

Motor Cycle Industry Trainer Association (MCITA)

Action Document

New Motorcycle Licence Test – Call to Action: April 2009.

You will no doubt be aware of the ongoing problems and issues which surround the new motorcycle test, which is being introduced as a requirement of a European regulation called the Second Driving Licence Directive. The new test will be introduced at the end of April.

The new test incorporates a number of new manoeuvres which are designed to complement the existing test. Some of these need to be performed at 50kph (31.06 mph). Due to an oversight on the part of the UK Government during European negotiations on the new test some years ago, the UK failed to argue for a derogation to allow the manoeuvres to be conducted at 30mph, meaning that a requirement emerged for new off road testing sites.

The Government originally planned to create around 90 test sites and suggested that there would be no increase to the motorcycle test fee, but since 2006 the DSA have been working on the development of only 66 test sites, which are known as Multi Purpose Test Centres (MPTC). The existing test is being delivered on approximately 250 test sites around the UK.

Various planning issues and problems meant that by the time the new test was originally meant to be implemented, September 29th 2008, only 39 test sites were completed. MCI and its partners in the motorcycle community approached Ministers and successfully persuaded the Government to delay the new test for six months, with an expectation that more test sites would come 'on line' and that the new test would be redesigned so that a broader range of testing facilities could be used.

Since September, the following situation has emerged.

- The new test will be modular. Module One will need to be delivered from the MPTCs as they contain the manoeuvres that need to be conducted at 50kph. Module 2 can be delivered from a broader range of sites.
- The motorcycle test fee will rise by 50% (the car test fee will rise by 15%)
- Only 45 MPTCs will be ready, a completely inadequate number if demands for Module One tests are to be met.
- DSA attempts to include casual and part time VOSA sites in the total of available Module One testing sites has been rejected by the industry and motorcycle trainers as being inadequate, given that these sites will only be available for a few hours a week.
- Numerous and fundamental issues have emerged from the new test booking procedure.
- The availability of tests under the new regime will not satisfy demand in many key areas of the country.

MCI, MCITA, MAG and the BMF will shortly meet Ministers again to discuss the current situation and the very real fear that the testing and training infrastructure could collapse under the new test regime. Although halting the implementation of the test is not legislatively possible, we are calling for a more creative interpretation of the new test than is being considered at present, in order to create enough flexibility in the system to meet demand and to ensure that motorcycle trainers do not go out of business.

In order to ensure that the Government realises the strength of feeling about this issue and the industry's serious concerns about the situation, the vitality of the training sector, jobs and road safety

impacts, this Action Document has been created to request support from MCITA members and the wider training industry

Why Does MCITA Seek Support on this Issue?

MCITA members and the MCITA Committee have expressed serious concerns about the new test and its impact on business, jobs and road safety. Our ongoing lobby in 2008 secured a delay to the new test, which we feel has not been properly exploited and serious concerns and key issues have yet to be resolved, particularly with regard to the number of MPTCs. We have had further contact with the Government on the issue and will shortly be meeting the DfT Minister Jim Fitzpatrick. We feel that only Ministerial intervention on the issue is likely to result in the emergence of any positive action.

However, we also need Parliamentary support in order to create additional pressure on the Government to act. MCI's public affairs department has been in contact with MPs on the issue. But for many constituency MPs, the case we make can be significantly enhanced if there is a local constituency interest or case which they can use.

Additionally, MCITA member companies and also individual ATB's represent a powerful lobbying force in their own right. You are all employers in Parliamentary constituencies. This means that you as an individual are in a prime position to gain the support of your local MP on various issues and have significant 'voice' in local political representation. We are therefore asking you to write to your local MP about the new motorcycle test and request their support for industry efforts to avert a crisis in motorcycle testing and training.

We have attached a letter below. MCITA requests that you send a copy of this letter to your local MP. Please personalise it if at all possible (perhaps by mentioning local training businesses), as a personal approach is more likely to achieve a positive result.

If you do not know who your MP is, please visit the <http://findyourmp.parliament.uk/commons/l/> website.

We would be very grateful if you could notify MCITA when you write your letter by sending a quick email to j.luckman@mcia.co.uk. We would also appreciate a copy of any replies that you get.

If your MP is interested in learning more about the issue and wants a meeting, we will be glad to help you prepare for this. Alternatively, the MCI team will be happy to meet MPs in Westminster, on your behalf, to discuss the motorcycle test issue. Please contact Craig Carey-Clinch at craig@mcia-pa.com or 07979 757484 if your MP is interested in a meeting and you would like a further briefing or other support.

Thank you for your support and we look forward to hearing from you soon.

The MCI Public Affairs Team