

VOSA ADVISES ON LOAD SECURITY



VOSA's close working relationship with the Health and Safety Executive ensures that our training courses embrace current thinking on all things safety related. Recent improvements to training on load security means that we're paying closer attention to this issue at the roadside.

Some of you may remember the article in issue 28 of Moving On, in which we advised readers to use the principles set out in the Department for Transport's *Code of Practice: Safety of Loads on Vehicles*. Well, policy has not changed since then and this guidance still applies.

VOSA's more recent work on load security with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has been to develop improved training for our roadside staff. This means that VOSA staff have the information they need to apply the rules on load security in a fair and consistent way across the country.

Once VOSA staff have undergone this training, they will use a 'load security enforcement matrix' – a systematic method to help them decide whether or not a load is secure. This matrix (more details on page 4) will guide examiners on what action to take, based on how secure the load is and how dangerous it could be if unsecured.

For example, a potentially dangerous load that has not been strapped in, restrained or otherwise secured will result in enforcement action. All loads must show evidence that a reasonable attempt has

been made to keep it secure during the journey. If a less hazardous load is insecure, but there is evidence that an attempt has been made to secure it, VOSA examiners will offer advice and guidance.



Operators will need to pay particular attention to curtain-sided trailers. VOSA's advice to industry is that curtain-sides should not be thought of as a restraint system. Loads carried in curtain-sided vehicles should be secured appropriately, without using the curtains as part of the securing system.

Although VOSA will be looking at load security with a fresh eye, there have been no changes to policy. We will only take enforcement action (prohibition and

sanction) where there is a clear danger. VOSA examiners will have sufficient knowledge, training and tools to help them apply the rules consistently, but industry must remember that this is still a subjective area. Where a reasonable attempt has been made to secure a load, enforcement action will not be taken and advice will be given.

Examiners will not routinely look in the back of vehicles or inside curtains unless there is cause for concern – for example, excessively bulging curtains or signs of load shifting.

The load security training programme is being introduced throughout the country, so operators and drivers will start to see a gradual change in enforcement during the summer, as well as fewer incidents and delays from spilled loads!

Visit www.hse.gov.uk/logistics/load-security.htm for useful advice on securing your load, including the Department for Transport's *Code of Practice: Safety of Loads on Vehicles*.

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From the editor



Hello readers,

Summer 2012 is here, the Olympics are upon us and VOSA is working in the background to make sure that PSVs are going to be in shape to transport passengers for the Olympics and Paralympics.

We've also come to the end of an era. This is the last full print edition of Moving On – but we're committed to the digital age and readers can sign up for free copies online via VOSA Direct at www.dft.gov.uk/vosa.

As this is the last edition in full print, we've taken the opportunity to put a poster on the back cover reminding drivers that they must carry 28 days worth of records. This is one of the most frequent causes of prohibitions VOSA issues. Rather than laying yourself open to a £200 fine for breach of regulations (not to mention the £80 immobilisation release fee), we recommend that drivers carry their records in the first place. Put the poster up where it'll help to remind drivers to carry 28 days of records with them, before they begin their journeys.

Safe driving,

Jessie VanBeck

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This newsletter, along with previous issues, can be viewed as a pdf on the VOSA website:
www.vosa.gov.uk/moving-on

NEWS IN BRIEF

CHANGES TO DIGITAL TACHOGRAPHS

The EU Commission has introduced a number of changes to digital tachographs. These design changes are being implemented in two generations, more commonly referred to as 2nd generation and 3rd generation digital tachographs.

Second generation tachographs were implemented from 1 October 2011.

Any tachograph activated from 1 October 2012 MUST be a

third generation tachograph and is required to have improved security features.

There is no requirement to retrospectively apply this Regulation. So vehicles already fitted with a 1st or 2nd generation tachograph may continue to use these.

Email enquiries@vosa.gov.uk for further advice on the fitment of digital tachographs.



Bus Service Operators Grant

VOSA has taken on the work of investigating bus service operators grant (BSOG) claims on behalf of the Department for Transport. These investigations are now being carried out by VOSA examiners, rather than inspectors from the Bus Service Operators Grant team.

In addition to undertaking investigations, our examiners are also carrying out basic checks to ensure that operators have systems in place to manage BSOG claims.

Payment of BSOG continues to be administered by the BSOG team in Hastings.

VOSA reports are sent solely to the BSOG team, who decide on the appropriate course of action to be taken. This may include submitting the report of the findings to the Traffic Commissioner.

Visit www.dft.gov.uk/topics/public-transport/buses/bsog for more information on BSOG.

VOSA at Truckfest

VOSA will be joining the crowds again at the Truckfest shows across the nation this summer. With experts in a range of specialities, we look forward to meeting with drivers and talking about the issues that

concern you. Come and find our stand for a chat.

Visit www.truckfest.co.uk for more information about the shows.

BUS PUNCTUALITY

VOSA has completed the roll-out of training our examiners to support bus punctuality.

VOSA is working closely with operators to improve service punctuality. Operators are encouraged to check their monitoring systems and to work in partnership with local authorities. This does not have to be a formal or statutory partnership, such as a Quality

Partnership. It can be a more informal voluntary one but operators and local authorities should be working together to improve the punctuality and reliability of local bus services.

Operators are reminded that Traffic Commissioners expect operators to monitor their own services.

Visit www.dft.gov.uk/topics/public-transport/buses for more information on partnership working with local authorities.



Check your gaiters

In Northern Ireland the Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA) conducts all vehicle testing (Classes 1 – 7). They have collected lots of data on the impact of the introduction of new test items resulting from the Testing Directive, which has some useful early insight for us here in Britain.

Northern Irish data showed the overall test failure rate for all vehicles went up by around 1.2%. Nearly half these failures (44%) were attributed to secondary restraint systems (SRS). Few trucks and buses are

fitted with SRS yet, so VOSA can expect to see a lower overall increase in failures than 1.2%.

The second biggest new failure item is dust covers and gaiters at 28%. So vehicle presenters would be well-advised to double check that vehicle dust covers and gaiters are intact before test, to prevent obvious but avoidable failures.

Visit www.vosa.gov.uk/vehicle-testing-manuals-and-guides for your copies of the 2012 inspection manuals.

MYTH of the MOMENT

“Foreign vehicles are more likely to break the rules than GB trucks – why don't VOSA pull more of these over?”

Reality: VOSA's targeting system makes sure we stop the vehicles that are at most risk of breaking the rules – whatever their nationality.



1ST NATIONAL ATF FORUM A BIG HIT WITH OPERATORS

Operators of Authorised Testing Facilities – ATFs – met in February to share best practice and ideas about the future of statutory testing for commercial vehicles. VOSA welcomed the chance to gather honest feedback and hear about different **experiences of setting up and running ATFs first hand.**

ATF operators gathered on 27 February at the first national ATF Forum in Birmingham to put forward their ideas about improving vehicle testing at Designated Premises and ATFs.



The event, hosted by VOSA, attracted 80 operators from all over the country to share their valuable experience about operating practices at ATFs two years after the launch of the ATF contract.

The forum proved to be a useful platform for discussions about maximising lane capacity and improving future business processes. Andy Chucas, Business Development Manager from S&K Haulage said "This was a great opportunity for the ATF community to get together in one place and share their experiences from signing the contract, to building up the business. It has been worthwhile to have

open and honest discussions with VOSA representatives in an informal setting."

Neil Jacob, Service Improvement Director for Imperial Commercials commented that "Presenting to the delegates today enabled me to outline the experiences we had when opening our ATF investments and it hopefully will bring some benefit to those gathered."

Your feedback

VOSA welcomed the first-hand feedback from ATF operators. VOSA's Chief Executive Alastair Peoples, who opened the Forum, said "It was good to see so many ATF representatives at this event talking through common experiences and discussing what can be done better in the future."

VOSA is looking at further opportunities to improve the testing service and strengthen and support networking within the ATF community.

Planning ahead

VOSA will remain committed to reducing cost to the industry and moving vehicle testing closer to the point of maintenance and repair throughout 2012/13.



As part of this undertaking, VOSA will also support the best use of lane capacity, effectiveness and throughput at ATFs where customer demand is highest.

The ATF network is also expanding healthily with the first ATF now up and running on the Isle of Wight. Over 42% of statutory vehicle testing is now carried out at close to 400 non-VOSA sites, and this network is set to expand even further.

VOSA's overall aim is to deliver the majority of core strategic testing at non-VOSA sites by 2013.

200

ATF MILESTONE



VOSA Chief Executive Alastair Peoples officially opened Volant Peoples Ltd's ATF in April this year, building the nation's ATF network to 200 facilities.

Alastair Peoples said: "I am absolutely delighted to open the 200th Authorised Testing Facility. Reaching this landmark shows that the industry has fully embraced the ATF testing model, which is helping operators save thousands of pounds in reduced fuel costs, vehicle downtime and salaries."

The milestone event took place at Volant's brand new, drive-through, two-lane facility in the Midlands.

FIRST ATF OPENS ON THE ISLE OF WIGHT



VOSA has successfully extended the network of Authorised Testing Facilities (ATFs) to the Isle of Wight. Malcolm Tipping and Steve Vardy from VOSA officially opened the first ATF on the island. D H Price, a newbuild ATF, opened its gates to their new customers with a fully booked testing day.

Apart from vehicle testing, the company also offers on site vehicle repair and maintenance services.

To find your nearest ATF, visit www.vosa.gov.uk and select the data.gov.uk link opposite the ATF logo.

Visit www.businesslink.gov.uk/ATF for advice and guidance on getting your own ATF started.



SAVING LIVES, SAFER LIMOS

The public are being advised to check that limousine operators are safe and legal before booking a limo for their special events.

Hiring limousines or novelty vehicles has become an increasingly popular part of school and college proms and leaving celebrations, as well as weddings and birthday parties. But there are concerns that many limos may be unlicensed and unsafe.

Stretched limousines must hold a licence as a passenger service vehicle – like buses and coaches – or be licensed by a local authority as a private-hire vehicle, as taxis are.

Without a licence, hiring out limousines is illegal.

Other risks when using an unlicensed company include:

- ▶ The driver may not be properly licensed to drive the vehicle.
- ▶ The vehicle and driver may not be insured.
- ▶ The vehicle may not be built to the necessary safety standards.
- ▶ The vehicle may not be maintained properly and could be dangerous.
- ▶ The vehicle is likely to be stopped during the journey for road safety checks by police or VOSA.

- ▶ If safety issues or offences are found, the journey that was paid for may be interrupted and the vehicle seized by police or impounded by VOSA.

VOSA is launching a campaign to make the public smarter at checking whether a company is licensed. Use the Operator Search at www.dft.gov.uk/vosa to check if a company holds a passenger service vehicle (PSV) licence or email enquiries@vosa.gov.uk.

To check if a company holds a private hire licence, contact your local council.



...From page one

Load security matrix

The key purpose of load security training is to help VOSA examiners respond appropriately to different load and security types. The priority is to deal with loads that are demonstrably not secure and therefore present a real danger to road users. This matrix is only intended as guidance and will not cover every eventuality. Other factors – such as the speed of the vehicle – will be taken into account.

		DEFECT CATEGORY		
		1	2	3
LOAD TYPE	A	PROHIBIT	PROHIBIT	ADVISE
	B	PROHIBIT	PROHIBIT	ADVISE
	C	PROHIBIT	ADVISE	ADVISE

DEFECT CATEGORY		
Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
No load securing	>30cm gap between load and vehicle headboard	Lashings on ropehooks
>1m gap between front of load and vehicle headboard	Unsheeted load in bulk tipper or skip	Minor damage to headboard not affecting structural integrity
Unstable load affecting vehicle stability or likely to topple from vehicle	Inadequate load securing leading to likely risk of harm	Unsuitable load securing
Severe structural damage to headboard or gaps in headboard that would allow load penetration	Unsuitable stacking of load items likely to lead to risk of harm	Poor condition of securing equipment
Items loaded over height of headboard	Height of load likely to affect vehicle stability	Unsuitable vehicle for load

LOAD TYPE		
Type A	Type B	Type C
Metal pipes, sheet or bar	Timber	Clothing
Reinforced concrete	FIBCs/bulk powder	Wood chip
Bricks, stone or concrete	Roll cages	Waste paper
Vehicles (including scrap)	Bagged aggregate	Coal bags
Plant machinery	Empty skips stacked 3 high	Bulk material (in tipper)
Reels (steel, wire or paper)	Heavy palletised goods	Packaging material
Kegs and barrels		Single loaded skips
Stacked loaded skips		Empty skips < 3 high
Empty skips stacked > 3 high		Light palletised goods
Metal castings		
Glass		
Containers/work cabins		

OPERATOR LICENSING – SMALL TRAILERS NOW IN SCOPE

On 4 December 2011, the licensing exemption for small trailers with an unladen weight not exceeding 1020kgs for hire or reward operations was removed. But what does this mean for operators?



If you operate a goods vehicle and tow a trailer for hire or reward, where the maximum train weight exceeds 3.5 tonnes, you are likely to be within scope of goods vehicle operator licensing and should seek further advice from VOSA.

Some dual purpose vehicles and any trailers drawn by them are still exempt but again, if you are unsure whether or not this means you, you should seek further advice from VOSA.

Hire or reward

In this context, hire or reward operations are those which primarily carry other peoples' goods. This would bring into scope transport and general haulage companies, courier companies, parcel delivery companies etc.

Still exempt

An operation may be classified as hire or reward by virtue of the fact that other peoples' goods are being transported. However, if delivery of those goods are not the primary activity, then the operation is still exempt. So landscape gardeners, for example – who

transport plants that are not the property of the landscape gardening business – are still exempt because their primary activity is landscape gardening, not transport.

Companies new to operator licensing

This change to the legislation will bring in to scope many companies that do not currently need an operator licence.

Some operators may therefore be unaware of the changes being introduced. If however, it is apparent that an operator has been advised of the changes and has not subsequently made an application for a licence, enforcement action will be taken.

If you're not sure if you're exempt from O-licensing requirements, email enquiries@vosa.gov.uk for further advice.

GET SET FOR THE OLYMPICS

Transport for London (TfL) has published information on making and receiving deliveries during the Olympic and Paralympic Games at www.tfl.gov.uk/2012freight. It contains information on the temporary road restrictions in place during the Games, and practical solutions to help meet the challenges.

Although some of the information is specific to London, much of the advice can be applied to deliveries made at locations affected by the Olympics elsewhere in the country, such as Weymouth and Portland, Eton Dorney, football stadia etc.

Case studies are provided to demonstrate how freight operators and their clients have used TfL's advice. The website also contains TfL's suggested Code of Practice for out-of-hours delivery activity.

Information about changes arising from the operation of the Olympic Route Network (ORN), Paralympic Route Network (PRN) and the Central London

Zone, categorised by borough, is available at www.tfl.gov.uk/orn.

No new permits will be needed for regular deliveries during the Games. However, TfL advises operators to ensure their drivers carry the following items with them:

- ▶ Photographic ID (preferably a driving licence).
- ▶ Confirmation of employment status with the company, on headed paper.
- ▶ Delivery manifest or PDA confirming the destination / collection point. For jobs assigned at short notice, a text message from the supervisor / Transport Manager is advisable, with a contact telephone number to provide verification.

TfL publishes a newsletter containing the latest information related to making deliveries in London at Games time. Email freight@tfl.gov.uk to be added to the circulation list.

YOUR NUMBER'S UP

Recent changes to VOSA's Categorisation of Defects included a reference to legibility of number plates. Number plates are key to identifying a vehicle for all sorts of enforcement purposes – not just by VOSA. So it is important that number plates are legible and individual characters can be read easily.

However, VOSA officers aren't going to prohibit vehicles for a dirty number plate if the driver cleans it up – we are realistic enough to know that whatever systems are in place for operators and drivers to make sure the plate is reasonably clean, a day on a dirty road can make quite a difference.

Number plates can also deteriorate – in particular when the Perspex cover starts to separate from the backboard (known as de-lamination), allowing dirt to get in and obscure the printed characters.

Drivers are responsible for making sure their number plate is legible as part of their daily walkaround check. Any early signs of deterioration should be recorded in the driver's defect reporting book so that it can be replaced before it becomes illegible.

Getting legal replacement plates can take some time – so if there are the early signs of failure it is worth ordering new plates early.

Visit www.direct.gov.uk/replace-registration-plate to find out how to order a replacement number plate.



www.vosa.gov.uk

BE A SAFE OPERATOR

Some readers may believe that VOSA is only interested in compliance with the law – but VOSA's role is also to support and advise drivers and operators on safe working practices – helping you to avoid accidents and keep our roads safe.

Several recent serious road traffic incidents involving heavy vehicles serve as a stark reminder that constant attention to safety is essential. Of course some incidents are caused by factors outside of the control of vehicle operators or their employees – but there are working practices which operators can, and should, adopt – above and beyond those required by law – that will improve the safety of all road users.

Wider thinking

A clear example of this can be found when scheduling journeys. The complexity of the drivers' hours rules – particularly when combined with the requirements of the Working Time Directive – can mean that the focus is on sticking to the rules, rather than the bigger picture of protecting your drivers against fatigue.

Operators need to think beyond the rules to make sure that when journeys are scheduled, drivers are given the opportunity to take a real rest, so that they can actually have a real rest! Good systems for managing driver fatigue

should reduce the risk of a driver being tired, not just the risk of the rules being breached.

There is an argument that the rules around operating and driving large vehicles are too complicated and onerous – and this can mean we lose sight of why we have

these rules in the first place. But whatever we may think about the details, the rules are there to make sure that the risks of fatigue are managed.

Just obeying the rules should not be the end of our – or your – responsibilities. There is a much wider obligation to behave in a safe way and to encourage fellow motorists to do the same. It can be easy to focus on the rules alone and forget the principles behind them. But it is important to remember the real purpose behind these rules – to keep our roads safe for everyone who uses them.

Of course, taking such considerations require a little more time and effort. But in the example provided, fewer tired drivers means fewer accidents, which in turn can mean more satisfied customers, a better risk score, lower insurance, a better reputation and healthier employees. All in all, a worthwhile investment.

Tools and techniques

A number of tools and techniques can be applied across all aspects of vehicle operation to improve efficiency and safety – ranging from managing vehicle condition and loading practices to quality of driving and record keeping.

It is also worth noting that some of the products available to help make vehicle operations more efficient – for example, by spending less on fuel – also have significant safety benefits. So improving the bottom line goes hand-in-hand with reducing the risk of incidents. For instance, many of the 'in cab' driver monitoring systems focused at ensuring economic driving techniques also encourage safe driving

practices. A one-off payment brings the benefit of long term savings on components and fuel as well as contributing towards safer roads.

Embracing the concept of safety is not something that is performed in a single action – it is embodied by the way we work. If operators, fleet and transport managers and drivers embrace the safer ways of working behind the rules, they protect not only themselves and their own business, but their fellows in industry and on the road, too.

Professional help

Trade associations produce a range of user-friendly guidance on safer working practices that are designed to help businesses save money. They will also be able to provide advice on which products will best suit your needs.

Visit www.vosa.gov.uk/manuals-and-guides to download VOSA's own range of publications.

The team at *Moving On* want to hear about safety systems you have adopted and found to work – send examples of your safe working practices to movingon@vosa.gov.uk.

ROB WILSON@SHUTTERSTOCK



MOVING ON GOES DIGITAL

Moving On is moving online.

This is the last full print edition.

Don't get left out in the cold! You can continue to get the latest news and updates from VOSA.

Visit www.dft.gov.uk/vosa to register for VOSA Direct and sign up to get *Moving On* emailed directly to your inbox.



KENTOH@SHUTTERSTOCK

STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH

VOSA has teamed up with prominent equestrian groups to create a user-friendly guide for anyone who uses a horsebox or trailers.

A Guide for Horsebox Owners has been put together alongside experts from Horse & Hound magazine, the British Equestrian Federation, the British Horse Society, British Eventing, British Dressage, the Pony Club, PRP Rescue Services, NFU Mutual and Horse World.

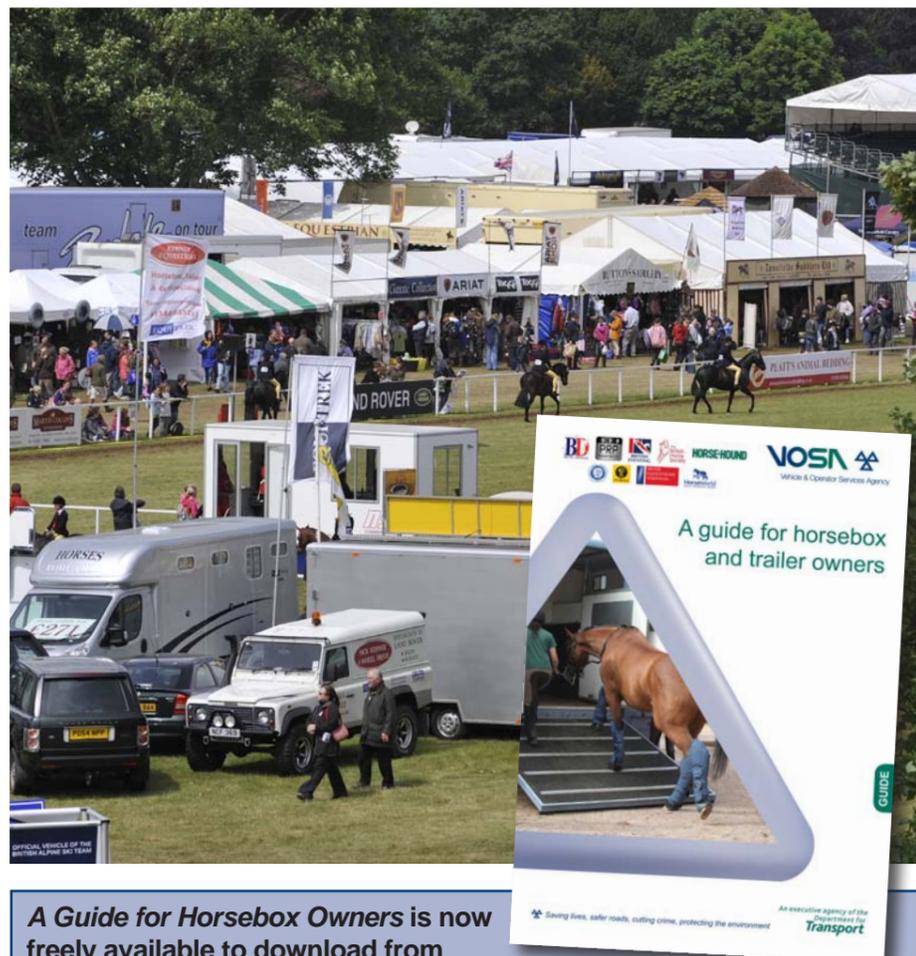
The rules for operating horseboxes, whether they are trailers or rigid vehicles, can be fairly complex. VOSA has identified a few areas where mistakes are often made. To help clear up any confusion around these areas, VOSA has issued simple, easy-to-understand guidance. *A Guide for Horsebox Owners* addresses the basic concerns and will help owners and operators of horseboxes to transport their horses and equipment safely and legally.

VOSA traffic examiners specialising in equestrian vehicles attended the Royal

Windsor Horse Show in May to answer questions and give advice. VOSA also used the show to launch the online guide, which was very well received.

The guide is in an easy-to-read format, divided into chapters on operator licensing, drivers' hours and tachographs, roadworthiness, vehicle weights, certificates of competence, other requirements and enforcement.

A Guide for Horsebox Owners is designed to answer all of those questions that horsebox and trailer owners may have, but were not sure of the answer. Owners can download a copy from the VOSA website to keep in their glove-box and refer to if they are in any doubt. The guide will help owners not to fall foul of the regulations by giving them a better understanding of the rules.



A Guide for Horsebox Owners is now freely available to download from
www.vosa.gov.uk/Guide-for-Horsebox-Owners

REMINDER: OCRS IS CHANGING

A number of improvements are being made to VOSA's Operator Compliance Risk Score (OCRS) system. Updates are being made in response to industry concerns and VOSA's need to ensure that the system continues to support effective targeting of non-compliant operators.

A more detailed exploration of the changes was undertaken in Issue 38 of Moving On, which can be found at www.vosa.gov.uk/moving-on. These updates include:

- ▶ The removal of predictive scoring.
- ▶ A simplified scoring and banding system where operators can move between bands through their own efforts.
- ▶ Moving from two to three years of data to calculate OCRS, where older defects/offences have a lower score.
- ▶ The introduction of a 'no score' (grey band) for operators where VOSA has no data within the last three years.
- ▶ The introduction of straight-to-red for some offences and where an operator has been prosecuted by VOSA.
- ▶ The introduction of a graduated element to the scoring system.

The original implementation date for these changes has been moved forwards while we make system changes that will ensure the final product is completely robust.

Download a list of frequently asked questions about the improvements from www.vosa.gov.uk/OCRS-FAQs, which also contains an explanation of the new point scoring system.

Operators who do not yet have access to their OCRS can visit www.businesslink.gov.uk/OCRS-Access-AppForm to complete the online application form for this service.

The registration process takes approximately five working days. A membership letter and separate confirmation letter will be posted to you, containing instructions on how to log in and create a user ID and password.

OCRS information published at www.businesslink.gov.uk/ocrs is current and will be updated with the changes when they come in to effect.

Department for Transport agency details

Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)
 Driver enquiries: **0300 790 6801**
 Vehicle enquiries: **0300 790 6802**
www.direct.gov.uk/emaildvla

Driving Standards Agency (DSA)
0300 200 1122
customer.services@dsa.gov.uk

Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA)
0117 951 5151
www.vca.gov.uk/contact.asp

Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA)
0300 123 9000
enquiries@vosa.gov.uk



Drivers! carry your records...

...and digital driver
card if one has
been issued

Today's records



+



the previous 28 days



Failure to carry correct records
could result in your vehicle being
immobilised, a penalty of £200
and an £80 release fee.

An executive agency of the
Department for
Transport