

DVA Monthly Tests Conducted Statistics

User Guidance

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This guidance supports the latest statistics presented in the *DVA Monthly Tests Conducted Statistics* publication¹. It includes data sources, descriptions and supplementary background information, which you should consider when using information from the publication.

We also use the data in this report in our quarterly *DfI Driver, Vehicle, Operator, and Enforcements Statistics* publication, again available on our website.

DVA statisticians have published a Data Quality Assessment report detailing information users may find helpful on the quality of the data. You can find the report at the following web address:

<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/publications/driver-and-vehicle-statistics-northern-ireland-administrative-data-quality-assessment>

¹ Available from our website at <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/driver-and-vehicle-agency-monthly-tests-conducted-statistics>

1. User Guidance – Vehicle Testing

Vehicle testing forms the most significant aspect, in terms of volumes, of the work of the Operations Directorate in the DVA, and by extension, the DVA as a whole.

The vehicle testing function is carried out by DVA-employed vehicle examiners across fifteen vehicle test centres in Northern Ireland. Testing includes the periodic inspection of cars, lorries, buses, taxis, motorcycles and other vehicles to ensure compliance with statutory roadworthiness standards, the testing of taximeters, and individual vehicle approval tests for one-off builds and imports.

Data Source and Coverage

NISRA statisticians extract the data from the DVA's in-house *Booking Services Project* (BSP) administrative system using inbuilt system reports. This system enables further disaggregation of the test volumes to be carried out on a consistent basis.

The data covers all tests conducted in NI during the month, broken down by the broad test category or test centre. Taximeter tests are excluded from these tables. These figures do not include those tests where the customer failed to attend (FTA) but which DVA had to provide a test appointment.

The data in table 1.4 covers all test bookings made during the month. It is important to note that this table refers to the date the booking was initially created on BSP, whereas the other tables refer to the date of the actual tests. This difference in reference dates means the two statistics are not directly comparable.

The vehicle testing statistics in this report are provisional due to the short period between the reference date and publication. You can find finalised statistics in our quarterly National Statistics publication.

Guidance

A description of the aggregations used to combine individual test types into common categories is included in Appendix A (Vehicle Test Classifications).

Individual Vehicle Approval (IVA) and Single Vehicle Approval (SVA)

In April 2009, the *Single Vehicle Approval* (originally introduced in May 1998) was replaced by the *Individual Vehicle Approval*. The *Motorcycle Single Vehicle Approval* (MSVA) was introduced on the 8th August 2003.

In 2016, NISRA statisticians conducted a harmonisation of vehicle testing categories. The substantial increase in IVA numbers during this time is because of a clearer identification of IVA test classes. This has also resulted in the reclassification of a small number of tests from the heavy goods, trailers, and omnibus to the IVA classification. The reclassification of categories within the vehicle testing tables has no impact on the overall totals for each quarter.

Data Quality Assessment

Very good – all data in the vehicle testing section were derived from a single administrative system (BSP) with full coverage and incorporating various validation checks. This single system approach means that the additional disaggregation's can be performed on a consistent basis from a single source.

2. User Guidance – Driver Practical Testing

DVA provides a wide range of driving test categories for testing learner drivers and motorcyclists to ensure that they meet the required standard of competence necessary to drive safely on public roads.

Seventeen test centres throughout Northern Ireland conduct practical driving tests, although not every centre carries out the full range of practical tests.

Driver testing, along with vehicle testing, falls under the remit of the Operations Directorate.

Data Source and Coverage

NISRA statisticians extract the data from the *Booking Services Project* (BSP) administrative system using inbuilt system reports. This system enables further disaggregation of the test volumes to be carried out on a consistent basis.

The data covers all tests conducted in NI during the month, broken down by the broad test category or test centre. These figures do not include those tests where the customers failed to attend (FTA) but which DVA nevertheless still had to provide a test appointment.

The data in table 2.4 covers all test bookings made during the month. It is important to note that this table refers to the date the booking was initially created on BSP, whereas the other tables refer to the date of the actual tests. This difference in reference dates means the two statistics are not directly comparable.

The driver testing statistics in this report are provisional due to the short period between the reference date and publication. You can find finalised statistics in our quarterly National Statistics publication.

Guidance

A description of the aggregations used to combine individual test types into common categories is included in Appendix B (Driver Test Classifications).

Both the current NI and GB motorcycle driving licence tests contain two test modules, both of which must be completed successfully to attain the licence. Module 1 is an off the road manoeuvring test which must be successfully passed, before undertaking module 2 which is the road driving test. When the candidate has successfully completed module 1, they may undertake module 2. The 2-module test was first introduced in NI on the 8th December 2008 and in GB on 27th April 2009. Both the NI and GB figures in this publication are the module 1 and module 2 tests combined i.e. number taking module 1 tests + number taking module 2 tests and number passing module 1 + number passing module 2. In NI, from February 2011, learner moped and motorcycle riders have to complete a compulsory basic training (CBT) course with an approved motorcycle instructor (AMI) before they can take their practical test.

The taxi driver practical test was introduced for new entrants to the taxi industry on the 31st October 2014.

Note that unlike vehicle tests, there are no re-tests for driving tests. If a candidate fails a test, they must apply for a full test again. For this reason, there are no statistics on driving test re-tests.

Data Quality Assessment

Very Good – all data in the driver testing section were derived from a single administrative system (BSP) with full coverage and incorporating various validation checks. This single system approach means that the additional disaggregation's can be performed on a consistent basis from a single source.

3. User Guidance – Driver Theory Testing

The DVA has responsibility for the theory test element of the overall driving test process. The test is administered in Northern Ireland by Pearson VUE under contract with the DfI through DVA.

The data presented in this section are derived from the returns provided by Pearson VUE to DVA. The DVA uses this information to calculate the annual payments to Pearson VUE under the terms of the contract, and is subjected to an independent annual systems audit to ensure information accuracy and reliability.

Data Source and Coverage

NISRA statisticians derive the statistics from the returns provided by Pearson VUE on both applications received and tests carried out.

The data covers all tests conducted in NI during the month, broken down by the test category. These figures do not include those tests where the customers failed to attend (FTA) but which DVA nevertheless still had to provide a test appointment.

The data in table 3.3 covers all test bookings made during the month. It is important to note that this table refers to the date the booking was initially created, whereas the other tables refer to the date of the actual tests. This difference in reference dates means the two statistics are not directly comparable.

The theory testing statistics in this report are provisional due to the short period between the reference date and publication. You can find finalised statistics in our quarterly National Statistics publication.

Guidance

Touch screen theory tests began on 1st January 2000, initially with just a Multiple Choice element, whilst the Hazard Perception element was introduced later on 6th January 2003. The number of questions and pass-mark for each section varies dependant on the test category².

From 6th April 2003, an amendment to the *Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) Regulation (NI) 1996* means that those wishing to take a practical motorcycle test will have to pass the relevant theory test regardless if they currently hold a full category B driving licence.

The theory test has changed further since 23rd January 2012. It now contains multiple-choice questions, which are no longer published in learning materials. The reason for this move is to encourage learners to develop their understanding as well as knowledge of safe driving theory.

If a driver has completed the standard case study test for one of the licence categories LGV or PCV, they may take the conversion test for the other licence category i.e. PCV or LGV. The conversion tests contain only questions specific to the particular licence category and do not include the common topic areas for these categories.

The taxi theory test was introduced for new entrants to the taxi industry on the 31st October 2014.

Similar to practical driver testing, there are no retests for theory tests. If a candidate fails a test, they must apply for a full test again. For this reason, there are no statistics on theory test retests.

Data Quality Assessment

Very Good – all data in the theory test section were derived from a single administrative system with full coverage and incorporating various validation checks. In addition, the information generated is used by DVA to inform the calculations for annual payments to Pearson VUE under the terms of the contract, and is subjected to an independent annual systems audit to ensure information accuracy and reliability.

² You can find further details on the make-up of each test at <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/driving-theory-test>.

Statistical Notes

Official Statistics

These are 'Official Statistics' as defined in Section 6 of the *Statistics and Registration Services Act 2007*. Statisticians from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) are seconded to the DVA and are responsible for ensuring that the statistics produced comply with the *Code of Practise for Official Statistics*.

Official Statistics are produced to a high professional standard. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.

Revisions Policy

We do not undertake any scheduled revisions; any revisions to these figures will only be made by exception as and when required.

In circumstances where figures need to be revised users will be notified and any revisions will be explained in terms of why a revision was required, the period covered, the tables affected and the impact of revisions on trend and other related figures.

Revisions are part of our obligations under the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Further details on our revisions policy and supporting statements relating to Official Statistics are available on our website. Please click the link below.

<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/statements-and-assessments>

Additional Data Sources

From the UK:

Driving tests, Theory tests and Instructor statistics

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/driving-test-statistics-drt>

MOT testing data for Great Britain

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/mot-testing-data-for-great-britain>

From the Republic of Ireland:

Driver and Vehicle Testing statistics

<https://www.cso.ie/en/databases/rsai/>

Driver Testing Pass Rates

<http://www.rsa.ie/en/RSA/Learner-Drivers/The-Driving-Test/Driving-Test-Centre/Pass-Rates/>

Vehicle Testing Pass Rates

<https://www.ncts.ie/statistics/annual-statistics/>

Appendix A: Vehicle Test Classifications

| Category | BSP Test Description |
|-----------------|---|
| Private Car | Private Car Private Car - Other |
| Motorcycles | Motorcycle I Motorcycle II Motorcycle – Other Quadricycle Tricycle |
| Light Goods | Light Goods Light Goods – Other |
| Heavy Goods | Artic 2 Artic 2 – RPC/VED Artic 3 Artic 3 – RPC/VED Breakdown Vehicle Dual Purpose Vehicle Heavy Motor Car / Truck HGV2 HGV2 – RPC/VED HGV3 HGV3 – RPC/VED HGV4 HGV4 – RPC/VED MOT Other Road Construction Vehicle Tower Vehicle VED/RPC (S) |
| Omnibus | General Accessibility Only General and Wheelchair Accessibility Initial Bus Test Initial Bus Test 17- 35 Seatbelt Initial Bus Test 36+ Seatbelt Initial Bus Test Articulated Initial Bus Test DDA Omnibus 9- 16 Seatbelt Omnibus 17- 35 Seatbelt Omnibus 36+ Seatbelt Omnibus First Time Omnibus Standard Omnibus Standard Articulated Omnibus Standard Dual DDA Omnibus Standard Single DDA PSV DDA Dual Schedule (General AND Wheelchair) Retest |
| Trailer | One Axle Trailer Two Axle Trailer Three Axle Trailer Trailer - Other |
| LPCV | LPCV / 17- 35 Seatbelt LPCV / 36+ Seatbelt LPCV / Minibus (More Than 8 Passenger Seats) LPCV / Minibus 9- 16 Seatbelt |

| Category | BSP Test Description |
|------------------------|--|
| | LPCV / Minibus 9- 16 Seatbelt RPC LPCV / Minibus RPC |
| Taxi | Stretched / Heavy Taxi Stretched Limousine Taxi |
| Taximeter ¹ | Taximeter |
| SVA | Partial MSVA Partial MSVA (pre) Premium SVA 3 or 4 Wheeled Moped / Motorcycle SVA 2 Wheeled Moped / Motorcycle SVA 3 or 4 Wheeled Moped / Motorcycle SVA Enhanced with Model Report SVA Enhanced without Model Report SVA Low Powered Moped SVA MC Retest SVA Production Vehicles SVA Retest (Basic / Enhanced) SVA Retest Vehicle with ECWVTA & No Cert. of Conf. |
| IVA | Basic IVA, M1 (Kit Car) Basic IVA, N1 (Kit LGV) Bus M2 (max mass not exceeding 5 tonnes) Bus M3 (2 axle, max mass exceeding 5 tonnes) Bus M3 (3 axle, max mass exceeding 5 tonnes) Free M1 Free M2, M3 Free N1 Free N2, N3 Free O1, O2, O3 & O4 Heavy Goods N2 – max mass >3.5t but not exceeding 12 Heavy Goods N3 – max mass >12t Heavy Trailers O3 – max mass >3.5t but not exceeding Heavy Trailers O4 – max mass >10t Light Trailer O1 – max mass <0.75t Light Trailer O2 – max mass >0.75t but not exceeding Standard IVA, M1 (Production Car) Standard IVA, N1 (Production LGV) Voluntary IVA (WAV) |
| CDG | CDG (HGV) CDG (Trailer) |

Notes:

1. The taximeter test is separate test to the taxi vehicle test and is not a vehicle roadworthiness test.

Appendix B: Driver Practical Test Classifications

| Category | BSP Label | Description |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| Private Car | B | Motorcar |
| Motorcycle ¹ | A A1 A2 AM A Off-Road A1 Off-Road A2 Off-Road AM Off-Road ETA ETA1 ETA2 | Large Sized Motorcycle (595cc) Small Sized Motorcycle (120cc to 125cc) Medium Sized Motorcycle (395cc) Moped Off Road Large Sized Motorcycle (595cc) Off Road Small Sized Motorcycle (120cc to 125cc) Off Road Medium Sized Motorcycle (395cc) Off Road Moped Extended Large Sized Motorcycle Extended Small Sized Motorcycle (120cc to 125cc) Extended Medium Sized Motorcycle |
| LGV | C C1 CE C1E | Large Goods Vehicle >7500kg Goods Vehicle 3500kg- 7500kg Goods Vehicle >7500kg + Trailer >750kg Goods Vehicle 3500kg- 7500kg + Trailer >750kg |
| PCV | D D1 DE D1E | Motor Vehicle with over 8 Passenger Seats Minibus 9- 16 Seats Motor Vehicle + Trailer >750kg Motor Vehicle + Trailer >750kg |
| Taxi | Taxi | Taxi |
| Other | BE C Module 4 D Module 4 ETB F H | Motorcar + Trailer >750kg ² Show + Tell Large Goods Vehicle >750kg Show + Tell Vehicle with over 8 Passenger Seats Extended Motorcar Agricultural Tractor Tracked Vehicle |

Notes:

1. Post 19th January 2013 test categories;
2. From 2013-14 these B+E tests have been subsumed within the '*Other*' category. In publications prior to 2013-14, tests relating to category B+E (Car + Trailer) were contained in the LGV classification. We have recalculated the historical back-series to include B+E tests within '*Other*'.

Appendix C: Glossary

| <i>Abbreviation</i> | <i>Meaning</i> |
|---------------------|---|
| ADI | Approved Driving Instructor |
| AMI | Approved Motorcycle Instructor |
| BSP | Booking Services Project |
| CDG | Carriage of Dangerous Goods |
| CPC | Certificate of Professional Competence |
| CR | Continuous Registration |
| DfT | Department for Transport |
| DfI | Department for Infrastructure |
| DoE | Department of the Environment |
| DSA | Driving Standards Agency |
| DVA | Driver and Vehicle Agency |
| DVLA | Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency |
| DVSA | Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency |
| EU | European Union |
| FABS | Freight and Bus System |
| FOPS | Foreign Operator Payment System |
| FPN | Fixed Penalty Notice |
| FTA | Failed to Attend |
| HGV | Heavy Goods Vehicle |
| IVA | Individual Vehicle Approval |
| LGV | Large Goods Vehicle |
| LPCV | Large Passenger Carrying Vehicle |
| (M)SVA | Motorcycle Single Vehicle Approval |
| NIDLS | Northern Ireland Driver Licensing System |
| NISRA | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency |
| NS | National Statistics |
| OLBS | Operator Licensing and Business System |
| OLCS | Operator Licensing and Compliance System |
| ONS | Office for National Statistics |
| OS | Official Statistics |
| PCV | Passenger Carrying Vehicle |
| PSV | Public Service Vehicle |
| RD | Refer to Drawer |
| RDS | Replacement Driver System |
| RTLD | Road Transport Licensing Division |
| SORN | Statutory Off Road Notification |
| SVA | Single Vehicle Approval |
| TLIS | Taxi Licensing Information System |
| TRU | Transport Regulation Unit |

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