



Department
for Transport

From the Parliamentary
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Ruth Cadbury MP
Chair, Transport Committee
House of Commons
London
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22 July 2025

Dear Ruth,

Following my letter of 20 May, I am writing to update you on the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency's (DVSA) progress with its 7-point plan announced in December last year. I did say in that letter I would write to you again by 30 June 2025, but you will be aware my officials agreed with yours a slightly longer timeframe for writing to you again.

Between 19 May and 13 June 2025, DfT established a taskforce to support DVSA's effort to deliver a lasting reduction in car practical driving test waiting times. Initial findings have highlighted the complexity of the demand picture. Whilst the further measures announced in April 2025 have created thousands of additional tests, I have asked DVSA to consider what further measures could be taken and I shall update the committee in early autumn.

Practical car driving test waiting times

As anticipated, practical car driving test waiting times continued to rise during the first quarter of 2025/26. This is because demand for car driving tests remained high.

Recruitment of new driving examiners (DE), a major part of the initiative to bring down long car test waiting times, remains challenging. Further information about the recruitment of new DEs appears below.

The average national car waiting time during June 2025 was 22.3 weeks. As you know, DVSA calculates the waiting time as being when there are 10% of the test slots still available for sale across a full week. As such, it is worth noting there are regularly tests still available much earlier than the official

waiting time might suggest. DVSA has always been clear there are no quick fixes to the current high waiting times.

Improving the rules for booking practical driving tests

Following on from DVSA's call for evidence and the information received, on 28 May, DVSA launched a public consultation on improving the rules for booking car driving tests. The agency is seeking views from the driver training industry, learner drivers and other interested parties on changes that aim to prevent learner drivers from being exploited by those who resell tests at a higher price.

The consultation will close at 11:59pm on 23 July 2025. By 2 July 2025, DVSA had received 37,535 responses. In line with the consultation principles, DVSA will aim to publish a summary of responses, including the next steps, within 3 months of the consultation closing.

Recruiting 450 DEs

You will recall DVSA's aim to recruit 450 DEs. Since July last year, the agency has recruited and trained 200 DEs who are now in post and delivering driving tests. Not everyone who made it past the initial recruitment stage made it either into, or out of training to become productive DEs; 80 failed or resigned.

There are currently 67 trainees in training, however, with 100 more who are booked to a future course and 96 further applicants have been made offers.

As you know, to mitigate the continued rise in demand, the Secretary of State for Transport asked DVSA in April 2025 to take further action through four more measures. The first was to fast track the consultation I mentioned above, which DVSA has done. An update on the other three are as follows:

- 1. Reintroduce the additional testing allowance (ATA) incentive scheme for DEs**

DVSA launched the ATA incentive scheme on 1 June. DVSA believes the introduction of the ATA will encourage both DEs and those in other roles to provide additional tests. Since the incentive scheme launched on 1 June 2025, DVSA has completed 28,541 tests using the ATA scheme, compared to 18,141 tests using the previous overtime scheme in June 2024. An increase of 10,400 tests completed.

- 2. Double the number of permanent trainers to help get more new DEs testing sooner**

DVSA is continuing to work towards doubling the number of trainers for DEs. This will ensure those potential new DEs can qualify as quickly as

possible. DVSA will be training new trainers through summer 2025 and we expect those who are successful to be in post by September.

3. Ask for volunteers from colleagues who can test but currently doing other roles to return to provide practical driving tests

There has been limited success with this so far. DVSA is continuing to encourage suitably qualified volunteers to conduct driving tests wherever possible.

DVSA progress on the 7-point plan

DVSA has also made progress with the 7-point plan announced in December last year and delivery of all the measures remain on track.

Introduce tougher terms and conditions for the service driving instructors use to book and manage car driving tests for their pupils

Since the change to the set of tougher terms and conditions, DVSA has closed 547 business accounts, made 233 suspensions and issued 111 warnings. Driving out abuse of the system will make more tests available for those who need them, when they need them.

Consult on increasing the amount of time people have to wait to take another test in certain situations

DVSA is continuing to explore proposals with the aim of consulting later in the year. I shall keep you informed about this forthcoming consultation.

Encourage learner drivers to be better prepared for their driving test through the 'Ready to Pass?' campaign

DVSA's ['Ready to Pass?' campaign](#) team is working with DVLA, DfT and National Highways to explore how we can better collaborate to help learners through the learning to drive process and improve the safety of young drivers.

DVSA has shared the learn to car driver user journey with the existing campaign messages and channels mapped onto the journey with DVLA and DfT. DVSA has also identified opportunities in the journey for collaboration, and it's been agreed DfT's marketing team will set up a cross-departmental workshop between DVLA, DfT and DVSA policy, digital and marketing leads to discuss this further and agree next steps. DVSA has also shared the campaign insight with DfT's behavioural insight team to help inform future research and messaging.

DVSA is in the process of procuring artificial intelligence content creation software to help with voiceovers and converting images into videos and

interactive quiz software for GOV.UK to encourage learners to self-assess if they are ready to take their test.

The campaign's existing no cost activities continue to support learners to be sure they are ready to take their test and encourage them to reschedule if they are not. This will increase their likelihood of passing their test first time, reducing overall demand on the system.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lilian', followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that extends to the right.

LILIAN GREENWOOD MP

MINISTER FOR THE FUTURE OF ROADS