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Investigation visits' new focus

REGULATORY

DVSA inspectors carrying out maintenance investigation visits at HGV and PSV operators' premises will be checking some new areas, DVSA reports. They include assessments of managing exhaust emissions, wheels and tyres, safety recalls and vehicle security.

As a result, the maintenance investigation visit reports (MIVR) have been updated to reflect this. Operators will receive a copy of these reports and along with other feedback to help them improve if necessary, it says.

DVSA recommends that operators read about the changes, via www.is.gd/ufapib, in order to stay compliant.

The MIVR consists of 14 sections. They are: operator legal entity; condition of vehicles;



examined at the fleet check; operating centre; inspection and maintenance records; driver defect reporting; maintenance facilities and arrangements; vehicle emissions; wheel and tyre management; PSVAR; prohibition assessment; security requirements; previous reported shortcomings, conditions

and undertakings; transport manager/responsible person; request for explanation response (where applicable).

There is a maximum of four assessment outcomes for a question section: 'satisfactory', 'mostly satisfactory', 'unsatisfactory' and 'report to office of the traffic commissioner'.

ENFORCEMENT

Bodycams rolled out

DVSA is investing in body-worn cameras for all front-line enforcement staff to reduce physical and verbal assaults. There were 35 assault incidents on enforcement staff in 2019/20, which is a 25% increase on the previous year.

REGULATORY

EU driving rules changes

EU drivers' hours and tachograph rules changed on 20 August 2020. The new rules include a requirement for drivers' to 'return home' every four weeks; a ban on taking regular weekly rest periods in the driver's vehicle; a new

definition of 'non-commercial carriage'; more flexibility on the scheduling of the rest periods for some drivers on international carriage of goods; new provisions for rests and breaks for drivers when journeys involve transport by ferry or by rail; a new requirement to keep a full record of all other work. The full rule can be reached via www.is.gd/tumili.

REGULATORY

Overweight vehicle fines

DVSA has authorised a temporary change in enforcement for overweight vehicles until further notice. Drivers of vehicles that are 30% or more overweight will now

receive a fixed penalty rather than a prosecution through the court system. Previously, exceeding weight by 15% or more was a £300 fine level offence, and it was a DVSA policy decision to prosecute when overweight is 30% or more.

REGULATORY

October exemptions

Following last month's note here about the new MOT test exemption scheme, 'DVSA plays favourites', it has been rolled into October. Fleets with MOTs due this month will get an automatic three-month extension; those falling into categories deemed to be extra-safe will get a full year.

Fact File

Photocard extensions

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, DVLA previously announced that photocard driving licences and entitlements expiring between 1 February 2020 and 31 August 2020 would be automatically extended by seven months. Last month, expiry dates were extended to 11 months and now apply to photocards and entitlements expiring between 1 February 2020 and 31 December 2020.

This means that full GB licence holders will not need to renew their photocard or entitlement to drive until 11 months after the original expiry date. For example, a driver whose entitlement or photocard originally expired in February 2020 was previously given a seven-month extension until September 2020, but will now have a new expiry date of January 2021.

The extension is automatic but operators should note that the driver record will still show the current (and not the extended) expiry date on the driving licence.

The extension of licence entitlement and photocard is an EU wide agreement, which will mean expired licences will continue to be recognised anywhere within the EU.