

Report of Joint NASP/DVSA meeting – February 11th 2020

In attendance:

NASP: Representatives from the three ADI associations that make up NASP, those being ADINJC, DIA and MSA GB and the minute secretary.

DVSA:	Jacqui Turland	Registrar
	Nick Taylor	Deputy Registrar
	Mark Magee	Head of Driver Policy (by Skype)
	John Sheridan	Driver Training Policy Manager
	John Caradine	Driver Training Policy Manager
	Bill Pope	Head of Publications
	Michael Warner	Senior External Affairs Manager
	Vasim Choudhry	Public Liaison Manager
	Nigel Robinson	Enforcement Delivery Manager ADIs
	Abigail Britten	Senior Strategic Communications Manager
	Chas Wright	DVSA Endorsed Lead Officer

In mid-February, NASP met with the above representatives from key DVSA operational and policy areas to discuss main issues and challenges within the industry. Also to consult with DVSA on new areas of policy and service development. NASP is the only ADI stakeholder group to have such meetings and regular dialogue with DVSA and is considered by the regulator to be the key consultative stakeholder for the driver training industry.

Minutes and actions were discussed from the previous meetings from October 2019 before moving on to the agenda of items raised by both NASP (responding to concerns and queries received from the respective memberships of each NASP group member) and DVSA.

Follow up from previous meeting: NASP asked to be sent the screenshots of the emails sent out to candidates after test and the marking sheet as shown now on the digital screens. There were no other outstanding action points.

Policy Matters: Mark Magee apologised for being unable to join the meeting in person but joined by webinar link. Updates included that the iPad app has now rolled out to all driving examiners, delivering 3,500 car tests a week. All tests are now on the app, B+E is currently being rolled out and the vocational tests will be next followed by motorbikes and then ADI Part 2 and other ADI tests. When the digital summary goes out, there is a link attached to a customer satisfaction survey, this goes to all candidates instead of the previous random

survey. NASP asked whether this would include questions about the ADI's performance however currently this is only about the test experience. Examples would be the booking and whether this was changed or if the examiner put the candidate at ease and whether the digital summary information was useful. NASP noted this was likely to be the highest level of engagement and an opportunity to ask whether the candidate felt test ready and prepared for independent driving. DVSA will explore if this is possible and NASP asked for any further feedback. There is currently work taking place to collect all marks recorded on both Part 3 and SCs, not just the pass or fail as is now. A further NASP meeting with DVSA by webinar will be arranged to take place shortly.

Display of ADI Certificates on Test:

DVSA reported on a survey carried out with ADIs where there had been 3,000 responses.

- 87% said that they always leave their badge in the car
- 11% that they sometimes remove it
- 2% that they always remove it

It also showed that the longer ADIs have been in the industry the more likely they are to remove it. Reasons given for removing badges included:

- Candidate not ready (this was the highest reason given)
- Not my candidate
- As a signal to the examiner
- Out of principle (this was not a very common reason given)

Those who do leave their badges in were asked why they thought people took them out, their responses were that they were a bad instructor or that candidates were not ready for test. DVSA are concerned as to why candidates are being presented if they are not ready for test.

To change the system to require instructors to leave their badge in on test, would mean DVSA would need to prove it was required, and that there was justification, proved by test results. The pass result of cars with dual controls but no certificate is 42%; pass result with dual controls and certificate is 48%. Only around 5% of tests are conducted in cars with no dual controls. The results of the survey will be published.

DVSA have now changed the way they deal with customers writing in to complain that their ADI won't allow them to take the test. Previously these had been treated as complaints, but now they are saying that it's up to the ADI to make that decision based on their professional opinion. DVSA emphasised that they want candidates to pass first time, road ready, not simply chance it and hope for a good day. ADIs are the first line gatekeeper to going on a test, they should (and do) use their professional judgement to advise the candidate on test readiness. If the candidate is not ready, they should decline use of their vehicle, rather than simply removing their badge. DVSA will support the ADI in this matter.

NASP suggested that ADIs relate their pass rates to standards check calls. DVSA explained that that poor pass rates are looked at by the Enforcement Team who will look at the number of ETAs and dangerous faults, but will also take into account ADIs taking up special needs candidates or a high number of candidates who find driving a difficult skill. Repeated presentation of candidates that are not ready for test is a road safety concern, waste of the candidate and public money, and increases waiting times for tests. As any ADI would expect, repeated presentation of candidates that are not ready will likely result in a conversation with the enforcement team to improve performance.

DVSA want to promote more ADIs observing on test, and said that the conducting of mock tests can have a positive effect on road safety. The group discussed various myths that DVSA are aware are circulating. DVSA said the Enforcement Team will act on all complaints about poor instruction. NASP suggested that the information about not taking a test until they are ready should be sent out at every possible opportunity to candidates. DVSA said that the rules about content on gov.uk are very strict, but that there is 'softer' information on Safe Driving for Life. DVSA will now include that ADIs are being safe and responsible by not taking people to test too early.

Trainee Licences:

DVSA said there has been no policy change relating to trainee licences. DVSA was receiving 350 appeals per annum before the change in Part 3, this has risen to 820 last year. Before the change to Part 3, 60% of PDIs were on the trainee licence, this is now 95%, and more people are currently training. DVSA had considered an automatic second licence, however had decided against it.

Complaints:

DVSA reported that the major changes discussed previously have now been implemented. The previous 3 tier system is now reduced to a 2 tier system, thereby decreasing the burden on staff and managing customer expectations. It had started on 6 January and feedback to date had been positive. There is also a system for vexatious complaints which can be applied at any tier. Email addresses to correspondence north and corporate reputation are being phased out, emails to use are public.liaison@dvsa.gov.uk and instructorconduct@dvsa.gov.uk which will then go to the new team.

Consultation will take place on dealing differently with complaints about disputed test decisions, which can only be challenged if tests were incorrectly conducted. DVSA said ADIs should be encouraged to go out on tests as part of the service that the candidate is paying for. They consider that many complaints could be avoided if the ADI had been present and witnessed what had happened. DVSA asked why an ADI would not want to see the end result of their work. NASP said the candidate is paying for the use of the car, some candidates don't want their ADI to sit in as they feel its extra pressure and that whilst candidates can be prepared well for test they don't necessarily perform as they are taught to on the day. NASP agreed that it would better to introduce the fact they can sit in on a test as early as possible to the candidate rather than last minute just before the test. At present only 12% of tests were accompanied - DVSA would prefer an ADI accompanying a

test to be viewed as free CPD by instructors and said there were fewer complaints when the ADI is present, as the ADI has a trusted relationship with the candidate and can also provide impartial independent thought on the test, the fault and future lessons to work on that issue. NASP suggested it was not the instructor's job to help reduce complaints about DVSA staff, to which DVSA agreed but highlighted that it provides a second opinion for BOTH the examiner to communicate the fault and for the candidate if they feel the test was not properly conducted.

It was agreed that education is needed for ADIs, staff at DVSA and candidates. DVSA are considering a cooling off period because complaints need to be thought through, and the candidates could be encouraged to meet with the DTCM. They felt that a period before a complaint can be lodged will reduce the number and improve the quality and substance of the complaints. Some candidates are not aware that their ADI can accompany them, and the role of the ADI is not always clear. It's also not always made clear the role of an accompanying LDTM, and there should be clarity about the priority of who accompanies. DVSA suggest that this should be discussed with the candidate early in the learning process and should be seen as the norm. NASP recommended it should be included at the beginning of the Driver's Record for everyone to see.

There is a consultation before the end of the financial year on payment of expenses for short notice cancellations. Currently reimbursed by cheque DVSA are now looking at how this could be done electronically.

Communications:

NASP want to have some guidelines for ADIs on what to expect if a complaint is made against them. DVSA said this had been discussed internally, and they had looked at the information on gov.uk. However, the numbers of people removed from the Register are very small, less than 1% of the ADI population are removed under Fit & Proper, and these mostly for motoring offences. The information on gov.uk has to be of use to the majority and cannot include things for such a small minority. NASP proposed that guidelines could be included with the first letter/communication to the ADI. DVSA said that the NASP associations represent ADIs and would be happy for NASP to do this, and that DVSA encourage people to be members of associations. NASP consider that as the regulator DVSA could be criticised for not providing guidelines, and that originally the letter had not said that people could be represented. DVSA said that every letter now says to get help.

NASP want documents to be available to see for ADIs and DVSA said they would look at opening the system up so that the individual can see more information. DVSA stated that most of it is included in the ADI14 and that ADIs sign every 4 years on renewal to say they have read the conditions. NASP asked if we can help to play a part in making it more apparent. DVSA stated that no action is taken against individuals until they are on the Register. The approach taken by the Traffic Commissioner is that there are key Terms & Conditions in the original application process that new operators are aware of, new operators attend a free New Operators Seminar which includes a tribunal roleplay film: people are therefore aware of their rights, and the consequences of falling foul of them. It

was agreed that association events and conferences are an opportunity to get messages out, and the ADI14 is the official route. DVSA suggested the associations could provide the guidelines as a member, with DVSA happy to support and make sure it is factually correct. DVSA suggested that when associations are representing ADIs they get the ADIs to email PADI (padi@dvsa.gov.uk) to give approval for the representative to talk to DVSA about their case. They said that this had proved beneficial in recent tribunal cases.

NASP had some members where their tests had been cancelled on the day due to the car not having insurance and NASP enquired if all cars presented were being checked for this. DVSA said if examiners have concerns, they can check, but there is no policy of checking every car. Hire cars can sometimes be a problem with insurance. NASP obviously encourage members to ensure they have valid road tax, insurance and MOT if required.

NASP asked about the long delay in getting a response from Tribunals and DVSA replied that there is no backlog, but it is down to individual judges, over which they have no control and the timeline varies depending on their schedules. NASP were concerned that protracted processes may result in mental health issues.

Publications:

DVSA said that digital services were being used more, and that there is constant feedback and user research. Currently there is a new website being built to replace both DVSA Learning Zone and Safe Driving for Life and work is ongoing as the current sites are not ideal and in need of change. This will be accessed by subscribing, or an ADI or ORDIT trainer can have a multi-user licence for learners to log in. The Driver's Record will be part of this new site and will integrate theory with practical and encourage learners to think about driving, not just passing the test, modules on car maintenance will be added. The website should be completed by the end of summer 2020 and the site will use nudges to put the learner on the correct user journey.

NASP enquired about the updated version of the Driver's Record which was due to be going out as a communication on the day of the meeting as they were disappointed to have only been involved at the very late stages of development. DVSA say they want to encourage active engagement. NASP agreed to join a strategic partners group to collaborate which could be via video conferencing services. NASP said that resources could be shared, with appropriate referencing.

DVSA explained a new campaign going out the next day which followed a survey conducted with learners and some telephone interviews with a view to driving up learner skills. Examiners have been consulted about the top 3 reasons for failure. DVSA said they are hoping to do some creative planning to overcome barriers and wanted to involve NASP. DVSA consider there should be more information on what a good driver looks like, and how to find a good ADI. There will be synergy with the Think 'New Driver' campaign, and cross Government working to combine projects. There is currently research going on for DfT on learners on motorways. NASP would be happy to be involved.

Sat Nav:

DVSA has no further information on the replacement of sat navs, this is still going through the tender process.

Test Centre Closures:

NASP asked what progress had been made since the last meeting when information had been promised as there are numerous rumours going around about closures. DVSA said the following day there was a planned meeting with HR, Estates, Internal and External communications to look at a Standard Operating Procedure and timeline for test centre closures. DVSA did explain that the trigger would always come from Estates and that staff have to be informed before outside stakeholders. Stakeholder engagement could take many forms - **consultation** where we would like to understand the impact of a closure, **collaboration** where we may be seeking an alternative site, or **information** where a decision has been made to close but we want to inform stakeholders in good time. DTCs close for a variety of reasons – tenancy, building condition and operational demand. Operationally we must ensure our estate is good value for money based on operational demand, we may not always want to relocate! NASP will be consulted on a draft SOP document.

ORDIT:

DVSA said there was a move to publicise ORDIT amongst ADIs and PDIs. It had been intended to make alterations 6 months after the introduction of the changes, but this would now happen in April. DVSA said they had started an analysis of ORDIT and schools to ensure compliance of 100% of trainers being on ORDIT, trying to move in the right direction. NASP fully support a poster in test centres to promote using ORDIT trainers. However DVSA stated that currently all posters were on hold while a new design was being finalised, to ensure all posters would have the same look.

DVSA said there will be workshops provided for ORDIT trainers only in order to raise the profile and encourage ORDIT registration so that trainers feel valued and that they are getting something back from DVSA. DVSA said proactive support (such as promotion of events, speakers etc) would be withdrawn from non ORDIT trainers, and there would be internal communication to make sure that staff know. NASP consider that examiners should be ambassadors for ORDIT and asked for a list of ORDIT registered trainers. DVSA said this is available on gov.uk however the search is by postcode and registrations can change daily. DVSA said that candidates are asked at the beginning of Part 3 tests whether they had been with an ORDIT trainer but it was agreed that some ADIs haven't fully seen proof that their trainer is registered on ORDIT. DVSA stated that there was a backlog of IT issues with ORDIT that are currently being addressed including how payment can be made.

Part 2 & 3 Update:

There will be a focus on fuel efficient driving in Part 2, though this has not yet been implemented, this, if marked, will incur a maximum of 1 driver fault. NASP enquired if there is any difference in the pass rate since the changes to Part 2. DVSA said that too many people are not passing Part 2 and that the test needed to reinstate its credibility while operating within existing regulations and embracing fuel efficient driving. NASP felt some PDIs don't understand the connection between Parts 1, 2 and 3 and try to cut costs and time taken in their training. DVSA encourages getting a trainer from the outset as would NASP. NASP asked if there was any progress in reducing the number of attempts taken for Part 1 however DVSA said this would come within a review of the whole regime in the future.

Pass rates for Part 2 -	2014/5	54.4
	2015/6	56.9
	2016/7	54.7
	2017/8	54.3
	2018/9	58.5
	2019/20	61.2 to date

There were 7,000 part 2 tests last year, compared to 4,000 in the previous year.

NASP asked whether a fuel efficient fault could be serious and DVSA explained it will be a maximum driver fault, not serious on its own. However, it could lead to a serious fault in other boxes.

Pass rates for Part 3 -	2014/5	32.5
	2015/6	34.4
	2016/7	35.8
	2017/8	36.1
	2018/9	37.1
	2019/20	36.1 to date

7,000 Part 3 tests were taken last year.

Developing ADI qualification:

NASP asked whether there would be a re-visit of the whole overview of the qualification process and DVSA replied that this might happen in the post review implementation.

DVSA Accreditation Scheme:

DVSA are working to ensure that the right products are being delivered as currently there are some local 'accreditations' with no quality control to ensure that they are fit for purpose. There will be an audit of what is already being accredited and in future there will be two levels. Endorsed products will have demonstrated a proven track record, and recognised products will enable innovation and will be for products that do not yet have the evaluation to prove that it works. It is hoped this will support new projects, but there will be a need to prove themselves after 2 years in order to convert to an endorsed product, or they will lose their recognised status.

There will have to be proof of projects working, with impact assessments and evidence of behavioural change and tangible benefits. There will be a launch in April/May with a trial for those that qualify. The fee of £1,000 will cover 2 years, to apply there will be a form on the gov.uk website. At the point of approval there will be a need to include how the scheme will be validated.

Earned Recognition:

NASP asked whether the earned recognition scheme suggestion would be revisited. DVSA are keen to see what the reward would be for ADIs and welcomed ideas and suggestions.

Any Other Business:

DVSA explained further work for deaf candidates and that the support group met in December to look at the customer journey, information, advice and guidance. Input included the Disability Driving Instructors group. There were 5 points in the Action Plan.

- Provide a prompt card pack for examiners. This will be available on the DT1 so that ADIs can download and use the same format.
- Double slots: the message needs to go out to all ADIs and examiners to make them aware of the support available.
- There is a different level of knowledge amongst staff and ADIs.
- Support needs to be written up so that all are aware.

NASP asked about the suggested changes to the theory test, this will be live on 14th April with an announcement on 18th February. The written case studies have been replaced with video clips taken from the driver's seat, and plain English will be used, there will be a sample clip on YouTube. There will be an awareness campaign for learners and parents, and no change to the hazard perception test

Suggested dates for the next meeting will be co-ordinated by NASP and DIA will be in the chair at the next meeting.

