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New roadside defect categories

REGULATORY

New guidance has been released by DVSA on the categorisation of defects found at annual test and on roadside.

The changes include new guidance on how DVSA examiners will deal with defects such as engine malfunction indicator lamps, emission control system faults, lighting and number plate defects, indirect vision devices and modified seatbelts.

In addition, tyre pressure measurement at roadside encounters will be introduced for single fitment tyres.

Some examples of amendments for public service, heavy goods and agricultural vehicles include:



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- A damaged, insecure or missing indirect vision device, subject to its severity, necessitates an immediate prohibition
- Engine or emissions malfunction indicator lamp illuminated or not following correct sequence (indicating a fault or insufficient reagent) will now result in a delayed prohibition
- Objects trapped between twin wheels is a new defect. The guidance aims to help users to understand the DVSA's inspection standards and is available via www.is.gd/hakilu.

EMPLOYMENT

Work-related stress

According to the Labour Force Survey, 15.4 million working days were lost to work-related stress, depression and anxiety in 2017/18. Stress, depression and anxiety were cited for 44% of all work-related ill health cases and 57% of all working days lost due to ill health.

The main factors causing work-related stress, depression or anxiety were stated as: workload pressures (including tight deadlines), too much responsibility and lack of managerial support.

In the PSV and the HGV

sectors, it is critical that operators are attuned to the mental health of their employees and aware of the pressures they are put under at work and at home. They should also be looking out for tiredness and changes in behaviour. They should seek advice from a medical professional if in doubt. We also advise operators to review their employment contracts to ensure they contain the provisions to allow for this.

The British Safety Council, among others, works with mental health charity Mates in Mind to deliver mental health training courses.

REGULATORY

Reporting accidents

DVSA has published a new version of the PSV accident form, which was last updated in November 2018. By law, PSV operators must report: fatalities; serious injuries (such as broken bones, damage to major organs or overnight hospitalisation); allegations of a safety defect; serious [vehicle] damage as a result of the incident; a safety-critical component failure, or history of the same component failing; or a vehicle catching fire. See www.is.gd/zejizi. DVSA earned recognition operators need to use another form: see www.is.gd/uxeyim.

Fact File

Maintenance spotlight

Traffic commissioners have recently pointed the spotlight on poor maintenance contractors. In October, TC for the West of England Kevin Rooney urged all operators to ensure that their current contractor is "competent, effective and accountable". Ultimately, the performance of the maintenance contractors has an immediate impact on the management of operators' compliance duties and therefore the safe keeping of their O licence(s).

In DVSA's Guide to Maintaining Roadworthiness (www.is.gd/nofine), section 5.1 highlights requirements for safety inspection facilities. They should include:

- Undercover accommodation for the largest vehicle in the fleet. This is required to ensure that safety checks can be conducted in all weathers
- Tools and equipment appropriate to the size and nature of the fleet
- Adequate under-vehicle inspection facility
- Adequate lighting
- Access to brake test equipment (a roller brake tester, decelerometer); headlamp test equipment; emissions testing equipment; undercarriage washing facilities (steam or pressure washer)

See www.is.gd/udowam for guidance on DVSA-approved equipment for the annual test.