

# Safe pass



**Tanker operators are having to cope with several regulatory and industry changes right now. Steve Banner explains some of the engineering and management issues**

Changes to the petroleum industry's Safe Loading Pass (SLP) scheme mean that all road tankers that load at participating terminals will have to be inspected at least once every six months by qualified technicians. So says Peter Davidson, safety, projects and commercial director at the UK Petroleum Industry Association (UKPIA), who explains that it's all about ensuring they meet safety standards.

Previously, inspections had to be conducted either every six months if the vehicles concerned were operated by contractors, or annually if they were directly operated by the major oil companies. Standardising on a single inspection interval reduces the risk of any confusion, he contends.

Tankers still have to display the disc, now redesigned, in the windscreen. If the disc is lost, stolen or defaced, however, terminal operators will be able to interrogate a newly-launched website ([www.safeloadingpass.com](http://www.safeloadingpass.com)) to check that a vehicle is SLP-compliant. Failure to comply will mean that a tanker is turned away (and separate discs are required for tractor units and tanker trailers). The website also records tanker inspection details. That includes everything from tanker barrel examinations – for leaks, dampness and damage – to vapour

adaptor inspections aimed at ensuring that they are secure and free of product, and that emergency pressure relief valves have been fitted.

Turning to the tractor unit and/or rigid chassis, areas that require examination include the wiring (no chafing or damage), sealing around the cab's rear window and roof hatch, and the condition of the fire screen. "The same website will allow operators to log in and allocate passes to vehicles electronically," says Davidson. "It's supported by a new IT platform."

#### **Risk assessment**

Standardising on a half-year interval is not the only change, however. "All workshops carrying out inspections will have to demonstrate that they have completed a risk assessment for working at height," he says. "They will also have to show that a risk assessment has been undertaken that takes into account DSEAR [Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations]."

"Where this might become an issue is if you have a mobile technician who is competent to carry out an SLP inspection, but ends up doing so in an operator's workshop that is not SLP-compliant," comments Tony Brown, technical manager at the Federation of Petroleum Suppliers. Both the

workshop and the technician must be SLP-approved. "At present there are some 50 workshops that have the necessary approval," Davidson says. Workshops have to be re-assessed every two years.

The revised SLP scheme, which started to come into force last month, is the result of agreement between UKPIA, the Tank Storage Association and the FTA (Freight Transport Association), which is administering the programme. "We're in a transition period," says Davidson. "The new arrangements are being implemented in stages."

Note: tankers transporting diesel, kerosene and aviation spirit all fall within scope, alongside petrol tankers. However, tanker fleets getting to grips with the new SLP arrangements will doubtless be relieved to learn that no significant changes to ADR (European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road) are in the offing. They have been busy enough in recent months, not only with the SLP changes, but also arranging the annual training their drivers require to retain the new Petroleum Driver's Passport (PDP).

### New passport

"This involves a classroom session with a written, multiple-choice exam and a practical assessment that includes driving, loading and unloading," says Darragh McGrath, health, safety and training manager at Norbert Dentressangle Tankers. The practical assessment is carried out during the individual's

who have not obtained one by 1 January 2015 will not be able to take their vehicles into terminals. "Approximately 6,000 drivers who regularly do so have been logged and the scheme is on track to have covered this number by January," says SQA head of specialist awards Sue Macfarlane.

It may be possible for the training to count towards the Driver's CPC if the course and training centre are approved by JAUP, the Joint Approvals Unit for Periodic Training. "For example the PDP classroom session could be built into a normal seven-hour CPC training session," McGrath says.

Incidentally, fleets concerned about the impact of Euro 6 on tanker safety need not worry, according to DAF marketing manager Phil Moon. The concern voiced by some tanker operators is that regeneration of the active DPF (diesel particulate filter), if triggered, could lead to petroleum vapour igniting. "What we're talking about are exhaust gases in the vicinity of the

tailpipe that reach around 400°C, but there is no real risk that they will cause an ignition in an open atmosphere," insists Moon. "The temperature would have to be a lot higher... That said, we would still recommend that drivers disable the regeneration system before they enter a terminal."

And he continues: "The other concern is that surface temperatures [around DPFs] might exceed 200°C, which they are not supposed to. But surfaces are so well shielded that this is unlikely to happen. The aim is to retain as much heat as possible in the exhaust system, because that aids regeneration."

Addressing another aspect of health and safety, the Scottish whisky industry has made a commitment to phase out working at height by 2024. This means changes to the design of tankers, given that they are

generally top-filled from an upper gantry. Glasgow-based Carntyne Transport, which lists hauling whisky in bulk as one of its specialities, has responded by allocating a budget of more than £3 million to what it calls hybrid tankers. These can be either top- or bottom-loaded so that they can cope as distilleries switch from the former to the latter.

These tankers have been designed in conjunction with the distillers and the Scotch Whisky Association. Some are being bought new. Other already in service are being converted to the new specification in Carntyne's own workshops. "We're a significant way through our conversion programme," Carntyne managing director, David Paterson reports. 



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Phil Moon



normal working duties, and the aim is for all PDP holders to have comparable knowledge and competence. A dedicated website has been set up at [www.pdppassport.com](http://www.pdppassport.com).

Meanwhile, the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) has been appointed by the Downstream Oil Industry Distribution Forum to run the PDP scheme on its behalf. SQA already manages the ADR scheme. A PDP lasts for five years. Tanker drivers