

DfI Driver, Vehicle, Operator, and Enforcement Statistics

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Key Findings

- The DVA received almost 258,000 applications for vehicle tests during October to December 2019, up by 2.7% on last year. In addition, the DVA conducted just over 269,000 vehicle tests, an increase of 3.5% compared to the same period last year, and the highest quarter three total on record. The pass-rate for full tests was 79.6%, an increase on the 79.3% in the same period last year, and the highest quarter-three pass-rate on record.
- Approximately 14,500 new vehicles were registered in Northern Ireland during July to September 2019. This is 5.8% lower than the figure recorded for the same period in 2018. The most popular new private-car was Ford (12%); with white the most popular colour (21%) and petrol the most popular fuel-type (59%).
- There were 1,212,000 vehicles licensed in Northern Ireland at 30th September 2019, an increase of 2.4% on last year. The overwhelming majority (82%) were cars.
- The number of theory tests conducted during the quarter decreased from 2018, from just under 18,300 to 18,100. The trend has remained steady over the past four years. The pass-rate for private-car theory tests was 44.8%, a decrease of 4.8 percentage points on the previous quarter, and the second lowest pass-rate in our time series.
- The DVA conducted just over 14,700 driving tests during October to December 2019, a figure unchanged from the equivalent period last year. The trend has remained steady over the past four years. The pass-rate for these tests was 57.7%, broadly unchanged over the past five years.
- Approximately 60,500 licensing transactions were carried out by DVA during quarter three of 2019-20. This represents an increase of approximately 2.6% in comparison with the volume carried out in the corresponding period in 2018. As the period of validity of a driving licence changed from 3 years to 10 years in 1985, this has resulted in a significant cyclical pattern with a peak renewal period during the middle of each decade.
- At the 31st December 2019, there were over 1,119,000 full and eligible licence holders with private-cars / light vans entitlement. This was a rise of 1.3% compared with the total twelve months ago.
- At the 31st December 2019, there were approximately 9,750 licensed taxi drivers, down by 7.1% when compared with the same point of 2018, and the lowest figure in our series. Similarly, there were nearly 8,700 licensed taxi vehicles, a further decrease of 1.3% when compared to the previous record low in the preceding quarter.
- During quarter three of 2019-20, DVA Enforcement staff spot-checked just over 1,000 vehicles, of which 39% were heavy goods vehicles.
- For the 12-month period up to the end of December 2019, Agency performance against both the vehicle testing and driving testing performance measures was below the target level of 92%. Vehicle testing levelled out at a record-low of 73.8%. Driver testing decreased for the eighth consecutive quarter, from 81.2% to 79.0%. For 2019-20, the DVA has split its driver licensing target into two categories: online applications and paper applications. For the April to December 2019 period, online performance was 97.5% processed within 5 days, whilst paper performance was 69.0% processed within 10 days, both against a target of 95%.

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Introduction

This is the twenty-first edition of the quarterly publication '*DfI Driver, Vehicle, Operator, and Enforcement Statistics*'. The statistics reported within this publication include summary key business volumes and transactions for drivers, vehicles, and operators and in the area of regulation and enforcement during quarter three of 2019-20. This covers the period from 1st September 2019 to 31st December 2019. Due to the transfer of vehicle licensing functions to DVLA, the data in the corresponding section (page 8) is from 1st July 2019 to 30th September 2019.

This release presents statistical information for the volumes of activities under the following business areas:

- Vehicle testing;
- Vehicle licensing & registration;
- Driver theory testing;
- Driver practical testing;
- Driver licensing;
- Road transport licensing (i.e. buses, heavy goods vehicles and taxis);
- Enforcement & compliance; and
- DVA target monitoring.

DVA systems provide the majority of data, although we also source some from within the wider Department for Infrastructure. In addition, while the DVA is no longer responsible for vehicle registration and licensing with the transfer of those functions to DVLA in Swansea in July 2014, statistics relating to these areas are presented in section 2.

Final, fully validated financial-year statistics will be published in the '*DfI Driver, Vehicle, Operator, and Enforcement Statistics, 2019-20*' report, which is scheduled for public release in late May/early June 2020. The latest edition of the financial-year statistics for 2018-19 is available on our website, listed below.

For further information and guidance on this publication, please see the User Guidance document, available on our website:

<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/driver-vehicle-agency-activity-statistics>

Background

The *Driver & Vehicle Agency* (DVA) is an executive agency within the *Department for Infrastructure* (DfI). The DVA was formed on 1st April 2007 as part of the Review of Public Administration, through a merger of two existing Agencies, namely the *Driver and Vehicle Testing Agency* (DVTA) and *Driver and Vehicle Licensing Northern Ireland* (DVLNI).

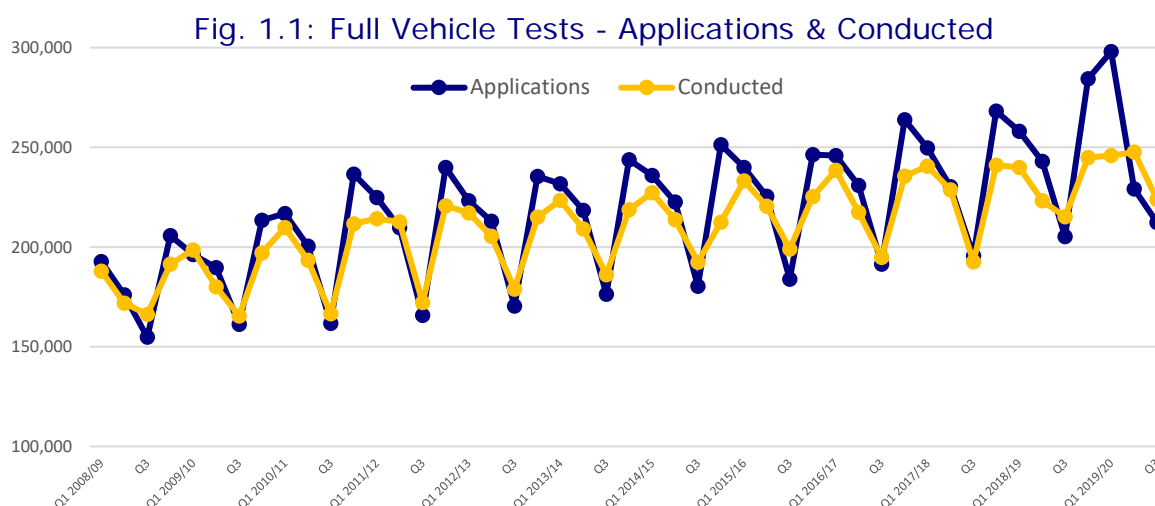
Vehicle testing forms the most significant aspect, in terms of volumes, of the work of the Operations Directorate in DVA, and by extension, the DVA as a whole.

Please note; the statistics covered in this section cover a time-period prior to the recent MOT disruptions relating to the lift equipment.

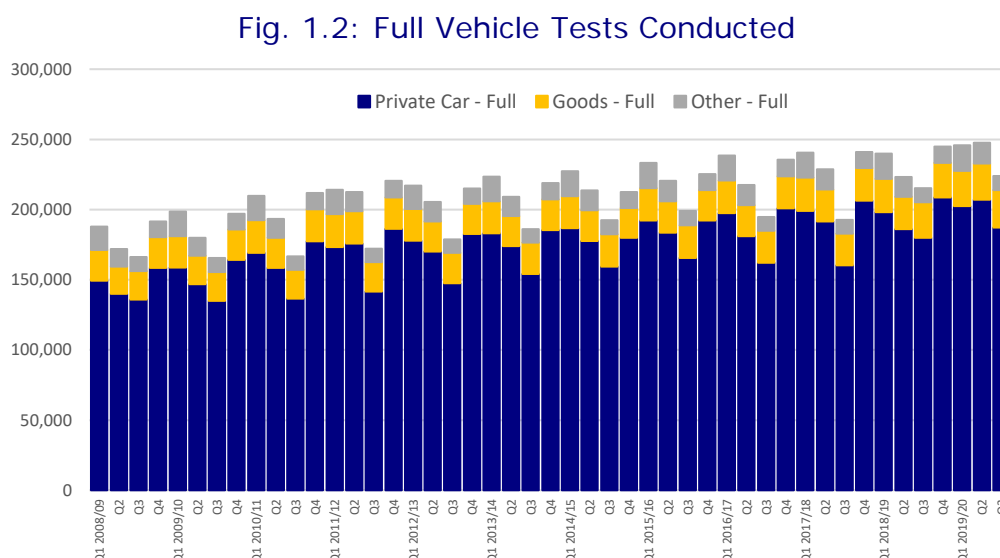
Vehicle Test Applications and Tests Conducted

From October to December 2019, the DVA received almost 258,000 applications for vehicle tests, up by 2.7% compared to the same three-month period in 2018, and the highest quarter-three total in our time series (table 1.1). The vast majority (82%) of these were for full tests rather than re-tests. This increase was primarily because of an increase of 7,000 (+4.2%) in full private-car test applications. The number of vehicle test applications has risen consistently over the past decade, with the total for the first nine months of 2019-20 exceeding the total for the full twelve months of 2008-09 (full tests, 739,000 vs 729,000). Note that the figures for vehicle test applications include taximeter tests (circa 1,100 tests per quarter), in contrast to the figures for vehicle tests conducted, which do not.

Note that additional Sunday opening at some test centres began during June 2019, which will account for some of the increases seen in 2019.



During quarter three, the DVA conducted just over 269,000 vehicle tests (full tests and re-tests), an increase of 3.5% compared to the equivalent quarter last year, and the highest quarter-three number on record. The vast majority of these (71%) were full tests for private-cars (table 1.7).



The increased level of vehicle test applications seen in the trend series can, in the main, be explained by the increasing number of licensed vehicles in Northern Ireland, which has risen by 10.6% over the past five years (see table 2.13). In addition, owners seem to be keeping their vehicles for longer, as the proportion of vehicles of MOT-age has risen by over 2% over the past four years, whilst the average age of a licensed vehicle has risen from 7.8 to 8.2 years over the same period. Together, this has resulted in approximately 75,000 (6%) additional vehicles requiring a test in 2019 compared to 2015.

The most popular booking method for vehicle test applications was the internet booking system, which received 77.8% of all applications, up by over 22 percentage-points on the equivalent period in 2015-16 (table 1.4).

Fig. 1.3: Vehicle Test Applications by Booking Method

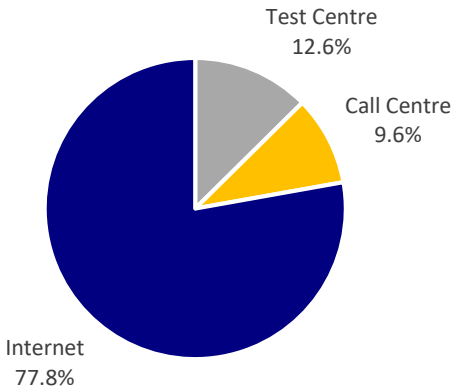
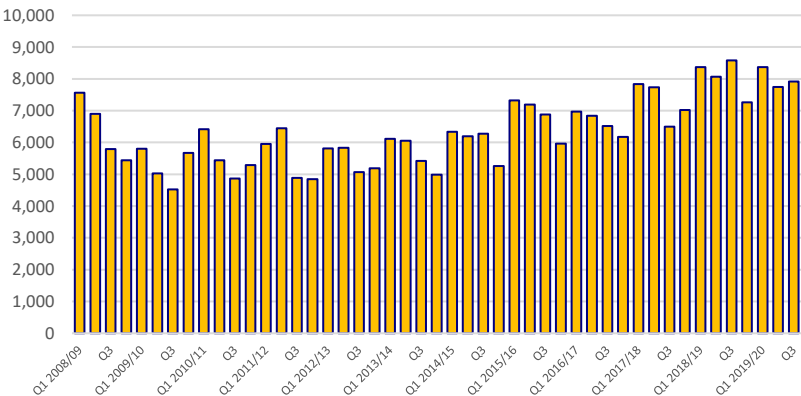


Fig. 1.4: Failed to Attends



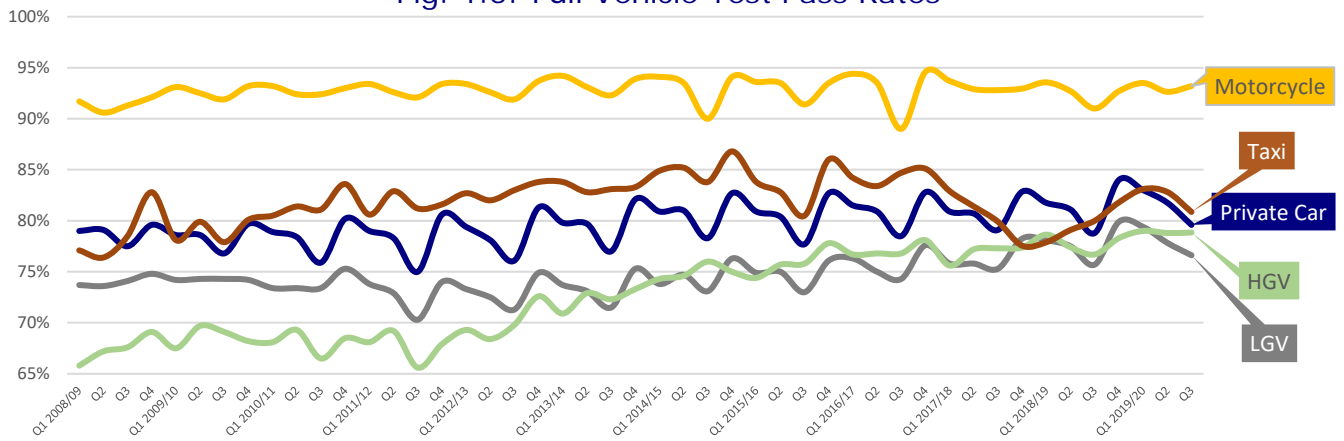
Approximately 7,900 vehicles failed to attend for a booked test during the quarter, a 7.7% decrease on the equivalent period last year (table 1.10). These account for 2.9% of the conducted tests during the quarter, a proportion that is broadly unchanged over the past decade. These tests equate to approximately 2,640 working-hours of time lost.

Vehicle Test Pass-Rates

In quarter three, the overall pass-rate for full tests was 79.6%, an increase on the pass-rate of 79.3% recorded in the same period last year, and the highest quarter-three pass-rate since the time series began in 2008. The full test pass-rates varied by test category, from 76.6% for large goods vehicles to 93.2% for motorcycles (for those categories where there were greater than 1,000 full tests) (table 1.11).

The overall pass-rate for re-tests was 93.7%, a decrease when compared with last year. Similarly, the re-test pass-rates varied by category, from 89.9% for trailers to 93.9% for private cars (for categories where there were greater than 200 re-tests) (table 1.12).

Fig. 1.5: Full Vehicle Test Pass Rates



Vehicle Tests by Test Centre

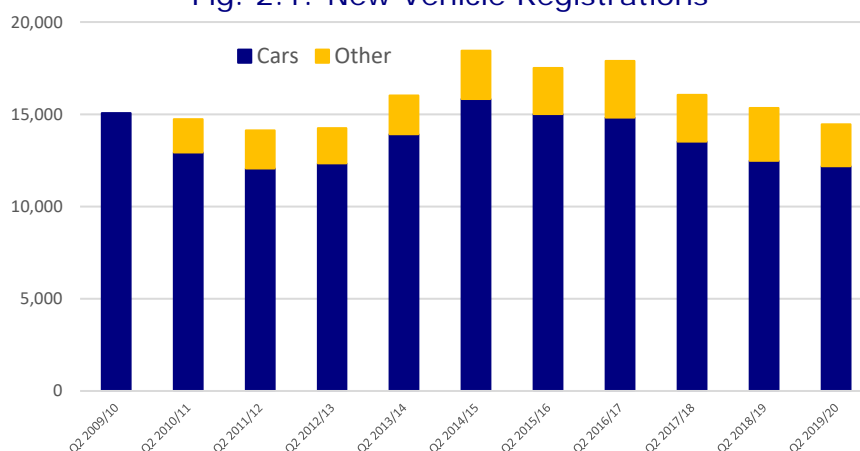
The busiest test centre was again Newtownards, which conducted nearly 29,700 tests during the quarter, although this is partly due to the greater number of lanes at this centre. In comparison, the quietest centre was Larne, having conducted just over 11,200 tests each during the October to December period (table 1.14).

Whilst the overall pass-rate for private-car full tests was 79.6%, by test centre this ranged from a high of 83.6% in Belfast (Balmoral) to a low of 74.4% in Larne (table 1.14). This was the twenty-ninth consecutive quarter (i.e. more than seven years) that Belfast (Balmoral) had the highest pass-rate, and the thirteenth consecutive quarter that Larne had the lowest.

Vehicle Registrations

During July to September 2019, approximately 14,400 new vehicles were registered for the first time in Northern Ireland. The number of new vehicle first registrations showed a decrease of 5.8% from the same period in 2018. Light goods first registrations accounted for the majority of this decrease, down by 22% when compared to 2018 (table 2.1).

Fig. 2.1: New Vehicle Registrations

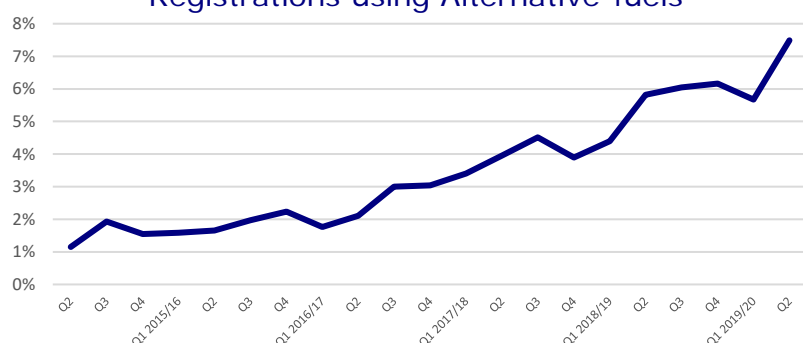


* Other Registrations split into new & used for Q2 2009/10 are unavailable.

The top make for cars registered for the first time during July to September 2019 was Ford, accounting for 1,529 registrations. This marks the eighteenth quarter in a row that Ford has been at number one. The second largest make was Volkswagen accounting for 1,354 registrations (table 2.3). Of the makes in the top ten for car first registrations during the period, the largest increase when compared to the equivalent period in 2018 was for Hyundai (+40%, from 602 to 845) and the largest decrease was for Nissan (-15%, from 672 to 570).

White was the most popular colour for new cars, accounting for 20.6% of all new registrations. Grey (20.0%), blue (18.5%), black (14.7%), and red (13.4%) are the next most popular.

Fig. 2.2: Proportion of New Car Registrations using Alternative-fuels



Over the past five years, there has been a decline in the proportion of newly registered cars fuelled by diesel, down from 51.7% of cars in 2014-15 Q2 to 33.4% this year (8,179 vehicles in 2014-15 Q2 down to 4,072 vehicles in 2019-20). Over the same period the number of

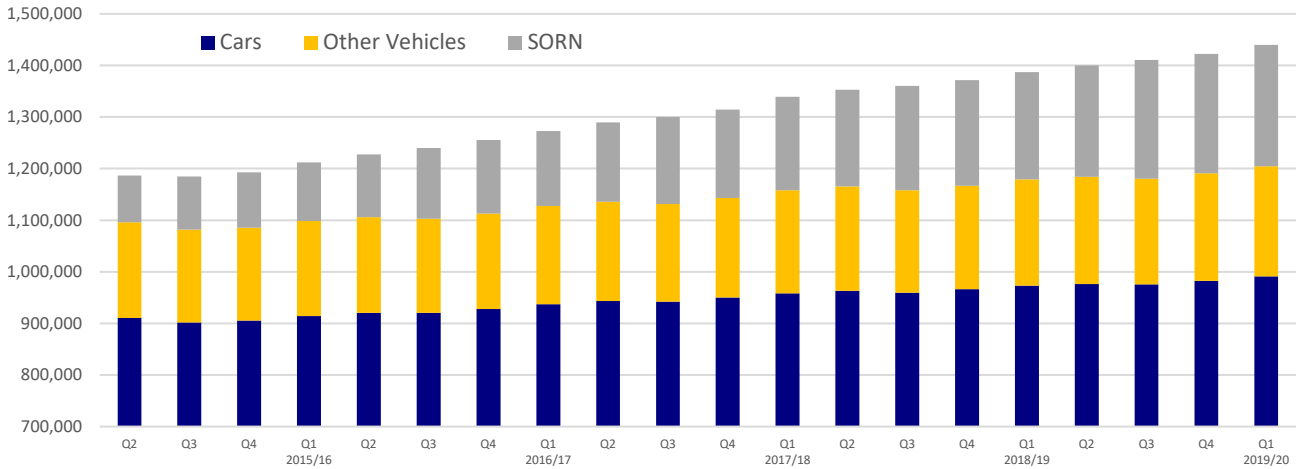
alternative-fuel¹ cars newly registered increased five-fold, from 182 in 2014-15 Q2 to 913 in 2019-20 Q2.

¹ Alternative-fuel vehicles are those able to use a range of alternatives to purely petrol or diesel fuel, including gas, electricity, or a combination such as gas bi-fuel and hybrid-electric.

There were approximately 1,212,000 vehicles licensed in Northern Ireland at 30th September 2019, an increase of 2.4% compared with the previous year, and 10.6% compared with five years ago (table 2.13). Of these, 82.2% (997,028) were cars, and 12.2% (147,478) were goods vehicles (including both light and heavy).

Approximately 245,000 vehicles had a *Statutory Off-Road Notification* (SORN) at the 30th September 2019, representing 16.8% of the total vehicle stock (table 2.13). The number of SORN vehicles in Northern Ireland increased by almost a seventh (13.3%) from the same date in 2018; in comparison to an 7.8% increase in Great Britain. It should be noted that since December 2013, *continuous SORN* was introduced so a SORN declaration from then onwards lasts until the vehicle is re-taxed, sold, permanently exported or scrapped. This has resulted in significantly higher year-on-year increases from Q3 2013/14 onwards, both in Northern Ireland and Great Britain.

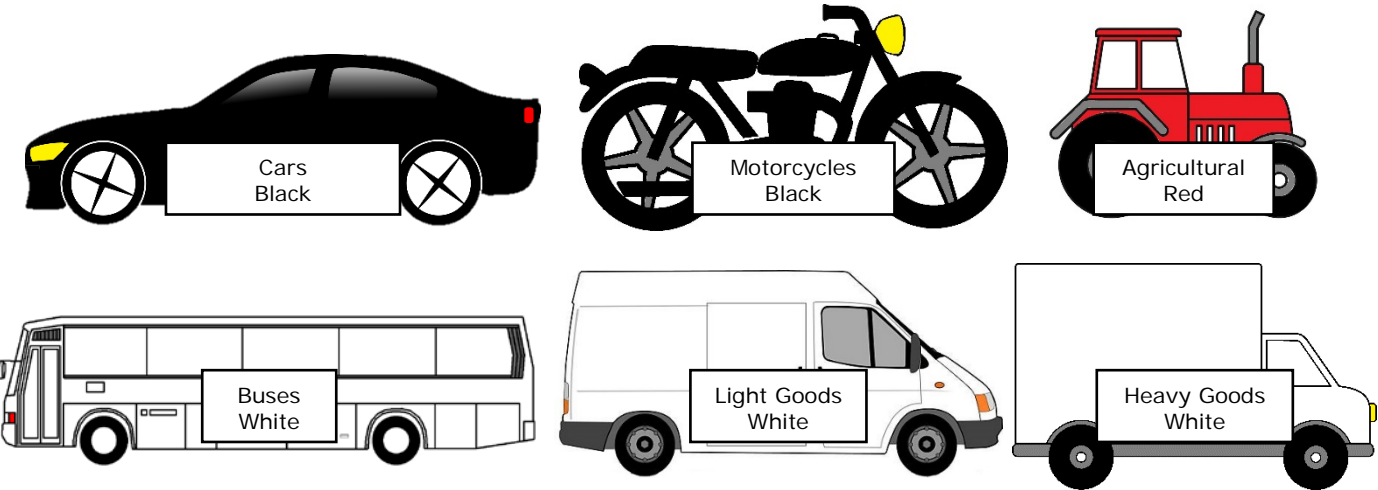
Fig. 2.3: Northern Ireland Vehicle Stock



As of 30th September 2019, the average age of a licensed vehicle in Northern Ireland was 8.6 years. However, there is some variance in average age for different body-types:

- Cars – 8.1 years;
 - Motorcycles – 13.3 years;
 - Light Goods – 8.2 years;
 - Heavy Goods – 9.7 years;
 - Buses – 9.9 years;
 - Agricultural – 21.1 years;
 - Other – 10.1 years.

Similar to the new registrations above, in the Northern Irish stock of licensed vehicles the most popular colours for each body-type are notably monochrome, with only the stereo-typical ‘big red tractor’ bucking the trend:



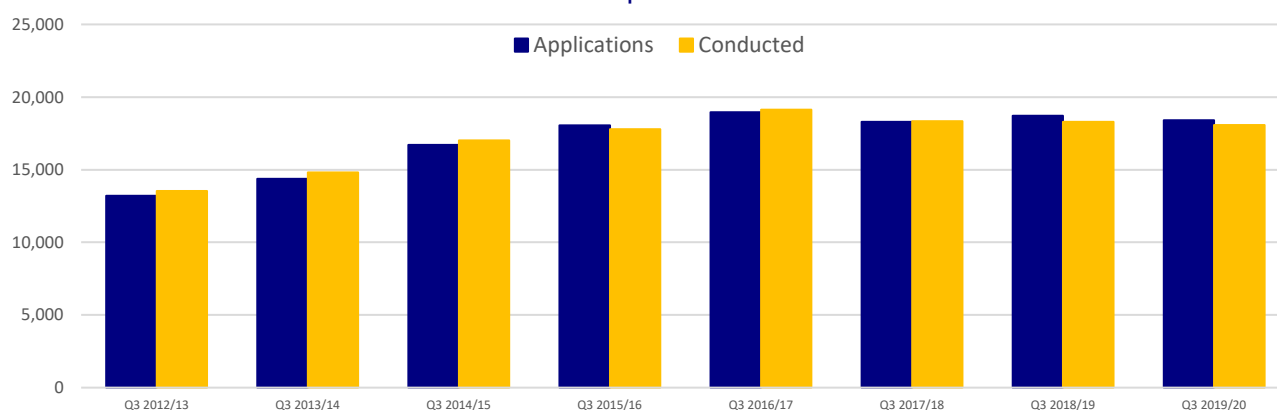
The DVA has responsibility for the theory test element of the overall driving test process. Pearson VUE administers the test in Northern Ireland under contract with the DfI through DVA.

Theory Test Applications and Tests Conducted

From October to December 2019, the DVA received just over 18,400 theory test applications. This marks a decrease of 1.6% from the 18,700 recorded in the same quarter last year (figure 3.1).

Similarly, during the same period the number of theory tests conducted decreased slightly from approximately 18,300 to 18,100 this year (table 3.2). Whilst this quarter is 7% lower than the series peak in 2016-17 quarter two (19,500), the trend since then has been broadly unchanged.

Fig. 3.1: Theory Tests - Applications & Conducted - Quarterly Comparisons



During quarter three, there were 1,798 tests where the individual failed to attend, a decrease of 1.5% on the equivalent period in 2018 (table 3.3). These account for nearly 9.1% of the conducted tests during the quarter, in keeping with the rising trend in non-attendees seen since 2015.

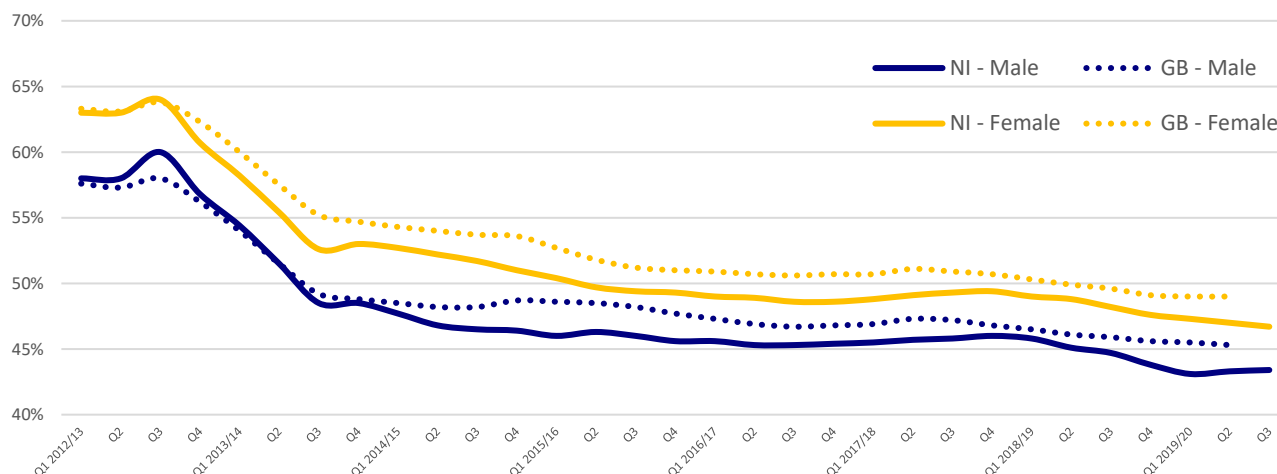
Theory Test Pass-Rates

The theory test pass-rate for private-cars in quarter three showed a 4.8 percentage-point decrease to 44.8% when compared with the previous quarter (table 3.4). This is an improvement from the record low seen in quarter one, whilst the current trend is approximately five percentage-points below the trend six years ago. The theory test pass-rate for motorcycles remains substantially higher, at 73.9%, reflecting the fact that those taking the motorcycle test will usually have already taken the private-car test. Whilst not directly comparable due to the nature and purpose of the tests, the pass-rate for the taxi theory test was 31.3%, an increase of 1.2 percentage-points over the preceding quarter, substantially higher than the 18.1% recorded in quarter three 2016-17. A reduction in the Hazard Perception pass-mark in September 2018 will have had some influence on this upwards trend.

Theory Tests by Gender

Using a four-quarter rolling average, the theory test pass-rate by gender for private-car drivers showed that females consistently have a higher pass-rate than males (table 3.7). For the latest quarter, the pass-rates were 47.0% for females and 43.3% for males. The figures for both genders have been gradually decreasing at the same rate since 2012. This 'gender-gap' in pass-rates is nearly identical to that seen in Great Britain (figure 3.2).

Fig. 3.2: Private Car Theory Test Pass-Rates - by Gender and Region



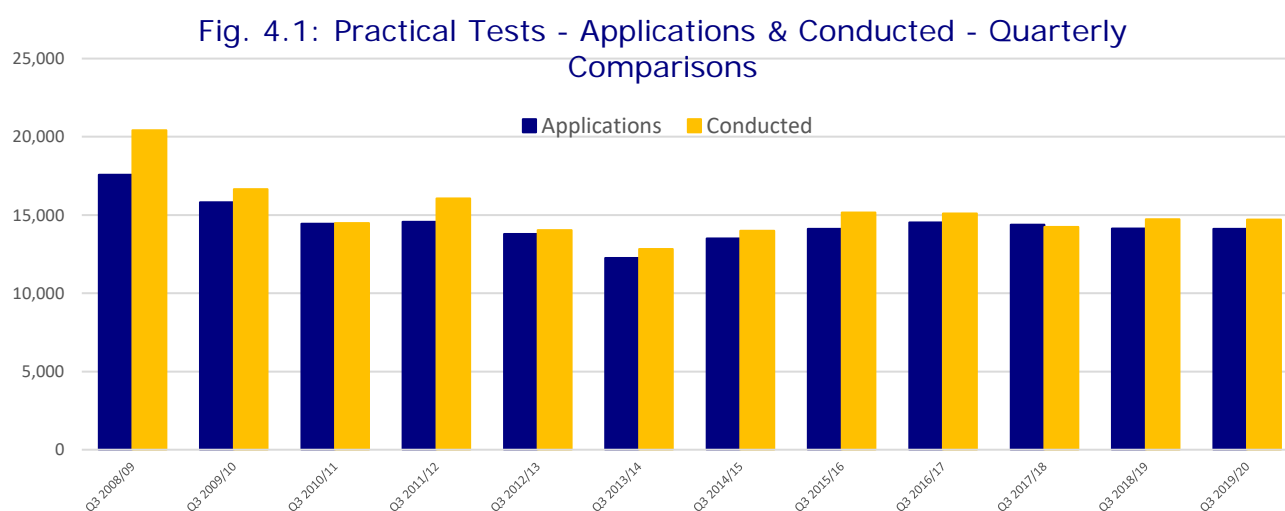
In general, from early in 2013, Northern Ireland theory test pass-rates for private-car drivers have been lower than the Great Britain pass-rates by approximately two percentage-points, although this gap has narrowed slightly during 2018-19. Also of note is that the declining trend in the pass-rate seen in Northern Ireland is nearly identical to the trend seen in Great Britain.

4 Driver Practical Testing

DVA provides a wide range of driving test categories for testing learner drivers and motorcyclists to ensure that they meet the required standard of competence necessary to drive safely on public roads.

Driving Test Applications and Tests Conducted

From October to December 2019, nearly 14,100 driving test applications were submitted to the DVA, a small decrease of 0.1% on the equivalent quarter in 2018 (table 4.1). During the same three-month period, the number of driving tests conducted remained unchanged at 14,700 (table 4.3 & figure 4.1). The trends for both applications and tests conducted over the past five years remain relatively steady.



For both driving test applications and driving tests conducted, tests for private-cars account for over four fifths of all applications or tests conducted.

During quarter three, there were 360 appointments where the individual failed to attend (FTA), representing a 27% increase on the same quarter last year, and the largest quarterly figure for eleven years (table 4.4). These account for nearly 2.4% of the conducted tests during the quarter, the second-highest proportion in our time series.

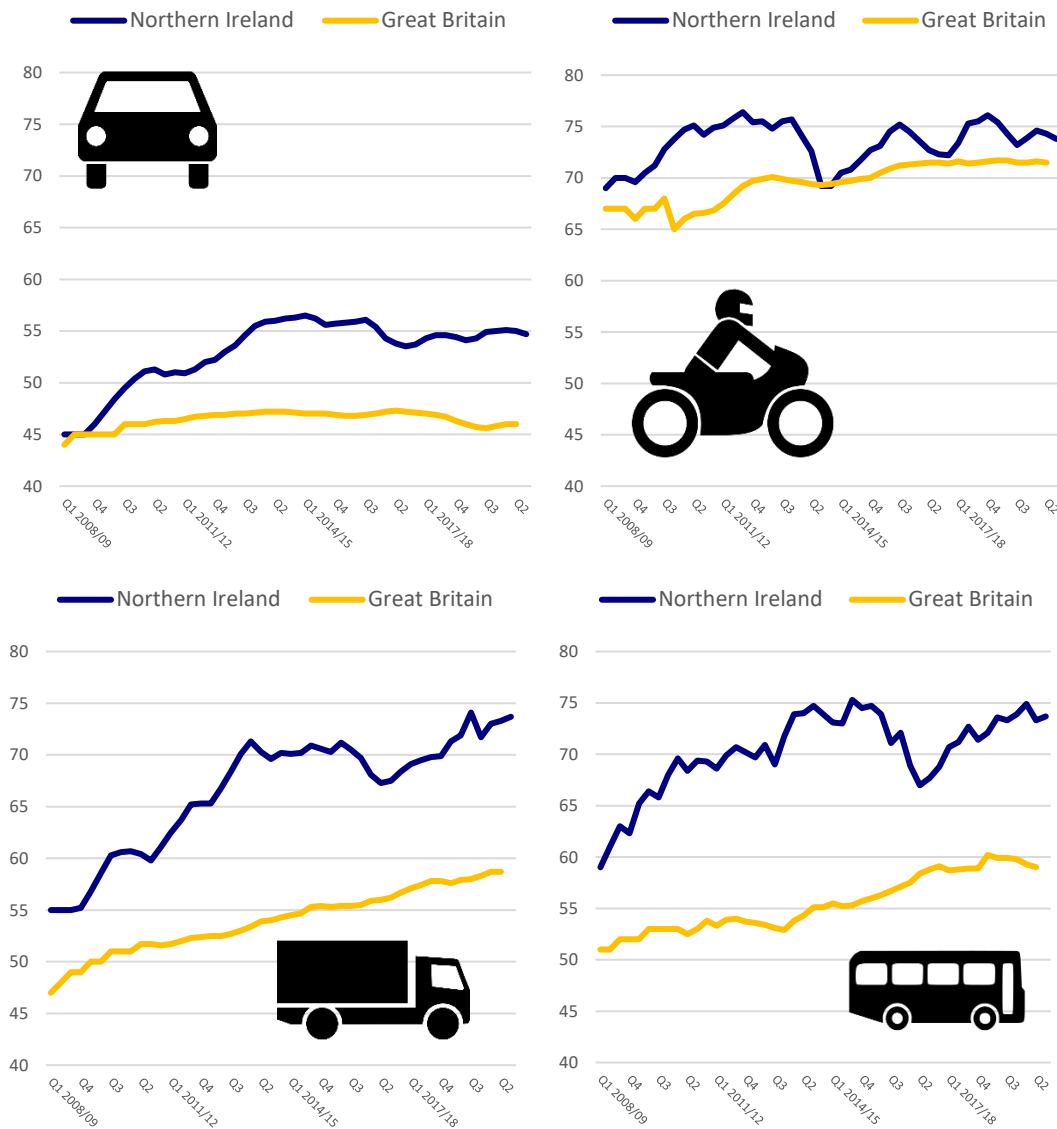
The most popular booking method for a driving test application was the internet booking system, which received 74.9% of all applications, up 0.8 percentage-points on the previous year (table 4.2).

Driving Test Pass-Rates

For October to December 2019, the pass-rate for all categories of driving tests was 57.7%, down 0.9 percentage-points on the 58.7% recorded in the equivalent quarter last year (table 4.5). Pass-rates for all categories of vehicle remain broadly unchanged over the past five years.

In general, Northern Ireland pass-rates across all four main vehicle categories are higher than the pass-rates in Great Britain (table 4.10 & Figure 4.2). Part of the difference between NI and GB pass-rates may be attributable to regional driving conditions including the volumes of traffic and complexity of available road networks for testing.

Fig. 4.2: Driving Test Pass-Rates – Rolling 4-Quarter Average



Driving Tests by Test Centre

The test centre that conducted the most private-car driving tests during the October to December 2019 period was, again, Belfast (Balmoral) (1,508 tests). The Armagh centre again conducted the fewest, with 385 tests during the quarter.

The overall pass-rate for private-car driving tests was 53.9%, ranging by test centre from 41.2% in Londonderry (Altnagelvin) to 73.2% in Lisburn (table 4.6). This was the second consecutive quarter where Lisburn had the highest pass-rate, and the eighth consecutive quarter that Londonderry (Altnagelvin) had the lowest. At least part of the difference recorded between test centres will reflect the differential driving ability and experience of candidates presenting for testing at each test centre while other relevant factors will be specific to the test centre such as local driving conditions.

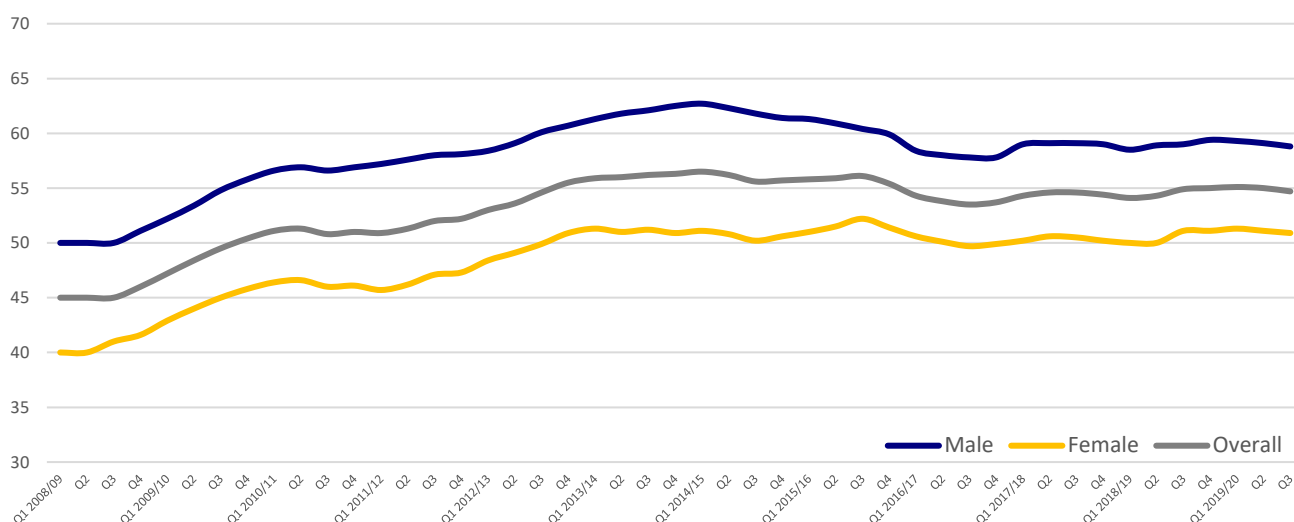
Driving Test Pass-Rates by Gender

A clear gender gap is apparent in Northern Irish test pass-rates, using a four-quarter rolling average (table 4.10 & figure 4.3). In the latest quarter, males had a 7.9 percentage-point higher pass-rate compared to females for the private-car driving test. This gap has remained relatively consistent over the past three years, although it is noticeably narrower than the 11.6% gap reported in 2014.

Every test centre offering private-car driving tests also showed this same disparity, to varying degrees, from 15.9 percentage-points at the Lisburn centre (79.4% v 63.4%) to 2.2 percentage-points at the Newtownards centre (49.0% v 46.8%) (table 4.7b).

Whilst similar gender gaps in favour of males are also apparent in Great Britain for cars and motorcycles, interestingly, and in contrast to NI, the GB pass-rates for large goods vehicles are higher for females. Without a detailed understanding of the profile of candidates presenting for these categories of tests, it is difficult to contextualise why these differences by gender and UK location may occur. It should also be noted the small numbers of females presenting for testing on large goods vehicles and passenger carrying vehicles in Northern Ireland.

Fig. 4.3: Northern Ireland Private-Car Practical Test Pass-Rates – Rolling 4-Quarter Average



The DVA's Driver Licensing division is responsible for licensing drivers in Northern Ireland. The DVA issues and, where appropriate, withdraws licences in respect of drivers of cars, motorcycles, goods vehicles, buses, and other vehicles.

Driver Licensing Transactions

The number of ordinary first licences ('provisional licences') issued in quarter three 2019-20 (6,943) was 10% higher than the figure for those issued during the same period in the previous year (6,310 licences) (table 5.1), although this figure is broadly unchanged over the past decade.

The DVA carried out approximately 60,500 ordinary licensing transactions during October to December 2019 (Figure 5.1). This represented an increase of 2.6% in comparison with the volume carried out in the corresponding quarter of 2018. As the period of validity of a driving licence changed from 3 years to 10 years in 1985, this has resulted in a significant cyclical pattern with a peak renewal period during the middle of each decade. Whilst this would usually have reduced by early 2017, the introduction of the new driver licensing IT system (*Driver Licensing System*) resulted in a backlog until late 2017.

During quarter three 2019-20, the DVA carried out 5,177 vocational licensing transactions, a decrease of 7.5% on the corresponding period in 2018 where the figure stood at 5,597 (table 5.2).

In other licensing activity, the number of letters of entitlement issued was a record high for our time series, from just under 700 issued in the quarter eleven years ago to approximately 6,570 issued during October to December 2019 (table 5.3). However, the volume of identity checks has decreased over the same eleven-year period: reducing from just over 14,200 in quarter three 2008-09 to just over 8,600 in the same period in 2019-10.

Fig. 5.1: Driver Licensing Transactions

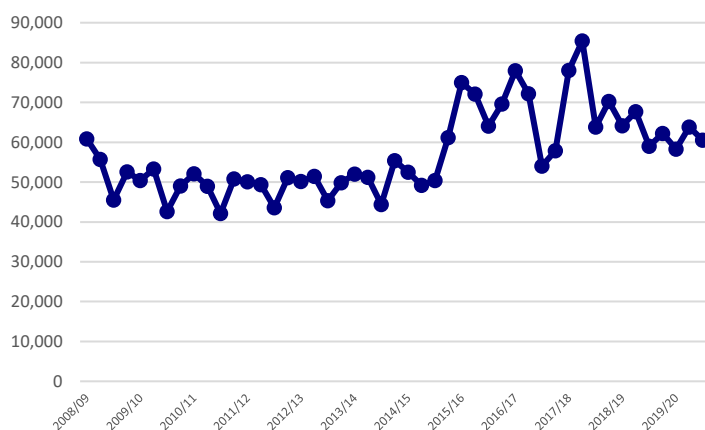
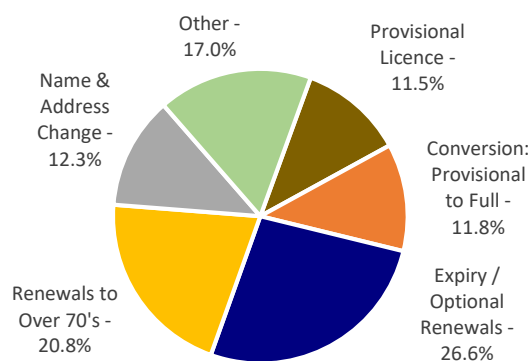


Fig. 5.2: Driver Licence Transactions Q2 2019-20, by Type



Driver Licence Stock

At the 31st December 2019, there were over 1,119,000 full and eligible licence holders with private-cars / light vans entitlement, a rise of 1.3% compared with the total twelve months ago (table 5.9 & figure 5.4). Conversely, the number of people holding a provisional licence for private-cars / light vans fell by 3.0% compared with a year ago. The number of people aged 65-and-over holding a full licence increased by over 5,900 in the past twelve months, with the total now approximately 214,000 individuals. In addition, those licence holders aged 65-and-over now account for a larger proportion of the driver licence stock: as of December 2017, they made up 18.5% of the total, whereas by December 2019 they were 19.1%, reflecting the nature of Northern Ireland's aging population.

An estimated 76.4% of Northern Ireland's adult population (i.e. aged 17 or over) had a full and eligible licence for private cars / light vans, based on the 2018 Mid-Year Population Estimates² (table 5.8i). For males, the estimated figure was 79.8%, which is approximately seven percentage-points higher than the 73.1% seen for females.

Fig. 5.3: Proportion of Population with a Full & Eligible Private Car Licence - by Age

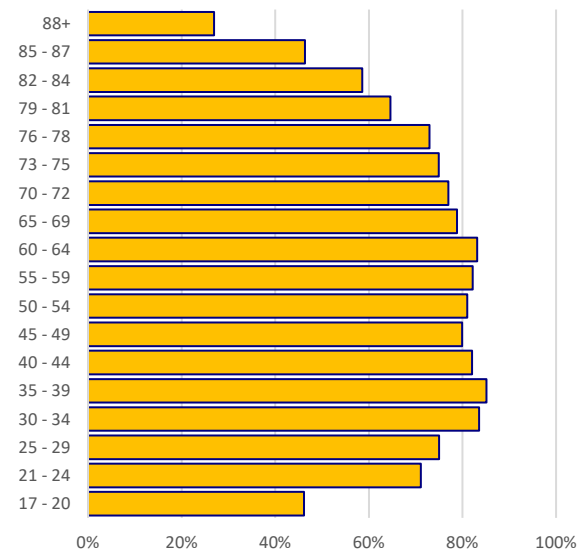


Fig. 5.4: Full & Eligible Private Car Licence Holders in Northern Ireland

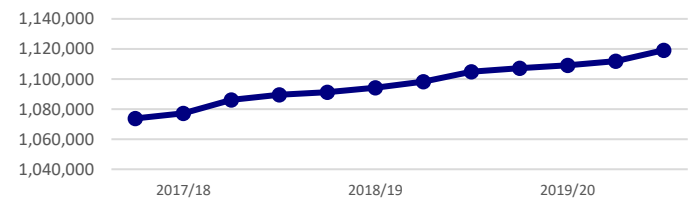
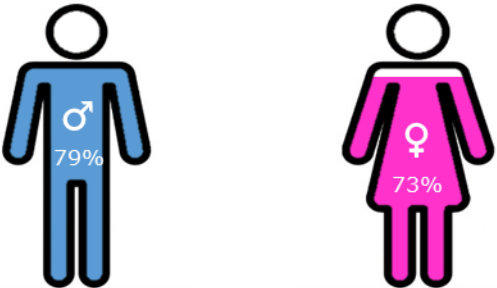


Fig. 5.5: Proportion of Population with a Full & Eligible Private Car Licence - by Gender



² Available from NISRA at <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/population/mid-year-population-estimates>.

6 **Road Transport Licensing**

The Passenger Transport Licensing division in DVA is responsible for issuing (and where appropriate, withdrawing) licences in respect of taxi drivers and bus operators. Goods licensing is the responsibility of the Transport Regulation Unit in DfI.

Taxi Licensing

The number of taxi driver licences in force at the end of December 2019 (9,738) was down by 7.1% on the previous year (table 6.2), and is the lowest number recorded in our time series. This is a continuation of the declining trend with numbers down by more than a third on the series high

recorded six years ago. This reduction may have been caused, in part, by the introduction of a new taxi driver theory and practical driving, introduced on 31st Oct 2014. Of these taxi drivers, 96% were Male, whilst their average age was 51.

Approximately 2,100 vehicle licences for taxis were issued during October to December 2019, which is 3% higher than the number issued in the corresponding quarter in 2018 (table 6.1). At the 31st December 2019, there were 8,700 licensed taxi vehicles in Northern Ireland, a decrease of 1.3% when compared to the preceding quarter, although broadly

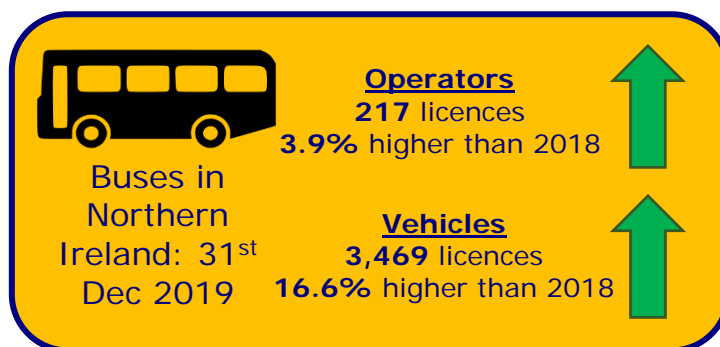
unchanged on the figure from 2017.

These taxi vehicles were affiliated to 1,373 licensed taxi operators, of which 86% were classified as small operators, i.e. can only list up to two taxis on the licence. Similar to the number of drivers and vehicles, the number of taxi operators is down over a sixth when compared with the figure recorded two years ago and is the second-lowest figure recorded in our time series.

Bus Licensing

The number of licensed buses at the 31st December 2019 was 3,469, up 16.6% on the figure on the equivalent date in 2018 (table 6.3) and the highest figure recorded in our time series. The DVA issued 951 bus vehicle licences during the quarter, up 21% on the equivalent quarter in 2018 (table 6.1).

At the 31st December 2019, there were 217 bus operator licences in force, up from the amount as recorded one year ago (208). During October to December 2019, the DVA processed 49 bus operator licences, down 9.3% from the 58 recorded in the same period last year.



Goods Licensing

The number of goods vehicle operator licences in force as at the 31st December 2019 was 5,371, a decrease of 7.1% on last year, and a decrease of 7.0% on six years ago (table 6.4). Whilst the total has decreased over



this period, within this, the number of standard international licences continues to increase, with the figure of 1,813 accounting for a series high 34% of all goods vehicle operators.

Associated to these operators, again as at 31st December 2019, were 21,781 heavy goods vehicles. This is a decrease of 2.3% when compared with the same point in 2018, and a decrease of 4.5% when compared with September 2017.

DVA Enforcement falls within the Agency's Compliance & Enforcement directorate. Roadside Enforcement is responsible for the enforcement of legislation pertaining to roadworthiness standards and licensing requirements at the roadside.

Enforcement Activities

During October to December 2019, DVA enforcement staff checked 1,042 vehicles; of these, the largest volume was for heavy goods vehicles, accounting for over a third of all vehicles checked (table 7.1 & figure 7.1).

Fig 7.1: Enforcement Spot-Checks, by Quarter

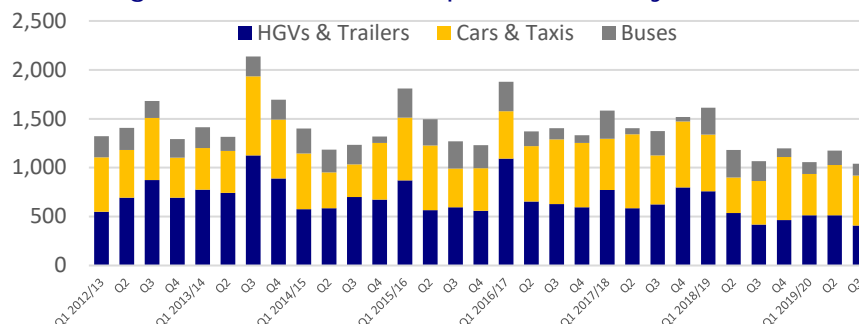
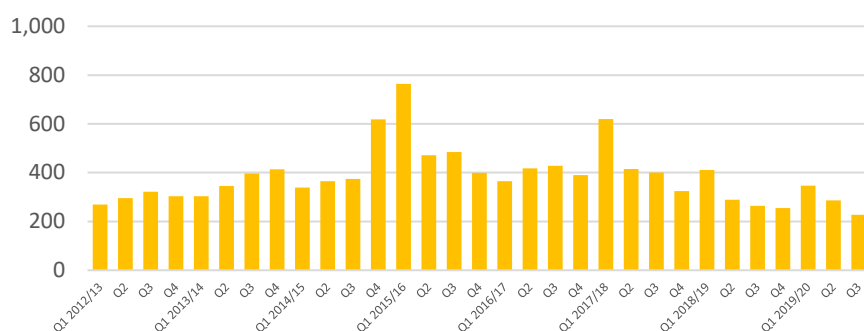
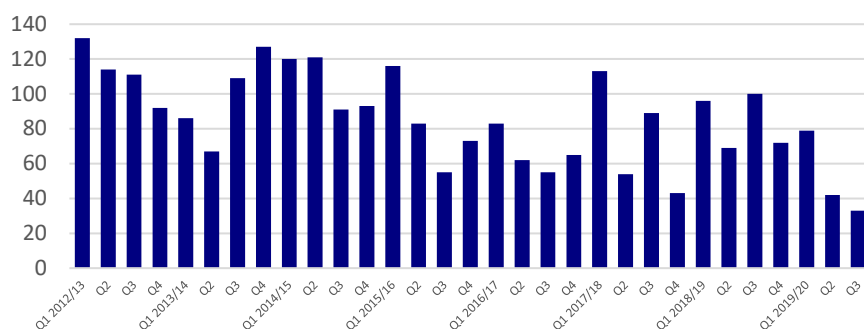


Fig 7.2: Fixed Penalties Issued, by Quarter



DVA enforcement officers issued 227 fixed penalty notices during quarter three (table 7.2 & figure 7.2), the lowest quarterly total since our time series began in 2012. The total value of these fixed penalties issued was £33,270.

Fig 7.3: Convictions, by Quarter



There were 33 successful convictions during the quarter, accounting for 109 offences. From these cases, the DVA received £18,220 of Court fines & costs.

This is the lowest quarterly number of successful prosecutions since our time series began in 2012.

During October to December 2019, enforcement teams carried out 11 joint operations with the PSNI (table 7.3 & figure 7.4). They also carried out eight cross border operations in conjunction with the Road Safety Authority in Ireland, along with PSNI and An Garda Síochána.

The DVA conducted 57 school bus checks during the quarter (table 7.4 & figure 7.5).

Fig 7.4: Joint or Cross-Border Operations, by Quarter

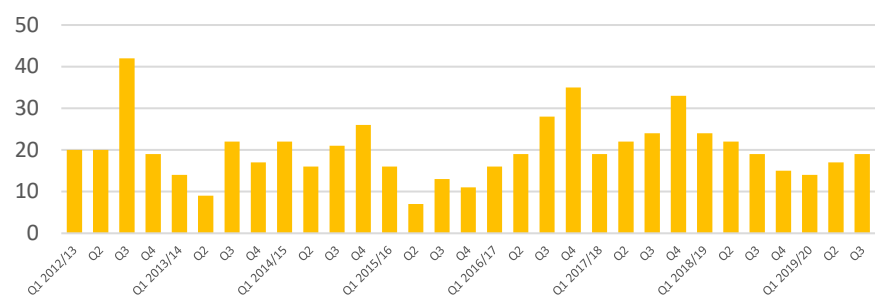
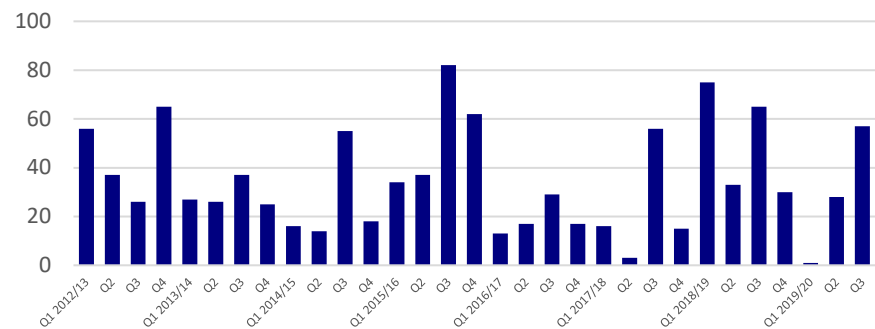


Fig 7.5: School Bus Checks, by Quarter

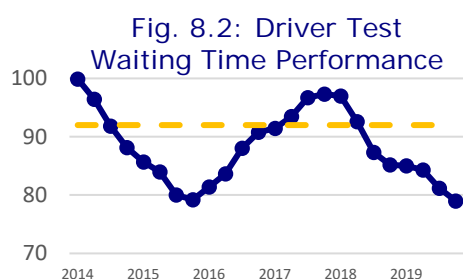
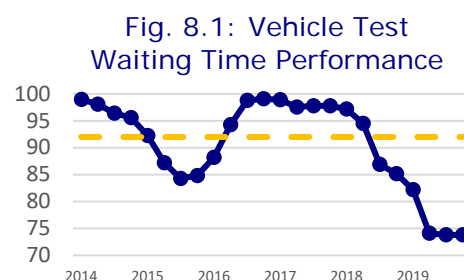


DVA Target Monitoring

The DVA monitors performance through four targets:

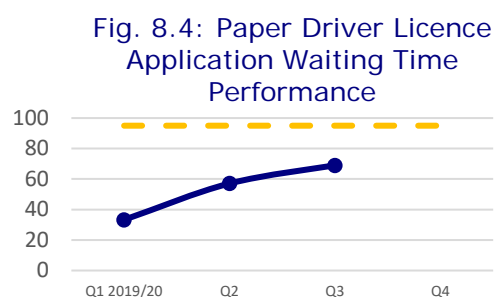
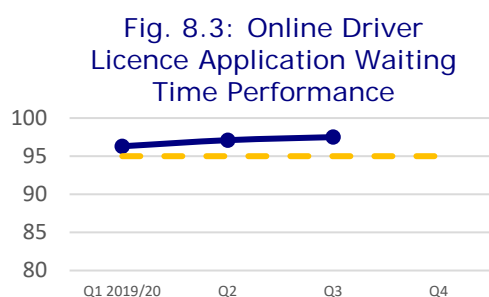
1. *Vehicle Testing* - Appoint 92% of vehicle test applications within 21 days or later on request;
2. *Driver Testing* - Appoint 92% of practical driving test applications within 28 days or, on request, at a later date;
3. *Online Driver Licensing* - Process 95% of complete online driver licensing applications within 5 working days;
4. *Paper Driver Licensing* - Process 95% of complete paper driver licensing applications within 10 working days.

Vehicle testing waiting time performance for the 12 months up to end-December 2019 was 73.8%. This was unchanged on the position last quarter, and 18.2 percentage-points below the current Agency target of 92% (table 8.1). This is the lowest reported figure since our time series began in 2014.



Driver testing waiting time performance for 12 months up to end-December 2019 was 79.0%. This is a 2.2 percentage-point decrease on the position in the previous quarter, and 13.0 percentage-points below the current Agency target of 92% (table 8.1). This is the lowest reported figure since our time series began in 2014.

For 2019-20, the DVA has split the reporting for driver licensing into two: one target for online applications (5 days) and another for paper applications (10 days). Neither of these is directly comparable to the previous *all-in-one* target. The figures reported are therefore for the first nine months of 2019-20 only, and not a 12-month performance like the other targets.



For the first nine months of 2019-20, online driver licensing performance was 97.5%, 2.5 percentage-points above the Agency target of 95%. For paper driver licensing, the performance was 69.0%, substantially below the Agency target of 95%.

(Note that the third and fourth indicators in this section do not yet have National Statistics accreditation, although continue to have Official Statistics status).

Notes

National Statistics

On the 24th March 2015, the UK Statistics Authority designated this series as National Statistics. This means the Authority has certified them as compliant with its Code of Practice for Official Statistics. You can find both the assessment report and letter of confirmation on the UK Statistics Authority website at <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/driver-and-vehicle-statistics-in-northern-ireland>.

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality, and public value. DVA statisticians produce them free from any political interference and undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They were awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is a producer's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

The Department further demonstrates its commitment to the Code of Practice by publishing a series of supporting statements related to its use of administrative data, publication strategy, confidentiality arrangements, revisions policy, customer service and complaints procedure. For further details, see <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/topics/statistics-and-research/code-practice-statistics>.

Note that since the report achieved National Statistics accreditation, we have added four new target-monitoring indicators. We have discussed these with the Office for Statistical Regulation (OSR), and it has been agreed that both the Vehicle Testing and Driver Testing Waiting Time targets fully comply with the National Statistics standard. However, whilst the two Driver Licensing processing time targets meet many aspects of the Code of Practice, more investigation of the processes and quality checks associated with the new *Driver Licensing System* would be required before the OSR could deem them fully compliant. In the interim, these indicators will continue to have the status of Official Statistics and this has been highlighted in the relevant section of the report.

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