

a) The total number of category B practical driving tests resulting in a 'walk back' to the test centre by the examiner, annually, for the last five years.

b) Of these tests, the number where the cause was as follows;

- 1) the examiner terminating the test in the interest of public safety**
- 2) the pupil requesting the test be terminated**
- 3) an accident on test**
- 4) a mechanical fault**

We have a list of activity codes which are used by examiners when a test is terminated or does not go ahead. These codes give the reason for the test being terminated or not going ahead. The examiner will record the code on the driving test report form (DL25) of that candidate. We do not, however, have a code for those driving tests that were terminated which resulted in a walk back to the test centre by the examiner.

Information on whether a car practical test resulted in a 'walk back' to the test centre by the examiner may be held on the reverse of the DL25. We only hold the reverse of the DL25 for two years. To determine whether information is held on the number of car practical tests resulting in a 'walk back' would require us to manually review the reverse of the DL25 for those driving tests that were terminated in the last two years.

We have estimated that it would take at least three minutes to review the reverse of one DL25 to determine whether it contains information on whether the test involved a 'walk back' to the driving test centre. There were 15,403 tests terminated in 2011 for the four reasons you requested in part b of your request. Therefore, to determine whether these tests alone resulted in a 'walk back' to the test centre would take in excess of 770 hours. Therefore, the time taken to review all tests terminated in the last two years to determine whether they resulted in a 'walk back' to the test centre would be far greater.

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.

We do, however, have activity codes for tests that were terminated for each of the reasons you listed in part b of your request. In the table below, you can find the number of tests terminated for each of these reasons in each of the last five years. Please note that this information represents those tests terminated for that reason and not all terminations will have resulted in a walk back to the test centre.

Reason for test being terminated/year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
The examiner terminating the test in the interest of public safety	7,139	7,504	4,946	4,851	5,479
The pupil requesting the test be terminated	0	0	4,181	4,816	5,192
Accident on test	226	232	202	181	228
Mechanical fault	8,403	7,463	5,560	4,975	4,504

Please note that we only began recording pupil requests for the test to be terminated in February 2009.

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