NASP report of the meeting between DVSA and NASP on 3rd September 2025 via the digital platform

The meeting took place at 4pm with representatives from NASP & DVSA

Meeting summary

- **Action log review and updates:** NASP opened the meeting and welcomed those present and led a review of the outstanding action log, discussing ongoing items such as enforcement work, the monthly bulletin, and the need for further discussions with DfT, with input from both teams.
    - **Ongoing Enforcement Work:** DVSA reported that enforcement work is progressing, with a draft blog post being prepared for review and publication.
    - **Monthly Bulletin Progress:** DVSA confirmed that survey results on the monthly bulletin have been collected and are being collated, with the next steps dependent on DfT's input. The aim is to issue a regular bulletin to ADIs as soon as possible.
- **ADI Service Update and Examiner Recruitment:** DVSA provided an update on ADI service demand, test delivery figures, examiner resource allocation, and ongoing recruitment plans.
    - **Service Demand and Test Backlog:** DVSA reported that demand remains high, with approximately 1,700 applications per month to start the qualification process and around 1,000 training licenses issued monthly. There are about 5,200 tests on hold, a figure that has remained stable over recent months.
    - **Test Delivery and Resource Allocation:** There are around 2,200 practical tests being delivered monthly, focusing examiner resources on Part 2 and Part 3 tests, with limited standards checks, prioritized for those with previous fails or identified risks. NASP pointed out regional differences in resource availability, DVSA, noted to look into.
    - **Recruitment Plans for ADI Examiners:** Recruitment is ongoing along with planned recruitment for more ADI examiners, with courses scheduled later in the year and early next year. The aim is to increase headcount, though recruitment is a rolling process and subject to pass/fail outcomes.
    - **Impact on Standards Checks and Future Outlook:** DVSA informed that as market saturation occurs and waiting times improve, resources will shift back to standards checks. Recruitment and training are expected to gradually improve capacity, though challenges remain in balancing examiner allocation.
- **Driving Test Trial and High-Speed Road Training:** DVSA provided updates on the current driving test trial, including data collection, examiner feedback, and the use of high-speed road resources, with NASP suggesting collaboration on training materials.

- o **Trial Extension and Data Collection:** DVSA explained that the driving test trial was extended through the summer to account for different traffic patterns, with ongoing data collection and positive examiner feedback regarding access to high-risk roads.
  - o **Use of External Training Resources:** NASP proposed leveraging the Driving Hub and other National Highways resources for training on high-speed roads, and DVSA expressed interest in collaborating to share and update relevant materials.
  - o **Trial Success Criteria:** DVSA clarified that the trial's success is measured by the ability to access higher-risk roads rather than changes in pass rates, as the focus is on preparing novice drivers for real-world conditions.
- **Driving Test Booking System Consultation:** An update on the recent consultation regarding the driving test booking system, including response statistics, analysis methodology, and considerations for balancing stakeholder input, with questions from NASP.
  - o **Consultation Response Overview:** It was reported that the consultation received approximately 102,000 responses, including significant input from learner drivers, ADIs, and driving schools. Over 150,000 comments were submitted, indicating high engagement. NASP asked how many instructors responded, DVSA suggested around 11,000.
  - o **Analysis and Impact Assessment:** DVSA ensured, ongoing analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data, with a regulatory options assessment to ensure policy interventions are balanced and consider all stakeholder impacts, including economic and public safety factors.
  - o **Stakeholder Representation and Policy Considerations:** NASP raised concerns about the weighting of responses from less-experienced stakeholders and the need to consider the role of ADIs in the booking process. DVSA explained that the analysis will account for these factors and that the consultation's scope was limited to booking system access.
  - o **Next Steps and Timeline:** DVSA confirmed that the results and next steps will be published by the end of autumn, with ongoing collaboration with DfT and further scrutiny for significant industry impacts.
- **Performance and Wait Time Updates:** DVSA provided a performance update on test wait times, booking window statistics, and pass rates, addressing media perceptions and the need for improved communication.
  - o **Wait Time and Booking Window Data:** DVSA reported that as of June 25, the average wait time was 22.2 weeks, with a slight increase in August due to the Christmas booking window. Over 640,000 tests are booked, and overall availability is around 4.73%.
  - o **Pass Rate Trends:** The average pass rate for the financial year to date is over 50%, with August at 50.69%. DVSA suggested that this is a positive trend, reflecting ongoing efforts to improve outcomes.
  - o **Media and PR Challenges:** NASP highlighted the need for regular, up-to-date bulletins or dashboards from DVSA to support positive PR and ensure stakeholders have accurate information, especially in response to media coverage.
- **Enforcement and Illegal Instruction Initiatives:** DVSA detailed enforcement activities targeting illegal driving instruction, collaboration with police and other agencies, new reporting channels, and complaint handling processes, with questions around enforcement from NASP

- o **Targeted Operations and Education:** There is ongoing targeted operations with police forces to identify illegal instructors, educate candidates, and conduct proactive checks at test centres, including badge verification and car park checks.
- o **Complaint Reporting and Investigation:** A new reporting page is being developed on GOV.UK for concerns about the ADI profession, including illegal instruction and test resellers. DVSA will inform when its available.
- o **Complaint Handling and Vexatious Reports:** DVSA clarified the distinction between channels for illegal activity and instructor conduct complaints. There are processes are in place to identify and manage vexatious or malicious complaints, with plans to enhance public messaging on responsible reporting.
- o **Investigation Process and Outcomes:** DVSA explained that actionable intelligence is required for investigations, and the quality of information provided is crucial. The team prioritizes cases with sufficient evidence and coordinates with examiners and other stakeholders as needed.
- **Review and Update of the ADI Code of Practice:** A comprehensive discussion on revising the ADI Code of Practice, covering segmentation for different audiences, legal requirements, complaint procedures, and next steps, with extensive input from NASP.
  - o **Segmentation and Audience Tailoring:** DVSA proposed tailoring the code to address the needs of ADIs, PDIs, and sponsors, with clear sections on legal requirements versus guidance, and specific content for trainee licence holders and sponsors.
  - o **Advertising and Sponsorship Guidance:** The group discussed clarifying rules for trainee advertising, the responsibilities of sponsors, and the challenges in regulating driving schools versus individual ADIs. DVSA confirmed that action can be taken against sponsors when necessary.
  - o **Complaint and Investigation Procedures:** The code will include clearer guidance on complaint handling, investigation processes, and the distinction between legal obligations and best practices. NASP emphasized the need for transparency and public awareness.
  - o **Training, Compliance, and Public Education:** Suggestions included introducing e-learning modules for trainees, requiring acknowledgment of the code before issuing licenses, and increasing public education on what constitutes professional conduct.
  - o **Next Steps and Stakeholder Engagement:** The attendees agreed to present the revised code to the wider forum for feedback on where the current code should be changed, ensure periodic reviews, and consider mechanisms to increase sign-up and awareness among ADIs and sponsors. DVSA highlighted ongoing efforts to integrate the code into theory test materials and application processes.
- **External Communications and Forthcoming Surveys:** DVSA outlined some upcoming external communications, including promotion of the ADI NJC Intelligent Instructor Conference, customer satisfaction surveys, updates on the driving test trial, and publication of quarterly statistics.
  - o **Upcoming Events and Surveys:** Some key communications and activities for September and October, including conference promotion, the ADI customer satisfaction survey, updates on the driving test trial, and the launch of the 2025 working as an ADI survey.

- - **Publication of Statistics:** Quarterly statistics for the National Driver Rider theory and instruction will be published in October, with subsequent releases scheduled for January and April.
- AOCB: NASP suggested slides were not really needed if they did not contain detail.
- NASP closed the meeting at 17.55 thanking everyone for their time.

Actions

- **Draft Blog Post Review:** Share the draft blog post on enforcement work with the group for review before publication. (DVSA)
- **Monthly Bulletin/Data Dashboard:** Progress the development of a monthly bulletin or dashboard with up-to-date figures for stakeholders, ensuring regular and timely dissemination of information. (DVSA)
- **Illegal Instruction Reporting Page:** Launch the new GOV.UK page for reporting concerns about illegal instruction and ensure clear guidance on reporting test resellers, scammers, and other ADI profession concerns. (DVSA)
- **Messaging on Vexatious Complaints:** Develop and include messaging for the public about the importance of submitting only genuine, substantiated complaints to protect ADIs from vexatious or malicious allegations. (DVSA)
- **Code of Practice Review and Stakeholder Engagement:** Present the main themes and proposed changes to the ADI Code of Practice at the upcoming car forum, gather stakeholder feedback, and determine next steps for revision and relaunch. (DVSA)