



SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

between

THE VEHICLE AND OPERATOR SERVICES AGENCY (VOSA)

and

**Operators and Providers of goods vehicles, trailers and passenger carrying vehicles,
represented by**

THE FREIGHT TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION (FTA)

THE ROAD HAULAGE ASSOCIATION (RHA)

THE CONFEDERATION OF PASSENGER TRANSPORT (CPT)

THE BRITISH VEHICLE AND RENTAL ASSOCIATION (BVRLA)

THE RETAIL MOTOR INDUSTRY FEDERATION (RMIF)

in respect of

VEHICLE TESTING

In accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement between the Parties, this Agreement sets out an understanding between VOSA and the Trade Associations, Operators, Presenters and Owners of goods vehicles, trailers and passenger carrying vehicles in respect of the levels of service they can expect from VOSA and its staff during the course of vehicle testing activities and the policies that apply. The Agreement also covers the standards and behaviours which the Trade Associations will encourage their members to adopt when presenting vehicles for test.

The Agreement covers the following aspects:

1. General Principles
2. Communication
3. Testing, Information and Defect Rectification
4. Test Appointment Booking and Test Station Opening Hours

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

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

- VOSA performance
- Trade Association/Operator/Owner/Presenter performance
- Joint Aspirations

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

All Parties will work together to raise roadworthiness standards and deliver benefits for the road transport industry and the general public. When in service, goods vehicles, trailers and passenger vehicles should be maintained to a level higher than the minimum test standard. Test station opening times and services should support the efficient and cost effective operation of vehicles in the road transport industry.

Measures of Success

VOSA will

- Develop Test Station service to meet Operator & Presenter needs
- Aim to minimise the global cost of testing to the industry

Trade Associations will

- Encourage their members to present vehicles for test which consistently meet test standards

Joint Aspiration

- The Initial Test Failure rate will decrease

2. COMMUNICATION

In addition to the Communications detailed in the MOA, 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 customer requirements
- Establish a system to notify operators, Trade Associations and vehicle owners of changes in policy and/or application of standards, at least three months before they take effect. The notice period may be waived where it can be demonstrated that this would seriously jeopardise road safety
- Continuously improve the provision of data to operators through
 - o Increased provision of OCRS and Test History data
 - o On-line access to test results
- Ensure VOSA staff are provided, in a timely manner, with the information and relevant training, to carry out their roles effectively, particularly where new legislation is enacted or where changed requirements in policy and or application of regulations take effect

Trade Associations will

- Respond 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 (eg outcomes from Stanmore meetings etc)
- Use their communications channels to promote information and advice to support safe operation

Joint Aspiration

- To develop and publish a jointly owned full suite of guides and information which will encourage and enable operators to operate safely and efficiently, and in full compliance with Regulations and Standards
- To reduce the number of "Fail to Attend" for test.

3. TESTING, INFORMATION AND DEFECT RECTIFICATION

TESTING

VOSA, operators/owners, and those who prepare and present vehicles for test on their behalf have a joint obligation to work together to ensure a quick and reliable passage of vehicles through test stations. VOSA will provide the staff and processes to conduct the test and a national network of stations operators (or their representatives) will present vehicles in a condition to pass the test first time, and at the appointed time.

Specialist Tests (eg Individual Approvals and Dangerous Goods) will be provided to the same level of availability and consistency as Annual Tests.

Measures of Success

VOSA will

- Provide trained staff to test vehicles to prescribed standards. Consistency will be validated by the national quality assurance team
- Monitor consistency of application of published standards and investigate the causes of any variability of standards applied during the test
- Be consistent in advising operators on how vehicles should be presented for test eg laden/unladen
- Publicise its complaints procedure and apply it ([VOSA Complaints Procedure](#))
- Publicise its statutory duty to refer an appeal against the result of a statutory test and certain complaints, either to the Secretary of State or to the Parliamentary Ombudsman - where relevant
- Aim to offer more tests at the time and location of the operator's choice, providing sufficient notice is given of the test requirement

Trade Associations will encourage their members to

- Present vehicles which consistently meet test standards
- Book tests sufficiently in advance to achieve the day and time they want
- Attend for test at the appointed time
- Cancel test appointments which are no longer required 3 days in advance where possible
- Provide any technical or other relevant information required to allow VOSA staff to test the vehicle in a timely manner
- Ensure any third party presenting the vehicle for test on behalf of an operator, or owner accepts responsibility for passing all test documentation to the first party

Joint Aspiration

- Improved accessibility of testing to all customers
- Raised standards of vehicle preparation and repair
- Improved access to test equipment between test, where appropriate

INFORMATION

Quality and provision of information is crucial to improving test pass rates. It is recognised that the presenter of vehicles is not necessarily the operator therefore, VOSA is committed to making information on test history available to operators and vehicle owners.

Measures of Success

VOSA will

- Continue to develop its provision of test data to operators
- Publish quarterly statistics of key information (eg initial pass rate; Failure to attend (FTA) Pass after rectification (PRS)- nationally and regionally)
- Provide on line access to test records
- Make electronic data available in a format that can be easily downloaded eg Excel by March 2008

Trade Associations will

- Be committed to notifying VOSA of test items that cause persistent unexpected failures
- Work with VOSA to investigate the cause of persistent failure items and develop solutions
- Work with members to identify and address areas where they can develop maintenance and inspections to improve roadworthiness and achieve higher pass rates
- Contribute and cooperate with VOSA on data gathering exercises

Joint Aspiration

- By end September 2008 all Parties will jointly produce a programme to raise awareness of the test failure items and identify industry specific projects to improve pass rates.

DEFECT RECTIFICATION

All Parties acknowledge that there are road safety and efficiency benefits when faults are rectified at the time of test, within the constraints of health and safety and on condition that appropriate components on the vehicle will be easily removed and replaced.

VOSA will

- As far as possible during annual test activities, minor repairs or adjustments can be made to avoid the vehicle unnecessarily returning to the workshop
- Publish guidelines that cover the type of repairs that may be rectified at the test station including the health and safety conditions required to be met.
- Communicate this policy widely both internally and externally

Trade Associations will expect their members to

- Ensure anybody who accompanies their vehicle to test will be equipped and competent to effect the repair or adjustment using suitable tools
- Direct the person in charge of their vehicle to conduct repairs/adjustments only as authorised by a member of VOSA staff
- Direct the person in charge of their vehicle to adhere to the Health and Safety regulations which apply to the site

Joint Aspiration

- To improve the condition of vehicles presented for test, so as to reduce the need for on-site rectification of defects

4. TEST APPOINTMENT BOOKING AND TEST STATION OPENING HOURS

APPOINTMENTS

VOSA is committed to providing test appointments as close as possible to the requested date, and has a target to offer 85% of tests, booked at least 10 days in advance, an appointment at the Test station of choice within 1 working day of the requested date. Trade Associations recognise that failure to attend pre-booked tests and swapped tests (eg vehicle for trailer) creates inefficiencies in the system and reduces VOSA's ability to deliver service improvements. All Parties are committed to working towards improvements in the operation and management of test appointments.

VOSA will

- Identify trends in failure to attend and produce statistics that differentiate between FTA and vehicles that arrive late and are subsequently tested
- Where a slot is not available test station staff will check on-line and offer availability at another site.
- Provide an on-line booking system for operators/presenters

Trade Associations will expect their members to

- Notify VOSA promptly of any delays which might impact on their test time where practical
- Cancel test appointments which they no longer need, or where the vehicle will not be ready for test, at least 3 days in advance where possible
- Avoid booking slots at multiple stations/times 'just in case' they are needed
- Book test appointments as far in advance as possible

Joint Aspiration

- Work together to calculate the cost of different levels of opening hours
- Identify cases of FTAs and work together to reduce the level

OPENING HOURS

All Parties recognise that the road transport industry operates on a twenty four hour, seven day a week basis, therefore test station opening times will be reviewed in line with industry working patterns. To fulfil current annual test requirements test station opening times will support the efficient and cost effective operation of vehicles in the road transport industry, but any changes to opening hours must be well utilised and be able to cover any additional costs incurred by providing the service.

VOSA will

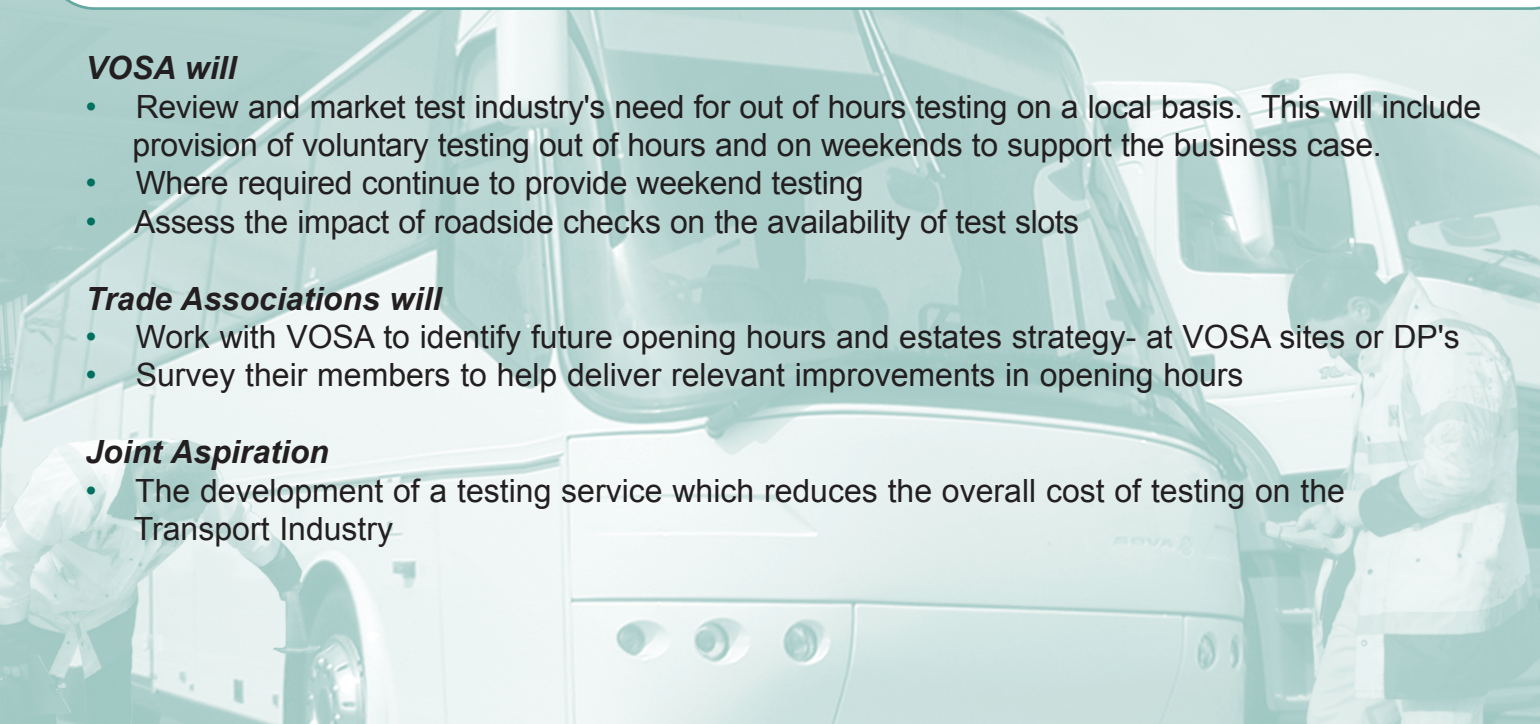
- Review and market test industry's need for out of hours testing on a local basis. This will include provision of voluntary testing out of hours and on weekends to support the business case.
- Where required continue to provide weekend testing
- Assess the impact of roadside checks on the availability of test slots

Trade Associations will

- Work with VOSA to identify future opening hours and estates strategy- at VOSA sites or DP's
- Survey their members to help deliver relevant improvements in opening hours

Joint Aspiration

- The development of a testing service which reduces the overall cost of testing on the Transport Industry





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