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REGULATORY

New rules for learner drivers on motorways

From 4 June 2018, learner drivers may have lessons on the motorway, provided they are supervised by an accredited driving instructor in a dual-controlled car.

The aim of allowing learner drivers to gain experience on the motorway is to ensure that they can use a motorway safely. It has been noted that many newly qualified drivers avoid the motorway after passing their test, and those who do venture on to the motorway often feel scared.

The change is voluntary, and the decision will be left up to the instructor. Driving on the motorway will not become part of the driving test.

The Highway Code is being updated to reflect the change, and driving instructors will be obliged to follow specific rules set out in that document if they wish to take pupils on to the motorway.

Haulage permit and trailer registration consultation

As part of Brexit, the UK is faced with a task of ensuring that its departure from the EU is as smooth as possible. As part of this, the government has introduced the Haulage

Permits and Trailer Registration Bill, about which a consultation closed last month.

Essentially, the bill will allow the UK to operate a permit scheme for international road haulage for journeys that require permits. It will also introduce a trailer registration scheme so that UK trailers will be allowed to be used internationally.

Proposals (<https://is.gd/hogafi>) have been made by the Department for Transport on the following:

- how a haulage permits scheme should operate in the future
- which trailers will require registration
- how a trailer registration scheme will operate.

Roadworthiness guide updated

The DVSA has issued a revised and updated edition of its 'Guide to Maintaining Roadworthiness': <https://is.gd/ilovap>. There are changes in many areas; highlights are listed below.

Tyre management has been highlighted in a new section that also includes monitoring tyre age and a link to a detailed tyre management guide (<https://is.gd/acosok>), as tyre defects are some of the most common defects



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identified by enforcement agencies.

Safety inspection intervals used to be calculated by a graph, previously included in Annex 4 of the guide, that has been removed. It was felt that this was too rigid, and didn't encourage developing safety inspection intervals around real-life considerations. Instead, there is now a table with examples of frequency for various operating conditions using case studies. This is intended to encourage operators to take a proactive, evidence-based approach to the management of safety inspection intervals.

Safety inspection and repair facilities must be checked by the operators to make sure they are adequate, even if inspections are contracted out. This point has been emphasised in the new edition. It also strongly recommends that workshops and technicians demonstrate their competence by achieving a recognised accreditation [IRTE's Workshop Accreditation and irtec are two prominent examples].

Safety inspection records have been updated to include brake temperatures and an amended report sign-off in the example report included in Annex 4.

Brake testing is strongly advised at every safety inspection, in the form of a laden roller brake test. Advice

on using EBPMs (electronic braking performance monitoring systems) and more comprehensive advice on brake testing is now included. New recommendations for those using road tests to assess brakes is to measure brake temperature readings and record them on the safety inspection report.

Drivers' daily defect reporting example reports (included in Annex 3) have been updated to include vehicle height and AdBlue system checks.

Emissions and air quality issues are discussed in a new section that highlights the importance of correctly maintaining the vehicle's emissions control system.

Public service vehicle accessibility guidance has been updated.

The vehicle operator licensing system (VOL) can be used for recording maintenance – the guide includes advice.

The **monitoring** section now covers details about the Earned Recognition scheme, changes brought about by the EU Roadworthiness Directive and prohibition assessment criteria.

Other guidance on **IT for vehicle maintenance systems** and for EBPMs, published since the guide was last updated in 2014, is now incorporated so it can all be accessed in one location.