

VOSA

Vehicle & Operator Services Agency



Business Plan 2005/2006

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Foreword by the DVO Director General



Welcome to the 2005/06 Business Plan for the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA).

The Agency is part of the Department for Transport's Driver, Vehicle and Operator (DVO) Group – together with the Driver and

Vehicle Licensing Agency, Driving Standards Agency, Vehicle Certification Agency and a small central directorate. Our aim is to 'Promote safe and secure drivers and vehicles on our roads'. The DVO Group's strategic priorities are to:

- improve services for our customers;
- protect all road users by tackling those who don't comply with their legal obligations; and
- improve the value for money of the services we deliver.

We are working to deliver these goals through a sustained programme of fundamental business transformation, made possible through the new opportunities offered by information communications technology (ICT). We started on this journey around 2000. Wherever possible we aim to replace paper (and, to a lesser extent, the telephone) with electronic, self-service methods which are structured around the customer's needs and put him or her in the driving seat. Many of our services are now available on the internet e.g. through Directgov or through automated voice recognition systems. Over the next few years we will extend and integrate them further so that individual citizens and commercial customers can access them as simply and straightforwardly as possible.

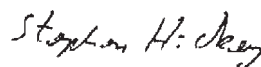
Technology also makes it easier for drivers and vehicles to comply with the standards set in legislation to promote safety and security on our roads. We will increasingly use our data to identify those who appear to be at risk of failing to meet their obligations to tax, insure and maintain their vehicles, to issue reminders and to follow up

where necessary. Together with our roadside enforcement activity, this enables us to reassure the law-abiding motorist that those who put others at risk by failing to meet their own obligations will be pursued.

Electronic, self-service systems, of course, are more efficient to run as well as offering new and better services to customers. They will help us meet the major challenge which we, like others, face of delivering better value by reducing costs while improving outputs. As well as our customer-facing, transactional areas, we will be looking at how best we streamline our support systems and processes.

Business change and new technology are not the whole story. In parallel we need to maintain and improve current services, including core services, like the practical testing of drivers and vehicles, where the impact of new technology may be longer-term. And we need to invest, not just in technology, but also in our people on whom all ultimately depends, and in the physical infrastructure which they and customers need.

This plan shows how VOSA will meet the needs of its customers in 2005/06 while contributing to this wider agenda. It's an exciting, challenging programme. I am confident that, working with others across the Department and beyond, the Agency will both deliver the services which its customers need today and drive forward the agenda for new and better services tomorrow.



Stephen Hickey
Director General
DVO Group

Opening words from the Chief Executive



Government agendas provide a clear steer for transforming the way we work to deliver a customer-focused and valued business. There are great opportunities for us in the Agency and as a part of the DVO group to make major improvements in the way we do business and I look forward to leading the organisation over what will be a period of significant change.

Change implementation is a key part of this year's plan. MOT Computerisation, new on-line services for customers and a more modern (risk-based and real-time) targeted approach to enforcement, are all programmes that will move from development to delivery over the year.

In delivering this change, our aim is to increase the momentum of modernising our relationships with our customers with a goal of making it as easy and efficient as possible for operators to comply with regulations.

- MOT Computerisation will transform the way garages administer the test and the way we manage the scheme, as well as providing benefits to the private motorist in consumer protection and road safety.
- Operator self-service gave e-access to our licensing services last year, and this year we will increase take-up of these services, as well as introduce e-test bookings and payments through a new commercial customer portal.

- A new initiative is the trialling of single-point-of-contact account managers for nominated customers. The aim here will be to establish more flexible arrangements to meet our customers' needs, while allowing our customers to make best use of the information we can provide to run their fleets safely.
- Another step forward on the path to improved relationships is the development of Service Level Agreements with the Trade Associations. These signal our joint intent and help shape our future in the way we work together.

In tackling those who don't comply with their legal obligations we will improve the targeting of our resources on the minority of serially non-compliant road users. This involves improving the quality and joining up of intelligence information gathered from various sources, and linking it to new systems for use at the roadside. Subsequent intelligence-led and risk-based targeted operations will enable a reduction in the number of unsafe vehicles and drivers on the road.

Improved customer focus and more effective enforcement is underpinned by the delivery of our value for money plan. This covers a range of activities from major programme benefits realisation, to improved efficiency through transforming processes and centralising internal services.

There is much to do and the major challenge facing us is to bring all of this together. One thing that has impressed me in VOSA is the commitment and professionalism of our staff and their relationship with operators to do just that. Our people are our most valuable asset and I am 100% confident that we can meet our challenges full measure. Our plans for the coming year are a major stepping-stone to deliver the improvements for today and the foundations for the future with a clear aspiration of becoming a world class leader in road safety.



Stephen Tetlow
Chief Executive



Vehicle & Operator Services Agency

...an agency of the

Department for
Transport

Contributing to:

Improved road safety

Protected environmental standards

Reduced vehicle crime.....

The risks on our roads

The UK is heavily dependent on transport for many reasons, whether it is at the individual level, travelling to work or going on holiday, or at the society level where we rely on complex logistics networks to distribute food and goods.

- As a nation we hold 32.3 million full car driving licences.
- In the UK there are 394,600 goods vehicles and 100,217 buses/coaches licensed to deliver the goods and provide the services we rely on.
- These vehicles are run by 103,000 goods vehicle and 8,600 bus and coach operators.
- They are driven by 1.665 million vocational driving licence holders, of which 1.350 million are goods vehicle and 0.315 million bus/coach.
- Altogether we travel 490.3 billion vehicle kilometres per year.

With this dependence on transport come risks to the UK road user and general public. These risks can directly impact individuals in the form of collisions or vehicle crime, or affect society in general such as through the effects of pollution.



Road safety

- Since 1980 the number of road casualties has fallen by 12%. There has been a 56% decrease in the number killed or seriously injured.
- In 2003 there were 214,000 collisions resulting in 291,000 road casualties, of which 3,508 were killed and 34,000 were seriously injured.

- Heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) were involved in 12,205 collisions (6%) and public service vehicles (PSVs) were involved in 10,765 (5%).
- There were 480 fatalities and 1,755 serious injuries where an HGV was involved, and 117 fatalities and 1,298 serious injuries involving buses and coaches.



Protecting the environment

- Since 1980, the volume of road traffic has risen 80% from 271.9 to 490.3 billion vehicle kilometres. With this has come an associated increase in a range of emissions, which are grouped into greenhouse gases and localised air pollutants.
- Of the 6 greenhouse gases outlined in the Kyoto Protocol, CO₂ is the most important contributor. In 2002, road transport contributed 26% or 38 million tonnes of all CO₂ emissions.
- Local air pollutants including nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, benzene and particulates impact on both our health and the environment. Emissions from transport sources of local air pollutants have fallen by at least a quarter since 1980 despite increased volumes of traffic.



Vehicle crime

- Vehicle crime peaked with 1.5 million thefts of or from vehicles in the early 1990s. In 2003/04 this number dropped to 0.9 million.
- Vehicle crime accounted for 15% of all recorded crimes in 2003/04.
- In 2003, 282,816 cars were stolen in England, Scotland and Wales. This is 31,900 fewer thefts than in 2002.

Mitigating the risks



Through contributing to Department for Transport (DfT) objectives and the Government's Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets, VOSA will help mitigate the risks on our roads.

Objective

PSAs

How VOSA contributes

To improve safety across all modes of transport

Reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured in Great Britain in collisions by 40% and the number of children killed or seriously injured by 50% by 2010 compared with the average for 1994–98, tackling the significantly higher incidence in disadvantaged communities.

- Ensuring compliance with roadworthiness standards through annual statutory testing
- Carrying out post-collision investigations
- Enforcing roadworthiness and traffic legislation
- Supporting Traffic Commissioners in their role as regulators of the commercial vehicle operator industry
- Supervising MOT scheme

To reduce the impact of transport on the environment

Improve air quality by meeting our national air quality strategy objectives for carbon monoxide, lead, nitrogen dioxide, particulates, sulphur dioxide, benzene, and 1-3 butadiene (shared with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)).

- Conducting emissions testing on various classes of vehicles
- Weighing lorries to reduce overloading
- Supporting Traffic Commissioners in minimising the impact on the environment around goods vehicle operating centres and in deciding requests for traffic regulation conditions

To improve public transport

Improve the accessibility, punctuality and reliability of local public transport (bus and light rail) with an increase in use of more than 12% by 2010 compared with 2000 levels.

- Registering bus services
- Handling bus complaints and monitoring compliance of bus services

To reduce congestion across all modes of transport

- Delivering effective enforcement work, which reduces collisions on the motorway and trunk road network, and encourages fair competition

To deliver a modern and efficient service

Achieve annual 2.5% efficiency improvements across the DfT.

- Developing a One-Stop Service including operator self-service, online test bookings and e-payments
- Computerisation of the MOT process
- Delivering 2.5% efficiency and 2.5% effectiveness savings

To reduce vehicle crime

Reduce crime by 15%, and further in high-crime areas, by 2007/08.

- Carrying out Vehicle Identity Checks (VICs) to verify the identity of written-off vehicles being returned to the road, deterring the crime of 'ringing'
- Checking the details of vehicles coming through the Single Vehicle Approval (SVA) scheme against an Interpol database to identify stolen vehicles



Home Office
BUILDING A SAFE, JUST
AND TOLERANT SOCIETY

Joined-up government

Key to enabling VOSA's strategy of reducing the risk to road users is the ability of our customers to keep, drive and operate vehicles safely and securely.

Our customers interface with a number of DfT agencies in order to comply with current legislation. VOSA, along with the Driving Standards Agency (DSA), Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) and Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA), work within a group framework with a clear remit to deliver, from a customer point of view, a more seamless, end-to-end service or 'One-Stop Service'.

Our group mission statement is...

'...promoting safe and secure drivers and vehicles on our roads.'

As an individual Agency we contribute directly to delivery of the Department's objectives but as a member of the DVO Group we have a greater opportunity to realise a more joined-up and focused approach to: a) delivering front-line services efficiently, and b) contributing to the development of evidence-based policy effectively.

Our developing Group strategy focuses on achieving three key outcomes: better services to customers; better compliance; and better value for money. Twenty-four corporate objectives have been identified to secure the successful achievement of the outcomes:

Better services to customers:

- timeliness of service delivery
- customer self-service
- process/form simplification
- customer ease of contact
- communications in plain language
- proactive systems
- keep users informed
- tailor services to customer groups.

Better compliance:

- safer vehicles
- safer driving
- reduce unlicensed driving
- improved data accuracy
- targeted and integrated enforcement
- reduce environmental impact
- reduce uninsured driving
- crime reduction.

Better value for money:

- shift to electronic channels
- maximise the tax yield
- paperless processes
- simplify and consolidate fees
- right people, right place
- reduce sick absence
- streamline support services
- modernise our estate.

Further detail on the Group plans can be found in the published DVO Corporate Plan.

The Central Directorates

Responsibilities include:

- developing strategies and policies for the Group as a whole, preparing plans and monitoring performance against them;
- ensuring alignment between the DVO modernisation agenda and the broader policies and priorities of the Department;
- driving forward DVO strategies for better customer service, improved compliance and value for money; and
- supporting the Director General and the Group as a whole.

VCA's responsibilities include:



- ensuring that vehicles and vehicle parts have been designed and constructed to meet internationally agreed standards of safety and environmental protection and crime prevention; and
- publishing data on emissions, fuel consumption and noise for models of vehicles.

DSA's responsibilities include:



- setting standards for drivers, riders and trainers;
- driver education and learning resources;
- registering and supervising quality-assured instructors; and
- effective and efficient assessments, conducted as computer-based and practical tests.

DVLA's responsibilities include:



- issuing licences to drivers and the maintenance of vehicle driving entitlements;
- maintaining records of driver endorsements, disqualification and medical conditions;
- issuing registration documents to vehicle keepers;
- collecting and enforcing Vehicle Excise Duty (VED);
- facilitating the police and intelligence authorities in dealing with vehicle-related crime;
- registering and issuing tachograph cards;
- issuing vehicle registration marks;
- selling attractive vehicle registration marks; and
- selling anonymised data.

VOSA's responsibilities include:



- supporting Traffic Commissioners in their responsibilities for operator licensing and bus registration services;
- annual testing of HGVs and PSVs;
- supervising of MOT scheme;
- targeted and random checks of vehicle roadworthiness and compliance with drivers' hours and operator licensing;
- offering advice and guidance to help customers comply; and
- vehicle collision investigations and research.

Working with our partners

The DVO Group work with a range of partners, through joint operations and projects, liaison meetings and working groups to ensure we are delivering our services effectively and consistently.



Others in government

- Highways Agency, Environment Agency, HM Customs and Excise, Government Agencies Intelligence Network.



Traffic Commissioners

European partners

- Comité International de l'Inspection Technique Automobile (CITA), Euro-Contrôle-Route, Confederation of Organisations involved in Road Transport Enforcement (CORTE).



Police



Trade bodies

- Retail Motor Industry Federation (RMIF), Freight Transport Association (FTA), Road Haulage Association (RHA), Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT), Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT), Garage Equipment Association (GEA).

ICT partners

- Atos Origin (formerly SchlumbergerSema), Siemens Business Services, Computacenter, LogicaCMG, Palomino Consultants Ltd (PCL).



Motoring and consumer organisations

- AA, RAC, Consumers' Association.

Transport Research Laboratory

Clearly customer focused

Key to the successful delivery of our plans is really understanding our customers. Modernising our relationship with them is an essential step towards our future performance improvement.



HGV operators

- Over 103,000 operator licences in issue
- Around 395,000 lorries
- 86% of operators with fewer than five vehicles
- Average fleet size: 3.8.



PSV operators

- Around 8,600 operator licences in issue
- Over 24,000 registered bus services
- Around 100,000 buses and coaches.



MOT garage trade

- Around 18,700 MOT garages
- Over 25 million MOT certificates issued annually
- 16,300 Authorised Examiners (AEs)
- 48,650 Nominated Testers (NTs).

Vocational drivers

- 1.665 million vocational licences in Great Britain
- Nearly 65,000 vocational provisional licences issued annually.



Trailer owners

- Nearly 265,000 heavy goods trailers.

Importers and kit car builders

- Nearly 1,200 SVA applications received annually for kit cars.

Manufacturers

- Around 37 vehicle manufacturers in the UK.



Introduction to the Business Plan 2005/06

Strategic framework

As an Agency we have continually developing strategies which support delivery of the Group corporate plan. These strategies provide us with longer (10-year) and medium (3/5-year) term views of where we are planning to go. The 2005/06 Business Plan is based on these various strategies.

The thrust of all our strategies is to ensure we make a positive contribution to:

- improved road safety;
- reduced vehicle impact on the environment;
- reduced congestion;
- reduced vehicle crime;
- increased consumer protection; and
- fairer operating competition.

Future deliverables from our strategies are detailed in the Route Map provided on page 43.

VOSA's business objectives

The Business Plan has external and internal perspectives: externally, 'what we are providing for our customers this year' and internally 'how we are modernising, managing and investing in our business'. These perspectives are reflected in four business objectives as follows:

External – delivery to customers

- **'To raise the compliance of the road haulage and passenger transport industries with licensing, roadworthiness, road traffic and environmental regulations and standards.'**
- **'To improve the roadworthiness and environmental standards of private motor vehicles, and to contribute to the reduction of vehicle-related crime.'**

Internal – modernising, managing, investing

- **'To work with DVO Group members and other partners to provide customers with a choice of modern, accessible and user-friendly services.'**
- **'To run an efficient, effective, continually developing and valued business, equipping our staff to make the best use of available technology, skills and knowledge.'**

Layout of this plan

This year's Business Plan is laid out in six further sections. The first section details our Secretary of State Key Targets for 2005/06 followed by four sections highlighting activity under the four business objectives. In the sixth section, we provide supporting information which is laid out in table form.

Risks associated with this plan

Risks particular to the delivery of this plan have been identified as follows:

- Investment programmes, particularly MOT Computerisation, fail to deliver.
- Change overload on enforcement staff (MOT Computerisation; Regional Intelligence Unit development; mobile roadworthiness; graduated deposits and fixed penalties).
- Delivery of core services is unduly disrupted by major change programme roll-out (MOT Computerisation, electronic services, targeted enforcement).
- Additional funding (bids for loans or proposed fee increases) does not materialise.
- Pressures to address the Gershon Review requirements put higher priority on delivery against value for money plan and jeopardise our ability to maintain planned customer service standards and/or major programme plans.
- The risk of having in place too big a change programme agenda.

Risks will be managed through the corporate process as detailed on page 42.

How we will measure our performance

We will deliver against a range of core service activities, change improvement plans and major investment programmes over the coming 12 months. Performance will be measured through Secretary of State Key Targets, other Key Performance Indicators, and front-line Service Standards. Together these form a package of measures for assessing delivery and quality of performance. Further detail is provided in the plan. Actual performance against these measures will be published in our Annual Report and Accounts.

Secretary of State Key Targets

The primary measure of our performance will be through the Secretary of State Key Targets. Setting of these targets gives us a clear remit for the priorities for delivery this year. Our Advisory Board monitors performance against these targets on the Minister's behalf. Supporting measures have been identified for each Key Target and they are detailed in the Plan.

Better customer services

1. To improve the availability of tests to meet customer needs better (page 16 refers).
2. To improve licence application processes, enabling quicker decisions for customers (page 16 refers).
3. To deliver a programme of improved e-service across the commercial and business sectors so that by 2008 80% of services will be available electronically (page 31 refers).
4. To maintain or improve customer satisfaction against 2004 levels (page 32 refers).

Better compliance

5. To improve enforcement effectiveness through increased targeting of offenders, making full use of Powers to Stop, Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) and improved intelligence data (page 21 refers).
6. To complete the roll-out of a robust MOT Computerisation system nationally and implement the benefits realisation plan (page 30 refers).
7. To complete the merger of the intelligence and compliance units to ensure the independence of Traffic Commissioners and improve the quality of investigated cases presented (page 20 refers).

Better value for money

8. To deliver 5% value for money savings covering at least 2.5% of baseline cost reduction measures and 2.5% of effectiveness improvements (page 40 refers).
9. To improve the suitability of the VOSA test station estate, in terms of location and condition, to reflect changing customer requirements (page 36 refers).

All Key Targets identified in the Plan are shown in the above format.

Services to the lorry, bus and coach industries

Business objective:

‘To raise the compliance of the road haulage and passenger transport industries with licensing, roadworthiness, road traffic and environmental regulations and standards.’



Delivered through:

- Understanding and promoting vehicle safety
- Licensing and testing services
- Education and enforcement

Understanding and promoting vehicle safety

Collision investigations

...3,508 people killed in 2003.

We share the DfT's target to reduce road casualties by 40% between 1999 and 2010. Our vehicle collision inspection service to the police is recognised as a valuable contribution to understanding the causes of major collisions involving HGVs, PSVs and cars.

In order to assist the police with their investigations, we provide an evidence collection and presentation service. This involves an in-depth inspection of the vehicle(s) involved, expert reports on our findings and presentation in court. As part of our enforcement follow-up work, we also visit operators involved in collisions to check their systems and operating practices.

Plans for this year include further specialist training of staff in order to meet the increasing demands for evidence to be collected and presented in the courts. We will seek to obtain national external accreditation for this training. Further work will be done to identify and supply staff with specialist equipment to aid the vehicle inspection.

We are to open discussions with ACPO (Association of Chief Police Officers) on whether a common vehicle collision reporting format for all police forces, based on that currently used by VOSA staff, would be useful for harmonisation of data collection/evidential purposes.

Applying the knowledge

We supply data and specialist teams to the globally acknowledged Co-operative Crash Injury Study and Truck Crash Injury Study, two DfT-funded projects managed by the Transport Research Laboratory.

In conjunction with the Highways Agency and DfT, we will work to explore data held on collisions by other agencies. Working with a multi-agency team, which includes the Transport Research Laboratory, VOSA is trying to identify those operators at risk of a collision and to establish preventive measures.

Reducing danger on the roads

Much of our work contributes to reducing the chance of accidents on the road to a minimum, through both safer drivers and vehicles. Our Vehicle Safety Branch plays a key role in many research projects, often globally, working with manufacturers and consumers in the field of identification and rectification of safety defects in vehicles and automotive products. This leads to actions such as recalls, production changes and the introduction of technical and service measures.

Last year saw the introduction of a new European Commission (EC) Directive on general product safety on a wide range of consumer products including vehicles, applicable to all European Union (EU) member states. We already have a system effectively in place and we will use this expertise to help, advise and encourage other agencies abroad to adopt a common approach to address safety issues in vehicle products.

Licensing and testing services

Customer service

We aim to provide a first-class service to our customers, continually identifying changes in customer needs. Understanding the customer's perception of our services is also important and we ensure that we are constantly receiving and acting upon customer feedback. This is achieved through workshops, surveys, meetings with trade associations and trade publications.

The importance of customer-focused delivery is reflected in two of our Secretary of State Key Targets around our licensing and testing work, as detailed below.

A MORI poll carried out in 2004 shows a 5% increase from 2003 in operators' overall satisfaction with licensing. We aim to further improve our services over the coming year as in the Secretary of State Key Target:

'To improve licence application processes enabling quicker decisions for customers.'

Last year we improved turnaround times on unopposed 'O'-licensing applications from 13 weeks to 10 weeks. This year we aim to further reduce the turnaround time and this challenge is reflected in the following key measure:

- 85% of unopposed operator licence applications determined within nine weeks from the date of receipt.

Reform of our processes will enable yet further service improvement and this is reflected in a second key measure:

- Simplified and quicker licence application processes implemented by 31 March 2006.

Over the past year, we have also improved the availability of test slots for our customers, partly in response to results of a MORI poll previously carried out. However, discussions with the trade associations suggest that, while it is acknowledged that forward booking times appropriate to the operator's requirements need to be maintained, it is not the only aspect of test availability that is important. Therefore we have amended our Secretary of State Key Target on testing to encompass a broader scope:

'To improve the availability of tests to meet customer needs better.'

We will then measure this Key Target through two key measures:

- HGV and PSV test appointments offered on or within 15 days of the requested date, 95% of the time.
- Market research of customer requirements for test availability and trialled key requirements by 31 March 2006.

Last year, one of the results of our work to increase our understanding of changing customer needs was the publication of a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with trade associations. This sets out an understanding of levels of service that can be expected at VOSA testing stations, plus policies that apply to the conduct of vehicle testing. Within the agreement, there is a range of potential changes to services that are under consideration including on-demand testing, dedicated times for re-tests and extended opening hours. The demand for these will become clearer as we carry out specific market research. The SLA also includes a commitment from operators to maintain vehicles to exceed a minimum standard at all times whilst in service, and to present vehicles believed to be capable of passing the test.

In the coming year, we will be monitoring our performance against our commitments in the Service Level Agreement. Progress will be kept under review through regular Stanmore/Trade Association Group/VOSA liaison meetings.

Details of the full range of Licensing and Testing Service Standards can be found on page 46.

Delivery of operator licensing

HGVs (lorries) and PSVs (buses and coaches), because of their size and weight, are potentially more dangerous than private vehicles. HGVs share the roads with private vehicles, which are smaller and more vulnerable. PSVs need to carry passengers safely. It is imperative that HGVs and PSVs are operated in a responsible manner. For this reason there has been a long-standing requirement that any HGV or PSV operator must have an operator's licence ('O'-licence) before being able to set up in business.

'O'-licences are granted by Traffic Commissioners (TCs). TCs are appointed by the Secretary of State but are statutorily independent. When an applicant seeks an 'O'-licence, three key conditions must be met before the licence can be granted. The three key conditions are that the applicant should be:

- of good repute;
- of adequate financial standing; and
- competent to run a transport operation.

TCs also have to be satisfied that licensed vehicles will be maintained in a roadworthy condition and driven safely.

We provide administrative support to TCs in processing 'O'-licence applications, maintaining the records of licence holders and maintaining a register of local bus services. Volumes of goods vehicle and bus and coach operator licences are expected to be around 103,000 and 8,600 respectively, i.e. at similar levels to last year. Bus service registrations are expected to remain at around 24,000. Refer to page 44 for more detail on licensing volumes.

E-enabling 'O'-licence administration is key to improving delivery of this service. Planned improvements are detailed on page 31.

Delivery of vehicle testing

Testing of:

- lorries and trailers (HGVs);
- buses and coaches (PSVs); and
- light goods vehicles (LGVs).

Voluntary testing service to operators

Certification of new buses and coaches

Specialist inspections:

- carriage of dangerous goods;
 - carriage of foodstuffs on international journeys; and
 - goods sealed for customs purposes.
-

Testing volumes for HGV motor vehicle and trailer annual tests, and for PSV annual tests are predicted to increase by 2.5%. We also expect to see some further movement from two to three-axle vehicles, especially trailers. The realignment of fees in 2003 and 2004 will mean that we are in a better position to manage income and resource to reflect this gradual movement.

Full details of testing statistics of all schemes managed by VOSA can be found on page 45.

Maintaining high standards

Standards Officers will benchmark the systems we have in place to secure the quality of what we do, reporting the information resulting from their work. We will share the best practice identified in a transparent, timely and accurate way to allow managers to manage performance and teams to continually improve, as we strive to achieve VOSA's wider aims. This year the team of officers will ensure that around 2,500 HGV and 250 PSV tests are quality assured, and that formal assessments of each test station are carried out to ensure accuracy of manuals and records, adherence to policy and procedures, and the condition of equipment. Commitment to this work is reflected in the Service Level Agreement.

Continued review of test content

Following some serious accidents in 2004, the HGV test now includes a check of twist locks for location/locking devices for shipping containers and also for the stabilising legs of vehicle or trailer-mounted cranes. Work will continue on the feasibility of an inspection of the actual cranes and loading arms fitted to vehicles and trailers to ensure they remain in the parked position when not in use.

This year will see changes to the annual test as a result of work carried out last year. We have introduced a strategy for HGV seatbelt checks and are now considering the resource and practical implications for the test itself, prior to its introduction.

From August 2005 onwards we expect to see new vehicles fitted with digital tachographs. As a result, our existing procedure for checking the operation of speed limiters and tachographs will need to change. We will therefore devise and agree new checks for such vehicles for introduction in the summer of 2006. In addition, we can expect to see a slight rise in the number of vehicles checked using the current approach. This is due to the extension from 1 January 2005 of the requirement to fit speed limiters to HGVs less than 7.5 tonnes on international journeys and buses of any weight with over eight passenger seats.

Testing in the future

European Community Whole Vehicle Type Approval (ECWVTA)

From 2009 it will be mandatory for many types of large passenger carrying vehicles, HGVs and trailers to have type approval, with a national scheme likely to be introduced in 2007. We will secure agreement of a business case in the autumn. This will build on options from a high-level review of the IT and other support requirements of VOSA, VCA and DVLA, as well as vehicle manufacturers, converters and importers. Implementation timescales are likely to remain uncertain until discussions in Brussels to amend the type approval framework directive are concluded. During the course of the year, VOSA will work with the other agencies and DfT to present a series of seminars to industry on the technical requirements for type approval. This multi-agency project will form part of the DVO Group strategic initiatives programme and is being led for DVO by VOSA.

Telematics – part of our research and development

We are conducting a feasibility study into telematics, onboard systems that have the potential to capture key vehicle metrics and transmit this information to a central data store for analysis. Working with Bank of Scotland Corporate and participating operators, this trial will help us gain knowledge about this technology and an understanding of what is available for capture and its potential for improving the quality and effectiveness of our vehicle inspections. The trial will run until September 2006, when a full evaluation will take place.

A second initiative has been agreed between VOSA and a large and reputable operator who is already making ground-breaking use of this technology. VOSA will be providing its inspection and monitoring services and, in return, sharing the knowledge gained from the initiative.

Not only do these systems have the potential to enable operators to identify faults and even wear in some components, and hence inform their maintenance and repair programmes, but they also have the potential for supporting our targeted enforcement work.



Education and enforcement

In support of the achievement of continuous compliance, we will deliver a balanced package of deterrence, education and sanction activities through: spot checks, specialist operations, audits on operators' premises and systems, and appropriate sanctions.

Education

We carry out a wide range of educational and advisory work to encourage operators to act in a compliant manner. Our support to the trade is through a number of approaches, some of which are detailed below:

Commercial training

We ran our first seminar programme for commercial vehicle operators in 2004. This, based on the European Working Time Directive, was very successful and we plan to run a series of seminars on digital tachographs and other developments in the autumn.

We carry out technical training at both regional venues and at operators' own premises. This year, the number of sessions carried out should be in line with industry demand.

Visits to operators' premises

Traffic Examiners (TEs) visit every new operator to give advice on a range of safety systems primarily relating to drivers' hours and vehicle loading. When an operator has been up and running for six months or so and where necessary, they will receive a visit from a Vehicle Examiner (VE), who will help them to evaluate the effectiveness of their vehicle maintenance arrangements.

Publications

Towards the end of last year we published *The safe operator's guide* – explaining the operator licensing system and helping ensure that all goods and passenger-carrying vehicles are used safely and legally. We also have a wide range of other leaflets on particular aspects of our work, such as testing schemes, enforcement activities and courses available. This year we will publish four more editions of *Moving On* – a free newsletter for the lorry, bus and coach trade. We continue to review the content of this newsletter in response to trade feedback.

Where appropriate we work with others, for example, BRAKE, the road safety organisation, to produce educational material that goes beyond the statutory minimum. We expect to do that again in 2005 on material relating primarily to drivers.

Balanced enforcement – 'keeping compliant drivers moving'

One of our main aims for 2005/06 is to ensure the minimum disruption to compliant operators, drivers and their passengers through better management of intelligence and further advances in targeting technology, as demonstrated below.

Improving our intelligence capability

A pilot started in 2004 to identify and resolve issues to enable us to separate clearly the management responsibility of intelligence gathering, from the management responsibility for supporting the TCs to undertake their statutory responsibilities. This followed concern that efforts should be made, among other things, to further protect the independence of TCs. We have explored the potential of merging resources from the previous Traffic Area Network (TAN) compliance and Vehicle Inspectorate (VI) intelligence teams into a VOSA Regional Intelligence Unit, which is entirely separate from the team dedicated to supporting the TC.

The pilot has identified and confirmed a number of benefits which have enabled examiner resources to be better directed to areas and operators where they would be more effective.

The pilot has been developed in cooperation with the senior Traffic Commissioner, and the Traffic Commissioner for the South East and Metropolitan traffic area. Agreement to the roll-out of the pilot more widely depends on decisions being made in relation to the IT investment required. This year we have reflected the importance of progressing this activity through one of our Secretary of State Key Targets:

'To complete merger of the intelligence and compliance units to ensure the independence of Traffic Commissioners and improve the quality of investigated cases presented.'

This target is supported by two key measures to ensure project completion and casework improvement:

- Roll-out of the Regional Intelligence Unit structure by 31 March 2006.
- Achievement by 31 March 2006 of a significant increase in the quality and completeness of cases submitted to Traffic Commissioners.

Transforming enforcement operations

In the past we were totally dependent on the services and availability of the police to carry out our roadside enforcement work as they had sole authority to stop vehicles. This has sometimes led to difficulties in carrying out our core work due to lack of police resource. Following the Police Reform Act 2002, a number of VOSA examiners have now been accredited by Chief Police Officers with the **Powers to Stop** vehicles for roadside checks on roadworthiness.

This has enabled our work to be better planned and more flexible, thus enabling a more efficient and effective approach. We are currently active in 29 police areas, having received accreditation from 75% of forces in England and Wales by the end of last year. Powers to Stop is expected to be fully rolled out to almost all of the 43 police force areas in England and Wales by July 2005. The

Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland has agreed the principle that we can stop vehicles but legislation is likely to be two years or more away. Discussions continue with DfT and the Scottish Executive.

Right data, right time, right place

Transformation of how we conduct roadside enforcement will be further delivered through the Mobile Access at the Roadside project. VOSA enforcement staff will have instant access to the latest information and intelligence about a vehicle, operator or driver at the roadside, being able to capture data and make online enquiries. The data collected is also available to the wider enforcement community. This project exploits new technology and is leading the way across Europe.

We are building a completely new mobile compliance application. This will operate on a handheld Mobile Compliance Device (MCD) which will enable vehicle encounters to be recorded at the point of contact. Roll-out to all enforcement staff is scheduled to be complete by the end of March 2006. Full use is being made of the latest wire-free mobile communication systems – General Packet Radio Services (GPRS) – which are currently operational within the enforcement community.

The benefits of the new mobile compliance system will include the ability to:

- target better at the roadside as an Operator Compliance Risk Score (OCRS)¹ will highlight whether the vehicle is at risk;
- receive and analyse vehicle and driver information from digital tachographs;
- issue Fixed Penalty Notices;
- access more timely and accurate data, including test history and uncleared prohibition notices; and
- improve efficiency through reduced retro-keying of encounter data.

¹OCRS is part of the targeted framework project. It will be based on information from roadside encounters, fleet checks, annual tests and prosecution results.

The solution will be sympathetic to the specific requirements of mobile enforcement officers and enable them to more effectively target vehicles, operators and drivers who are known to be non-compliant or have a poor enforcement history. This will have the effect of reducing the burden on the compliant by sifting vehicles more quickly through roadside enforcement check sites.

'A number of major projects which have been running behind the scenes for some time now will deliver during the course of the year and, as well as offering new and improved ways of working, will give us the opportunity to review and adapt the way we conduct many of our core activities'

Alastair Peoples, VOSA Operations Director

Maximising the effectiveness of camera technology

We have extended the deployment of equipment and plan to coordinate further activities with other agencies to make best use of the camera network on British roads. We are linking existing cameras with Weigh In Motion Sensors (WIMS) owned by the Highways Agency and DfT which are embedded in the roadway. Following a six month trial on the West Midlands motorway network, due to run until July 2005, we will evaluate the success of this approach and consolidate future plans for extending this particular use of combined technology. Vehicles which are flagged up as a probable overload can be brought into a weighbridge check site for the weights to be verified and the vehicle prohibited until made safe, if necessary. Additionally, the data captured by the cameras, which would operate 24/7, can be used to strategically deploy staff and resources at the most effective times and locations.

The next stage of the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) project plan currently includes the purchase of additional interchangeable ANPR kits which are designed to be used in Power to Stop vehicles as well as independently. We are working with other agencies to ensure the effectiveness of our ANPR capability. We are also looking at the possibility of a back-office server capable of processing data from a growing national ANPR network.

Significant investment in the various initiatives will enable transformation of the way we carry out our enforcement work and, in consequence, improve the effectiveness of what we do. Our plans to achieve this transformation and improve the balance of reduced burden on the compliant with more effective targeting of the non-compliant are reflected in the following Secretary of State Key Target:

'To improve enforcement effectiveness through increased targeting of offenders making full use of Powers to Stop, ANPR and improved intelligence data.'

Our performance this year will be assessed through the following measure:

- 5% increase in effective targeting through a mixture of reduced percentage of vehicles detained at the roadside which have not contravened driver and vehicle regulations, and increased numbers of dangerous vehicles and drivers taken off the road.

As new systems are rolled out during the year, we will explore how we best exploit new equipment and working practices. This work will include determining performance measures which incentivise delivery of best 'safer vehicles and drivers' outcomes.

Working together

This will be the first full year of the secure dial solution to access the **Police National Computer** via our Prosecution and Legal Services offices. This provides the benefit of direct access to information on drivers and operators who have committed indictable offences and helps to inform more meaningful and relevant enforcement action.

Our ongoing partnership with the **Highways Agency** is helping us to continue working on network issues, including the funding of new sites, sharing sites and space, and identifying common objectives for post-collision inspections. This also includes the possibility of joint training for VOSA and Highways Agency staff in evidence gathering.

New work

Dangerous goods security checks

This year we will be taking on new work where specialist examiners will conduct security checks at premises where dangerous goods are stored. During these checks, our staff will look at site security and security plans and will ensure that new and existing staff or contractors employed are competent and have had the necessary training.

Enforcement work at the roadside will change slightly for drivers of vehicles carrying dangerous goods. Examiners will now check: the driver's photo identification, evidence that the driver has received security awareness training, that any anti-theft device fitted is working, that the driver is aware of the company's security plan and that they know what part they play in that plan. Specialist staff will be trained in June in readiness to commence this new work from 1 July 2005.

Developing initiatives

Digital tachographs

Existing analogue tachographs use a paper chart to record drivers' hours. Digital tachographs will provide records in digital format, recorded and stored both in the device itself and on individual driver smart cards. The system will enable records of drivers' hours to be electronically downloaded from both tachographs and smart cards to either operator-based or remote computer systems for analysis.

EU requirements for type approval have now been met by manufacturers and introduction will commence during this year. The DVLA has already put in place the infrastructure for providing smart cards, and VOSA is working in close liaison with manufacturers to ensure that the necessary network of Approved Tachograph Centres will be in place to support the introduction of digital tachographs.

VOSA is developing enforcement tools to enable checking of drivers' hours compliance both at operator premises and at the roadside. This will include a method of detecting fraudulent use of smart cards. Deployment will commence to coincide with the anticipated introduction of this kit.

VOSA is leading the UK implementation of digital tachographs across the DVO Group and wider, including the police and in Northern Ireland. Those involved in the implementation have established a special website, www.digitaltachograph.gov.uk, to provide advice on the implementation of digital tachographs – this will be updated throughout the course of implementation.

Graduated Fixed Penalties and Deposits

Roll-out for Graduated Fixed Penalties and Deposits is planned by the end of this financial year, subject to the final stages of legislation and the drafting and making of regulations by departmental policy colleagues. We have been working with DfT logistics policy and DfT lawyers in developing the primary legislation required for the scheme. Next steps are to develop secondary legislation working with the trade, DfT, the police service and the Home Office.

During the year, there will be further development work on the project in order to provide consistency of fines. Systems are being developed for the safe taking of financial deposits from those drivers who do not have a UK address at which a summons can reliably be served. Work also continues in developing the Fixed Penalties software as part of our work on mobile access at the roadside.

Lorry Road User Charging (LRUC)

A project is being led by HM Customs and Excise which is likely to be introduced in 2007/08. Its main objective is that all UK and foreign lorry operators using UK roads should contribute fairly towards the cost they impose in the UK. The aim is to ensure the appropriate balance between user charges and other methods of raising revenue from lorry operators. Rates will be structured so that heavier and more polluting lorries pay a higher rate. There will be a compensating reduction in fuel duty available on fuel bought in the UK for lorries paying the charge, regardless of nationality.

Discussions are taking place on the extent of VOSA's involvement in LRUC, particularly regarding compliance and data provision. This includes the potential to offer our expertise on working with the tachograph calibration centre network, and to supply data from, for example, the Goods Operator Licensing database for billing and charging purposes.

Working in Europe

VOSA is a member of the **Confederation of Organisations in Road Transport Enforcement (CORTE)**, set up in 2004, which comprises national bodies from various EU Member States, each having expertise in road transport, including national enforcement agencies, the police, government transport departments and industrial partners.

CORTE enables enhanced awareness of enforcement issues and the development of legislative or technical solutions to improve road safety. It supports the European Commission's goal to reduce the number of deaths across the EU by half by 2010. Our involvement currently includes participating in workshops, conferences, and working groups.

Joint enforcement

Along with representatives from DfT, VOSA represents the UK on the steering committee and working groups of Euro-Contrôle-Route (ECR) – a group of representatives of European enforcement agencies working together to find common working methods. Members of ECR are Spain, France, Germany, Eire, Belgium, Austria, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Poland, and the UK.

VOSA has developed a series of coordinated HGV and PSV checks in association with ECR members and with traffic police from the TISPOL organisation (a group of traffic police forces from throughout Europe). These checks will look at areas such as speed limiters, drivers' hours and carriage of dangerous goods.

Currently, we have chairmanship of the exchange of data working group looking at ways in which data from roadside checks and more specific 'intelligence' can be exchanged between members. This information helps to target operators who fail to comply with legislation while travelling through other member states.

We will be participating in a number of European exchanges in 2005/06 in order to gain first-hand experience of enforcement practices and national legislation in Europe.

Best practice

CITA – Comité International de l'Inspection Technique Automobile

We work with our European partners on seven CITA working groups. Through these groups we can ensure that our views are fully represented internationally when vehicle testing methods and standards are being reviewed. Additional working groups are under consideration and we will take part where appropriate (e.g. motorcycle testing).

AUTOFORE

This is an EU/CITA project that looks at current roadworthiness enforcement systems in European operation and in selected countries elsewhere. The project aims to identify a number of options for in-use vehicle compliance checks in Europe. These could include greater use of roadside inspection, remote sensing, operator quality, performance rating and compliance incentives, for example, to supplement or enhance annual testing regimes. The project aims to recommend ways of exploiting current and future vehicle and diagnostic technology, linking to another EU/CITA project – Initiative for Diagnosis of Electronic Systems (IDELSY). VOSA is a member of the formal Project Management Group. AUTOFORE is a two-year project which started in February 2005, and will report to a number of bodies including the European Commission.

Sharing expertise

The Government, through the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, is very keen for its departments and agencies to take part in twinning projects where one EU member state provides assistance, in the form of consultancy and/or training, to a candidate or accession state, thus supporting EU enlargement.

Near the end of last year we were successful in our bid to twin with the General Inspectorate of Transport in Hungary for a six-month project to help them towards the adoption and implementation of EU legislation related to digital tachographs. In addition we are currently bidding for a two-year twinning project in Turkey to further develop the legislative and institutional framework of the Turkish road transport sector in accordance with the EU Acquis. Our plans for this work support the Government's championing of Turkey's accession to the EU.

Services to private vehicle owners

Business objective:

‘To improve the roadworthiness and environmental standards of private motor vehicles, and to contribute to the reduction of vehicle-related crime.’



Delivered through:

- The MOT scheme
- Vehicle approval schemes
- Light vehicle work
- Vehicle Identity Checks
- Testing research

The MOT scheme



Scheme overview

Through our supervision of the MOT testing scheme for private motor vehicles, we ensure compliance with prescribed minimum standards at the time of the test and seek to raise the general level of compliance.

There are currently around 18,700 MOT garages in service with approximately 1,100 applications by Authorised Examiners (AEs) approved in the last year. The volume of MOT tests has increased gradually over the past few years and the number of annual tests conducted by MOT garages this year is expected to be in the region of 25.7 million. These tests are carried out by VOSA-approved Nominated Testers (NTs).

Our major project with Siemens Business Services (SBS) to computerise MOT is now in the final stages of comprehensive trials. More detail on the project is given on page 29. All our Service Standards for the administration of the MOT scheme can be found on page 47.

MOT training

As well as supervising the MOT testing scheme, VOSA is responsible for the compulsory training of all AEs and NTs, with courses taking place across all regions in Britain. Our MOT training scheme ensures that AEs and NTs are trained to the standard required to administer the MOT test accurately, consistently and fairly. This year we expect to carry out almost 4,000 trainer days, with in excess of 35,000 students taking part.

Following a feasibility study last year, we will run a project to review the way that we carry out NT training with options ranging from continuing with existing arrangements through to VOSA only having an assessment role. Options also include reviewing the current number of training days to include more hands-on experience combined with customer care training.

As part of the feasibility study (through a series of regional focus groups), we carried out customer research on the AEs' and NTs' perception of the service that we currently provide. The report from this research will help inform the overarching review of training.

Education and communication

Following another year of successful MOT seminars in 2004/05, we plan to run at least 135 seminars with an anticipated 12,000 attendees this year. This level of attendance is indicative of the value the trade derives from the seminars. A range of topics is covered at these events including ongoing projects, new technology and feedback from any relevant surveys that have taken place.

Following the continued positive feedback to *Matters of Testing*, we will produce a further four editions this year, incorporating any specific requests from the trade.

In response to suggestions made at Trade Awaydays, last year we trialled three Vehicle Testing Station Councils in Birmingham, Manchester and Gatwick. They have proved to be an effective means of communication between VOSA and our customers. They are a successful forum for us to provide education and advice, but also to acquire knowledge and experience from our customers. Dependent upon continuing demand from AEs and NTs, and available resource and funding, we are considering the possibility of a further seven Councils this year.

Enforcing safe MOT testing

Our enforcement staff carry out routine and targeted checks on garages and the staff, to ensure that consistent standards are maintained. AEs and NTs have a statutory right of appeal against any subsequent decision made to cease garage authorisation or approval to test. We also offer the option to attend an informal hearing.

Reviewing the test

Automated test equipment

Phase 2 of our trial of automated MOT test equipment is complete. This phase included a practical assessment comparing automated equipment with the standard two-person method, and its findings are that the concept is proven to be sound. We are now working on the specifications in conjunction with the Garage Equipment Association with introduction planned for early in the summer, subject to formal consultation. Where taken up, this equipment should deliver greater test consistency and enhanced efficiency, and the MOT trade has shown a strong interest in pursuing this option. Within this activity we have also incorporated the development of a specification for new-generation beam testers.

Review of re-testing procedures

VOSA is looking into the benefits of MOT garages providing their customers with a partial re-test after a failed MOT instead of the current mandatory full re-test. With MOT Computerisation, it will be possible to ensure that partial re-tests (of the failure items and any other components or systems affected by repairs) can be carried out consistently and effectively while ensuring minimum risk to road safety. A consultation paper on the proposal for partial re-tests is due to be issued by the summer, following discussions with the trade; subsequent results are expected three months later.

Vehicle approval schemes

Single Vehicle Approval and Enhanced Single Vehicle Approval

The Single Vehicle Approval (SVA) scheme is a pre-registration inspection for cars and light vehicles that have not been type-approved to British or European standards, including amateur-built vehicles and vehicles using parts from previously registered vehicles.

The main purpose of the check is to ensure that these vehicles have been designed and constructed to acceptable safety and environmental standards before they can be used on public roads.

The Enhanced Single Vehicle Approval (ESVA) scheme covers commercial imports of non type-approved cars and light vehicles.

SVA and ESVA volumes are expected to be around 35,000 in total this year with the trend towards ESVA expected to grow slightly.

Motorcycle Single Vehicle Approval

We have been carrying out Motorcycle Single Vehicle Approval (MSVA) checks since June 2003; volumes have been below original expectations due to a large number registered before the introduction of the scheme. Feedback to date on VOSA's running of this scheme has been generally positive. A formal review of the scheme originally planned for last year will now form part of a system audit planned for early this year. We expect to undertake around 7,700 MSVA inspections this year.

Light vehicle work

We carry out roadworthiness and emissions checks on some light vehicles complementing the work of the police, who undertake a higher proportion of this work, and local authorities, who conduct emissions checks in their own areas. Our enforcement activity involves roadside checks of cars, taxis, private hire cars, non-testable vehicles (including mobile cranes and diggers) and LGVs, which are goods vehicles not exceeding 3,500kg gross weight.

An LGV and car fleet compliance check will be carried out in September 2005, the results of which will inform our future strategy of checks of these vehicle types. The analysis of the results is expected in spring 2006. A programme of LGV roadside spot checks will continue this year.



Vehicle Identity Checks

Our core work includes the inspection of vehicles that have been returned to the road having previously been written-off by insurance companies, thus contributing to a reduction in vehicle crime, particularly the number of vehicles stolen and passed off as accident-repaired. We expect to carry out more checks this year as a result of improved data transfer from insurance companies to the DVLA. We will continue to manage the level of resources allocated to this work to match the level of demand.

Testing research

To support us in achieving our objective to improve roadworthiness and environmental standards, it is essential that we are constantly aware of changes in both vehicle technology and the equipment we use to test it.

Initiative for Diagnosis of Electronic Systems (IDELSY)

We are working in partnership with German and Spanish testing agencies to look at the development of a single European test of a wide range of car on-board diagnostics. The project is currently in its main testing phase which will end this summer and report to the European Commission and CITA by the end of the year. The aim of the project is to recommend a clear way forward for future interrogation of car on-board diagnostic systems.

Low emission petrol research

As part of the DfT Exhaust Emission Steering Group's work, we have been leading a six-month trial using exhaust gas analysers to compare against results from electronic scanning tools. Modern engine management and diagnostic systems produce fault codes that can be interrogated and this project will establish whether there is a correlation between the two test methods, and report on the robustness and reliability of the scanning technology. VCA are contributing by undertaking conformity of production tests, the data from which will be compiled into a final report to DfT in July 2005.

The rate of change in vehicle and test equipment technology today is rapid. This year will see VOSA engineers researching and exploiting new technologies to effectively and efficiently keep the nation's testing schemes up-to-date and relevant.

Alan Wilson, Testing Standards, Policy and Strategy

Modernising our services

Business objective:

‘To work with DVO Group members and other partners to provide customers with a choice of modern, accessible and user-friendly services.’



Delivered through:

- Transformation through e-delivery
- Improving customer relationships

Transformation through e-delivery

MOT Computerisation

MOT Computerisation will be the single biggest change to MOT testing since the scheme's inception over 40 years ago. The benefits of the computerised system include:

- improved confidence when purchasing second-hand vehicles due to the ability to check MOT status and, from completion of roll-out, MOT history;
- improved consistency of test;
- reduction in the level of repairs undertaken as a result of wrongly issued fail notices;
- better test information and vehicle condition awareness due to standardisation of test output documentation including a new, printed advisory notice which will list items which the presenter needs to be made aware of but are not, in themselves, a reason for failure;
- greater confidence in the MOT scheme, due to more effective supervision and enforcement enabled by computerisation; and
- easier services for the private motorist with cars over three years old, as the DVLA will be able to expand the recently introduced Electronic Vehicle Licensing service.

Benefits to the MOT garage business include:

- easy access to vehicle-specific information (such as information on the make and model being tested or details of any recalls that have been issued for that type of vehicle);
- increased efficiency of administration by providing electronic ordering and payment mechanisms; and

- reduced security concerns as the system should lead to a reduction in theft and fraud associated with MOT certificates.

Road safety benefits from reduced risk of unsafe vehicles on the road include:

- improved standards of testing as testers have access to online vehicle-specific information;
- more rigorous testing because system design enforces MOT scheme rules (e.g. inability to fail vehicles for non-testable items);
- reduction in incorrect equipment calibration;
- reduced ability to legitimise stolen and unroadworthy vehicles; and
- more efficient and effective enforcement through real-time access to information.

Last year's target was to have a robust MOT Computerisation system being rolled out nationally by March 2005. We have worked closely with SBS to ensure the robustness of follow-up work to initial trials and the planning/scope of final trials. This means that, subject to the successful completion of final trials, full roll-out is scheduled to commence in April 2005.

While delays are disappointing, our overriding principle is that the service must be robust, reliable and effective and that our roll-out plans are sustainable, prior to implementation in all 18,700 garages. This approach has the full support of the garage trade. We are pleased to note customer eagerness for the scheme.

'After some teething problems were ironed out in the first phase of the trials we have found the system to be excellent. We've had no problems at all with the system and have not called the service desk once this time. Overall I am very impressed with the new MOT Computerisation system and look forward to its launch.'

Javed Akhtar, VTS Sheffield

Delivery of MOT Computerisation is a key priority this year, as is ensuring the benefits of the system are fully realised, both from immediate use of the system and longer-term amendments to enforcement working practices. The importance of this major project is reflected in the following Secretary of State Key Target:

'To complete the roll-out of a robust MOT Computerisation system nationally and implement the benefits realisation plan.'

Achievement of this target will be assessed through the following two measures:

- Robust MOT Computerisation system roll-out completed by 31 March 2006.
- Delivered first phase of benefits, linked to roll-out, from specified benefits realisation plan.

A programme of staff training will take place to ensure the smooth roll-out and implementation of MOT Computerisation. Once the system is fully embedded, existing working practices within our MOT enforcement scheme may be reviewed together with projects already under way on other working processes within the organisation.

VOSA and SBS will be assisting testing stations with the implementation of MOT Computerisation by:

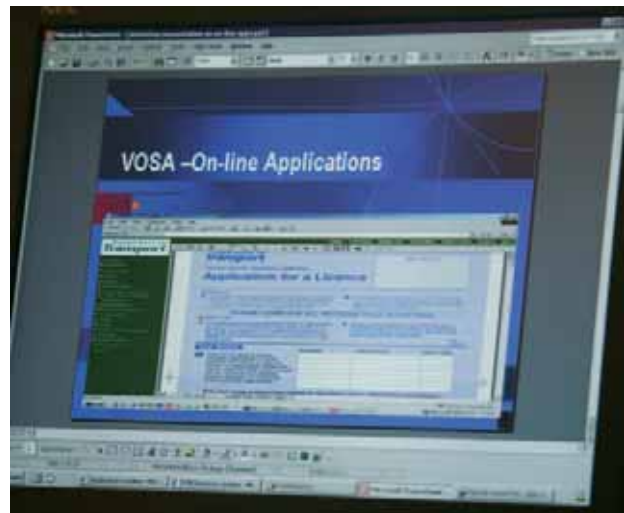
- Regular updates and articles in the Trade Press including VOSA's own publication *Matters of Testing*
- The production of two videos, one relating to preparation for installation and the other dealing with installation and training itself
- Separating installation from training in order to ensure that more time can be spent on instructing stations on how to use the new equipment
- Producing leaflets for testing stations to issue to motorists with their first computerised MOT certificate

Prior to the roll-out of MOT Computerisation we carried out an MOT Garages' Survey to ensure a clear understanding of the trade's views of our existing service. There will be a further survey later in the year to include those garages that have been using the new system for at least three months, in order to ensure that the anticipated benefits of the project are starting to be realised.

Commercial Customer Programme

The development of e-services will continue to deliver benefits to both the customer and to VOSA. To provide easy and extended access to these services, we are bringing together a single portal for commercial customers – a website which will encompass the whole range of VOSA's e-services, which will be available by December 2005. This is reflected in one of the key measures supporting our Secretary of State Key Target on e-services:

- The commercial portal available to the public by the end of December 2005.



As a result, transactions across our licensing and testing services will be quicker, more efficient and available out of normal office hours. During the year, our customers will be able to book, pay for and manage their licensing and testing services online, in one place. We will continue to develop our Commercial Customer Programme in support of DVO's Customer Strategy. This work is reflected in one of our Secretary of State Key Targets:

'To deliver a programme of improved e-services across the commercial and business sectors so that by 2008, 80% of services will be available electronically.'

Increased take-up

This year will see further progress in enhancements to our award-winning operator self-service system, leading to improved efficiency and customer service, in turn also contributing towards one of DVO's strategic priorities of contributing to 'timeliness of service' delivery. The take-up of operators carrying out changes to their vehicle details online continues to grow.

I consider the on-line facility to be a significant step forward, and eagerly anticipate the next stage.

Simon Archer, Arriva the Shires Ltd

We aim to encourage yet further use of this service by publicity and promotion of the service and extending the facilities available throughout the year, as reflected in the following key measure:

- Increased take-up of vehicle operator self-service to 55% of vehicle transactions in 2005/06.

Extended operator self-service

For eight months operators have been able to make changes to their vehicle details online. In response to customer research, and the successful take-up of this service, this functionality is being further developed to enable the operator to make other changes to their licence details online. This extended service should be available by the end of 2005.

We will develop an online facility for those wishing to make an application for a new licence towards the end of this year, reflected in one of our key measures:

- On track to deliver online licence applications in 2006/07.

Test bookings

By the end of December 2005, customers will be able to book HGV and PSV tests online through the portal. This will not only deliver customer self-service but should also contribute towards improving forward booking time, through the optimum use of testing resource. A further key measure supports delivery of this work:

- Online test booking capability available to the public by the end of December 2005.

E-payments

Through VOSA's online test bookings service, customers will have the added option to pay for their tests by credit/debit card as we will have the appropriate electronic payments structure in place by the end of the year. Before the autumn, 'O'-licence holders will have the facility to pay their licence fees online, reflected in the following key measure:

- Online payments by credit/debit card capability available to the public by the end of December 2005.

Electronic bus registration

This service will enable operators to submit whole applications electronically.

Network improvements

In order to improve the capacity, resilience and cost-effectiveness of the DVO's inter-agency communications network and to cope with an expected increase in data traffic from the One-Stop Services, the Group has been looking into a network procured through the Government Secure Intranet (GSI) procurement framework which would provide a higher service availability, be quicker to implement, more resilient to failure, cost-effective and would provide integration with the new GSI technology.

Improving customer relationships

In order to deliver the objective to 'provide customers with a choice of modern, accessible and user-friendly services', it is paramount that we continue to understand our customers, and what they perceive as good service. One way that we achieve this is through a robust programme of surveys and workshops. Elements of our work that are already changing in response to customer feedback include one-stop service, account manager trials and changes in test station availability. These are all covered in more detail throughout the plan.

Surveys and workshops

This year we plan to carry out a further eight DVO regional commercial customer operator workshops where we will be able to provide an update on changing technologies and industry developments to the trade, while also listening and responding to the views and demands of the operator. We will also carry out an operators' survey in the autumn, in conjunction with activities that will be taking place as a result of an action plan drawn up from the previous survey.

A further drivers', fitters', and presenters' survey will be carried out in the autumn in order to continue to track satisfaction levels, and to monitor attitudes to existing services and any proposed new work.

Following surveys on MOT motorists and MOT garages carried out last year, we have drafted an action plan in consultation with the industry which addresses some of the concerns of both the motorist and the industry about MOT, including the customer's experience at the garage, AEs' and NTs' perception of our training, information available on the scheme, etc. The action plan will form the basis of a three year vision for improving the scheme. This year we will carry out further surveys to ensure that we maintain an accurate understanding of the needs of both garages and the motorist.

We will ensure that we continue to provide the right service to our customers reflected through the following Secretary of State Key Target:

'To maintain or improve customer satisfaction against 2004 levels.

- MOT customers $\geq 81\%$
- operators $\geq 79\%$
- presenters, drivers, fitters $\geq 92\%$ ¹

¹Statistical tolerances of MOT customer: +/- 6%
Operators: +/- 5%
Drivers, fitters and presenters: +/- 4%

Customer care

We are considering the viability and benefits of establishing a group of account managers who would be a single point of contact for the customer and who would help VOSA supply a better and more efficient service to our customers. This role will ensure better communications with the trade through regular contact with fleet operators who present large numbers of vehicles for test through the national network of stations. We are currently trialling this service with three regional managers in Scotland, the North West and Eastern Regions and three large operators; a further three may join the trial. An assessment of the trial will be conducted in the summer.

Working with manufacturers

We are also trying to promote the industry's participation in manufacturer forums. This valuable relationship with the industry provides us with vehicle-specific information which allows us to strengthen the service we provide to our testers by providing them with adequate information on newly manufactured vehicles which are coming into the market. We carried out the first one last summer, meeting with truck and car manufacturers. We will continue to forge these links by carrying out a further forum this year.

A quality enquiry service

Last year saw a further significant increase in the level of service the Enquiry Unit provides to the customer, with the number of calls fielded increasing by 54% on the previous year. The increase has been due to taking on all the general enquiries for each of the Traffic Area Offices (TAOs); changes to the criteria of the ESVA scheme; and introducing a specific option to deal with VIC calls. Since the early part of 2005, the commercial customer has been able to call VOSA's Enquiry Unit and make payment over the phone by credit or debit card for any licence transactions.

VOSA will improve its service to the customer and general public by extending the hours of service of the unit from 7am to 8pm Monday to Friday and 7.30am to 5.30pm on a Saturday. We will also be supporting the Siemens Helpdesk to ensure the smooth transition of the roll-out of the MOT Computerisation scheme. A further increase in calls to the Unit is anticipated as more customers take advantage of this service.



Running a sound business

Business objective:

‘To run an efficient, effective, continually developing and valued business, equipping our staff to make the best use of available technology, skills and knowledge.’



Delivered through:

- The right resources for the job
- Improving our performance
- Managing financial resources
- Managing risk

The right resources for the job

Competent staff meeting business needs

Delivering benefits of sharing expertise

A DVO shared competency framework has been developed which reflects the DVO strategic vision and required behaviours, and next year we will be integrating it into VOSA human resources (HR) processes. Work will also start to define more clearly the knowledge and skills required for each 'role' in VOSA and the specific competencies required to underpin them.

The merger required a harmonised Annual Staff Reporting (ASR) system to be introduced to enable all VOSA staff to be assessed on equal terms. As a result, a new-style ASR form will be introduced for the 2005/06 reporting year which will also incorporate an assessment against the DVO competency framework.

As part of the DVO People Programme, we will be participating in a project to design a programme for the development of talented individuals below the Senior Civil Service which complements both the DfT Talent Pool and the Cabinet Office 'Professional Skills in Government' initiatives. In addition, VOSA will be exploring opportunities to introduce more effective succession planning using the tools and data now becoming available through the HR system.

Training

Technical

VOSA's Apprenticeship Scheme has been running for five years, during which time 50 people have taken part and 35 have graduated to date. As part of a planned review of Training Services, we plan to replace the current scheme with a broader technical development programme (VOSATech). Like the previous scheme, VOSATech will be open to all employees, but the big difference is that VOSATech will have multiple entry and exit points (based on an individual's prior level of experience and qualification), to develop technical competence as well as managerial ability.

The Graduate Mechanical Engineering Training Programme is approaching its fourth year. This scheme encourages new thinking and the latest technical academic knowledge to come into the business. The ultimate aim is that at the end of a four-year programme, each graduate will be in a position to become a Chartered Engineer. To date, VOSA has worked with VCA on this scheme but this year will see the recruitment of three new entrants as the Department's Transport, Technology and Standards Division (TTS) has also become a partner in the scheme.

E-learning

We are committed to making the transition away from traditional classroom-based learning to more integrated (blended) methods. New blended learning programmes will utilise various learning assets and methods to create coherent, practical, stimulating and more engaging learning experiences. As well as reducing the amount of time individuals have to spend out of the office and associated travel costs, learning and development will become more accessible for those unable to travel or stay away from home. At the centre of this approach is e-learning. We already have access to a large library of electronic material as a result of taking part in a joint

procurement exercise with our DVO partners that took place at the end of 2004. This material can be accessed by staff via either the intranet or internet.

More flexible operational hours

In response to a combination of factors, such as changes in customer needs and ways of working, external demands (e.g. from DfT), and our responsibility to contribute towards value for money savings, we are planning to carry out a scoping study this year that will review the demand for different working patterns within testing and enforcement operations, and also within our support and licensing functions.

The importance of diversity

It is Government policy and a legal requirement to eliminate racial discrimination and promote equality of opportunity for people of **all** ethnic groups. As a public body, we are taking steps within VOSA to put these policies into action. We carried out an Ethnicity Survey in 2004/05 and the findings from this will indicate whether our measures are working, the progress we are making, and what we may need to put in place for 2005/06 and beyond.

Compliance with Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

We are working towards developing a Race Equality Scheme Action Plan by building on work already carried out last year. Impact assessments on key processes within the business are under way. Our work in this area is also contributing towards the DfT Action Plan.

Investing in our staff

VOSA is due to be re-accredited as an Investor in People (IiP) by December 2005. The benchmarking is being carried out on a rolling basis with half of the organisation having been assessed during the autumn of 2004 and the remainder during the autumn of 2005. There will then be a high-level overview involving directors in December 2005 and, assuming that the standard is fully met, the lead assessor will recommend continuing accreditation. IiP UK launched a revised standard in November 2004 but, as an existing accredited organisation, VOSA has elected to be measured against the previous standard for the current assessment.

Developing staff relationships

HR will contribute to work currently under way to establish a VOSA Internal Communications Strategy. In this way we will ensure that all key HR subjects, matters and themes are communicated in a consistent and effective manner to our staff across the organisation.

Improving employee relations

Plans are in place to develop and implement a partnership agreement with the VOSA trade union side, to promote collaborative working and improve relationships.

Estates and equipment modernisation programme

Secretary of State Key Target:

'To improve the suitability of the VOSA test station estate, in terms of location and condition, to reflect changing customer requirements.'

To continue providing a high standard of testing and enforcement and maintaining our standards of health and safety for staff and customers, we are progressing with our programme of estate modernisation and improvements.

To provide enhanced working conditions for staff and improved facilities for customers, major refurbishments are planned at certain strategically located stations – Northampton, Leeds, Exeter and Leighton Buzzard – with ongoing work in respect of other potential sites. We expect to acquire a site for relocation of the Swansea station during the year, with initial work being undertaken in respect of the merits of relocating the Garretts Green, Birmingham station. This work is reflected in one of our key measures:

- Completed refurbishment of at least the following HGV test stations – Northampton, Leeds, Exeter and Leighton Buzzard – by 31 March 2006.

As part of a longer-term strategy, we are also reviewing the locations of other test stations, striving for an optimum structure to meet customer needs. For example, work with the Highways Agency on traffic flow information may help to influence where test stations are sited in the future.



This year will see major advances in the preparatory work towards a Replacement Test Lane Equipment project with significant procurement work anticipated. Included within this modernisation programme we will address areas such as headlamp aim, load simulation, inspection pits and roller brake tester (RBT) equipment (drawing on the experience and knowledge gained from the former RBT project).

The importance of this work is reflected in a key measure:

- To have started roll-out of the modernisation programme of test hall equipment by 31 March 2006.

In tandem with this project, we will carry out a review of our current method of assessing the condition of steering and suspension components to see if recent developments in test equipment design could provide a safer, more effective and less costly alternative.

Further measures to help delivery of our testing and enforcement objectives include procuring more glass opacity testers and tyre tread depth gauges. We will also extend the use of roller brake testers at the roadside through the provision of new equipment at strategic locations.

Ensuring a healthy and safe working environment

We will consolidate the work we put in place last year to improve health and safety training and support for managers. This will include:

- training a further group of health and safety coordinators to a nationally recognised standard; and
- further improvement of training for all our managers to deal with stress at work.

Further employee noise exposure assessments will be conducted in preparation for imminent reductions in statutory occupational levels. These assessments will include testing stations renewed, or refurbished, under our estate and facilities modernisation programme.

In the light of other impending revisions to regulations, we will review the existing arrangements at all our premises for:

- fire safety; and
- control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH).

Along with DfT, and other agencies within the DVO Group, we aim to improve further our arrangements for work-related road safety, including:

- strengthening our policy and guidance, for all employees who drive on VOSA business;
- improved arrangements for maintaining the roadworthiness of our vehicle fleet; and
- structured assessment and training for employees driving our marked and unmarked vehicles and motorcycles.

Managing financial resources

Funding the plan

Forecast income

Income is earned predominantly from operator licence and vehicle fees, statutory testing fees and the sale of MOT certificates. With the exception of MOT, we plan to increase fees in August. These increases will contribute towards: continuing to bring the accounts into balance; the repayment of the loans for further modernisation and refurbishment of our estates and equipment; and the delivery of e-services to our customers.

Our fee proposals this year include intentions to complete the realignment of HGV fees to more accurately reflect the time taken for each axle test. Fee increases will be in consultation with the trade, consistent with levels of increases discussed in presentations over the last two years.

Additional funding

Under the Spending Review (SR) 2004 settlement for DfT, the funding for enforcement work is in place for this financial year – though there are potential gaps for 2006/07 and 2007/08 which we are actively addressing with DfT. However, there are several departmental/EU policies, such as lorry road-user charging, for which we are currently developing our funding needs with regard to start-up and ongoing testing/enforcement delivery, prior to making bids to DfT and/or HM Customs and Excise for appropriate funding.

We have made bids against the DVO loan pool provided by SR2004 settlements to enable us to progress with the estates modernisation plan and the investment in equipment across the network of stations and at the roadside. We have obtained loan funding for the development of full e-enablement of the services we provide to commercial customers. The allocation of all of this is as identified in the DVO value for money delivery plan.

A major task this year is reviewing the provision of the VOSA IT network/system support. We will be working with both ATOS and Computacenter to identify a clear transition plan and value for money from this exercise. When funding arrangements and fee increases are settled, we will commence/adjust plans accordingly.

Planned expenditure

Expenditure plans cover staff, accommodation and other running costs and payments which include spend on IT service deliveries, interest and loan repayments. The levels of expenditure have been set to reflect the delivery of our value for money plans. Expenditure planned for this year assumes the commencement of roll-out of MOT Computerisation with associated payments to Siemens Business Services. This will result in a reduction in the surpluses on the MOT account and subsequent cash reserves. The income and expenditure account opposite shows a forecast in-year deficit and the impact on our retained surplus.

This year's planned **capital investment** includes continued investment in the estate and a programme of replacing equipment at both testing stations and the roadside, and further enhancements to IT systems. We have group approval to accelerate these expenditure plans over the coming year by drawing on cash reserves by up to £10 million.

As a Trading Fund, our objective is to break-even year-on-year on each scheme. Specifically, the costs incurred in undertaking all aspects of work involved with a particular scheme should be covered by the scheme's fee or payment. For example, the full cost incurred in testing PSVs should be matched by the total amount of income received from the relevant fees charged.

Another Treasury target the Trading Fund must meet is '**return on capital**'. This measures the return on average assets. Performance is monitored throughout the year through assessment of a forecast figure, and the final out-turn forms part of our audited accounts. The in-year target is to earn a +3.5% return on capital.

Forecast income and expenditure account

	VOSA plan 2005/06
INCOME	£'000
Statutory test fee income	58,768
Statutory licensing fee income	32,089
MOT pad fee income	36,457
DfT/agency enforcement income	9,164
Miscellaneous income	10,832
Project income	0
Movement in balance of fees in advance	0
TOTAL INCOME RECEIVED	147,310
EXPENDITURE	
Operating costs	
Staff costs	77,789
Accommodation	10,346
Other running costs	74,433
Depreciation	6,874
Amortisation of project funding	(11,742)
Total operating expenditure	157,700
Surplus before ROC	(10,390)
Other payments	
Early retirement provision	0
ROC	0
Interest	2,829
Dividends payable to DfT	0
Total other payments	2,829
Total expenditure	160,529
Retained surplus/(deficit) in year	(13,219)
Retained surplus brought forward	32,097
Retained surplus carried forward	18,878

Improving our performance

Realising value for money

Our value for money plan will contribute towards the Group's 15-step plan to address requirements of the Gershon Efficiency Review. The Group has a target of £145 million value for money savings by 2007/08, and 500 fewer staff. We are working on a number of initiatives that will contribute towards the delivery of value for money savings, although we plan to monitor and manage this through the year dependent upon variables such as progression of projects against plan, DfT changes, etc.

'To deliver 5% value for money savings covering at least 2.5% of baseline cost reduction measures and 2.5% of effectiveness improvements.'

This target is reflected in two key measures:

- £3.5 million savings
- +2.5% effectiveness (as measured in the Performance Gain (PG) points system).

Our value for money plan details the projects and activities being undertaken to deliver against these measures. The plan includes how realised benefits will enable headcount reduction against current activities as follows:

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Full-time equivalent reductions	160	120	17
Cumulative	190	310	327

These figures do not include staffing for new work, both planned (e.g. Dangerous goods security checks) and potential (e.g. the impact of LRUC developments), or possible increases in core activity volumes.

Initiatives contributing to delivery of value for money include:

Sickness absence management

Building on work that we have already carried out to improve sick absence rates in the business, we are taking on board new initiatives to address this issue. We are currently focusing on identifying the different causes of absence and will be targeting specific areas where high levels of sick absence occur. Other initiatives include the provision of workplace health awareness/health screening, delivery of management training and post-trauma training and a proactive approach to long-term absence management through early intervention by our occupational health contractor and HR.

Review of effectiveness of support services to operational parts of the business

We will complete a project to identify how VOSA should best deliver back-office services and support for its front-line staff more effectively and economically, taking various factors into account, such as:

- emerging VOSA compliance and customer service strategies;
- the need to maximise deliverability of business benefits (in particular staff savings) from planned IT and other investment;
- DVO One-Stop Service (OSS) and Channel Strategy;
- e-enabling of services including licensing, test booking and e-payments (including VOSA on-the-spot fines);
- DVO strategy to remove paper handling (e.g. for financial repute) and the need for certificates;
- changing DfT policies; and
- the potential for handling local enquiries through call centres and the commercial portal.

Business modelling – testing

We have recently commenced a project to identify potential efficiency and effectiveness gains in testing, including a review of our core HGV and PSV testing processes, also looking at SVA and ESVA operations. We will produce a high-level cost benefit analysis detailing options for computerisation of testing. Finally, the project will provide an analysis of the positioning of operators and their maintenance providers relative to goods vehicle test stations and Designated Premises (DPs) to identify outline cost savings opportunities arising from potential estate rationalisation.

More efficient budget management

We encourage a culture where staff continually challenge existing ways of working to ensure improved efficiency. We recently reviewed both our stationery and car hire contracts and this year we will see financial savings as a result of this work.

Links to the central shared services review

The aim of the Support Services Review is to simplify, streamline, and integrate support services across DfT (including the central department and executive agencies). This should lead to more effective cross-agency working, free up management time, and is expected to yield at least £20 million in savings between 2004/05 and 2007/08 across the Department.

Customer contact centre

As part of our customer service and value for money planning we – together with other DVO agencies – are developing our future strategy in relation to customer contact centres.

Contact centres are likely to continue to play a vital role in ensuring customers receive the advice and help they need. But demand for traditional phone services will change as more customers use the web and automated voice systems; and there is scope to provide a more comprehensive, One-Stop, phone-based service to customers by enabling more types of enquiries to be handled together rather than through a series of different lines. There is thus significant scope to streamline the current arrangements within VOSA and to help customers by sharing information and support where this makes sense more widely across the Group.

Developing and delivering strategy for these key services will be an important challenge in the year ahead.

Elsewhere in the plan we refer to other projects that will also realise value for money benefits, such as test bookings, e-payments and MOT Computerisation.

Managing a continually changing environment

VOSA continues to enhance its approach to managing change. The Change Improvement Programme has been established to work with the existing Change Board to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of change.

The Change Improvement Programme is assembling the holistic view of the end-to-end change programme and reviewing the change governance process to manage better the delivery of change through:

- using a balanced scorecard approach to manage existing change;
- enhancing benefits management;
- rationalising existing projects and focusing on high-priority projects;
- identifying and sharing best-practice business process;
- addressing barriers to change and managing stakeholders; and
- coordinating existing communication teams to deliver strategic and tactical messages.

We are moving towards a process-focused business and, over the next 12 months, we will be refining and developing an initial high-level business model which will be a powerful tool for understanding process ownership. Having a clear set of integrated process models will also improve consistency of delivery across the business.

Managing risk

We fully recognise five principles for public risk management as follows:

- Openness and transparency – We publish our risk management policy and procedures.
- Involvement – We have sought to establish a comprehensive set of risk registers. All levels of staff are encouraged to report risks and opportunities to the groups who maintain the registers.
- Proportionality – We have incorporated risk management into our planning and delivery reporting systems to ensure risks are managed in a consistent and measured way and that adequate internal control arrangements are in place.
- Evidence – Our process is designed to ensure all relevant risk factors are considered and quantified. This provides a shared understanding of each risk and the options for dealing with and managing them.
- Responsibility – We have appointed risk stewards to oversee the arrangements for managing those risks contained in the corporate risk register and risk coordinators to manage the risk contained in Group registers.

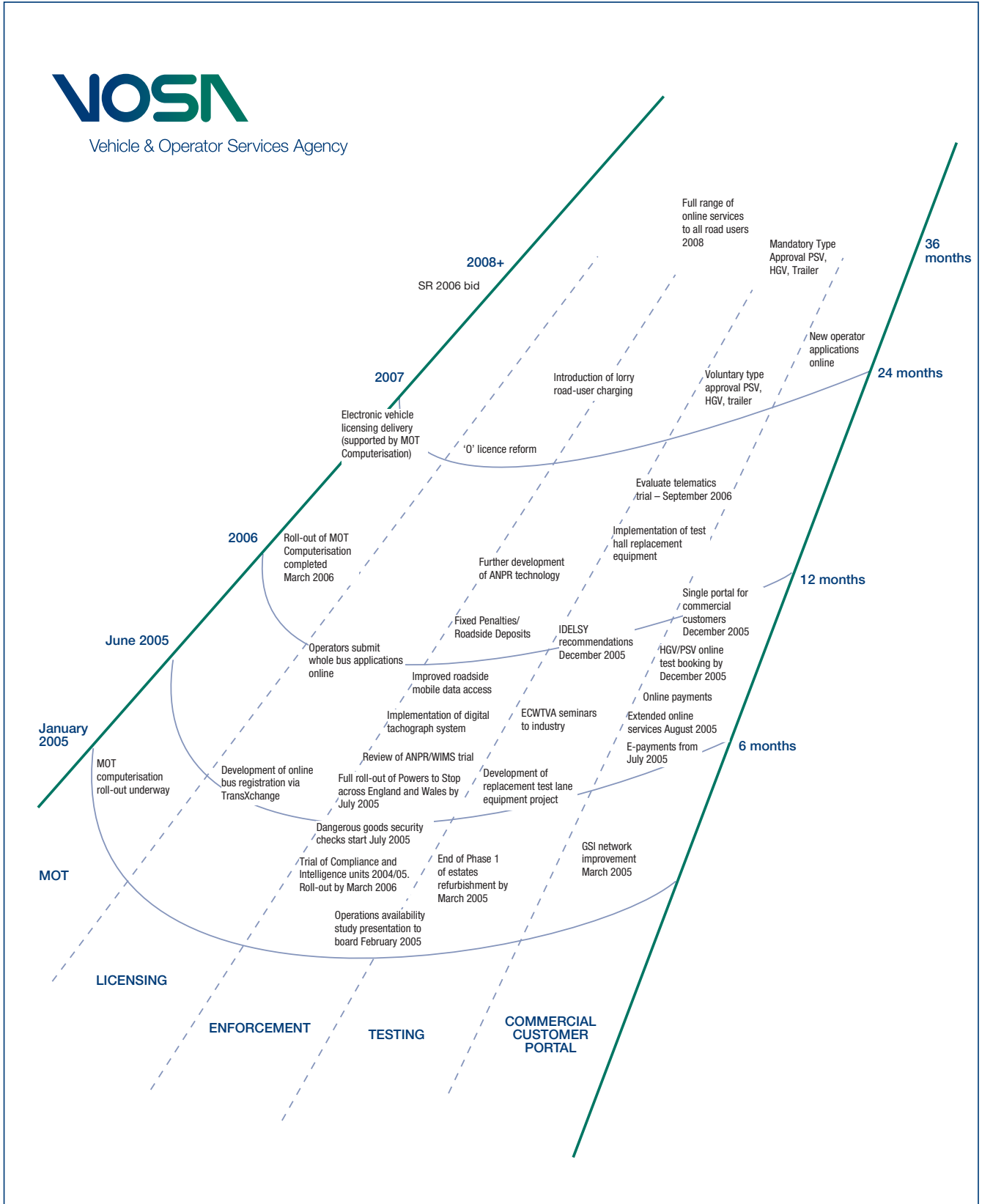
The Directing Board has established and embedded within VOSA a comprehensive risk management system, as reviewed by the Audit and Risk Management Committee. Risk management has been built into the corporate planning systems and has also been incorporated into our Total Quality processes to complement the work already undertaken by Corrective Action and Continuous Improvement teams.

Individual executive directors are designated risk stewards for each of the key risks contained in the corporate risk register. The stewards monitor and/or develop controls or risk treatment plans through specific groups who are responsible for the areas identified as high risk (impact and/or probability).

A second tier of risk register is maintained by product groups, project teams and operational or policy branches. This tier identifies new or emerging risks and, where possible, agrees and puts in place risk treatment plans. Where it is judged that potential risks may have a corporate impact, these risks are reported to the Directing Board through the Monthly Performance Report using a RAG assessment (red/amber/green – to indicate whether controls are considered effective, less than effective or ineffective).

Business Plan supporting information

Delivery route map



Licensing volumes

HGV		Actual	Forecast	Planned
		2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Operator licences in issue				
	Restricted	49,500	49,500	49,500
	Standard National	41,100	41,100	41,100
	Standard International	12,400	12,200	12,200
	Total operator licences in issue	103,000	102,800	102,800
Vehicles on licence				
	Restricted	106,100	106,500	106,500
	Standard National	202,700	204,100	204,000
	Standard International	98,700	87,400	89,500
	Total vehicles on licence	407,500	398,000	400,000
	New licence applications	10,600	10,100	10,100
	Variations to licence	9,700	9,700	9,700
	Continuations	13,800	13,900	14,200
PSV		Actual	Forecast	Planned
		2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Operator licences in issue				
	Restricted	2,800	2,900	2,900
	Standard National	3,000	3,100	3,100
	Standard International	2,700	2,600	2,600
	Total operator licences in issue	8,500	8,600	8,600
Bus permits issued				
	Small bus	4,412	4,500	4,500
	Large bus	111	110	110
	Community bus	13	10	10
	Total bus permits issued	4,536	4,620	4,620
	New licence applications	1,320	1,380	1,380
	Variations to licence	1,320	1,300	1,300
	Continuations	1,200	1,100	1,100
Bus registrations				
	Live	24,200	24,000	24,000
	New	4,700	5,400	5,400
	Variations	10,100	11,100	11,100
	Cancellations	3,300	3,300	3,300

Testing volumes

		Actual 2003/04	Forecast 2004/05	Planned 2005/06
HGV	Motor Vehicles			
	Annual tests	467,500	468,500	480,000
	Re-tests	140,500	123,000	126,000
	Trailers			
	Annual tests	241,500	243,500	249,500
	Re-tests	58,500	57,000	58,500
		908,000	892,000	914,000
PSV	Annual tests	81,500	78,500	80,500
	Re-tests	14,000	13,000	13,500
		95,500	91,500	94,000
LGV	Class IV	2,400	2,400	2,500
	Class V	10,400	8,300	8,500
	Class VII	1,400	1,300	1,300
		14,200	12,000	12,300
SVA	SVA	33,600	16,200	16,000
	ESVA	3,500	19,000	19,000
	MSVA	2,500	7,700	8,000
	Re-tests	12,700	6,000	6,000
VIC		N/A	42,000	70,000
ADR		1,569	2,500	2,500
TIR		446	325	400
COIF		8,885	9,000	9,000
TEMPO		571	420	500
Issue of MOT certificates (million)		24.6	25.1	25.7

VOSA Service Standards

Licensing:

- **Goods and PSV licence applications – unopposed and which do not require a public inquiry:** 85% of applications will have a decision issued within nine weeks of the date of receipt of the application and the required fee in the Traffic Area Office.
- **Goods and PSV licence applications – opposed or which require a public inquiry:** 85% of licence applications that attract opposition or which require to be determined at public inquiry will have a decision issued within 20 weeks of the date of receipt of the application and the required fee in the Traffic Area Office.
- **Goods and PSV licence major variation applications – opposed or which require a public inquiry:** 85% of applications for a major change to a goods or PSV operator's licence will be determined within 20 weeks of the date of receipt of the application and the required fee in the Traffic Area Office.
- **Goods and PSV licence continuations:** 95% of operators who apply to continue their operator's licence will be sent their licence documentation and vehicle discs within five working days of the correct fee required to continue the licence being received in the Traffic Area Office.
- **Bus registrations:** 95% of complete applications to register, vary or cancel local bus service registrations will be determined within five working days of receipt of the application and any required fee being received in the Traffic Area Office.

Testing staff will aim to:

- (at all our full-time test stations) offer an appointment for 95% of annual tests within 15 working days of the date of receipt;
- complete 90% of all tests within 90 minutes of their appointment time. This will not apply if a vehicle is late for its test appointment;
- conduct prohibition clearances within three days of a requested date;
- provide all drivers with the relevant documentation at the end of the test (e.g. roller-brake test print-out, smoke meter print-out, written details of failure items) and offer an explanation of what all the information contained within the documentation means; and
- conduct tests to our published standards.

Enforcement staff will aim to:

- apply enforcement standards correctly and fairly;
- avoid delaying vehicles by more than one hour at road checks;
- keep delays at road checks to buses and coaches carrying passengers to a minimum by beginning inspections within 15 minutes and releasing vehicles within 30 minutes of being stopped. Note: where prohibitions of further movement of any vehicles are issued or drivers are cautioned for offences, longer delays may be necessary but these will be kept to a minimum;
- remove prohibitions immediately if the cause has been put right while a VOSA Examiner is still on site, providing the VOSA Examiner has no reason to think the vehicle is unfit for service;
- carry out all overloading prohibition clearance examinations within 24 hours of the request being received;
- give the driver a copy of any prohibition issued to them or their vehicle and explain what it means. A copy of any prohibition will be sent to the vehicle operator within five working days;
- issue an exemption to a prohibition (where appropriate) to allow the limited safe use of the vehicle subject to specified conditions; and
- advise as soon as possible following any investigation whether any further action will be taken, and, if so, what that action is likely to be.

Staff supervising the MOT testing scheme will:

- apply enforcement standards correctly and fairly, and they will provide timely and reliable advice whenever it is sought;
- notify appointments to visit proposed testing premises within five working days of receipt of a fully completed and correct application;
- provide a Nominated Tester training course or assessment exam within 20 working days of receipt of a correctly completed application form;
- issue pads of MOT test certificates within one working day of receipt of a request and frequently by return (as MOT Computerisation is rolled out, this standard will no longer apply, as receipt-style certificates will be printed); and
- determine 95% of appeals within five weeks of receipt of full written representations by the due date against the withdrawal of an Authorised Examiner, Nominated Tester, designated council or designated council inspector status and against intentions to refuse applications for the above.

Glossary

ADR	International arrangement for the carriage of dangerous goods	MSVA	Motorcycle Single Vehicle Approval
AE	Authorised Examiner – individual, person in partnership or company meeting the requirements (premises, equipment, personnel and good repute) to carry out MOT testing	NT	Nominated Tester – qualified mechanic who has been nominated by an AE to carry out MOT tests
ANPR	Automatic Number Plate Recognition	OBD	On-board diagnostics
CCP	Commercial Customer Programme	OSS	One-Stop Service
CITA	Comité International de l'Inspection Technique Automobile – International Motor Vehicle Inspection Committee	PCL	Palomino Consultants Ltd
COIF	Certification of Initial Fitness	PNC	Police National Computer
DfT	Department for Transport	PSV	Public Service Vehicle – vehicle licensed to carry (normally nine or more) fare-paying passengers
DSA	Driving Standards Agency	SVA	Single Vehicle Approval scheme
DVLA	Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency	TAN	Traffic Area Network
DVO	Driver, Vehicle and Operator Group	TAO	Traffic Area Office
ECWVTA	European Community Whole Vehicle Type Approval	TCs	Traffic Commissioners – seven TCs are appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport and are statutorily independent in their licensing functions
ESVA	Enhanced Single Vehicle Approval	TE	Traffic Examiner – VOSA employee responsible for front-line enforcement of safety and licensing provisions on HGVs and PSVs
EU	European Union	TIR	International arrangement for the carriage of goods sealed for customs purposes
GVTS	Goods Vehicle Testing Station	UN	United Nations
HA	Highways Agency	VCA	Vehicle Certification Agency
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle – goods-carrying vehicle over 3,500 kg design gross weight	VE	Vehicle Examiner – VOSA employee responsible for front-line enforcement of roadworthiness of HGVs and PSVs and standards control of MOT testing stations
ICT	Information Communications Technology	VI	Vehicle Inspectorate
IDELSY	Initiative for Diagnosis of Electronic Systems	VIC	Vehicle Identity Check
LGV	Light Goods Vehicle – goods-carrying vehicle not exceeding 3,500 kg design gross weight	VOSA	Vehicle Operator Services Agency
MORI	Market and Opinion Research International	VTS	Vehicle Testing Station
MOT	Annual statutory test for cars and motorcycles	WIMS	Weigh In Motion Sensor

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