



SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

between

THE VEHICLE AND OPERATOR SERVICES AGENCY (VOSA)

and

Authorised Examiners (inc Designated Councils)

and Nominated Testers, represented by:

THE RETAIL MOTOR INDUSTRY FEDERATION, SCOTTISH MOTOR TRADE ASSOCIATION,

THE MOT TRADE USER GROUP

and a VTS Council member on behalf of the VTS Councils

in respect of the

MOT SCHEME

This Agreement sets out an understanding between VOSA, Authorised Examiners and Nominated Testers, represented by the bodies listed above, in respect of the levels of service they can expect when dealing with VOSA concerning education, compliance, enforcement and MOT computer issues. The Agreement also covers the standards and behaviours which the trade, through the mentioned bodies, will be encouraged to adopt when NTs and AEs are in contact with VOSA staff.

The Agreement covers the following aspects:

1. General Principles
2. Communication
3. Applications for Authorisation
4. Test Information and Interpretation
5. Enforcement and Sanctions
6. Provision of computer based services

Performance against commitments made in this Agreement will be measured and reviewed regularly by all Parties, with an annual summary which will be produced in January of each year. The Parties will agree to revise the terms of this Agreement based on experience.

Each of the following areas has three measurements of success - one for each organisation to work on in the immediate future for immediate action which will lead to success and the third which is a joint longer term goal:

- VOSA performance
- MOT Trade representatives
- Joint Aspirations

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

All Parties will work together to ensure public confidence in the MOT scheme by encouraging and promoting consistency in test standards and that corrective procedures are in place where necessary.

The core objective of this SLA is to facilitate improved road safety through raising MOT test standards. It is intended to help VTS aim for constant improvement. VOSA will target and increase their activities on those VTS considered to be high risk and/or non-compliant and relieve the burden on those that are demonstrably and consistently compliant.

All AE's and NT's should be encouraged to adhere to the requirements and principles of this SLA.

Measures of Success

VOSA will:

- Continue to develop suitable testing standards and procedures
- Provide support and advice to meet the needs of the industry
- Aim to minimise cost of enforcement to the industry by targeting those VTS considered high risk or non compliant
- Review the content and availability of training as appropriate

MOT Trade will:

-Through Trade Associations:

- Work with members to ensure that the reputation and integrity of the MOT scheme is maintained and operated in accordance with the MOT scheme requirements
- Contribute constructively and proactively to MOT scheme changes
- Encourage members to have suitably trained and competent staff
- Encourage members to have premises that provide a safe and clean environment

-Through VTS Council members and Trade Associations;

- Provide help & guidance to any VTS, acting as a conduit to VOSA staff where needed

Joint Aspirations:

- Enhance confidence in the values and standards of MOT testing
- Improve the standard of MOT testing thereby improving road safety and the environment
- Provide and utilise multi channel application processes, reduce timescales and cost to Industry when opening and running VTS
- Work constructively to deliver reductions in the numbers of people killed or seriously injured on the road network
- Create a relationship, which encourages greater positive dialogue between VTS staff and VOSA.

2. COMMUNICATION

All Parties accept that there is a need for specific and timely communications, and that all have responsibilities to ensure that information gets to the people who need it and are able to act upon it.

Measures of success

VOSA will:

- Continue to improve VOSA services in line with VTS requirements
- Discuss any material changes to the MOT scheme with Trade User Group and VTS Councils, at the earliest opportunity, well before policy is finalised and at every significant stage thereafter. Ideally such changes will be communicated at least three months before they take effect.
- Continuously improve the provision and accuracy of data to AEs and NTs by delivering appropriate data and information via the VTS device
- Ensure VOSA staff are provided in a timely manner with the information and relevant training, to carry out their roles effectively
- Provide quality guidance and assistance to Authorised Examiners and Nominated Testers through all established communication channels, including the web and VOSA's national number 0300 123 9000
- Publicise our service level agreement and procedures
- Promote access to our complaints procedure
- Continue to maintain the information on the internet ensuring it is up to date and consistent with the information available to the VTS
- Provide literature and DVDs to help inform MOT testing staff of new issues
- Organise and deliver a range of MOT Seminars and attend a variety of conferences and other venues to deliver appropriate presentations
- Publicise to AEs/NTs the value of the VTS Councils and its confidential 'local council representative' facility

MOT Trade will:

- Respond constructively to requests for input/information/participation in VOSA trials, surveys and consultation exercises
- Accept a role in owning and communicating processes/initiatives/decisions when they are agreed
- Support VOSA staff in order for them to undertake the statutory function as regulators of the MOT Scheme

-Through Trade Associations;

- Use their communications channels to promote information and advice to support compliant operation
- Encourage their members to attend relevant seminars and conferences
- Publicise to AE's/NT's the value of the Trade Associations and their confidential 'representative' facility
- Encourage their members' staff to improve and remain compliant using all established channels including the web and VOSA's national number 0300 123 9000
- Consider local or independent training events to supplement VOSA activities

Joint Aspiration:

- To develop and publish a full suite of manuals, guides and information which will encourage and enable VTS to operate safely and efficiently, and in full compliance with the required standards
- Wherever possible materials should be available in an electronic format.
- Optimise the use of forums that the Trade and VOSA attend to review industry progress and raise standards within the scheme

- Encourage and support attendance at a variety of VOSA events aimed at improving communications within the industry
- Recognise that multi-site VTS operators may have specific needs for communications to be effective and that those needs should be considered by VOSA
- Recognise additional measures taken by AEs to improve testing standards, such as independent quality control schemes and membership of recognised trade associations/bodies

3. APPLICATIONS FOR AUTHORISATION

All parties agree that there is a need for an efficient application process to ensure they are completed within a defined time scale, both for authorisation as an AE and for approving significant alterations (e.g. ATLS) to existing VTS operations and entities that require application through a VT01.

Measures of Success

VOSA will:

- Provide a timely and effective system for processing applications for authorisation
- Notify appointments to make an initial visit for proposed testing premises within 5 working days from receipt of a fully completed and correct application. The actual visit will take place within 15 working days of that notification.
- Where there is a requirement for a further visit, arrange to visit the VTS within 10 working days when notification is given by the AE to request final authorisation
- Ensure the VTS device is installed and activated within 5 working days of final authorisation visit.

MOT Trade will:

- Encourage applicants to fully and accurately complete all documentation prior to application
- Provide all relevant documentation, and if necessary evidence to VOSA as and when requested
- Actively encourage applicants to ensure final authorisation visits are requested at the earliest opportunity

Joint Aspirations:

- Assess the viability of a centralised system for handling applications
- Carry out a review of the VT01 application pack and process

4. MOT TEST INFORMATION AND INTERPRETATION

Interpretation of legislation and dissemination of information is fundamental to creating a compliance culture. We jointly aim to make compliance easier than non-compliance. All Parties are committed to working together and with DfT to establish a clear and coherent interpretation of relevant legislation, taking into account Governmental commitments to minimise the regulatory burden on industry.

The on-going partnership in the development and publication of relevant guidance is a key part of this, as is the commitment of all Parties to make best use of their joint and individual communication channels.

Measures of Success

VOSA will:

- Provide fully trained staff to carry out all regulatory duties to the prescribed standards, against a background of trade dialogue and co-operation. Consistency will be validated by the national quality assurance team
- Ensure all VOSA staff receive adequate initial and regular refresher training
- Monitor the application and interpretation of standards and investigated and ensure inconsistencies are investigated and rectified in a timely manner
- Provide 80% of all Nominated Tester assessment exams within 20 working days of receipt of a fully completed and correct application
- Measure the effectiveness of its channels of communication in providing up-to-date information to AE & NTs

MOT Trade will:

- Through trade associations, where an interpretation has been agreed with VOSA, support and publicise the agreed position
- Bring to VOSA's attention any inconsistencies where local interpretation appears to be different to national policy
- Through trade associations determine all the facts of a case/complaint and ensure that their members have followed agreed processes for local resolution before escalating through VOSA nationally

Joint Aspiration:

- Identify and address areas where positive action can be taken to improve testing standards and procedures
- Aim to resolve complaints, queries and issues as near to the source as possible, only escalating where necessary
- Create a quantifiable Quality Control system that encourages the correct testing standards.
- Aim to make compliance easier, fostering a culture whereby a VTS through the AE or NT (s) can be encouraged to proactively seek advice on test procedures and standards.
- Examine the opportunities for creating better NT development
- Review NT/AE training by 2010, either through VOSA totally or via recognised 3rd parties including development training for prospective testers.

5. ENFORCEMENT AND SANCTIONS

Both VOSA and the MOT trade are committed to ensuring constantly higher standards of testing are carried out at all VTSs. To maximise the opportunity, VOSA is committed to ensuring that VEs carry out their duties at the VTS fairly. The desired position is to ensure a positive outcome from enforcement checks for both parties.

Historically Enforcement inspections can cause disruption to VTS schedules and VOSA is committed to minimising the time taken to carry out such checks. Trade Associations will work with VOSA to assist Authorised Examiners to understand the enforcement process and will consider how they can help members appreciate the purpose of VOSA Targeted MOT Enforcement checks.

Measures of success

VOSA will:

- Review with trade representation the Vehicle Examiner 'Operating Instructions' which directly affect the relationship between NTs/AEs and the VE.

- Apply standards correctly, consistently and fairly and aim to provide timely and reliable advice wherever possible
- Determine 95% of appeals against refusal or cessation of MOT authorisation or approval within 25 working days of either receipt of full written representations, or the date of informal hearing.
- Where a formal disciplinary interview is conducted inform relevant parties of proposed action within 25 working days, or advise within the same timescale where no further action is to be taken
- Notify an AE/NT of the examination of a vehicle in response to an complaint giving no less than 24hrs notice (exceptional circumstances excluded)
- Give a decision to contemplated disciplinary action representations within 20 working days from the reply deadline advising the outcome and how it has been reached. In exceptional circumstances and in the case of a complex/large scale case, a timescale as to when decisions will be made to be provided.
- Not cause avoidable disruption when visiting a VTS
- Inform AE of Mystery Shopper positive outcomes via VTS device message system

MOT Trade will:

- Through their communication processes (magazines, newsletters, websites etc.), will distribute to members any relevant information for improving test standards that VOSA supply.
- Provide support to recipients of disciplinary action to apply correct testing standards and management of their sites.

Joint Aspiration:

- Create a culture towards VTSs of a balance of support and enforcement rather than currently a predominance of enforcement.
- Periodic reviews of weighting factors that identify potential risk
- Through joint working reduce MOT test error rates
- A reduction of the risk score of all VTS

6. PROVISION OF COMPUTER BASED SERVICES

The MOT station is totally reliant on VOSA's service provider for the computer system and contingency procedures to be able to provide testing services to the public. Any disruption to the service, failure to quickly implement contingency procedures and extended Emergency Test periods will have a detrimental effect and cost implication to the test station.

Joint Aspiration

- Seek trade input into requirements for future contract renewal



Alastair Peoples

Alastair Peoples - VOSA



Stephen Coles

Stephen Coles - RMIF



David Innes

David Innes - SMTA



John Ball

John Ball - VTS Council

