



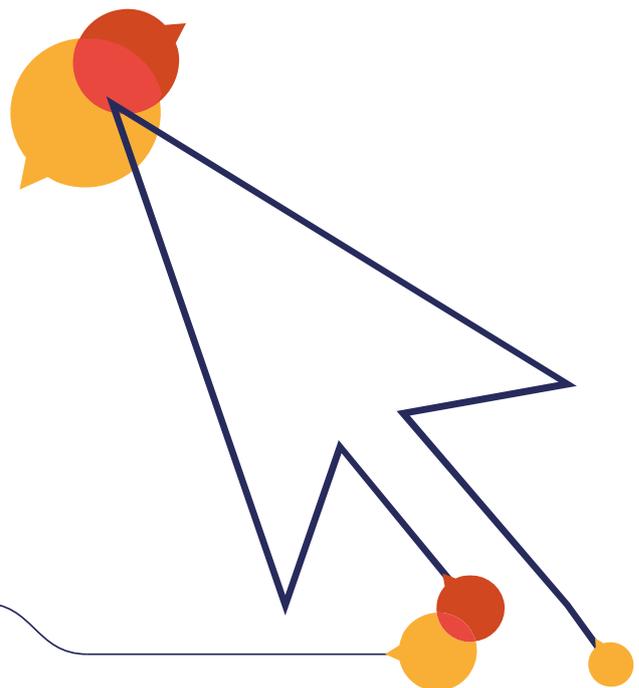
accidents don't have to happen

Consultancy Report

DVSA

Consultancy Report

Version: Final



Introduction

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) was commissioned by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) to risk assess new elements of the driving test which the DVSA are due to introduce on 4th December 2017.

The assessment took place on Wednesday 27th September at the RoSPA Training Centre in Kings Norton, Birmingham.

Gordon Witherspoon, SEO – Driving Policy Manager at the DVSA was in attendance.

Findings

The structure of the Risk Assessment comprised of Mr Witherspoon explaining and demonstrating the training driving examiners are receiving for the new elements of the driving test. This demonstration was given to Keith Bell (DVSA ADI) Quality Manager (RoSPA Fleet Safety), Rob Burgon RoSPA Head of Training and Sharan Gosal Technical Support Executive.

The demonstration consisted of both the e-learning training and support that is available and the practical on-road training which examiners are receiving as well as an explanation of how the training would be rolled out and how the DVSA will ensure all examiners have received the training before delivering the new test.

For the purposes of this consultancy, the new elements of the test that were assessed are:

- Vehicle Safety Check Questions
- Independent Driving Using a Satnav
- The Forward Park Exercise
- The Pull Up On The Right Manoeuvre

Vehicle Safety Check Questions

The 'Show Me' question will now be asked whilst the candidate is driving. The 'Show Me' questions all refer to the operation of controls which a driver would be expected to carry out whilst the vehicle is moving once they have passed the test. The examiner will only ask a question which is relevant to the vehicle presented for test e.g. the examiner would not ask to be shown how to wash and clean the rear windscreen if there was no rear wiper fitted to the vehicle.

The examiners have been trained to only ask the 'Show Me' question on suitable roads, which are relatively quiet and straight to allow the candidate to demonstrate the control without additional



hazards/distractions. Although the candidate would be expected to then turn off the control, the examiner is able to prompt them to do so without adversely affecting the result of the test.

Independent Driving Using a Satnav

Independent driving has been part of the driving test since 2010 but has until now been conducted using either the method of asking the candidate to follow road signs to a destination or by the examiner giving a series of instructions and showing a diagram before the candidate drives this route. This has been for 10 minutes of the driving time on the test.

The traffic sign method will remain for 1 in 5 tests but the other 4 in 5 tests will now have the independent driving element conducted through the use of a Satnav and both options will now last for 20 minutes of driving time on the test.

The Satnav will be a standard one which will be used on all tests supplied by TomTom. The DVSA have identified 2 alternative methods of securing the Satnav in the vehicle. The first, and preferred method is through the use of a Dashmat. The Dashmat has been extensively tested by the DVSA both in terms of its ability to remain stationary and how well it fits all vehicles. There have been no incidents of the Dashmat moving on the dashboard, even under reasonably extreme driving. The DVSA have not found a vehicle yet which the Dashmat does not work in. The second, backup method is to fix the Satnav to the windscreen through a sucker cup. Examiners have been given information to fix the Satnav in the centre of the windscreen as low as possible and also the bottom right hand corner of the windscreen if required. The examiners have been trained in the operation of the Satnav, how to charge it and what to do should an issue arise.

During the practical demonstration, no issues were presented that would constitute a high risk. The examiner's experience and knowledge of the local area and driving plays a key role in this.

The Forward Park Exercise

Reverse parking into a bay has been part of the test since 1999 and has always been conducted at the start or end of the test at the test centre. This exercise will remain an option on the new test but an additional manoeuvre of forward parking into a bay will become an option as well.

The examiners, under the guidance of the Local Driving Test Manager (LDTM), will identify suitable car parks, other than the test centre, to carry out the forward park manoeuvre. They will contact the owner of the car park, if required, possibly using a pre-written letter by the DVSA, to ask for permission to use the car park. Should permission not be given or if an examiner has a negative experience then the car park will not be used on the test. On each test route there should be several car parks identified so that each car park is not overused.

Examiners have been trained on both the selection of suitable car parks as well as suitable areas of the car park to use. The examiners will direct candidates to the quieter parts of the car park and will allow the candidate to choose the bay they wish to park in. The candidate will then reverse out the bay and the examiner will, if necessary, help the candidate to leave the car park.



During the practical demonstration, Mr Witherspoon demonstrated pulling in to a parking bay on the left or right hand side and reversing and exiting. The instructions that go along with this to the student and the selection of a quiet area of a car park ensures that this is a low risk.

The Pull Up On The Right Exercise

There is currently a requirement for candidates to show that they can pull up on the left and then move away safely again, this is done both with no obstruction in front of the candidate but also with a parked car in front of the candidate (moving off at an angle).

The new manoeuvre will require the candidate to pull up on the right and then reverse back about 2 car lengths. The examiners have been trained on the type of roads where this manoeuvre would be acceptable and those where it would not. The candidate is allowed to choose the place to pull up once the instruction has been given but if they start to choose an inappropriate place or fail to pull up before the situation changes then the examiner can abort the attempt without any detriment to the candidate.

When this exercise is carried out in accordance with the guidelines issued by the DVSA, both the examiner and candidate have good sight lines, both forward and rearward, to be able to pull away safely from the right. The examiner has enough time to watch the candidate as well as complete their over the shoulder check as the candidate pulls away. In fact the sight lines for the examiner are far worse on the aforementioned moving off at an angle, which is in the current test.

This exercise takes a relatively short amount of time and so it is unlikely that other vehicles would pull up either in front or behind the candidate before they move away again. However the examiners have been trained what to do in these circumstances.

During the practical demonstration, this manoeuvre was carried out a couple of times, and Mr Witherspoon explained in detail the type of roads that are suitable for this type of manoeuvre and also which traffic conditions are suitable and are not suitable.

At no time during this part of the demonstration, did the passenger feel at risk. It was noted that the examiner would have a better view of the road traffic conditions to the front, rear and side whilst sitting in the passenger seat for this manoeuvre. A key part of this is the execution of the training that the examiners will receive and carrying out dynamic risk assessments on the day to decide whether a road/traffic conditions make the manoeuvre suitable.

RoSPA also carried out a detailed review of sections of the DT1 document that were relevant to the car driving test and found no areas for improvement. The DVSA are to be commended on the depth and rigorous nature of the document.



Recommendations

RoSPA would recommend that within the risk assessment prepared by the DVSA that an additional column detailing who could be affected by the identified risk be added such as member of the public, children, animals, passengers in the car. If this is thought to be the same for all risks it could be added as a statement to cover the whole document.

RoSPA would also recommend that where the document DT1 is referenced, the reference is more detailed such as chapter and paragraph as DT1 is a very large document and people should be able to find the reference quickly.

The control measures and level of risk should also be clearly stated for each risk identified.

Conclusions

RoSPA found all aspects of the new elements of the driving test to be introduced on 4th December 2017 to be Low Risk.

The training for the examiners is thorough and provides good guidance on how the examiner should carry out a Dynamic Risk Assessment (DRA) for each element before and during the test. Examiners are used to carrying out DRA's as part of delivering the elements already conducted on driving tests.





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