

I am writing to confirm that the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency has now completed its search for the information which you requested on 16th November 2005.

Answers to your questions follow below, in the same order as your original email.

Q. 1/2) How many computerised MOTs have been replaced because of MOT Mismatches? How many have been changed by DVLA?

A. 1/2) Up to 25th November 7,047 computerised MOTs have been changed by DVLA because of an MOT Mismatch.

Q. 3) What methods do DVLA employ to check vehicle details are correct?

A. 3) For every MOT test carried out the VRM and VIN details are checked against the DVLA record, if a match is found the tester is presented with information taken from the DVLA record. If no match is found the tester is required to complete all 17 fields of data manually. The identification of a Mismatch between the two records does not affect the MOT procedures.

Differences between the data entered by the MOT tester and the DVLA record are reported overnight to DVLA as MOT Mismatches. DVLA investigates five forms of Mismatch, these are, VRM, VIN, Make, Model and Colour.

Specific MOT Mismatch casework teams have been set up and specialise in this work. The teams fully investigate each mismatch and either amend the DVLA or VOSA record depending on where the error lay, they also issue an amended V5C or MOT certificate to the customer where appropriate. The majority of MOT Mismatch transactions are dealt with by a combination of the following options: -

- by deciding that no action is necessary
- by reference to the source document to check the manufacture's original data
- by correspondence with the keeper, and where the above measures fail to resolve the discrepancy, by referring the vehicle for an inspection, either with LOD or the Police depending on the circumstances.

Receipt of MOT mismatch data allows DVLA to improve the accuracy of the vehicle's database by investigating errors noted by vehicle examiners at the time of the MOT test and correcting the record accordingly.

Q. 4) What process is in place if a garage has a computer problem and they can not get through to the service desk?

A. 4) If a garage has a problem with an individual piece of equipment, they need to contact the Service Desk to test under the 'Fallback' arrangements. Additional agents are currently being deployed onto the Service Desk to make it easier for

garages to get through. In the event of a large scale, widespread system outage, VOSA will consider testing under Emergency Testing (ET) procedures which removes the need for the garage to contact the Service Desk in respect of each individual test. If garages cannot get through to the Service Desk to obtain the ET code, they can contact their local VOSA Area Office or the VOSA Enquiry Unit who will both have been informed of the ET code.

Q. 5) How long should a garage not be able to test before emergency testing is invoked?

A. 5) There are no fixed time limits in place in respect of the decision to invoke Emergency Testing. This is because there are a large number of variables which need to be weighed up by VOSA before a decision to invoke Emergency Testing can be made. Examples of such variables include the number of garages affected, the nature and likely duration of the problem and the time of day when the incident occurs. Rigid procedures would prevent VOSA from being flexible and acting in the best interests of the garages at all times.

Q. 6) How long is a garage unable to test before they may claim compensation for loss of earnings?

A. 6) There are no fixed criteria in place in respect of claims for compensation. If garages consider that they have suffered any financial loss due to MOT Computerisation they should write to VOSA giving fully quantified details and supporting evidence. VOSA will consider any such letter on its merits.

If you are unhappy with the way the department/agency has handled your request, you may ask for an internal review. You should contact ***** if you wish to complain.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

If you have any queries about this reply, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely