

MOT TESTING SCHEME

Requirements for Authorisation for a Vehicle Test Station

(Common to all Classes)

November 2009

The Vehicle and Operator Services Agency, on behalf of the Secretary of State appoints Authorised Examiners and Designated Councils to carry out inspections known generally as MOT tests. This document sets out the application procedure and requirements that must be met.

IMPORTANT: THIS DOCUMENT SHOULD BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR AUTHORISATION FOR A VEHICLE TEST STATION (COMMON TO ALL CLASSES) AND REQUIREMENTS FOR AUTHORISATION FOR AUTHORISED EXAMINERS.

WARNING: Applicants are advised not to proceed with alterations to buildings or purchase of equipment, etc, before receiving written approval in principle from the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency.

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1. Introduction.

1.1 This section details the requirements for those applying to have a site approved as a VTS or seeking approval for changes to an existing VTS. It covers:

- How to Apply
- Application Enclosures
- Requirements for Premises
- Equipment Requirements
- MOT Testing Signs and Notices
- Acceptable Variations to Layout and Equipment

2. How to Apply.

2.1 Applications must be made on the current Application for MOT Authorisation Form (VT01). All relevant sections should be completed and the signed form returned to a local VOSA Office along with any requested enclosures as outlined in this section.

2.2 Those applying should not submit their application until confident that it will fully meet all the requirements, approval to test will only be granted to applicants who also meet the requirements to be an Authorised Examiner or are already authorised.

2.3 The requirements in this section should be read in conjunction with the Class Specific Requirements (for classes approval is sought) and the List of Acceptable Equipment.

Note: If the applicant proposes to carry out building alterations or obtain new equipment, it is recommended that this is **not** done before VOSA has given approval in principle to the application.

3. Application Enclosures.

3.1 Applications for a new site to be approved for testing or alterations to existing sites will need to be supported by the following evidence;

- a) site plan showing the buildings, the location of the testing bay, the access from and to the public highway and the location of the MOT notice board
- b) a fully dimensioned drawing of the proposed testing bay, or bays, showing adjacent equipment and parts of the building, the location of the test equipment, the position and dimensions of the entrances and exits, and the area from which the test may be observed
- c) planning permission (or an exemption), or written confirmation from the Local Authority that the existing approval covers MOT testing.

Note: The plan and drawings must show that the site will meet the requirements outlined in this section and the requirements for the class(es) approval to test is sought.

4. Requirements for premises.

For a site to be considered for approval it must provide the following:

4.1 Premises with:

- a) test facilities housed in a weatherproof building capable of being totally enclosed and provide a satisfactory working area

Note: not mandatory for Roller Brake Test standing area on Class 3,4,5,7 authorisations.
- b) equipment laid out so that testing can be performed effectively. The equipment should be laid out and located so that other garage activities will not affect the proper conduct of the test
- c) unobstructed, safe and easy access from the site entrance to the building entrance
- d) adequate off road parking
- e) a clearly identified weatherproof public waiting room or area from which the whole test can be directly observed without interruption, except for road testing (room for 2 seated people is considered sufficient)
 - mirror or camera relayed images may be acceptable if all parts of the test can be observed as it would from an enclosed viewing area with window. Consideration should be given to the quality of image produced during variable light conditions. The use of recording equipment (CCTV) is unacceptable
 - the observation room or area should be identified by a notice and floor markings if applicable. There should also be a notice in reception indicating the presence of a viewing area.

4.2 A test bay with:

- a) clear unobstructed access and egress from the entrance of the building
- b) vehicle entrances and exits that conform to the dimensions applicable to the class(es) for which authorisation is sought
- c) a width which conforms to the dimensions applicable to the classes which authorisation is sought. Minor intrusions such as wall piers may encroach on these dimensions provided vehicle testing is not impeded

Minor intrusion: means any part of the building structure or other fixtures which come within the minimum bay outline.

- they must be so positioned that vehicle movement and the recommended method of inspection are not impeded
 - items of equipment other than the brake tester console and a desk surface for MOT purposes are not normally permitted
- d) headroom which conforms to the dimensions applicable to the class(es) for which authorisation is sought
- e) adequate general illumination. There must be sufficient artificial lighting to enable testing to be carried out without difficulty.

4.3 A layout:

- a) which conforms to the requirements of the class for which authorisation is sought
- b) with at least 600mm clearance between the outer edges of equipment in adjacent bays on side by side layouts
- c) with at least 600mm clearance around all parts of a lift, including control boxes
- d) with a clearance of at least 1.0m forwards of the non drive on end and 1.5m to the rear of the drive on end of a lift or pit to any entrance/exit door or wall.

MOT Testing Distraction or Disruption.

There is an increased likelihood of distraction and disruption to MOT tests when bays are not separated by walls, etc. from other activities on the premises.

new applicants should be aware that where VOSA considers there may be a risk of testing distraction or disruption, they may be asked to clearly paint the outline of the boundaries of the test bays in 'open plan' workshops/premises

- test bays must then be kept clear of all non-MOT testing activities and equipment when testing is in progress
- existing testing stations that make alterations increasing the likelihood of testing distraction or disruption may be required to comply with the above paragraphs.

5. Equipment Requirements.

5.1 Major Equipment:

- a) a means of allowing the underside of vehicles to be properly examined without obstruction or hindrance; (fitted with steering and suspension play detectors on the VOSA List of Acceptable Equipment if an Automated Test Lane (ATL) or One Person Test Lanes (OPTL installation)
- b) a testing station may be permitted to have more than one underside inspection facility which share the same brake tester, headlamp testing area and emissions equipment providing
 - i) the underside facilities are located so that testing can be carried out effectively
 - ii) the additional underside facility meets the requirements for the class(es) tested and does not adversely affect the standard of the test
 - iii) if the additional underside facility is used as a headlamp standing area then it must have a dedicated headlamp aim tester unless the rails are continuous across all bays . The facility must also meet all the requirements associated with headlamp testing, including level and calibration certificates
 - iv) the viewing area has an unrestricted view of all the testing facilities, if this cannot be achieved from one viewing area then additional viewing areas must be provided.

5.2 A headlamp aim testing facility.

5.3 Brake testing equipment.

5.4 Emissions testing equipment. (excluding motor bicycles)

5.5 All testing equipment must be kept in good working order. Measuring apparatus must be calibrated in accordance with VOSA's requirements. If an item of mandatory test equipment is not re-calibrated by its due date then testing which uses that item will be prevented until the item is re-calibrated.

5.6 Miscellaneous Equipment:

- a) a tyre tread depth gauge selected from VOSA's latest List of Acceptable Equipment
- b) corrosion assessment tool
- c) suitable pinch bars, long and short (N/A classes 1 & 2)
- d) a steel tape measure (min extended length 1.0m)

- e) suitable wheel chocks for the class(es) of vehicle to be tested (not applicable classes 1 & 2)
- f) brake pedal application device from the VOSA List of Acceptable Equipment (only mandatory for ATL & OPTL installations)
- g) suitably positioned mirrors or colour camera system for lighting checks (only mandatory for ATL & OPTL installations)
- h) a suitable hand held low voltage inspection lamp.

6. MOT Testing Signs and Notices.

- 6.1 A Vehicle Testing Station sign (three triangles detailed in 'The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002, Schedule 4, diagram 864'). The prescribed testing station sign to be displayed in a prominent position, no part higher than 4.5m from the ground and no more than one sign on each road frontage.
- 6.2 The business trading name as described within either the Companies or the Business Names Acts is displayed conspicuous and legibly.
- 6.3 An MOT notice board with a protective transparent covering so positioned that VOSA notices can easily be read by anyone submitting vehicles for test. The board must be of sufficient size to accommodate at least six A4 notices (Portrait).

7. Acceptable Variations to Layout and Equipment.

- 7.1 Provided there is no change in the class of vehicles tested, particular variations will be allowed for Authorised Examiners and applicants as shown below.
 - a) **Existing Authorised Examiners moving their test bay or equipment within their present building(s).**
 - i. the test bay and equipment layout of these existing Authorised Examiners will be considered suitable if they meet the requirements as laid down in section 3 to 5 above, except where it would be impossible to do so without major structural alteration, such as significant work to the roof, floor or load-bearing walls
 - ii. test equipment requirements will be considered met if the existing Authorised Examiner retains his current equipment. If new equipment is obtained, it must meet the current relevant requirements.

- b) **New applicants or existing Authorised Examiners moving into previously authorised premises using an existing test bay. Provided an NT has carried out a test and issued a test certificate within the previous 12 months.**
 - i. the test bay and equipment layout of new applicants moving into previously authorised premises will be considered suitable if they meet the Requirements for Authorisation (previously Conditions of Appointment) that were current when the site was last accepted. Occasionally, certain updates will have to be complied with i.e. test equipment, tools etc. Advice should be sought from the local VOSA Office at initial inspection
 - ii. test equipment requirements will be considered met if the equipment last used for MOT testing is retained, provided that it is still in full working order. However, any changes to required equipment that would have been necessary had the premises been in continuous testing must also be complied with

Note: The Salter type brake meter (pull along brake tester) is not acceptable for new or re-authorisations.

Authorised Examiners and new applicants in remote rural areas

- 7.2 The premises, equipment layout and equipment of Authorised Examiners and new applicants in remote rural areas will be considered suitable if the requirements are met in VOSA's view as far as is reasonably possible.

To be considered for remote rural area status:

- a) the premises must be 15 miles or more by road from a testing station that meets the specification as laid down in Section 3 to 5 or as varied by 7.1
- b) not more than 350 tests per year are likely to be carried out.

Equipment Awaiting Approval

- 7.3 Brake and headlamp test equipment will normally be selected from VOSA's latest List of Acceptable Equipment:

- a) all applicants that wish to use any equipment not on VOSA's List of Acceptable Equipment will be referred to VOSA Headquarters

- b) exceptionally, where a manufacturer has sought acceptance of his equipment but VOSA has not assessed its suitability, applicants may use equipment not on the List of Acceptable Equipment, provided the application is supported by
 - i. a certificate signed by the manufacturer, or recognised agent in the case of imported equipment, that it meets the performance specification and is correctly installed
 - ii. an undertaking signed by the applicant that he will cease testing until the equipment is replaced or modified if subsequently VOSA decides that it does not meet its specification or it is not correctly installed. (Normally this would be three months).