

1) The number of car practical tests booked in 2009 and 2010 that had a special needs marker. Please specify the reason for the marker.

In the 2009 calendar year, 12,137 candidates booked 18,918 tests with a special needs marker. In the 2010 calendar year, 14,809 candidates booked 22,072 tests with a special needs marker.

A special needs marker is used against a booking to provide the examiner with information that may or may not impact upon the test. This is a free text box and the information is dependent upon the candidate providing the information at the time of booking the test and our customer service operator recording the information accurately. The majority of special markers recorded are about the candidate bringing an interpreter or translator to the test; of the 18,918 markers recorded in 2009 approximately 10,600 markers were due to interpreter comments. The list below shows the most common categories of information recorded in the special markers free text boxes:

Adapted car – includes steering balls, extended pedals, left accelerator
Candidate has ADD, ADH or ADHD
ADI attending the test with the candidate
Candidate has had an amputation, missing limbs, missing fingers or toes
Mental illness, anxiety, panic attacks
Arthritis
Asthma
Autism/Aspergers syndrome
Back Problems
Cerebral Palsy
Cystic Fibrosis
Diabetes
Difficulties with left/right instruction
Disability
Dyslexia/dsypraxia
DVLA test
Epilepsy
Examiner to speak slowly
Extra mirrors used
Eyesight issues
Hand signals needed
Hearing issues
Heart/circulation/stroke conditions
Interpreter needed
Learning difficulties
Literacy issues
Suffers from ME
Suffers from MS
Paralysis
Paraplegia
Polio
Pregnancy
Prosthetic limb
Restricted movement

Speech problems
Spina Bifida
Weakness in limbs muscles
Wheel chair use

2) The number of car practical tests passed in 2009 and 2010 that had a special needs marker. Please specify the reason for the marker

This information is exempt from release under section 12 (1) (cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit) of the FoIA. A full breakdown of this exemption can be found at Annex B.

The appropriate limit, as prescribed by the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004, is £600 for Central Government and £450 for other public authorities, with staff costs calculated at a rate of £25 per hour. When calculating whether the appropriate limit is exceeded, authorities can take account of the costs of determining whether the information is held, locating and retrieving the information, and extracting the information from other documents. They cannot take account of the costs involved with considering whether information is exempt under the Act.

Special needs markers are recorded on our booking system and a separate system records the test results. To compile this information would involve manually matching records from both systems and this would exceed the 24 hour list prescribed by the fees regulations.

Whilst we have not been able to supply information about pass rates for candidates where special needs text has been entered, we can supply information about the number of candidates who passed a test who have a physical disability or have failed the eyesight test. In these cases, an additional report form (D255) is completed and our test result system captures and can produce reports for these forms. In 2009, 2,158 candidates took a test where a D255 form was completed and 1,258 candidates passed the test. In 2010, 2,319 candidates took a test where a D255 form was completed and 1,350 candidates passed the test. You should note that we do not electronically record the nature of the disability for these tests.

The information supplied to you continues to be protected by copyright. You are free to use it for your own purposes, including for private study and non-commercial research, and for any other purpose authorised by an exception in current copyright law. Documents (except photographs) can be also used in the UK without requiring permission for the purposes of news reporting. Any other re-use, for example commercial publication, would require the permission of the copyright holder.

Most documents supplied by the Driving Standards Agency will be protected by Crown Copyright. Most Crown copyright information can be re-used under the Open Government Licence (<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/>). For information about the OGL and about re-using Crown Copyright information please see The National Archives website - <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/information-management/uk-gov-licensing-framework.htm> .

Copyright in other documents may rest with a third party. For information about obtaining permission from a third party see the Intellectual Property Office's website at www.ipo.gov.uk.