



Department for Transport

Lynne Barrie
Chair
National Associations Strategic Partnership

Baroness Vere of Norbiton
Minister for Roads, Buses and Places

Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Tel: 0300 330 3000
E-Mail: baroness.vere@dft.gov.uk

Web site: www.gov.uk/dft

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Dear Ms Barrie,

Thank you for your letter of 17 September about the recent announcement to remove the requirement for car drivers to take a car and trailer test (B+E), the risk to road safety and the impact this will have on businesses.

I appreciate the concerns you have raised. As you are aware, the proposal to remove the requirement for car drivers to take a B+E test if they want to tow a trailer, was subject to a public consultation exercise. The consultation received over 9,500 responses and most respondents supported the proposals. Due to the online platform being used to collate the responses, officials were able to analyse the responses as they were being submitted. The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) has analysed the responses and published a summary of the public feedback on these proposals on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) The DVSA will publish a full consultation report in due course.

Following the outcome of the consultation, on 10 September the Government announced that it will be implementing a number of measures to significantly boost heavy goods vehicle (HGV) testing availability; this includes eliminating tests to tow a trailer.

Legal processes must be followed, and the DVSA is looking to amend the regulations as soon as possible. When the law is changed, all car drivers will be able to tow a trailer weighing up to 3,500kg without the need for an additional test. As a result, the DVSA will not be carrying out any B+E tests from 20 September.

The DVSA takes its commitment to road safety extremely seriously and will work with the industry and stakeholders to encourage drivers to undertake training to help ensure they are safe and competent to tow larger trailers. The DVSA will continue to work with the training industry and other interested parties to provide guidance on training.

The HGV driver shortage has been well documented and is an issue that is affecting millions of people and businesses throughout the UK. The Government has acted decisively to help address the HGV driver shortage and has announced these range of measures to help the industry recover from the pandemic.

I understand changes to legislation will inevitably affect some people more than others. I also appreciate the impact the pandemic and the national HGV driver shortage has had, and continues to have, on individuals and businesses. The Department and the DVSA will continue to encourage people who want to drive a car and trailer to get professional training with providers to promote road safety and help support those businesses.

The DVSA is also exploring options for an industry-led accreditation that could offer a standardised non-statutory testing approach. It plans to meet with key stakeholders, including trainers and insurers, to discuss this issue. As the Chair of NASP, you have been invited to the first meeting due to take place on 27 September. NASP's suggestions on competency-based training, assessment and certification with an approved B+E trainer will no doubt form part of the discussions at the inaugural meeting and the DVSA is hopeful of a consensus on the way forward.

Driver theory testing and the termination of B+E testing represent very different issues in terms of underlying legislation and road safety risk; they cannot be directly compared. The concerns over the extension of theory test certificates was one that affected a significant number of new, less experienced drivers. The B+E changes affects more experienced, full licence holders. The DVSA will encourage these drivers to undergo additional training that it hopes NASP will play an important part in developing.

Legislative changes are usually subject to a post implementation review which gives the opportunity to review and potentially update the changes made. The Department will keep these changes under review to ensure they are effective and help increase HGV testing capacity to meet demand whilst ensuring road safety is not compromised in the process.

Thank you for taking the time to write in with your concerns.

*Yours,
Charlotte*

BARONESS VERE OF NORBITON