An Agency within the Department for
Infrastructure
Gníomhaireacht laistigh den Roinn
Bonneagair
www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Driver & Vehicle Agency

Guide to maintaining roadworthiness

Commercial goods and passenger carrying vehicles

(October 2017)

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Section One

Introduction

Section 1:

Introduction

About this Guide

The Driver & Vehicle Agency (DVA) has produced this Guide to explain the responsibilities and systems involved in maintaining vehicles in a roadworthy condition, regardless of operating conditions, fleet size or vehicle type. The procedures and systems explained in this Guide are useful for operators, drivers and all those who are responsible for operating, maintaining or providing commercial goods and passenger carrying vehicles. The general principles apply equally to light goods and passenger vehicles below the operator licensing thresholds and for vehicles that are otherwise exempt.

Best practice

It is not enough to rely on a maintenance system alone, because this cannot ensure that vehicles are roadworthy. To ensure best practice, you will need to combine good quality maintenance practices and skills with supervision and effective management of the system.

New operators

If you are a new operator, you will find practical advice on how to devise, install and monitor a system for ensuring roadworthiness. If you follow the advice given in this Guide you can make sure you are complying with the law and that your compliance can be monitored and controlled.

Experienced operators

If you are an established or experienced operator, you will be able to use this Guide as a benchmark to assess whether your systems are sufficiently comprehensive or should be reviewed and improved in order to do it your way. This guidance applies to you whether you carry out your own maintenance, contract out maintenance or do a combination of both.

Doing it your way

We recognise that there are different methods and systems from those that are described within this Guide that can result in vehicles being maintained in a roadworthy condition. If you are an operator who wishes to adopt a different system, you must still satisfy the Department that the system you use is effective. The Department will only agree to variations that will not reduce the control necessary to ensure satisfactory maintenance. The ultimate test will be whether or not a vehicle is roadworthy.

Key Information

There must be a firm management commitment to review and improve maintenance systems where defects are found on vehicles or when the fleet size or the nature of the business is changing. As a licensed operator, you can also be assured that the maintenance systems described in this Guide will be accepted by the Department provided that the resulting condition of your vehicles remains satisfactory. If this is not the case, however, the Department reserve the right to require more stringent arrangements from you (e.g. shorter periods between inspections). The competence of the persons who carry out safety checks or safety inspections may also be challenged.

What does this Guide contain?

The procedures and systems described in this Guide relate to responsibilities for roadworthiness, the different types of inspections, inspection intervals, data storage, inspection facilities, planner updates and essential reviews. This Guide includes many references to written records and maintenance planners. Keep in mind that as a general principle computer records are acceptable, provided that they contain the essential information that needs to be available for inspection by our examiners. For further information relating to computer systems use this guide.

Other guidance

It is also important to note that this Guide is concerned only with systems of maintenance for roadworthiness. If you are looking to the maintenance regime as a means of achieving economy and reliability, we advise you to seek help from vehicle manufacturers, their agents or the relevant trade organisations. You can find more information on sources of further help and advice at Annex 3.

Getting it right

The Department recognises that operators of goods and passenger carrying vehicles will not get everything right on every occasion. However we want operators and drivers to be vigilant and act responsibly. The penalties for and consequences of non compliance for the operator, the transport manager, the driver and the general public can range from the inconvenient to the catastrophic. Non compliance can result in prosecution through the issue of Fixed Penalty Tickets or through court.

If you are a licensed operator you may lose your good repute, which may result in the Department curtailing, suspending or revoking your operator's licence. If you are a transport manager and you lose your good repute, the Department will declare you unfit to manage the activities of a transport undertaking. At worst, you may cause serious injuries to road users or others, or even fatal collisions because of badly maintained vehicles.

Key points of a good maintenance system

Use these important key points as a guide to help you plan and set up a compliant and effective maintenance system for your vehicles.

1. A responsible person must undertake a daily walkaround check, preferably immediately before a vehicle is used.

2. First-use inspections are essential for operators who lease, hire or borrow vehicles. These are especially important where vehicles and trailers have been off the road for some time.

3. Drivers must be able to report promptly any defects or symptoms of defects that could adversely affect the safe operation of vehicles. Reports must be recorded and provision should be made to record details of any rectification work done.

4. Drivers' defect reports, used to record any faults and rectification work, must be kept for at least 15 months.

5. Operators must ensure that regular checks are carried out on items that may affect roadworthiness.

6. Safety inspections must include those items covered by the appropriate DVA annual test.

7. Safety inspections should be pre-planned, preferably using a time-based programme.

8. The system of safety inspections must be regularly monitored, especially in the early stages.

9. Any remedial work carried out as a result of safety inspections must be recorded.

10. The safety inspection record must include:

    - name of owner/operator;
    - date of inspection;
    - vehicle identity;
    - odometer (mileage recorder) reading, if appropriate;
    - a list of all the items to be inspected;
    - details of any defects;

- name of inspector;
- details of any remedial /rectification or repair work and by whom it was done;
- a signed declaration that any defects have been repaired satisfactorily and the vehicle is now in a safe roadworthy condition.

11. On some types of vehicles and operations, intermediate safety checks may be necessary.

12. Records of safety inspections must be kept for at least 15 months for all vehicles including vehicles that have been removed from the operators licence.

13. Staff carrying out safety inspections must be competent to assess the significance of defects. Assistance must be available to operate the vehicle controls as necessary.

14. There must be an internal system to ensure that unroadworthy vehicles are removed from service with someone responsible to take vehicles off the road.

15. Operators who undertake their own safety inspections must have the correct tools and facilities for the size of the fleet and type of vehicle operated.

16. All operators should have access to a means of measuring brake efficiency and setting headlamp aim. For vehicles showing signs of visible exhaust smoke a diesel smoke meter should be used to ensure that the level of smoke emission is within legal requirements.

17. Operators are responsible for the condition of vehicles and trailers that are inspected and/or maintained for them by agents, contractors or hire companies.

18. Operators who have contracted out their safety inspections must draw up a formal written contract with an inspection agency or garage. Such operators should have a means of regularly monitoring the quality of work produced for them.

19. The dates when safety inspections are due must be the subject of forward planning. A maintenance planner or wall chart should be used to identify inspection dates at least six months before they are due. Computer-based systems are equally acceptable.

20. Any system of maintaining the roadworthiness of vehicles should be effectively and continually monitored.

21. Any changes by licensed operators to the arrangements for safety inspections must be notified to the Northern Ireland Central Licensing Office (NICLO).

22. Drivers must be given clear written instructions about their responsibilities.

Section Two

Responsibilities for roadworthiness

Section 2:

Responsibilities for roadworthiness

This section gives best practice advice on the responsibilities that you as an operator or driver will have for ensuring the roadworthiness of your vehicles. It covers what you are legally required to do, according to the law.

As an operator and/or driver of vehicles, it is **your responsibility** to ensure that the vehicles you use are roadworthy. **It is an offence to use an unroadworthy vehicle on the road.** In addition, if you are an operator of a goods vehicle (HGV) or a bus that falls within the scope of operator licensing, you must meet the requirements of the licensing legislation that governs the decisions of the Department. For operator licensing purposes the user is responsible for the vehicle being maintained in a safe and roadworthy condition at all times when in use on the road. The term '**user**' of a vehicle applies both to the driver and to the person paying the driver to act for them.

Key Information

Operators must comply with the declaration they give to the Department that they will ensure their vehicles are operated in a safe mechanical condition. If operators intend to make any change to their maintenance arrangements they must notify the Departments Northern Ireland Central Licensing Office (NICLO) for HGV,s and Passenger Transport Licensing Division (PTLD) for Buses'

Hire, Loan or Lease Vehicles

The vehicle itself may either belong to the user or be in their possession under any agreement for hire, hire purchase, loan or lease. The user of the towing vehicle is responsible for the roadworthiness of a trailer **even if it does not belong to them.**

Foreign Trailers

If foreign trailers are used then the user is responsible for the roadworthiness in terms of condition but also in terms of the technical design of the trailer.

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Roadworthiness inspections

When it comes to ensuring the roadworthiness of a vehicle, there are two types of essential inspections – which differ in scope and depth. Each type is used for a different purpose and requires different levels of skill to be carried out effectively.

The two types of inspection are:

- daily walkaround checks, and
- first-use inspections / regular safety inspections.

An inspection should not be confused with a service. A service contains items requiring routine maintenance, usually determined in scope and frequency by the vehicle's usage and the recommendations of the vehicle's manufacturer.

Section Three

Daily walkaround checks

Section 3:

Daily walkaround checks

This section looks at the daily walk around check. It offers best practice advice on setting up a system for reporting faults and looks at defect reports, while clearly stating your legal position.

A responsible person must undertake a **daily walk around check** before a vehicle is used. As a driver DVA recommend you carry out the check before you first drive the vehicle on the road each day. See Annex 11 for suggested items to check during the walk around check for HGVs and Buses.

The daily walkaround check can be undertaken using a hand-held device and the results can be stored in an electronic format. However, evidence must be carried by the driver to ensure they can prove to an examiner at the roadside that they have completed the check and show any defects etc. identified. Where an electronic device is presented a visual review of the on-screen data will suffice as evidence carried.

Where more than one driver will use the vehicle during the days running the driver taking charge of the vehicle should make sure it is roadworthy and safe by carrying out their own walk around check; however due to health and safety constraints, this may be impractical in certain scenarios.

An example of a system for managing in-service driver changes is where a walk around is carried out by a responsible person and the drivers monitor the vehicle during the days running. When there is a change in driver during the day it is sometimes unsafe to carry out a walk around check, for example at a bus stop, this will be considered acceptable where there is a robust driver defect reporting system in place, which details the initial walkaround check and any defects or "NIL" defects reported during the day for the various drivers of that particular vehicle.

Key Information

The person made responsible by the operator must carry out a minimum of one check in 24 hours. The check should consist of a walkaround inspection of the whole vehicle or combination. On multi-trailer operations a defect check should be made on each trailer being used. The walk around check should cover the external condition, ensuring in particular that the lights, tyres, wheel fixings, bodywork, trailer coupling, load and ancillary equipment are serviceable.

Assistance may be required at some time during the inspection, for example to see that lights are working. Alternatively, a brake pedal application tool may be used as an effective means of making sure stop lamps are working and that the braking system is free of leaks.

In addition, a torch, panel lock key or other equipment may be needed to assist in undertaking relevant checks.

A system of reporting and recording faults

There must be a system for reporting and recording faults that may affect the roadworthiness of the vehicle and for having them put right before the vehicle is used. **Daily defect checks are vital, and the results of such checks should be recorded.**

It is important that enough time is allowed for the completion of these walk around checks and that staff are encouraged and trained to carry them out thoroughly. Drivers should be made aware that daily defect reporting is one of the critical elements of any effective vehicle roadworthiness assessment system.

Examples of how to perform a walk around check can be found on Youtube under DVSA HGV or PSV Drivers Daily Walk around check.

If you are the user of the vehicle, it is your responsibility to ensure that any hired, leased or borrowed vehicle is in a roadworthy condition and has all the necessary certification when used on the road. Therefore, it is essential that you or one of your staff do a daily walkaround check (as described in the previous box) before any such vehicle is used. It is your responsibility to be able to provide maintenance records covering the period of use.

Furthermore, if a vehicle has been off the road for a period longer than that between planned maintenance inspections, it should be given a full safety inspection (see Section 4) prior to being brought back into use.

Drivers' defect reports

As the driver, **you are responsible** for the condition of your vehicle **when it is in use on the road.**

Key Information

Drivers **must** be able to report any defects or symptoms of defects that could prevent the safe operation of the vehicles. In addition to daily walk around checks you must monitor the roadworthiness of your vehicle when it is being driven and be alert to any indication that the vehicle is developing a fault (e.g. warning lights, exhaust emitting too much smoke, vibrations or other symptoms). When a vehicle is on site work, you should walk around the vehicle to identify any defects. If any defects are found, **you must not use the vehicle** on the road until they are repaired.

Providing a written report

Any defects found during a daily walk around check **must be the subject of a written report** by you or some other person responsible for recording defects.

The details recorded should include:

- vehicle registration or identification mark;
- date
- details of any defect or symptom; and
- the reporter's name
- And who the defect was reported to

It is common practice to use a composite form that also includes a list of the items checked each day. It is advisable that where practicable the system should incorporate 'Nil' reporting where the driver makes out a report sheet or confirms by another means that a daily check has been carried out and no defects found. Electronic records of reported defects are acceptable and must be available for 15 months along with any record of repair. Hard copies must be able to be produced where required.

Appropriate action

Key Information

All drivers' defect reports must be given to a responsible person with sufficient authority to ensure that any appropriate action is taken. This might include taking the vehicle out of service. Any report listing defects is part of the vehicle's maintenance record and must be kept, together with details of the remedial action taken, for at least 15 months, together with details of any rectification work and repairer for.

Nil defect reports, if they are produced, should be kept for as long as they are useful. Normally this is until the next one is received or until the next scheduled safety inspection is undertaken. Nil defect reports are not required under the conditions of operator licensing. However, they are a useful means of checking that drivers are carrying out their duties in this respect.

If you are an owner-driver, you will probably not have anyone to report defects to except your transport manager (if you have one). In these cases, defects and remedial action can simply be recorded and held for at least 15 months.

Examples of a daily check and defect report form are shown in Annexes 4A and 4B. Also see the graphical diagrams in Annex 11 showing the main items to be checked for both Goods and Passenger Vehicles.

Drivers' responsibilities

Drivers must be made aware of their legal responsibilities regarding a vehicle's roadworthiness and the procedures for reporting defects. This can be achieved by writing a letter to each driver describing the defect reporting systems and any other relevant duties they are expected to perform. The driver should sign this letter to show in writing that they have received it and that they understand what is required. Drivers share the responsibility for a vehicle's roadworthiness with the operator. **Drivers may be fined or prosecuted** for the existence of defects found on the vehicles they drive **if they are considered partly or wholly responsible** for their existence.

Minor repairs by drivers

If you are an operator, you should bear in mind that drivers who are expected to repair minor defects in service, e.g. light bulb replacement, might need basic training.

Traction services and third party trailers

Operators can provide a traction only service to customers who wish to own their own trailers for branding and loading purposes but do not wish to operate vehicles to pull trailers. It is also common practice for an operator who may own trailers but is also contracted to tow third party trailers not owned or maintained by them.

Unfortunately, ensuring third party trailer road worthiness can be problematic for the traction service operator as usually for short term use the trailer owner would be responsible for the routine maintenance of the trailer including the safety inspection (SI). Under these circumstances traction operators are reliant on the trailer owner to correctly carry out their own safety inspections within their stated frequency and complete any necessary repairs.

Key Information

The traction operator is responsible for ensuring that a thorough walk around check of the tractor/trailer combination is carried out to establish it is safe prior to use. If defects are identified during the walk around check these should be rectified prior to use.

Traction operators would be expected to work with the trailer owners to ensure any trailers operated fall within the owners agreed SI frequency and that they are road worthy. It is best practice for the trailer owner to provide evidence to the operator that first use checks and safety inspections have been undertaken and there are no defects reported for the trailer. There must also be a robust system in place to ensure defects identified during the walkaround check or defects that develop during use are recorded and rectified before the tractor/trailer combination is operated in an unroadworthy condition.

Key Information

The driver/operator bears the full responsibility for the safe operation and roadworthiness of the tractor/trailer combination at the time it is being driven.

If a roadworthiness prohibition is issued to the trailer for a defect which would not have been apparent to the driver, either during the walk around check or faults which would not be evident by the performance, handling or warning systems of the vehicle during use, there is a potential issue associated with the trailers owners maintenance regime.

Although the operator does not own the trailer they are ultimately responsible for using the combination in an unroadworthy condition and the traction **operators' compliance rating will be affected**. It is therefore strongly recommended that operators obtain from the trailer owner or customer the safety inspection interval for the trailers concerned and a copy of the current relevant inspection reports to ensure the trailer has been correctly inspected within the stated frequency.

Key Information

Operators are responsible for ensuring any prohibitions issued to vehicles/ trailers used by the operator are cleared or they have notified the vehicle/ trailer owner a prohibition has been issued. Clearance inspection results are normally recorded against the operator who received the prohibition notice, failure to take appropriate action when a prohibition is issued could associate the operator with the offence of using the vehicle/trailer in contravention of a prohibition notice. Operators are also urged to pro-actively follow-up potential issues with the vehicle/trailer owner and third party maintenance provider with the aim to address any shortfall within the maintenance systems.

Section Four

Regular safety inspections and first use inspection

Section 4:

Regular safety inspections and first use inspection

This section describes why regular safety inspections and the first use inspection are essential to an effective roadworthiness maintenance system.

Inspection scope and content

A safety inspection can be a freestanding inspection of just those items affecting road safety and certain environmental issues, or it can be part of a more comprehensive inspection that, in addition, takes into account items relating to the vehicle's work performance and economic operation. Regular safety inspections are essential to an effective roadworthiness maintenance system. Although a part of the overall vehicle maintenance plan, the inspections should ideally be undertaken as a separate, albeit often sequential, operation to routine servicing and repair. This provides the maintenance programme with the flexibility to intensify or otherwise change the frequency of inspections. It also allows the introduction of ad hoc inspections, should they be required, without affecting frequency of servicing and other routine work (e.g. when the operating conditions call for more regular checks or when first-use inspections are required).

In addition, free-standing inspection reports can be produced which provide the operator with the means of determining not only the roadworthiness of individual vehicles in service but also the **overall effectiveness** of their vehicle maintenance system, thus enabling the instigation of any changes that might be necessary.

Safety inspection information can be collected by the use of a handheld device and be stored electronically. The records **must** show a clear audit trail from inspection to repair sign off – should one be required.

A record must be completed for each safety inspection separately for both vehicles and trailers. If the record of the safety inspection is to be stored electronically then the checklist used for the inspection need not be retained. You may use an electronic device (e.g. PDA) in place of a checklist.

Hire, loan or lease vehicles

If you are the user of the vehicle, it is your responsibility to ensure that any hired, leased or borrowed vehicle is in a roadworthy condition and has all the necessary certification when used on the road. Therefore it is **essential** that you do a daily walk around check (as described in Section 3) before any such vehicle is used. It is your responsibility to be able to provide maintenance records covering the period of use.

Hired vehicles should be inspected by a member of staff from the rental company prior to being made available for each rental. This pre-rental inspection should include all major mechanical parts, exterior and interior condition and electronic equipment, fluids, tyre condition and pressure.

The operator should keep a copy of this checklist as proof that the rental company has carried out a pre-rental inspection. This inspection along with a walk around check by the operator will help ensure that the vehicle being used is roadworthy. If the operator has any doubt that the rental company has carried out a comprehensive pre-rental inspection of the vehicle/trailer then a First Use Inspection should be carried out.

Being cost effective

Although primarily undertaken in the interest of safe vehicle operations, roadworthiness inspections, together with prompt remedial action, are also cost effective. The early indication of wear, damage or maladjustment may prevent sudden failure of a component – resulting in unscheduled downtime – or prevent wear becoming so advanced that premature replacement becomes necessary.

New vehicles entering service that have undergone a comprehensive recorded pre-delivery inspection will not require a safety inspection. A newly acquired used vehicle should be given a full safety inspection.

Reference should be made to the manufacturer's recommended tolerances to ensure that each item covered by the safety inspection is inspected properly and limits of wear and tolerance adhered to.

In addition, DVA produces an on-line heavy vehicle inspection manual for use at annual tests. This manual, which gives details of inspection methods and pass/fail criteria, can be found at the following link:
https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/heavy-vehicle-inspection-manual

This online manual is a useful guide when safety inspections are carried out. However higher standards may be needed during safety inspections to allow for deterioration of components in service before the next inspection.

Key Information

A roadworthiness safety inspection must include all the items covered by the statutory annual test.

Safety inspection intervals

Operational needs must not over-ride safety considerations. Safety inspections should, where practicable, be programmed to follow a time-based pattern. The frequency at which inspections are undertaken should be determined by assessing the level of mechanical degradation likely to occur over a period as a result of the vehicle's usage. This will depend on such factors as:

- the age and type of vehicle operated
- the nature of its load and the equipment and fittings it carries or supports
- the type and range of operations on which it is likely to be engaged
- the type of terrain and the nature of the environment in which it operates or is likely to operate
- the distance and speeds at which it travels and the journey times

Assessing the above factors for each vehicle will, in the majority of cases, enable a time-based programme of inspections to be formulated. Some operations, however, are subject to continuous change, or vehicles can frequently be assigned to alternative tasks or routes, making the adoption of a strictly time based inspection programme impracticable. Mileage-based inspection programmes may be more suitable for some operators but will need to be linked to time.

The resulting intervals in time between mileage-based inspections will need to be consistent with the guidance in Annex 5.

Older vehicles and trailers

National statistics show that as vehicles and trailers age the average annual MOT failure rate increases and they are more likely to experience in-service roadworthiness defects than newer vehicles. Therefore, the guidance in Annex 5 has reflected that older vehicles and trailers will need more frequent maintenance and has indicated a minimum safety inspection frequency requirement for vehicles and trailers aged 12 years and older.

New vehicle operators

If you are a new operator, you will need to know where to start. However, you will not have the benefit of past experience or vehicle maintenance records to call upon. The chart in Annex 5 provides a guide to safety inspection frequencies likely to be appropriate for various operational modes.

The frequencies shown are in weekly increments and take account of the type of work undertaken, the operating conditions and mileages covered. Whatever the safety inspection interval is, its effectiveness in ensuring that the vehicle is safe for use on the road must be regularly monitored.

Monitoring is especially important in the early stages.

Experienced vehicle operators

If you are an experienced operator, you are free to tailor these inspections to suit the nature of your operations and vehicle characteristics. It is acknowledged that modern vehicle systems now have the ability to indicate maintenance requirements. You may even deploy more than one system across a fleet, where vehicles and the nature of the work vary. Systems will be judged primarily on their effectiveness in maintaining roadworthiness.

It follows therefore that in order to maintain an inspection regime that is sufficiently flexible to accommodate these changing criteria it might be more appropriate to adopt an inspection frequency determined by, for instance, the vehicle's mileage. However, if you modify your inspection schedule, it is sensible to monitor the effect on roadworthiness on a monthly basis. If an unacceptable increase in defects is seen then a change back to the original schedule would be necessary.

See the case study examples for a better idea of how to adapt your systems.

Leased vehicles

Leasing companies may be able to assist operators with determining the frequency of inspections.

Key Information

Whichever safety inspection interval is decided upon, these intervals **must not** be exceeded. To allow some flexibility with planning safety inspections it is recommended that the International Organisation for Standardisation **(ISO)** week numbering system is used. With this system the safety inspection should be completed within the relevant ISO week it falls. ISO defines the week as always starting with Monday through to Sunday. See Annex 5 for further guidance on SI frequency. See Annex 8 for an example of a maintenance planner.

Once established, operators wishing to change safety inspection frequencies, or on the basis, on which the frequencies are determined, must notify the Departments Northern Ireland Central Licensing Office (NICLO).

Case studies

Case study 1 – N. E Hall

N. E. Hall is a new haulage company who need to implement a maintenance schedule. They estimate an annual mileage of 100,000 miles and will be carrying out arduous work. Based on DVA's graph they selected an initial time interval of 4 weeks for their inspections.

Case study 2 – Bob's Construction

Bob's Construction is an experienced operator and have two 7.5 t trucks which operate on the road and also on building sites. They found that 75% of defects identified during the 4 weekly inspections were suspension related due to the terrain.

They decided to modify their maintenance schedule such that the suspension was inspected every 3 weeks and the whole vehicle was inspected every 6 weeks. After trialling this for 6 months they noticed an improvement in the suspension condition but did not see any deterioration in other parts of the vehicle due to the reduced frequency.

Case study 3 – CJS Couriers Plc

CJS Couriers Plc is a courier company that normally operate within the Bristol area but occasionally carry out national or continental deliveries. CJS found that during normal operations this 4 weekly system was too frequent as very few defects were ever found, however when there is an increase in national or continental deliveries they were seeing a spike in defects for that period. Generally during a local delivery period they will drive 50 miles a day on each vehicle. A national delivery could result in a daily mileage of 360 miles depending on location and a continental delivery would be significantly more. They decided to switch the policy so that the vehicles are inspected every 2000 miles or 6 weekly, whichever comes first. They also introduced an additional inspection before any continental delivery.

Case study 4 – Pronto Bus Plc

Pronto Bus Plc is a large operator with great experience. They use two different models of bus, the Speedliner and the Retro and, because of the age difference of the two models they found they had significantly different levels of reliability. The Speedliner vehicles, which were over 12 years old were very unreliable and so they needed to inspect them every 4 weeks to maintain safety. The Retro, which are newer vehicles, were much more reliable and so the inspection frequency was reduced to 6 weekly. After monitoring this for 12 months they found no change in roadworthiness for the Retro model.

Case study 5 – MacDonald Bus Ltd

MacDonald Bus Ltd is an experienced operator who run 152 buses around the Edinburgh area. They operated a strict 28 day inspection frequency but felt this was excessive because 75% of the fleet was relatively new. They decided to reduce the frequency to 42 days for the 114 buses which are under six years old and keep the inspection schedule the same for the remainder of of the fleet. This was seen to have no negative affect on roadworthiness over a 12 month monitoring period. However, they were able to reduce their yearly inspections by 300, thus freeing up buses and staff for other jobs.

Case study 6 – Move4U

Move4U is a removal company with a fleet for vans and trucks of various sizes. They initially used a 4 weekly inspection as recommended by DVA but felt this was too frequent. They increased this to 12 weekly, but after a 6 month monitoring period they saw a large rise in defects resulting in more prohibitions from DVA at the roadside. They then decided to reduce this to 6 weekly as a more realistic frequency.

After 12 months of monitoring, the defect level matched what it was, at 4 weeks and so Move4U have decided to adopt this schedule permanently.

Please note: The case studies are based on fictional examples and not related to current operators.

Safety inspection report forms

Key Information

A written report **must** be completed for each safety inspection carried out. Reports must also be completed separately for vehicles and trailers. If the record of the safety inspection is to be stored electronically then the paper checklist used for the inspection need not be retained. The use of an electronic device to record the results of daily walk round checks and to store those records is acceptable, providing this information can be easily presented to enforcement inspectors if requested.

Each report must show at least the following:

- name of owner/operator
- date of inspection
- vehicle identity
- odometer (mileage recorder) reading (if appropriate)
- a list of all items to be inspected
- an indication of the condition of each item inspected
- details of any defects found

- name of inspector
- details of any remedial/rectification or repair work and by whom it was done
- a signed statement that any defects have been repaired satisfactorily and the vehicle is now in a safe and road worthy condition

The report may contain details of any work to be carried forward. In particular, further checks may be needed on certain items deemed likely to deteriorate during service and make the vehicle unroadworthy before the next scheduled inspection or routine service.

Examples of suitable safety inspection report forms are given in Annexes 6A and 6B.

Intermediate safety checks

With some types of vehicle and operation it may be necessary to check some components more often than at full safety inspections. For example, a vehicle used in urban areas, such as a public service vehicle or a local delivery vehicle or a vehicle used in hilly areas, may require a weekly brake component and adjustment check together with a steering and suspension inspection. It is sometimes necessary also to check components following repair work.

Technical Information

As part of promoting best practice and improving safety standards the Society of Operations Engineers (SOE) has produced a series of Technical Guides. Most are free to download and include the best practice for wheel security and safe working practices.

The SOE technical guides can be found using this link:
http://www.soe.org.uk/resources/technical-guides/

The Code of Practice for the selection and care of tyres and wheels for commercial vehicles (developed jointly by the Department for Transport, the British Standards Institute and industry and trade associations) recommends that following road wheel removal and refitting the wheel nut torque should be checked – after the vehicle has been standing for **30 minutes** or after having travelled for between **40 km and 80 km** (25 to 50 miles). Some further guidance for wheel security can be found on the technical leaflet 'Careless Torque Costs Lives', this can be found using the following link:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/careless-torque-costs-lives

Ad hoc safety inspection intervals

Safety inspections may be needed at times outside the scheduled programme. Examples include when the vehicle is used for harder work or covers greater distances than usual (e.g. vehicles used on site).

Electronic capture and storage of safety inspection data

Key Information

Safety inspection and repair work records, whether undertaken by operators or contracted out, must be kept for at least 15 months as part of a vehicle's maintenance history.

Operators must, however, ensure that the records are complete and available, or can be made available on request for inspection at the operating centre. If you hire, lease or borrow a vehicle you are responsible for its roadworthiness and you must retain, copies of any inspections that have been carried out while the vehicle is in your possession.

Electronic capture and storage of safety inspection data

Electronic capture and/or storage on computer of details of defects found or work done (e.g. by bar coding or scanning) **is acceptable provided that a means of interpreting each code is readily available.**

Safety inspection records can be stored electronically, using a computer. The system must be tamper-proof and capable of producing hard copy information for use as evidence at any Public Inquiry or hearing held by the Department. Computer records must contain the same information set out on pages 25 - 26 with the exception of:

- a full list of items inspected (these can be indicated on the paper report used for the inspection);
- an indication of the condition of each item inspected (it is sufficient to provide details of defective items only). Internet based systems are becoming more common. These provide significant opportunities for improving the ease with which operators can plan and monitor the maintenance of their vehicle, thus leading to higher standards and improved compliance. For further information relating to computer systems use this guide.

Safety inspectors

Key Information

A person undertaking safety inspections **must** be technically competent and operationally aware of the safety standards that apply to the vehicles they examine. They should have been trained in the techniques of vehicle examination, diagnosis and reporting, and possess a sound working knowledge of the online heavy inspection manual produced by DVA. A Safety Inspector could prove technical competence by solely time served experience; however with modern vehicle systems and working practices it is strongly recommended that inspectors obtain relevant technical qualifications and achieve an automotive technical accreditation or meet a recognised quality standard for the vehicles they inspect.

A safety inspector should not be expected to carry out repair or servicing work during the course of the examination.

Use of assistants

There may be times during the course of an inspection when the inspector will require the assistance of someone to operate certain vehicle controls. **The operator must ensure that this assistance is available when required**. The vehicle's driver can often provide such assistance.

Authority to remove a vehicle from service

If you are the operator, you must ensure that someone within your organisation, at all times, has the authority to decide whether a vehicle is fit for service and to take it off the road if it is not. That person must be available to decide whether a vehicle can be allowed back into service after repairs. This responsibility may be delegated, in writing (i.e. in the form of a standard agreement) provided that it is made clear to the nominated person what their responsibilities are.

Key Information

The Transport Manager retains legal responsibility for vehicle roadworthiness regardless of whether his or her activities are delegated.

Vehicle cleanliness

Vehicles should be cleaned regularly on top, inside and underneath. This will **make it easier to spot defects** at scheduled safety inspections and during daily walkaround checks.

Duties of staff

It is important that all staff with an involvement either directly (e.g. drivers and workshop staff) or indirectly (e.g. transport management staff) are made fully aware of the company's legal and moral responsibilities as an operator of road vehicles. They should also be made aware of the subsequent importance of ensuring the effective operation of the vehicle maintenance programme.

Drivers, workshop staff and those otherwise responsible for the condition of vehicles **should be individually informed in writing of their specific duties and responsibilities** – particularly regarding safe vehicle operation.

Emphasis should be placed on the importance of maintaining an effective safety inspection programme and the role they play in promoting and sustaining its integrity. **One method might be to write to each relevant employee in duplicate, thus permitting a returned signed copy to be retained by the company.**

Section Five

Safety inspection and repair facilities

Section 5:

Safety inspection and repair facilities

This section covers the facilities needed to undertake safety inspections and the arrangements needed if you do not undertake your own inspections. The same guidance applies to the repair of any defects found during safety checks.

Key Information

If you are an operator, you must decide whether to undertake your own safety inspection and maintenance work in-house or to contract all or part of the work to someone else.

Own safety inspection facilities

If you decide to provide your own safety inspection facilities, **you must ensure that they are adequate for the job.**

Facilities should ideally include:

- undercover accommodation for the largest vehicle in the fleet - this is required to ensure that safety checks can be conducted satisfactorily in all weathers (depending on fleet size the building may need room for more than one vehicle at a time);
- tools and equipment appropriate to the size and nature of the fleet;
- an adequate under-vehicle inspection facility - ramps, pits or hoists may not be needed if the vehicles have enough ground clearance for a proper inspection to be made on hard standing;
- adequate lighting;
- access to brake test equipment (e.g. a roller brake tester or decelerometer);
- access to headlamp test equipment;
- access to engine exhaust emission test equipment;
- access to steam or pressure under-vehicle washing facilities; and
- a safe working environment.

If an operator fails to maintain vehicles in a safe and roadworthy condition with the facilities provided the Transport Regulator may take regulatory action.

Brake Testing

Every safety inspection must assess the braking performance of the vehicle or trailer. It is strongly advised that a calibrated roller brake tester (RBT) is used at each safety inspection to measure individual brake performance and overall braking efficiencies for the vehicle or trailer. However, it is also acceptable to use an approved and calibrated decelerometer to test vehicles without trailers to measure overall brake efficiency values. Where possible, it is also best practice to test the vehicle or trailer in a laden condition and to obtain a printout of the brake efficiency test from either the RBT or decelerometer, which should be attached to the safety inspection record. If the brake test equipment cannot produce a printout, efficiency results must be recorded by the inspector on the safety inspection report.

To help operators arrange brake tests with safety inspections it is acceptable for a satisfactory brake test to be carried out within the same week of the planned safety inspection.

To provide operators with greater flexibility, where it is impracticable to obtain a brake efficiency result on a safety inspection the brake performance must still be assessed by means of a road test carried out under controlled and safe conditions. The safety inspection record must reflect that the brake performance was assessed by a road test. However, a road test method to assess the brake performance for all planned safety inspections will usually be inadequate. Therefore it is normally expected that the vehicle or trailer should complete at least three successful brake efficiency tests spread throughout year in addition to the annual roadworthiness test.

If deficiencies in brake performance have been identified either during the use of the vehicle or trailer or at the safety inspection a measured brake efficiency test must be carried out. This efficiency test must confirm the brakes are performing satisfactorily before the vehicle or trailer can be considered as roadworthy. The results of this brake test must be kept as evidence of repair with the operators maintenance documentation and can be included as one of the brake tests required to meet the minimum requirement.

Key Information

Where operators experience problems with braking performance either at annual test, roadworthiness inspections or through operational performance and fail to meet the standards outlined above, the Transport Regulator may take regulatory action.

Furthermore, if an operator demonstrates an adverse compliance history whilst meeting the requirements outlined above it will be necessary to introduce further measures.

Other requirements

For vehicles showing signs of visible exhaust smoke a diesel smoke meter should be used to ensure that the level of exhaust smoke is within the legal parameters. Information on the levels of permitted exhaust smoke is contained in DVA's annual test inspection manuals.

Quality Standards Recognition

It is strongly recommended that providers of vehicle safety inspections and maintenance have achieved recognised Quality Standards for maintenance facilities, working practices and staff competence.

Contracted-out arrangements

If you decide to use a contractor, **you are still responsible** for the condition of vehicles that are inspected and/or maintained for you by a third party.

Key Information

Care must be taken to ensure that the facilities used by the contractor are adequate and that the staff are competent. The list of facilities (on page 31) can be used as a guide to assess the contractors suitability. You should also ascertain that the agent/contractor is in possession of an inspection manual and has suitable inspection sheets.

Drawing up a contract

It is essential to have a written contract that sets out precise details of vehicles covered to include frequency and type of check, along with a repair policy. Such a contract must be provided to support an application for an operator's licence. If the contract is cancelled, or the terms of an existing contract are changed, a copy of the new agreement must be sent to the NICLO without delay. An example of a contract can be found at Annex 7.

Contract limitations

Even when a maintenance contract exists between you (the operator) and a contractor, **you remain legally responsible for the condition of the vehicle,** the authorisation of any repair work undertaken and the retention of records. You need to be satisfied at all times that the level of maintenance agreed matches the demands placed upon vehicles and that the standards achieved by the contractor **are kept at a sufficiently high level**. You should therefore **talk regularly** with the contractor to ensure that they are familiar with the operational needs of the vehicles they are required to inspect and repair. This knowledge is important if the contractor is to be called upon to advise on a particular course of action – particularly when your technical know-how is limited.

Even when you get on well with a contractor, you should have a system for regularly monitoring the quality of work done.

Obtaining first-time annual test pass rate data from the contractor is one way of checking that their performance is satisfactory, but this should be supplemented by other checks. **Any sign of unreliability, incompetence or other shortcomings causing a reduction in the standards achieved should receive prompt attention**. Here again a good working relationship can help, but if problems persist you might well consider a change of contractor.

Visiting agents

As an operator, you may employ a visiting agent to undertake safety inspections, repairs and routine maintenance. However, you should ensure that the agent is qualified to work on the type of vehicles you operate and that adequate facilities and tools are provided. As is the case for contracted-out maintenance, **you are responsible for vehicle condition and record keeping.**

Roadside safety inspections

Only emergency repairs may be done at the roadside and provided there is no road safety risk associated with the conduct of such repairs. Routine maintenance and repairs **must not** be carried out on the public highway

Planning a safety inspection programme

Key Information

Safety inspections must be planned in advance. Vehicles that are subject to a statutory annual test may have their year's programme planned around the anticipated test date to avoid duplication of work associated with the test, such as cleaning and major servicing. A simple method of drawing up a programme is to use a year planner or flow chart. An example can be found in Annex 8.

Computer-based systems are equally acceptable, and the numerous electronic vehicle maintenance record management and storage systems available will often incorporate an electronic planning feature. The information, **which should be kept in the simplest form possible and displayed prominently**, will serve as a reminder of programmed inspections or of any changes that have been necessary. All vehicles subject to programmed attention should be included. Ideally planners or charts should be used to set safety inspection dates at least six months in advance. Vehicles' annual test dates should be included, **as should servicing and other ancillary equipment testing or calibration dates, e.g. tachograph, lifting equipment, etc..**

Any planner should be updated regularly indicating progress of the programme recording any extra work carried out. Vehicles that have been taken off the operator's licence or other vehicles temporarily off-road should have their period of non-use identified, and a note should be made when vehicles have been disposed of.

The planner or chart may be used to record other items in the vehicle maintenance programme, such as servicing, unscheduled work and refurbishing. Each activity should be clearly identified.

Benefits

It must be emphasised that the reason for having an efficient maintenance system which is either electronic or manual is to reduce the chances of the vehicle being defective. This will reduce the risk of the vehicle being prohibited, thus reducing downtime, and the risk of its being involved in a serious road traffic collision. It also reduces the risk of the driver or operator being prosecuted for defects. With the introduction of fixed penalties it is imperative that a proper system is introduced and maintained. Any planning tool software used needs to meet the requirements of the maintenance regime agreed as part of the operator licensing requirements.

Key Information

DVA does not approve any software systems or hardware devices. It is ultimately the operator's responsibility to ensure that the maintenance system used does not jeopardise their operator's licence.

Section Six

Monitoring

Section 6:

Monitoring

This section examines why the importance of continuous reviewing and monitoring of the quality of safety inspections is essential for all systems for maintaining a vehicle's roadworthiness.

Continuous reviewing and monitoring of the quality of the systems in place is essential to ensure that they are sufficiently comprehensive to do the job.

One method of monitoring is to invite a technically competent third party periodically to re-inspect or undertake a safety inspection irrespective of whether inspections are done in-house or are contracted out.

The content of completed inspection reports can also be analysed. **Checks should reveal any incomplete records and may also show patterns of faults**. If many faults are reported regularly this could indicate that:

- there are not enough safety inspections;
- daily walkaround inspections are not being completed correctly; or
- defects are not being corrected promptly or effectively.

If no defects or few defects are reported regularly, safety inspection intervals may be too short or the quality of inspection may not be high enough.

Effective monitoring will enable you, the operator, to adjust the intervals between safety inspections to suit the operation of vehicles. In this respect there is considerable flexibility provided within the framework of this guide.

Rental and leasing companies who are members of the British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association are regularly inspected under the BVRLA's Quality Assurance Programme where the maintenance records, branches and vehicles are inspected by an independent UKAS accredited inspector. This inspection can be used as part of your regular monitoring of the rental and leasing companies who provide vehicles for you.

Monitoring of drivers daily checks

The daily walk around check is a vital part of any maintenance system and so requires continuous monitoring to ensure the checks are being performed correctly. One way of checking the quality of the daily check is to have a visiting agent or competent in-house member of staff, to re-examine the vehicle as it leaves or enters the operating centre. The inspection result can be checked against the drivers defect reports to ensure the drivers check is of sufficient quality.

Another approach could be to use the safety inspection. The person carrying out the safety inspection could note which defects found should have been detected during the drivers daily walkaround check. A review of the driver defect reports could be performed and appropriate action could be taken to establish why the defects were not detected during the walk around check.

Key Information

Monitoring must continue whether or not changes are made to the inspection programme.

Annual test results

Attention should also be paid to annual test results and the issue of prohibitions and inspection notices. Regular monitoring of all available information will enable you to check the effectiveness of your system in keeping your vehicles roadworthy. The frequency or scope of safety inspections may need to be adjusted to ensure that the system maintains the roadworthiness of all vehicles operated.

What does the annual test for commercial vehicles involve?

Full details of what is tested can be found in the Heavy Goods Vehicle Inspection Manual see link https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/heavy-vehicle-inspection-manual

British standards

Key Information

British Standard BS EN ISO 9000 is a standard for quality management systems. If you are an operator who has been awarded this standard, you must observe systems of working set out in a quality manual. Such a manual will contain details of the organisation of the business, the responsibilities of staff and methods of operation.

Those businesses aiming for BS EN ISO 9000 accreditation will need to consider the training, documentation recording, planning, standards and monitoring aspects of their organisation.

Vehicle Safety Recalls

Key Information

If you receive notification of a safety recall for your vehicle(s) from a manufacturer, it is important that you act promptly to ensure the rectification work is undertaken. This will remove the risk that your vehicle may become unroadworthy due to the potential defect identified by the manufacturer.

Annex

Annex 1

Enforcement of the Goods Vehicle Operator Licensing scheme

1. The Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act (Northern Ireland) 2010 requires any person who uses (i.e. "operates") a goods vehicle or a combination of vehicles with a maximum gross weight over 3,500 kg to carry goods for hire and reward to have an operator's licence. It also requires any person who uses (operates) a goods vehicle with a maximum gross weight over 3,500 kg to carry goods in connection with any trade or business to have an operator's licence.

2. When considering an application for a goods vehicle operator's licence, the Department must consider whether there will be satisfactory facilities or arrangements for keeping authorised vehicles in a fit and serviceable condition. They will seek assurances that the applicant will conduct regular safety checks and inspections of the vehicles at specified intervals and keep records of those checks and inspections and their results. These details are 'undertakings' made for the purposes of obtaining a licence.

3. At any time after a goods vehicle operator's licence has been granted the Department may direct that it be revoked or suspended, or that its scope be reduced on several grounds, including:

- failure to fulfil an undertaking given for the purpose of procuring a licence;
- convictions or fixed penalties relating to maintaining vehicles in a fit and serviceable condition;
- A vehicle being operated under a licence that has been issued with an immediate prohibition for an MSI mechanical deficiency specified within Annex IV of EU Regulation 1071/2009, Annex II of Directive 2014/47/EU or Regulation (EU) 2016/403.

4. In certain circumstances DVA examiners may be required to undertake an audit or assessment of a licensed operator's maintenance arrangements. Such audits or assessments will normally be made:

- shortly after the grant of the licence;
- because of a request by the operator for a variation to the licence;
- because evidence of maintenance problems has come to light; following the issue of prohibition notices, poor annual test results or similar information; or
- if the licence has been reviewed for other reasons not related to maintenance.

5. In the course of an audit or assessment, vehicle examiners will check:

- records of vehicle safety inspections kept by the operator;
- driver walkaround records;
- records of action taken to rectify faults;
- driver training records; and
- maintenance facilities and equipment, or, in the event that maintenance is contracted out, the equipment and facilities provided by the contractor.

6. The extent to which records are inspected will depend on the nature of the audit/assessment including the operator's history, the type, seriousness and frequency of any mechanical infringements, and test history data.

7. Failure to keep records of safety inspections is in itself a regulatory matter. The vehicle examiner may discuss with the operator appropriate safety inspection procedures and will report whether they consider the maintenance arrangements to be satisfactory; any deficiency may result in an unsatisfactory report, leading to possible regulatory action by the Department. In certain circumstances, e.g. where facilities at the operating centre do not allow for adequate inspection, the operator may be asked to bring their vehicles to a DVA test centre for inspection.

8. Examiners may at any time:

- enter and inspect a goods vehicle and for that purpose detain the vehicle during such time as is required for inspection;
- enter any premises on which they have reason to believe a goods vehicle is kept or where the examiner believes it is used in connection with the maintenance of vehicles used for the carriage of goods by road;
- request the production of documents or the provision of information in relation to the use of vehicles for the carriage of goods on the road as to maintenance, owners, drivers, etc.;
- seize documents or other articles;
- divert a vehicle that is stationary at the roadside to another location, within ten miles, for further inspection.

9. Examiners may make visits to operating centres to examine vehicles. They may also conduct spot checks at the roadside. Examiners' activities may extend beyond a visual inspection. Examiners have a range of equipment that operators may encounter, including mobile roller brake testers, exhaust smoke meters, and equipment to check the accuracy of the tachograph and the function and setting of the speed limiter.

10. When vehicle examiners encounter a defective vehicle at the roadside, on an operator's premises or at a test centre, they may issue a prohibition notice or a vehicle defect notice, depending on the severity of the fault(s). A prohibition may result in an immediate ban on the further use of the vehicle or some form of restriction on the vehicle's use on a road. Prohibitions may take effect immediately or may be delayed for up to ten days, depending on whether there is an immediate danger to public safety. Exemptions may be issued, e.g. to allow a vehicle to be towed away for repair. A prohibition may be issued with a requirement that the vehicle is re-examined at a testing centre and the examiner must then be satisfied that it is fit for service. This will entail an examination of the components and systems affected by the defects at the test centre. A fee will be chargeable for this examination. If during the inspection the vehicle is deemed to have further faults the test may be extended to include as much of the vehicle as needs to be inspected for the examiner to be satisfied it is "fit for service" and roadworthy. If further faults are found the vehicle may be issued with another prohibition notice or the current one may not be removed.

11. Other sanctions available to DVA Examiners include the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices and court prosecution action for infringements detected. Defects which relate to brakes, steering and tyres may also be endorsable and attract penalty points on the drivers licence.

NOTE: If a person obstructs an authorised examiner acting in the course of their duty, they are guilty of an offence.

Annex 2

Enforcement of the Bus Operator Licensing scheme

1. The Transport (Northern Ireland) Act 1967 requires any person who uses (i.e. "operates") a vehicle on the road to carry passengers for reward (subject to certain exemptions) to have a bus operators licence.

2. When considering an application for a bus operators licence the Department may attach conditions to the licence including a requirement in respect of the maintenance of vehicles operated under the licence.

3. The condition in relation to maintenance specifies the holder of the licence shall:

a. maintain each motor vehicle used by him, in the provision of the service on the licence, in accordance with the vehicle manufacturer's recommended maintenance schedule;

b. record the following particulars in respect of each vehicle:

i. the date of any such maintenance carried out on each vehicle;

ii. the nature and extent of that maintenance (including particulars of items repaired and replaced); and

iii. the identity of the person carrying out the maintenance work;

c. maintain and keep records prepared in accordance with condition (b) at his principal place of business for a period of 18 months from the date of the maintenance carried out on each vehicle;

d. furnish all records prepared in accordance with condition (b) upon request to an inspector appointed by the Department for Infrastructure under section 37 of the Transport Act 1967.

4. At any time after a bus operators' licence has been granted the Department may direct that it be revoked or suspended, or that its scope be reduced on the grounds that:

› any condition subject to which the licence was granted has not been complied with;

› convictions or penalties have been imposed relating to vehicles not being maintained in a fit and serviceable condition;

› a vehicle operated under the licence has been issued with an immediate prohibition for an MSI deficiency specified within Annex IV of EU Regulation 1071/2009, Annex II to 2014/47/EU or (EU) 2016/403.

5. In certain circumstances DVA examiners may be required to undertake an audit or assessment of a licensed operator's maintenance arrangements. This assessment will normally be made:

- shortly after the grant of the licence; or
- as a consequence of poor maintenance arrangements, eg due to the detection of vehicles being operated by the licence holder with serious infringements, which have been issued with an immediate prohibition for an MSI deficiency specified within Annex IV of EU Regulation 1071/2009, Annex II of 2014/47 or (EU) 2016/403.

6. In the course of such an audit or assessment, vehicle examiners will check:

- records of vehicle safety inspections kept by the operator;
- driver walkaround records;
- records of action taken to rectify faults;
- driver training records; and
- maintenance facilities and equipment, or, in the event that maintenance is contracted out, the equipment and facilities provided by the contractor.

7. The extent to which records are inspected will depend on the nature of the audit/assessment including the operator's history, the type, seriousness and frequency of mechanical infringements, and test history data. Failure to keep records of safety inspections is in itself a regulatory matter. The vehicle examiner may discuss with the operator appropriate safety inspection procedures and will report whether they consider the maintenance arrangements to be satisfactory; any deficiency may result in an unsatisfactory report, leading to possible regulatory action by the Department. In certain circumstances, e.g. where facilities at the operating centre do not allow for adequate inspection, the operator may be asked to bring their vehicles to a testing station for inspection.

8. Examiners may at any time:

- stop, enter and inspect a motor vehicle used for the carriage of passengers for reward, and for that purpose detain the vehicle during such time as is required for inspection;
- enter any premises on which they have reason to believe a motor vehicle used for the carriage of passengers for reward is kept or where the examiner believes it is used in connection with the vehicles in question;
- request production of documents or the provision of information in relation to the use or maintenance of vehicles for the carriage of passengers for reward.
- take copies or retain documents until they can be copied;
- divert vehicles that are stationary at the roadside to another location, within ten miles, for inspection.

9. Examiners may make visits to operating centres to examine vehicles. They may also conduct spot checks at the roadside. Examiners' activities may extend beyond a visual inspection, and have a range of equipment that operators may encounter, including mobile roller brake testers, exhaust smoke meters, and equipment to check the accuracy of tachographs and the function and setting of speed limiters.

10. When vehicle examiners encounter a defective vehicle at the roadside, on an operator's premises or at a test centre, they may issue a prohibition notice or a vehicle inspection notice, depending on the severity of the fault(s). A prohibition may result in an immediate ban on the further use of the vehicle or some form of restriction on the vehicle's use on a road. Prohibitions may take effect immediately or may be delayed for up to ten days, depending on whether there is an immediate danger to public safety. Exemptions may be issued, e.g. to allow a vehicle to be towed away for repair. A prohibition may be issued with a requirement that the vehicle is re-examined at a testing centre and the examiner must then be satisfied that it is fit for service. This will entail an examination of the components and systems affected by the defects at the test centre. A fee will be chargeable for this examination. If during the inspection the vehicle is deemed to have further faults the test may be extended to include as much of the vehicle as needs to be inspected for the examiner to be satisfied it is "fit for service" and roadworthy. If further faults are found the vehicle may be issued with another prohibition notice or the current one may not be removed.

11. Other sanctions available to DVA Examiners include the issue of Fixed Penalty Notices or court prosecution action for infringements detected. Defects that relate to brakes, steering and tyres may also be endorsable and attract penalty points on the drivers licence.

NOTE: If a person obstructs an authorised examiner acting in the course of their duty, they are guilty of an offence.

Annex 3

Where to get additional help

Technical support

The Department and DVA provide advice and assistance to operators to help improve professional standards in the industry. Examiners can advise on safety inspections and can help operators set up acceptable record-keeping systems or maintenance facilities. Together with the Department we view this part of our duties as an effective and important means of improving road safety.

The vehicle manufacturer is an important source of advice on the characteristics and technical requirements of the vehicles that the operator is using. Such advice is published in the vehicle handbook and other publications. Further advice can be obtained from the local specialist dealer and/or direct from the manufacturer.

The trade associations such as the Freight Transport Association (FTA) the Road Haulage Association (RHA) and the Federation of Passenger Transport Northern Ireland(FPTNI) are important sources of advice for operators. They also represent the goods vehicles and bus industry when engaging with the Department and DVA on a range of legislative and operational matters

Training

The trade associations, individual colleges, training organisations such as Go Skills, and vehicle manufacturers offer courses and seminars covering operator licensing and maintenance systems. Further advice and information regarding training can be obtained from the relevant sector skills councils (i.e. Go Skills for public service vehicles and Skills for Logistics for heavy goods vehicles) and trade associations.

Saving fuel and protecting the environment

There are a number of government recognised organisations that offer help and assistance when considering fuel consumption and protection of the environment.

The Energy Saving Trust works to cut greenhouse gases and air pollution from the road transport sector. It promotes cleaner, lower carbon vehicles and fuels, eco-friendly driving techniques and low-carbon transport alternatives.
http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/business/transport/fleet-management-essentials#drive-economically-fleet-health-check-and-green-fleet-management

SAFED (Safe and Fuel Efficient Driving) is the DfT-approved programme, which has demonstrated average fuel savings of more than 10%, a corresponding saving in fuel and reduction in carbon and CO2 emissions, and a reduction in gear changes of 37%. SAFED can qualify as a training module under the EU Training Directive Driver CPC requirements.

Publications

The following publications are available from DVA

HGV Inspection Manual – inspection procedures and minimum roadworthiness standards for the statutory testing of heavy goods vehicles.
https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/heavy-vehicle-inspection-manual

Categorisation of Defects – standards (primarily for use by DVA Enforcement staff) on the issue of prohibitions for roadworthiness defects on all classes of vehicles.
https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/driver-vehicle-agency-categorisation-defects-manual

Annex 4A

Example of a driver's vehicle defect report (goods vehicles)

Driver's name:	Date:
Vehicle no:	
Trailer fleet/serial no:	Odometer reading

Daily or shift check (tick or cross)				***Items refer to articulated lorry and trailer combinations**	
Fuel/oil leaks		Lights		Mirrors	
Battery security (condition)		Reflectors		Coupling security *	
Tyres and wheel fixings		Indicators/Side repeaters		Electrical connections *	
Spray suppression		Wipers		Brakes inc. ABS/EBS	
Steering		Washers		Security of body/ wings	
Security of load		Horn		Markers/Reg plates	
Mirrors		Excessive engine exhaust smoke		Glass	

REPORT DEFECTS HERE:	**RECTIFIED:**

Defects reported to:	

Write NIL here if no defects were found	Driver's Signature

Defects rectified by:

Signature: Date:

Annex 4B

Example of a driver's vehicle defect report (passengers vehicles)

Driver's name:	Date:
Vehicle no:	
Trailer fleet/serial no:	Odometer reading:

Daily or shift check (tick or cross)					
Fuel/oil leaks		Wipers		Mirrors	
Battery (if easily accessible)		Washers		Steering	
Tyres and wheel fixings		Horn		Heating/ventilation	
Brakes (inc. ABS/EBS)		Glass		Body interior	
Doors and exits		Reflectors		Excessive engine exhaust smoke	
Indicators/Side repeaters		Body exterior		Emergency exit hammer	
Fire extinguisher		First-aid kit		Registration Plates	
Seat/seat belts		Accessibility requirements			

REPORT DEFECTS HERE	**RECTIFIED:**

Defects reported to:	

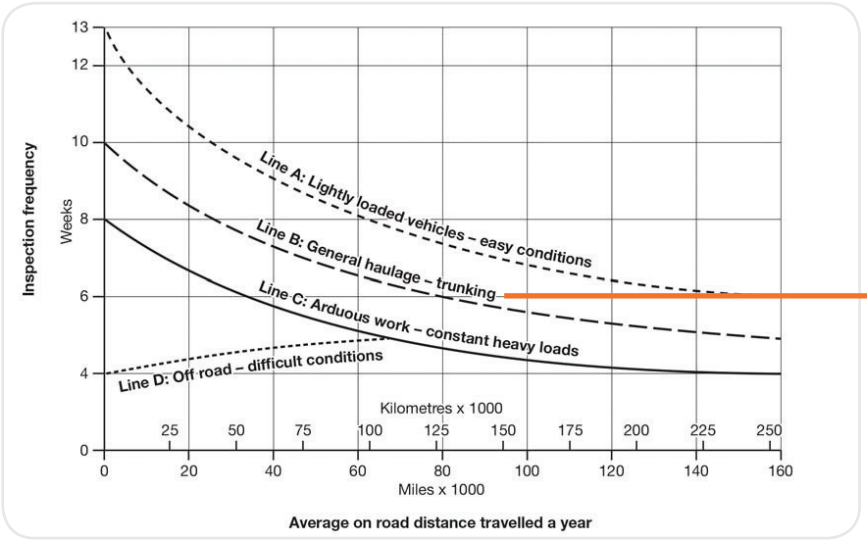
Write NIL here if no defects were found	Driver's Signature

Defects rectified by:

Signature: Date:

Annex 5

A guide to safety inspection (SI) intervals



≥ 12 yrs old

1. Safety inspection intervals for all vehicles should fall between lines A and C or A and D as appropriate.

2. If the vehicle or trailer is 12 years or older then the SI interval should be no more than 6 weeks. The chart is only a guide and it is the responsibility of you, the operator, to increase the number of safety inspections should the operating conditions demand it. Equally, the number of safety inspections may be decreased with notification to the Northern Ireland Central Licensing Office (NICLO).

3. If you are confident that this will still be effective in maintaining roadworthiness. The actual inspection interval chosen should be determined by taking into account:

- the age of vehicle/trailer
- the conditions under which a vehicle will be operated;
- the expected annual mileage;
- the recommendations of the vehicle manufacturer; and
- other factors that may increase the risk of vehicles becoming unroadworthy.

4. Vehicles that are used only for part of the year, or that have been out of service for some time, should be inspected before they are first used. When they are being used, the subsequent safety inspection intervals should be determined in accordance with this chart – conditions of use and the equivalent annual mileage (e.g. 20,000 miles covered over a six-month period represents an equivalent annual mileage of 40,000).

5. Trailers not permanently coupled but in regular use need to be assessed on their conditions of work and anticipated mileage.

6. Where there are doubts about what interval to choose, new operators are advised to be cautious and make more, rather than fewer, checks.

7. Exceptional or difficult conditions can be encountered by vehicles operating on unmade roads, e.g. in quarry work or on building or land reclamation sites, where conditions result in accelerated component wear and vehicle damage. The operator is advised to increase the number of safety inspection checks above the guidance in the graph shown.

8. It is likely that an appropriate inspection frequency for public service vehicles would fall between curves A and B, up to a maximum period of ten weeks.

Vehicles and trailers aged 12 years and older

National statistics show that as vehicles and trailers age the average annual MOT failure rate increases and they are more likely to experience in-service roadworthiness defects than newer vehicles. Therefore, the guidance for older vehicles and trailers is that they will need more frequent maintenance and recommend a maximum interval of 6 weeks between safety inspections for vehicles and trailers aged 12 years and older.

Key Information

Which ever safety inspection interval is decided upon, the inspection frequency should not be extended without prior notification to the Transport Regulator. The following safety inspection should be carried out within the specified weekly or mileage based time scale and not beyond. To allow some flexibility with planning safety inspections it is recommended that the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) week numbering system is used, with this system the safety inspection should be completed within the relevant ISO week it falls. ISO defines the week as always starting with Monday through to Sunday. See Annex 8 for an example of a maintenance planner.

For example:

A six weekly SI interval has been decided, using the ISO week planner, (for this example) the vehicle came into service and had a first use inspection in week 10 of the ISO calendar the following safety inspections should then be completed within ISO week 16, 22, 28, 34, 40, 46 etc.. If a safety inspection was completed outside the planned schedule, for example because of a breakdown, a new schedule may need to be created. For the example given above it would not be permissible to carry out an early SI in week 20 and then have an eight week interval to week 28, the operator would need to either carry out another SI at week 22 and continue with the original planned schedule or reschedule 6 week intervals from week 20 to 26, 32 etc.

Annex 6A

Example of a safety inspection record (HGV)

Vehicle Registration:	Odometer Reading:
Make and type:	
Date of inspection:	ISO Wk No:
Operator:	

Notes
Serviceable (Col3) – enter the appropriate code:

✓ = Satisfactory	X= Safety item defect	R= Repair required
N/A= Not Applicable	M= Monitor (possible maintenance require before next SI)	

Part 1 – Inspection
A: Inside vehicle

Check no.	Item Inspected	Serviceable	Defect found	Rectified by
1	Seats			
2	Seat belts & Supplementary Restraint Systems			
3	Mirrors & Indirect Vision Devices			
4	Glass and View of the Road			
5	Windscreen Wipers and Washers			
6	Speedometer/Tachograph			
7	Horn			
8	Driving controls			
9	Steering control			
10	Service brake pedal			
11	Service brake operation			
12	Pressure/Vacuum warning and build-up			
13	Hand levers operating mechanical brakes			
14	Hand-operated brake control valves			
15	Cab floors and steps			

B: Ground level and under vehicle

Check no.	Item Inspected	Serviceable	Defect found	Rectified by
16	Cab doors			
17	Registration plates			
18	Cab security			
19	Security of body, Containers & Crane Support Legs			
20	Condition of body			
21	Exhaust emissions			
22	Road wheels and hubs			
23	Size & Type of Tyres			
24	Condition of Tyres			
25	Sideguards, rear under-run devices & Bumper Bars			
26	Spare wheel and carrier			
27	Condition of Chassis			
28	Vehicle to trailer coupling			
29	Trailer parking, emergency brake and air line connections			
30	Trailer landing legs			
31	Spray suppression, wings and wheel arches			
32	Speed limiter			
33	Electrical wiring and equipment			
34	Engine and transmission mountings			
35	Oil leaks			
36	Fuel tanks and system			
37	Exhaust systems			
38	Steering mechanism			
39	Suspension			

Check no.	Item Inspected	Serviceable	Defect found	Rectified by
40	Transmission			
41	Additional braking devices			
42	Brake systems and components			
43	Markers and reflectors			
44	Lamps			
45	Direction indicators and hazard warning lamps			
46	Aim of headlamps			
47	Other dangerous defects			

C: Tyre Condition

Condition of Tyres (enter N/A if not applicable)				
Ck 48	Axle 1	Axle 2	Axle 3	Axle 4
o/s	mm	mm	mm	mm
out	psi	psi	psi	psi
o/s	mm	mm	mm	mm
in	psi	psi	psi	psi
n/s	mm	mm	mm	mm
in	psi	psi	psi	psi
n/s	mm	mm	mm	mm
out	psi	psi	psi	psi

D: Brake performance

(Laden / Unladen) (Roller brake / Decelerometer test)

Check no.	Item inspected	Efficiency
49	Service brake performance	%
50	Secondary brake performance	%
51	Parking brake performance	%

Part 2 – Comments on faults found

Check no.	Fault details
Signature of inspector: Name of inspector:	

Part 3 – Action taken on faults found

Check no.	Action taken on fault	Rectified by

Part 4 – Declaration

"I consider that the above defects have been rectified satisfactorily and this vehicle is now in a safe and roadworthy condition".

Signature of Supervisor:

Note: It is always the responsibility of the operator to ensure that the vehicle is in a roadworthy condition before being used on the road

Annex 6B

Example of a safety inspection record (PSV)

Vehicle Registration:	Odometer Reading:
Make and type:	
Date of inspection:	ISO Wk No:
Operator:	

Notes
Serviceable (Col3) – enter the appropriate code:
✓ = Satisfactory X= Safety item defect R= Repair required
N/A= Not Applicable M= Monitor (possible maintenance require before next SI)

Part 1 – Inspection
A: Inside vehicle

Check no.	Item Inspected	Serviceable	Defect found	Rectified by
1	Driver's seat			
2	Seat belts & Supplementary Restraint Systems			
3	Mirrors & Indirect Vision Devices			
4	Glass and View of the Road			
5	Accessibility features			
6	Windscreen wipers and washers			
7	Speedometer/tachograph			
8	Horn			
9	Driving controls			
10	Steering control			
11	Service brake pedal			
12	Service brake operation			
13	Pressure/vacuum warning and build-up			
14	Hand levers operating mechanical brakes			
15	Hand-operated brake control valves			

Check no.	Item Inspected	Serviceable	Defect found	Rectified by
16	Driver's accommodation			
17	Interior of body, passenger entrance, exit steps and platforms			

B: Ground level and under vehicle

Check no.	Item Inspected	Serviceable	Defect found	Rectified by
18	Passenger doors, driver's doors and emergency exits			
19	Registration plates			
20	Security of body			
21	Exterior of body including luggage compartments			
22	Exhaust emissions			
23	Road wheels & hubs			
24	Size and type of tyres			
25	Condition of tyres			
26	Bumper bars			
27	Spare wheel and carrier			
28	Condition of chassis			
29	Wings and wheel arches			
30	Vehicle to trailer coupling			
31	Speed limiter			
32	Electrical equipment and wiring			
33	Engine and transmission mountings			
34	Oil and waste leaks			
35	Fuel tanks and system			
36	Exhaust and waste systems			

Check no.	Item Inspected	Serviceable	Defect found	Rectified by
37	Suspension			
38	Axles, stub axles and wheel bearings			
39	Transmission			
40	Additional braking devices			
41	Brake systems and components			
42	Reflectors and rear markings			
43	Lamps			
44	Direction indicators and hazard warning lamps			
45	Aim of headlamps			
46	Ancillary equipment			
47	Other dangerous defects			

C: Tyre Condition

Condition of Tyres (enter N/A if not applicable)				
Ck 48	Axle 1	Axle 2	Axle 3	Axle 4
o/s	mm	mm	mm	mm
out	psi	psi	psi	psi
o/s	mm	mm	mm	mm
in	psi	psi	psi	psi
n/s	mm	mm	mm	mm
in	psi	psi	psi	psi
n/s	mm	mm	mm	mm
out	psi	psi	psi	psi

D: Brake performance

(Laden / Unladen) (Roller brake / Decelerometer test)

Check no.	Item inspected	Efficiency
49	Service brake performance	%
50	Secondary brake performance	%
51	Parking brake performance	%

Part 2 – Comments on faults found

Check no.	Fault details
Signature of inspector: Name of inspector:	

Part 3 – Action taken on faults found

Check no.	Action taken on fault	Rectified by

Part 4 – Declaration

"I consider that the above defects have been rectified satisfactorily and this vehicle is now in a safe and roadworthy condition".

Signature of Supervisor:

Note: It is always the responsibility of the operator to ensure that the vehicle is in a roadworthy condition before being used on the road

Annex 7

Example of a maintenance agreement

Model agreement between the operator and Contractor for safety inspections and/or repair of vehicles and trailers subject to operator licensing

The Agreement is made on the _____ day of _____ 20 _____ between:

_____ (the contractor), whose address/ registered office is:

_____

_____

_____ (the operator), whose address/ registered office is:

_____

_____

1. The contractor agrees that they will, in relation to every vehicle mentioned in the Schedule below, on every occasion when that vehicle is submitted by the operator as mentioned in Paragraph 2 below on or after the date of this Agreement:

a. inspect all the items specified in the maintenance record in the form for the time being approved by the Department which relate to the vehicle;

b. if the operator so consents, carry out such renewals and repairs as may be necessary to ensure that the vehicle and every part of it specified in that maintenance record is in good working order and complies with every statutory requirement applying to it; and

c. complete that maintenance record to show:

i. which items were in good working order and complied with the relevant statutory requirements when the vehicle was submitted;

ii. which (if any) items were not in good working order or failed to comply with those requirements when the vehicle was submitted but have been replaced or repaired so that those requirements are satisfied; and

iii. which (if any) items were not in good working order or failed to comply with those requirements when the vehicle was submitted and which have not been so replaced or repaired.

d. provide the operator with a copy of every completed maintenance record.

2. The operator agrees that they will-

a. submit to the contractor each vehicle mentioned in the Schedule below in order that the contractor may, as regards that vehicle, comply with the provisions of Paragraph 1 above:

i. within _____ weeks of the Agreement; and thereafter

ii. within _____ weeks of the date of the last safety inspection;

b. pay to the contractor such reasonable charges as the contractor may make pursuant to their obligations under Paragraph 1 above; and

c. Retain and make available for inspection by an authorised officer, every maintenance record mentioned in Paragraph 1 above for a period of:

i. 15 months in the case of a Goods Vehicle (Including trailers)

ii. 18 months In the case of a PSV (including trailers where drawn)

3. This Agreement may be ended by either party giving to the other _____ month's written notice of their intention to end it.

Schedule

The Schedule shall list Motor Vehicles and their trailers which are being used by the operator under their operators licence and to which the maintenance agreement applies in the following manner:

i. **Motor Vehicles** (the Schedule should give Registration numbers and a brief description of each vehicle)

ii. **Trailers** (the Schedule should give the trailers identification number and brief descriptions of each trailer)

As witness (etc.)

Signature(s) or seal, of operator

Signature(s) or seal, of contractor

Annex 8

Specimen maintenance planner

Vehicle Registration Number	Vehicle Make and Type	Week No:	JANUARY				FEBRUARY				MARCH				APRIL				
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18

Vehicle Registration Number	Vehicle Make and Type	Week No:	MAY				JUNE				JULY				AUGUST				
			19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36

Vehicle Registration Number	Vehicle Make and Type	Week No:	SEPTEMBER				OCTOBER				NOVEMBER				DECEMBER			
			37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53

S = Safety Inspection
I = Intermediate Inspection
M = Major Service & Inspection
A = Annual Test Preparation (Including Major Service & Inspection)
O = Vehicle Excise Duty Renewal
X = Work Completed

Annex 9

Useful Addresses & Contact Numbers

Driver & Vehicle Agency

Testing Section
Balmoral Road, Malone Lower
Belfast, BT12 6QL
Tel: 028 9068 1831
Email: dva@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Driver & Vehicle Agency

Compliance and Roadside
Enforcement Section
148-158 Corporation Street
Town Parks
Belfast BT1 3DH
Tel: 02890254100
Email: dva.enforcementadmin@
infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Driver & Vehicle Agency

Passenger Transport Licensing Division
County Hall
Castlerock Road, Waterside
Coleraine, BT51 3HS
Tel: 028 9025 4100
Email: busoperators@infrastructure-ni.
gov.uk

Driver & Vehicle Agency

Driver Licensing
Coleraine County Hall
Castlerock Road, Waterside
Coleraine, BT51 3TB
Tel: 03002007861

Freight Transport Association

109 Airport oad West
Belfast, BT3 9ED
T 028 9046 6699
F 028 9046 6690
www.fta.co.uk

Energy Saving Trust

21 Dartmouth Street
London SW1H 9BP
Tel: 0845 602 1425
http://www.energysavingtrust.org.
uk/business/transport/subsidised-
ecodriving-training

Road Haulage Association

Kirkton House
Allen Road, Kirkton North, Livingston
EH54 6TQ
Tel: 01506 414073
Fax: 01506 412335
Email: scotland-northernireland@
rha.uk.net

Federation of Passenger Transport Northern Ireland

ECOS Centre
Kernohans Lane,
Ballymena
Co Antrim, BT43 7QA
Telephone: 02825638938
Email: info@fptni.org
http://www.fptni.org/

Society of Operations Engineers

22 Greencoat Place
London SW1P 1PR
Tel: 020 7630 1111
www.soe.org.uk

Transport Regulation Unit

Department for Infrastructure
Causeway Exchange
1-7 Bedford Street
Town Parks
Belfast, BT2 7EG
Telephone: 0300 200 7831
Email: tru@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Northern Ireland Central Licensing Office (NICLO)

PO Box 180
Leeds, LS91BU
Tel: 0300 200 7831

Annex 10

DVA Test Centre addresses

ARMAGH

47 Hamiltonsbawn Road
Ballynahome
BT 60 1HW
Tel: 028 3752 2699

LARNE

Ballyboley Road
Ballyloran
BT40 2SY
Tel: 028 2827 8808

BALLYMENA

Pennybridge Industrial Est
Larne Road
Ballycraigy
BT42 3ER
Tel: 028 2565 6801

LISBURN

Ballinderry Industrial Est
Ballinderry Road
Knockmore
BT28 2SA
Tel: 028 9266 3151

BELFAST

Balmoral Road
Malone Lower
BT12 6QL
Tel: 028 9068 1831

COLERAINE

2 Loughan Hill Industrial Est
Gateside Road
Loughan Hill
BT52 2NJ
Tel: 028 7034 3819

COOKSTOWN

Sandholes Road
Coolkeeghan
BT80 9AR
Tel: 028 8676 4809

CRAIGAVON

3 Diviny Dr
Carn Industrial Est
Tarsan
BT63 5RY
Tel: 028 3833 6188

DOWNPATRICK

Cloonagh Road
Flying Horse road
Ballymote Upper
BT30 6DU
Tel: 028 4461 4565

ENNISKILLEN

Chanterhill
Moneynoe Glebe
BT74 6DE
Tel: 028 6632 2871

LARNE

Ballyboley Road
Ballyloran
BT40 2SY
Tel: 028 2827 8808

LISBURN

Ballinderry Industrial Est
Ballinderry Road
Knockmore
BT28 2SA
Tel: 028 9266 3151

LONDONDERRY

New Buildings Industrial Est
Victoria Road
Ballyore
Glenaden Complex
BT47 2SX
Tel: 028 7134 3674

MALLUSK

Commercial Way
Hydepark Industrial Est
Grange of Mallusk
BT36 8YY
Tel: 028 9084 2111

NEWRY

51 Rathfriland Road
Carneyhough
BT34 1LD
Tel:028 3026 2853

NEWTOWNARDS

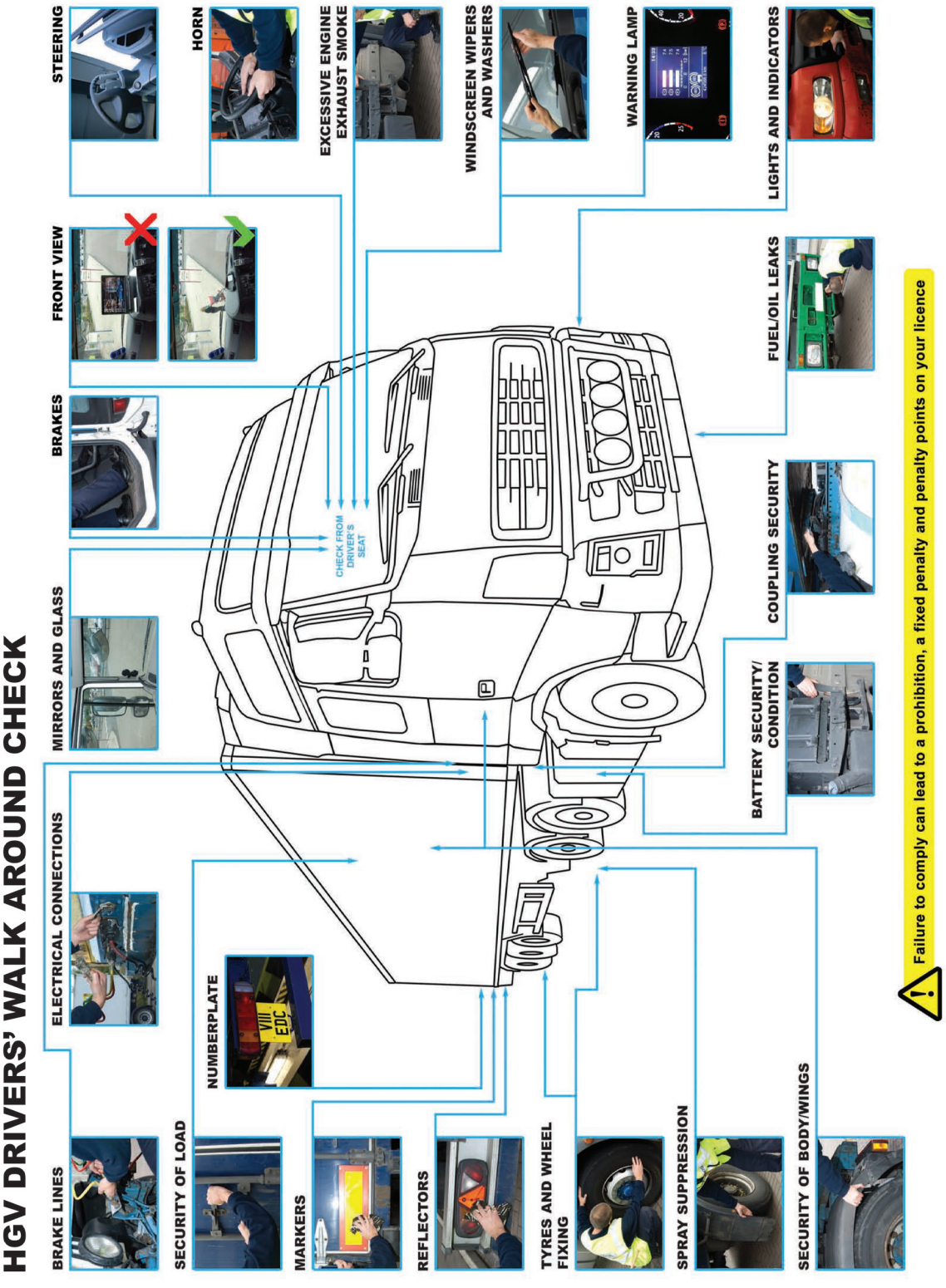
Jubilee Road
Scrabo
BT23 4XP
Tel: 028 9181 3064

OMAGH

Gortrush Industrial Est
Great Northern Road
Mullaghmenagh Upper
BT 78 5EJ
Tel: 028 8224 2540

Annex 11

Walk around Check



PSV DRIVERS' WALK AROUND CHECK

MIRRORS AND GLASS

STEERING

FIRST AID KIT

FIRE EXTINGUISHER

BODY INTERIOR

DOORS AND EXITS

BRAKES (BE SURE TO LISTEN FOR AIR BRAKE LEAKS)

EMERGENCY EXIT HAMMER

WINDSCREEN WIPERS AND WASHERS

CHECK FROM DRIVER'S SEAT

BODY EXTERIOR

HEATING/VENTILATION

NUMBERPLATE

HORN

FUEL, OIL AND WASTE LEAKS

WARNING LAMPS

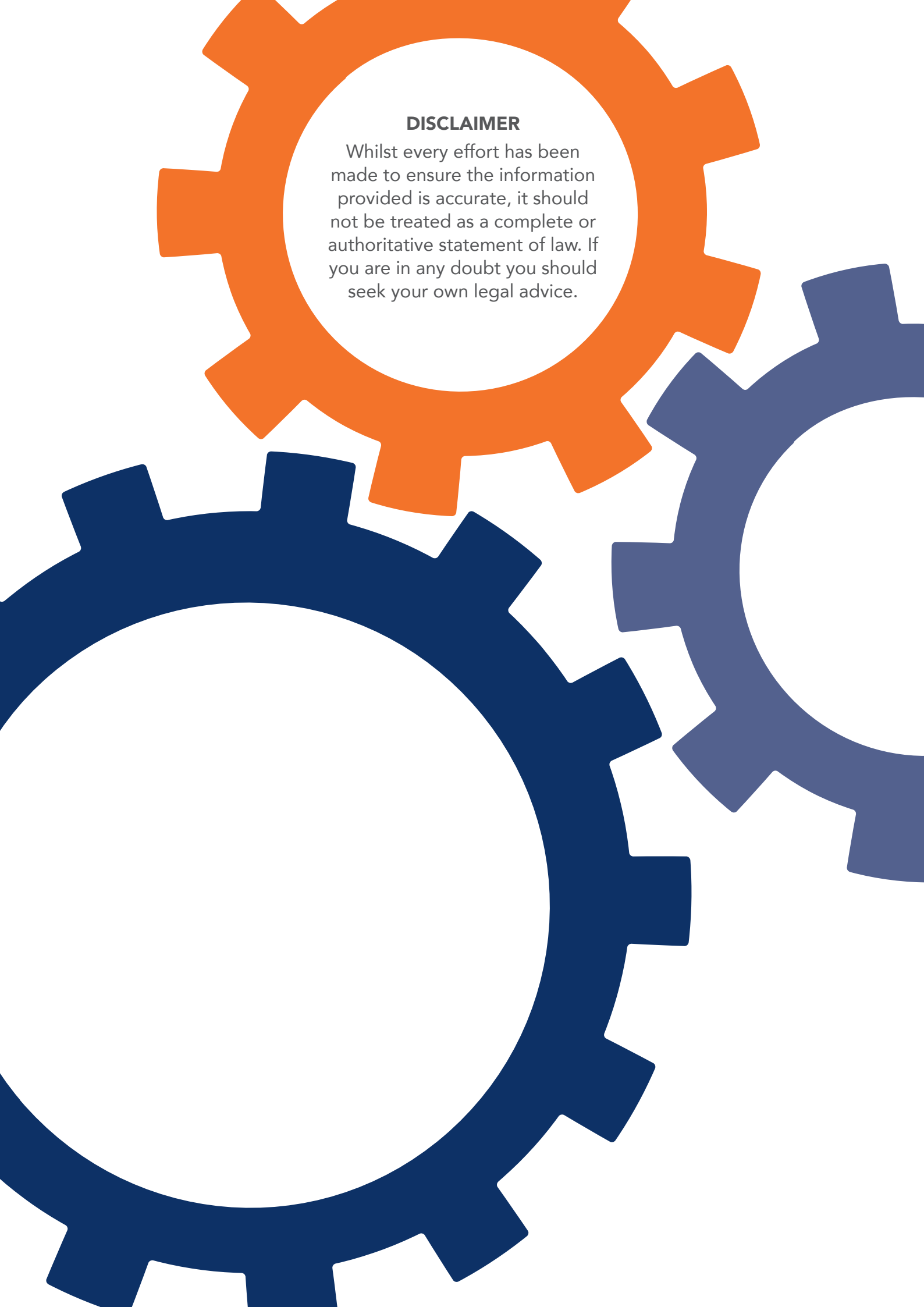
LIGHTS AND INDICATORS

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBILTY

TYRE AND WHEEL FIXING

EXCESSIVE ENGINE EXHAUST SMOKE

Failure to comply can lead to a prohibition, a fixed penalty and penalty points on your licence



DISCLAIMER

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the information provided is accurate, it should not be treated as a complete or authoritative statement of law. If you are in any doubt you should seek your own legal advice.