



Driver & Vehicle
Standards
Agency

Heavy Vehicle Testing Policy
Driver and Vehicle Standards
Agency
Berkeley House
Croydon Street
Bristol
BS5 0DA

T: 0300 123 9000
VTR@dvsa.gov.uk

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Dear Sir/Madam

Display of “Ministry plates” on Goods Vehicles and Trailers

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) are seeking views from industry on changing the requirement to display a “Ministry plate” on a goods vehicle/trailer.

We are carrying out a survey over the next few weeks to gather feedback on how the proposal might affect your business.

<https://forms.office.com/e/WqJd7ASDK8>

What is being considered

In line with DVSA’s ambition to improve customer experience and provide a better digital service, DVSA are working to make Ministry plates and plating certificates (VTG6 & 7 documents) available to access electronically on GOV.UK. Plates would be linked to the vehicle/trailer record on the MOT History Service (MOTH).

This would allow operators, drivers, maintenance providers and enforcement bodies to view a digital copy of the issued Ministry plate by accessing MOTH, as part of the vehicle/trailer record. A self-print facility would also be available, if needed, like heavy vehicle test certificates.

A Regulation change is also being considered. If this change was made, this would mean that there would no longer be a legal requirement to affix the “Ministry plate” to the vehicle/trailer. Operators would however continue to have the option of displaying a Ministry plate if they wished to do so. This change would also remove the requirement to purchase and replace plates when they are lost, become faded or defaced.

The survey will ask you the following.

- 1) Do you agree with the considered approach in making the information available on MOTH, negating the need to affix a physical Ministry plate on the vehicle or trailer? If not, please give your reasons.
- 2) Do your drivers use the Ministry plate as part of their checks to ensure that a vehicle isn't overloaded? If yes, and the Ministry plate was not required to be displayed, could this be achieved in another way (such as access to the on-line version).
- 3) When you are conducting brake tests as part of routine maintenance is the Ministry plate used (for the DTP number)? If yes, and the Ministry plate was not required to be displayed, could this be achieved in another way (such as access to the on-line version).
- 4) For vehicles that already display a Ministry plate, how often do you need to replace the Ministry plate on the vehicle currently? (This helps us understand the scale of the cost saving).
- 5) For a small number of older vehicles, some of DVSA's records may have fallen out of sync with the correct information. That may mean that some records for older vehicles are incomplete when moving to the electronic record. We would plan to deal with those on a case-by-case basis as identified. Do you think that will cause a problem?
- 6) Do you envisage any difficulties for your business if the requirement to display a Ministry plate is removed, if so, what changes could be made to help potential transition?

Background

The Goods Vehicles (Plating and Testing) Regulations 1988 require goods vehicles and trailers to be issued with a plating certificate, under this consideration, there would be no change to this requirement. Regulation 70 of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 creates a legal obligation to securely affix a Ministry plate to a goods vehicle/trailer, so as to be legible at all times, in a conspicuous and readily accessible position.

Previously, vehicle/trailer Ministry plates were printed on pre-printed 'security paper' by DVSA and laminated prior to posting to the applicant. There was a time delay in this process, and it caused inconvenience to Industry.

Since March 2023, Ministry plates have been emailed to applicants electronically in PDF format, for self-print and display.

DVSA are working to make Ministry plates and plating certificates available to access electronically as part the vehicle/trailer record on MOT. This would discontinue the email process. The Ministry plates would be available to view digitally by accessing the on-line service, as part of the vehicle/trailer record.

Presenting the information digitally, means that consideration could be given to reducing the cost to industry brought about by affixing the Ministry plate to the vehicle/trailer.

If a change were to be taken forward, this would mean amending the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986, and other associated regulations, to remove the legal requirement to affix the “Ministry plate” to the vehicle/trailer. Operators would however be free to affix the Ministry plate if they so wished, or make local copies available to drivers etc, but there would be no legal obligation to do so.

Please give us your views

Please fill in the [survey](#) to help us understand the impact the proposed change might have on you. On average, it should take less than 5 minutes to complete. It will close at midnight on 5th May 2024, DVSA will analyse the responses and keep you informed of the outcome. If you have any questions about the survey, or the proposal, please email VTR@DVSA.gov.uk.

Yours faithfully



Gordon Thomson
Head of Vehicle Testing and Approvals Policy