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for Transport

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Dear Huw,

Thank you for the opportunity to give evidence on the 'Work of the DVSA' along with Peter Hearn, Operations Director (North), at the Transport Select Committee hearing on 27 October 2021.

Please find below our responses to the information requested by the Committee members.

- **The Chair requested Baroness Vere write to the Committee regarding the DVSA's trading fund status being revoked. (Q27)**

In 2019, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) carried out a routine review of the DVSA's sector classification on the instructions of Eurostat, the European statistical body, as part of a wider exercise involving similarly classified entities. It decided the DVSA should be re-classified as 'central government' for the purposes of National Accounts, rather than remain classified as a 'public corporation'. As the classification changed to 'central government', HM Treasury requested that the Secretary of State for Transport revoke the DVSA Trading Fund Order and include the DVSA within the Departmental reporting boundary. This means that the DVSA's financial performance becomes a part of Department for Transport group reporting and the DVSA's funding becomes controlled through the standard HM Treasury budgeting process (i.e. delegated budgetary control totals).

Trading fund status is revoked through laying a Statutory Instrument. The DVSA's Trading Fund (Revocation) Order 2021 was laid before Parliament on 1 February 2021 and came into force on 1 April 2021. The decision to revoke the DVSA's trading fund status was not based on performance.

- **Greg Smith asked Baroness Vere to write to the Committee on the current number of HGV instructors and to explain where there are gaps that are preventing the current backlog from being solved. (Q32)**

There are around 1,000 training schools who book using the DVSA's trainer booking system. Vocational training is not regulated; therefore, the DVSA does not have full information on the number of trainers [instructors] working in the industry, but it believes it to be in the region of 5,000.

The DVSA is working with stakeholders and trainers to understand capacity and their future needs as part of ongoing plans to support the shortage of drivers in the longer term.

- **Robert Largan asked Peter Hearn to write to the Committee with the number of people who obtained various categories of HGV driving licenses in 2020. (Q41)**

HGV tests passed by Delegated Examiners	C1	C1E	C	CE
2018/19	233	17	1,164	189
2019/20	225	6	977	120
2020/21	151	11	712	29

HGV tests passed, in total, by DVSA and Delegated Examiners	C1	C1E	C	CE
2018/19	4,707	370	27,009	12,577
2019/20	4,677	296	26,005	11,787
2020/21	3,009	89	9,293	4,533

To note: The above figures may include the same person/people in different categories. They cannot be added together and quoted as the number of people.

An explanation of the licence categories is as follows:

C1	Lorries between 3500kg & 7500kg with a trailer up to 750kg
C1E	Combinations of vehicles where the towing vehicle is in category C1 and its trailer has a maximum authorised mass of over 750kg as long as the maximum authorised mass of the vehicle and trailer is not more than 12000kg and the maximum authorised mass of the trailer is not more than the unladen weight of the towing vehicle
C	Vehicles over 3500kg with a trailer up to 750kg
CE	Vehicles over 3500kg with a trailer over 750kg

- **Robert Largan asked Peter Hearn to write to the Committee on the number of HGV tests lost during the pandemic. (Q42)**

It is not possible to determine the number of HGV tests lost during the pandemic as these were not tests that were booked and then not taken. However, based on the number of HGV tests typically conducted in a year (around 70,000*), around 62% of HGV tests were potentially lost during the pandemic.

Demand for HGV tests has been running at around 15,000 per month.

When a vocational test slot is released, a trainer booker may purchase the slot and return it to the DVSA in exchange for a refund if they do not have a candidate to fill the slot. Refunds usually run at around 11% (circa 1,600). In September 2021, refunds were at 43.5% (over 6,500).

Vocational slots where the examiner is available but there is no test booked (EANTB) would normally be less than 2%. In September 2021, EANTB was 8.8%, reflecting the high level of refunds and subsequently unsold slots.

- **Robert Largan asked Peter Hearn to write to the Committee with the number of vocational examiners the DVSA had 10 years ago. (Q51)**

The DVSA does not hold data on the number of vocational examiners the DVSA had 10 years ago as it operates a live system that shows the current status of employees. The table below shows at the number of vocational examiners as at 1 November 2021:

Total Headcount	Full Time Equivalent	Full time headcount	Part time headcount
282*	260.79	154	63

**65 members of staff are trained to conduct vocational tests, but do not do so as part of their regular day job. / other duties*

As of 22 March 2020, the DVSA had 256 vocational examiners.

Between 23 March 2020 and 2 November 2020, 39 staff who were qualified to conduct for vocational tests stopped testing due to reasons such as licence revoked on medical grounds / retirement, resignation etc.

The DVSA was unable to train examining staff to replace the attrition experienced due to lockdown restrictions.

- **Karl McCartney requested Baroness Vere write to the Committee on the current number of people who are qualified to deliver fuel. (Q64)**

ADR is a United Nations treaty that governs transnational transport of any materials on the road that could be hazardous or cause danger to life or the environment.

Fuel drivers need ADR Certification (Class 3 and tanker), and then they would also need the PDP (Petroleum Driver Passport), which ensures tanker drivers in the UK are trained and assessed in loading, transporting and offloading petroleum fuel products from road tankers.

As of September 2021, there were 77,587 ADR drivers with ADR certification.

- **Karl McCartney asked Baroness Vere to write back on the following questions: (Q69)**
 - **Four months ago, how many qualified fuel delivery drivers were there?**
 - **Does that compare well to how many fuel drivers there were a year ago or two years ago?**
 - **What is the natural wastage? Is there a 10% turnover of those numbers every year?**
 - **How many extra fuel drivers are trained per year?**

There has been a 6% decrease in drivers holding ADR entitlement since August 2019:

- In June 2021, there were 77,450 ADR drivers with ADR certification.
- In August 2021, there were 77,252 ADR drivers with ADR certification.
- In September 2020, there were 80,072 ADR drivers with ADR certification.

For background, the distinction between ADR Certification (Class 3 and tankers) and PDP is that within ADR, you can undertake modules in regard to the class of goods that you wish to transport, and in this case class 3 is flammable liquid. Within class 3, there are many different types of

flammable liquids, one of which is fuel. A driver will also undertake a module on the class of vehicle they wish to take, and in respect of flammable liquids (and fuel), it is mostly likely that these would be transported in tankers.

However, because fuel is just one particular good within class 3, and tankers can be used to transport various different flammable liquids, therefore this does not necessarily mean that all of those who have ADR Certification (class 3 and tankers) have a PDP. It is also worth noting that the number of drivers with a PDP card and the history does not equate to the total number of drivers because there is a small % (c.10%) who do not load at Terminals and hence, despite the fact they should anyway, have not obtained a card.

As live data is not processed from 4 months or 12 months ago, it is difficult to provide an accurate reading of how many drivers had valid licences with specific classes at those points in time. In addition, there are a few caveats with this data set, and so please note the following:

- The history of the PDP Scheme will show an increase as more and more drivers have joined the Scheme, but this does mean there has been an overall increase in the number of drivers.
- The PDP total numbers does not include Escalin drivers who have obtained their Defence PDP, as this data has to be kept confidential.

Below are the figures for PDP:

Drivers with a valid DGDT (Dangerous Goods Driver Training) certificate on 1 July 2021	77,450
Drivers with a PDP (Petroleum Driver Passport) certificate on 1 July 2021	11,085

Drivers with a valid DGDT certificate on 1 July 2020	79,822
Drivers with a PDP certificate on 1 July 2020	11,637

Total number of DGDT Tanker modules issued between 1 April 2021 and 30 September 2021	5568
Total number of DGDT Tanker modules issued between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021	8363
Total number of DGDT Tanker modules issued between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020	13,385

Total number of DGDT Class 3 modules issued between 1 April 2021 and 30 September 2021	7845
Total number of DGDT Class 3 modules issued between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021	11,689
Total number of DGDT Class 3 modules issued between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020	19,011

Total number of PDP certificates issued between 1 April 2021 and 30 September 2021 (not including OpEscalin)	1719
Total number of PDP certificates issued between 1 April 2020 and 30 March 2021 (not including OpEscalin)	1712
Total number of PDP certificates issued between 1 April 2019 and 30 March 2020 (not including OpEscalin)	2055

A caveat for the 2019-2020 module figures that may look inflated, is that this is the traditional “refresher” year. This is where long-standing candidates will have a pattern of their refresher date falling in a particular year, with it being 2019 on this occasion.

- **The Chair asked Baroness Vere that since there are 314 vocational examiners including those supplied by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and 3,500 tests available, does this not mean around 11 tests per week can be conducted by each examiner? 3,500 tests could be completed within 2 days if examiners are conducting 4 tests a day. Could we not do more tests then?**

This calculation is based on the number of vocational test slots available per week (test capacity) of 3,500 divided by the number of vocational examiners (314) resulting in each examiner conducting 11 tests per week.

However, this is not the case. The DVSA makes around 3,500 vocational tests available per week. Not all of those test slots are bought by trainers. A proportion of the slots that are bought are returned for a refund as the trainer does not have a candidate to present for test. In September 2021, refunds were at 43.5% (over 6,500). This means there is currently capacity within the test booking system.

The 314 vocational examiners includes 24 defence driving examiners supplied by the Ministry of Defence. Of the remaining 290 DVSA examiners skilled to conduct vocational tests, 65 are not operational due to other duties, such as policy administration work, and examiner training. Of those conducting vocational tests, around 25% are part-time. Annual leave and additional training also affects the number of tests an examiner conducts. Examiner utilisation is around 80%, equating to 156 full time equivalents. At 20 tests per week, per examiner, the number of tests conducted is 3,120 per week. The balance of tests (380) are conducted through over time.

- **Greg Smith asked Baroness Vere to confirm if DVLA have a tracking mechanism to ascertain how many PCV licence holders are seeking to obtain a HGV licence.**

Unfortunately it is not possible to show how many drivers with entitlement to drive buses (PCV) have also applied for entitlement to drive HGVs. The

DVLA's records show entitlements that drivers hold to drive specific vehicles at a point in time. Holders of both PCV and HGV licences also have provisional entitlements for other PCV/LGV/HGV vehicles automatically added to their driver records, meaning that they do not need to apply for a new licence if they wanted to train to become an HGV driver. Therefore, it is not possible to track how many bus drivers have applied to become HGV drivers.

- **An analysis of the breakdown of theory test centres across the regions of the UK.**

The new theory test service has been designed to improve accessibility for customers. Population data was used to determine where people live, and then a software tool was applied to map the routes and times based on average traffic flow. This uses the road network and is based on 34,000 reference points across England and Wales, and 6,976 in Scotland. The analysis showed that in order for 100% of candidates to be able to access a theory test centre within 40 minutes or 40 miles, a further 22 sites were needed, which resulted in some test centres having to be relocated.

A list of the theory test locations is at Annex A.

I hope the above is useful and helpful in answering the Committee's questions. Peter and I thank the Committee for its interest and scrutiny of DVSA's work.

*Yaws,
Charlotte*

BARONESS VERE OF NORBITON