

UPDATE ON THE MOTORCYCLE TEST REVIEW

Summary

In June 2010, the Road Safety Minister announced a review of the practical motorcycle test, following concerns raised by the motorcycle training / industry and user groups about the accessibility of the module 1 test service, to candidates across the country, and also about the safety of some of the current module 1 manoeuvres.

The Motorcycle Test Review has been considering alternative ways of providing a motorcycle test that maintains UK riding standards and improves accessibility and safety for test candidates, while meeting the requirements of the European legislation.

The test is currently carried out in two separate modules, one off-road on a purpose built manoeuvring area, and one on-road. The aim is to accommodate all of the manoeuvres in a single event test that can be carried out on road as far as possible and delivered in all parts of Great Britain.

We have made progress in identifying potential alternative manoeuvres and the kinds of location that could be suitable. Work is underway to evaluate these options to see if they are feasible, safe and deliverable in all areas.

Research

Phase 1

We have completed phase 1 of the research, which involved holding independent trials, off-road on mock road layouts, with test level candidates. The trials were conducted by the Transport Research Laboratory and concluded in December 2011. The trials evaluated and verified the standards, suitability and safety of the proposed new manoeuvres. Phase 1 has confirmed that the proposed new manoeuvres are feasible to be carried out on the road, with the exception of the figure of 8. A four page summary of the research findings is at Annex A.

Phase 2/3

As the outcome of phase 1 has proved positive, the next step is to move to trials at on-road locations, to establish feasibility and safety in real road environments. The on-road trials will include phase 2 of the research, involving experienced riders to ensure the safety of the trial environment and then, subject to consideration of phase 2 findings, phase 3 involving test level candidates. Phase 2 is underway and is due to finish in the autumn.

Next Steps

Following these trials, there will be a full public consultation on any proposals for changing the motorcycle test and, subject to the outcome of the consultation, a new version of the test could be introduced in 2013.

Initially, the priority will be to provide on-road testing in areas that do not currently have good access to existing off-road sites. In other areas, existing off road sites will be used for the new manoeuvres for a transitional period. In the longer term, on-road testing can

be rolled out more widely, as more on-road sites are identified. These would all be on a single event basis. The aim is that this would lead, over time, to all tests being done on-road.

In the meantime DSA is working with trainers in priority areas to identify and address candidates' needs. This includes making tests more accessible by using local, non-DSA sites on a part time casual hire basis.

In addition, in some areas the DSA will offer single event testing where trainers can book both modules together so that candidates can take module 2 immediately if they pass module 1. The DSA has also recruited more examiners and made improvements to the test booking process to ensure that motorcycle test slots are available in the right places at the right times, particularly during the summer when demand is highest.