



ENFORCEMENT

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DVTA ENFORCEMENT STRATEGY – BUS AND COACH SECTOR

The Driver & Vehicle Testing Agency (DVTA) recently undertook a strategic review of its Road Transport Enforcement Section. It was considered an opportune time to review the roles and functions of the Section and to undertake this in light of the needs and expectations of the industry and our partners.

It was evident that there was a need to consider new methods of measuring performance – to demonstrate that real progress was being made in reducing non-compliance. It was also clear from the feedback received that the industry would like action to be focussed more directly on the illegal sector. Our contact with other bodies, including enforcement organisations, highlighted new methods and technology for assisting enforcement.

We produced the new Enforcement Strategy in July 2005. A copy is also available on the DVTA web site under the heading 'Publications' (www.dvtani.gov.uk). The themes of the strategy include:

Output-based, transparent measures of performance

At present performance is monitored through the use of targets for numbers of inspections of driver and vehicle documentation, including tachograph records checked and examination of vehicles for roadworthiness. Objectives to seek improvement in the level of compliance in key areas have been agreed and will be monitored by the Agency's Management Board.

Overt, covert and educational approach

The new approach will involve more targeted enforcement, be it through inspection, in-depth investigation or education. This will involve developing expertise in obtaining and categorising intelligence on rogue operators, the development of a database of information on the transport fleet and the sharing of information with other enforcement bodies.

Utilisation of modern technology

Investigation undertaken in the development of this strategy identified a number of technology-based systems that will make the Section more effective and provide flexibility. These include mobile brake testing and automatic number plate recognition equipment.

Compliance Baselines

At present the Agency is undertaking exercises to establish the current level of compliance within the Bus and Coach Industry. Using information from the exercises, data from the test centres and from Great Britain (GB), targets will be set for future improvement.

COMPLIANCE CHECKS

While introducing the new approach operational checks have been ongoing and since April 2005, 508 buses and drivers were spot checked by Enforcement Officers at the roadside revealing the following offences:

- No Road Service Licence 32 (6%)
- No Public Service Vehicle Licence 18 (3%)
- No Public Service Vehicle Driver's Licence 7 (1%)
- No Insurance 16 (3%)

In addition, 76 mechanical defects were detected resulting in the issue of 11 Immediate and 22 Delayed Prohibition Notices.

During the same period, Enforcement Officers visited 35 Road Service Operators and inspected 157 vehicles in service at the time. From this 30 vehicles were found to be non compliant with PSV regulations, representing a non-compliance rate of 19%. As a result 1 Immediate and 22 Delayed Prohibition Notices were imposed.

INTELLIGENCE LED ENFORCEMENT

During the past year a number of very successful intelligence led investigations were carried out. One such investigation commenced as a result of complaints alleging that an operator was using a fleet of self-drive minibuses illegally without PSV Licences and Valid Insurance. This investigation, which lasted several months, culminated in a prosecution where the operator was fined £3000 and received an 18-month driving ban.

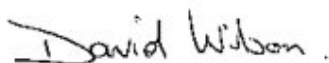
WORKING TOGETHER

The benefits of more effective enforcement will be improved road safety and fairer competition.

We need your help and cooperation and we will be seeking new ways to communicate more effectively with all representatives of the industry.

Please contact us if you require information in respect of licensing regulations, or on maintaining your vehicle.

You can also report any suspected illegal operator or driver in total confidence by contacting the Intelligence Team on 02890 254117 or 02890 254176. Alternatively you can send an email to dvtaenforcements@doeni.gov.uk



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