratios	Suitable mirrors	Seat belts
4,000 kg + 2,000 kg Trailer	8	N/A	80	N/A	Yes	Yes
ABS	Tachograph	Cargo compartment/trailer	RTM *			
Yes	Yes	Closed box trailer body.	800 kg for the trailer			

CATEGORY C

MAM**	Length (metres)	Width (metres)	Speed km/h	Ratios	Suitable mirrors	Seat belts
12,000 kg	8	2.4	80	8	Yes	Yes
ABS	Tachograph	Cargo compartment/trailer	RTM *			
Yes	Yes	Closed box body.	10,000 kg			

CATEGORY C+E (DRAWBAR)

MAM**	Length (metres)	Width (metres)	Speed km/h	Ratios	Suitable mirrors	Seatbelts
20,000 kg	14 (trailer at least 7.5)	2.4	80	8	Yes	Yes
ABS	Tachograph	Cargo compartment/trailer	RTM *			
Yes	Yes	Closed box body trailer.	15,000 kg			

CATEGORY C+E (ARTICULATED)

MAM**	Length (metres)	Width (metres)	Speed km/h	Ratios	Suitable mirrors	Seatbelts
20,000 kg	14	2.4	80	8	Yes	Yes
ABS	Tachograph	Cargo compartment/trailer	RTM *			
Yes	Yes	Closed box body trailer.	15,000 kg			

CATEGORY D1

MAM**	Length (metres)	Width (metres)	Speed km/h	Ratios	Suitable mirrors	Seatbelts
4,000 kg	5	N/A	80	N/A	Yes	Yes
ABS	Tachograph	Cargo compartment/trailer	RTM *			
Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A			

CATEGORY D1+E

MAM**	Length (metres)	Width (metres)	Speed km/h	Ratios	Suitable mirrors	Seatbelts
4,000 kg + 1,250 kg trailer	N/A	N/A	80	N/A	Yes	Yes
ABS	Tachograph	Cargo compartment/trailer	RTM *			
Yes	Yes	Closed Box Trailer – at least 2 metres high and 2 metres wide	800 kg for the trailer			

CATEGORY D

MAM**	Length (metres)	Width (metres)	Speed km/h	Ratios	Suitable mirrors	Seatbelts
N/A	10	2.4	80	N/A	Yes	Yes
ABS	Tachograph	Cargo compartment/trailer	RTM *			
Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A			

CATEGORY D+E

MAM**	Length (metres)	Width (metres)	Speed km/h	Ratios	Suitable mirrors	Seatbelts
1,250 kg trailer	N/A	2.4	80	N/A	Yes	Yes
ABS	Tachograph	Cargo compartment/trailer	RTM *			
Yes	Yes	Closed Box Trailer – at least 2 metres high and 2 metres wide	800 kg for the trailer			

HOW DO I GET MORE INFORMATION?

You can get more information on Minimum Test Vehicles on the Agency's website at www.dvtani.gov.uk. Or speak to one of the Agency's supervising examiners on 02890 547958 or 02890 541818.



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