

Published by: The Society of  
Operations Engineers

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Council

Registered in England:  
Company No 3667147  
Registered Charity: No 1081753  
A Company Limited by Guarantee

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Publisher: Peter Knutton

Transport Engineer is the official  
journal of IRTE.  
Produced on behalf of IRTE by Findlay  
Media Ltd, Hawley Mill,  
Hawley Road, Dartford, Kent DA2 7TJ  
Tel: 01322 221144  
www.transportengineer.org.uk

**abc** Transport Engineer is  
distributed free of  
charge to SOE  
members, dependent on  
membership sector. For non-members,  
the annual subscription rate (12  
issues) is £75 UK and EU, or £77  
airmail outside EU. For other SOE  
members, the discounted rate is £30.

Printed by: Pensord Press UK,  
ISSN: 0020-3122

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# When times change, the trick is different thinking

So there's good news and bad news. The DVSA  
(Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency) is cutting costs  
at ATFs – Authorised Testing Facilities – by 3.5%, but  
it's raising fees at its own testing stations by 18.5%.

Why? DVSA says that operators using ATFs should not have to  
contribute towards the upkeep of the government's estate.

Back on the good news theme, DVSA is delivering on its  
promise, with the first group of vehicle inspectors already irtec  
accredited, having completed their IMI Quality Assured Award  
programme under IRTE (Institute of Road Transport Engineers)  
guidance, which grants them full licences to test vehicles. But  
the less good news for some: transport operators and

individuals – including fleet engineers and technicians – will find themselves subject to a more  
robust law enforcement regime, with tougher penalties and swifter action from DVSA and the  
traffic commissioners for those found failing to meet their compliance obligations (page 30).

This theme of change is evident at the engineering and policy levels, too, with, for example, TfL  
(Transport for London) pushing for an extended Safer Lorries Scheme, which will almost certainly  
see trucks banned from the capital 24/7, if they aren't fitted with sideguards and safety mirrors.  
And that same organisation is currently trialling proximity sensors and cameras, designed to  
detect cyclists and pedestrians in blind spots, and warn drivers in real time. They're currently on a  
few buses in known hot spots, but the writing must be on the proverbial wall.

Add in Euro 6, and its associated maintenance issues yet to come, plus ongoing developments  
with AMTs (automated manual transmissions), dual-clutch system launches and turbo retarder  
clutches (page 27) and it's clear that, as an industry, we are experiencing what are often referred to  
as challenging times. Even fuels and lubricants aren't safe (pages 12 and 33).

All the more reason, then, to sign up for the IRTE Conference on 17 September, which this  
year moves to St George's Park, Burton upon Trent – home of the English Football Association.  
Delegates will hear from leading transport engineers, fleet managers and other industry  
heavyweights, all focusing on these key issues for today. Among highlights will be: dual-fuel  
technologies, with the latest from the two-year Low Carbon Trucks trial; an update on Euro 6  
engine and after-treatment maintenance; how to specify trucks for minimum total cost and  
maximum productivity; the power of modern synthetic lubricants to reduce fuel consumption; and  
why EC Whole Vehicle Type Approval is about to change bodybuilding for everyone.

This year, the IRTE Conference also includes a staged public inquiry, presided over by traffic  
commissioner Kevin Rooney, with a legal team from Backhouse Jones. This is your chance to  
witness how it works, and to understand what you need to do to avoid the real thing. Also new  
for this year are in-depth streams covering legal/compliance (DVSA and traffic commissioner  
updates, law enforcement and legal trends), fuel-saving aids (telematics, aerodynamics, driver  
behaviour, etc), and bus and coach engineering (hybrids and electrics; design and maintenance  
for fire prevention; and the pros and cons of biofuels and fuel additives).

Don't miss out. Spaces are limited and this is your professional engineering institution.

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