Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency

DVL TODAY

NEWS FROM THE DRIVER & VEHICLE LICENSING AGENCY | ISSUE 31 | WINTER 2006

Sale of the Century

Pages 6&7

CHARTER MARK
CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

An executive agency of the Department for Transport

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Project Manager

NEIL AKASS AND HAYDN REES
report on the Driving Licence Upgrade Project

ON THE CARDS

The Driving Licence Upgrade Project (DLUP) was initiated in 2004 following a review of driving licence security. This project is responsible for the replacement for the current photocard driving licence production equipment and the building of a new card production facility.

The first photocard driving licences were issued in 1998 and now more than 26 million drivers possess a photocard.

The first photocard driving licences were issued in 1998 and now more than 26 million drivers possess a photocard. The review found that the competency of fraudsters and criminals in being able to produce good quality counterfeit licence cards had increased. The acceptance by the financial sector of the driving licence as a form of identity to support financial transactions encouraged criminals to counterfeit and forge the licence. Although the current card contains a range of security features, each one has become compromised to some degree. This, coupled with the age of the card production equipment, meant we needed to replace the equipment to produce a far more secure card.

Above: images of DVLA's new driving licence production facility

Following an open tender exercise, IBM were chosen as the prime service supplier, in partnership with Trueb and Muehlbauer. As well as improving the security of the document itself, the project will also address a business continuity risk by providing a second print site. Driving licences are currently produced at DVLA's HQ in Swansea but work has recently been started on a state of the art facility on the other side of the city. Once completed, the existing production area will be refurbished to provide the Agency with a flexible dual site operation with increased capacity to meet the extra volumes which will arise out of the 10 year renewal cycle commencing in 2008. DVLA will then have the foremost public sector production and despatch centre in the UK.

A new high specification driving licence will be introduced during 2007. It will be made from a highly secure material – Laser Engraved Polycarbonate (LEP) – and contain a number of new security features to prevent counterfeiting and forgery. The Agency is grateful for the assistance of colleagues from the National Document Forgery Unit and the Security Services for advice in this area. In order to facilitate this, new machines will need to be installed in the new facilities. We have already taken delivery of the first of these in order to start the rigorous testing process.

In addition to the laser engraving process, the machines have the capability to add a smart chip to the licence. Advice from law enforcement and card industry security experts is that smart card technology represents the best level of security to protect the card. We have recently received Ministerial approval to progress with plans for smart card licences. This will include a small pilot during next year, prior to which we shall work with key stakeholders including the Driving Standards Agency and the Police. Details are being developed, but dates for final full implementation of smart card licences have yet to be finalised, as they are dependent on the approval of the European Commission with regards to standards.

DVLA has led the work on standards by engaging with the International Standards Organisation's Working Group on Driving Licences, who have been developing a standard for an international driving licence.

DVLA places security very highly amongst its priorities. The introduction of a new generation of driving licence will result in a step change in security and place the Agency at the forefront of developments in smart technology. DVLTODAY

A new high specification driving licence will be introduced during 2007.

PAUL JEFFREYS reports on the outcome of the review into releasing vehicle information

REVIEW OF RELEASE OF INFORMATION FROM THE UK VEHICLE REGISTERS

Tough new measures to govern the release of vehicle keeper information from the vehicle registers are to be introduced

In July, Dr Stephen Ladyman, Minister of State for Transport, announced the outcome of the review of the release of information from the DVLA and DVLNI vehicle registers. The Minister had commissioned the review, which included a full public consultation, following concerns about the breadth of organisations that now had access to the registers under legislation that had been in place for over 40 years.

Tough new measures to govern the release of vehicle keeper information from the vehicle registers are to be introduced. They are designed to protect people from misuse of their information, provide clear and robust complaint and audit procedures where misuse is alleged, while allowing those who do have reasonable cause to get the data they need.

Among the 14 new measures are:

- detailed guidance on what constitutes reasonable cause to receive information
- requirement for organisations to be members of an accredited trade association or regulatory body in order to be able to make requests electronically – with tough standards attached
- organisations that fail to meet these standards having to make requests in detail on a case by case basis
- if an organisation uses information improperly, further requests may be refused on the basis that the abuse indicates that the organisation does not have reasonable cause for seeking the information
- regular checks on recipients of the information and targeting those who are the subject of complaints
- new evidence requirements where data is sought to enforce parking restrictions
- robust complaints procedures for people who believe their data has been misused.

Stephen Ladyman said:

"Protecting the privacy and confidentiality of individuals is critical, and that is why we are introducing this raft of measures to address the concerns raised regarding the kinds of organisations that receive information.

"The new measures will reassure people that their personal information will be protected from misuse, while still allowing its release to those with a legitimate reason to receive it".

The Minister will shortly announce progress in delivering these new measures. The new measures will be monitored closely to ensure that the new system is working effectively. DVLTODAY

BETHAN BEASLEY reports on DVLA's 5th annual enforcement conference

DVLA, PARK LANE, MAYFAIR.

A more famous name on a more famous street you couldn't hope to find. Situated in the heart of Mayfair the London Hilton on Park Lane enjoys one of the most prestigious addresses in the world. It can now also claim to have played host to DVLA's 5th annual enforcement conference on 5 October.

The conference is aimed at those professionally involved in the reduction of vehicle related crime and nuisance vehicles. A burgeoning demand for places meant that we had outgrown our previous rural venue in Oxfordshire and the distinguished London address not only attracted even more delegates but also meant that Dr Stephen Ladyman, Minister of State for Transport, was able to attend and deliver the opening speech.

In addition to the Minister, over 300 delegates were entertained by several well-respected figures at the top of their respective fields.

Med Hughes, Chief Constable of South Yorkshire Police spoke about involving additional partners to improve road safety and using technology to improve productivity. He also raised concerns about the increased use of stretch limos in criminal activity.

Bob Macnaughton, NCP's Chief Executive and conference sponsor, explained their role in supporting many enforcement initiatives, not least DVLA's wheelclamping operation.

Dr Stephen Ladyman, Minister of State for Transport opening the conference

Richard Kitchen, DVLA's Director of External and Corporate Services outlined the Agencies agenda on change and partnership working. Sir Robin Wales, Mayor of Newham, Ashton West, Chief Executive of the Motor Insurers' Bureau also gave presentations.

Clive Bennett, DVLA's Chief Executive closed the conference and spoke of DVLA's passion in helping tackle vehicle crime and how strong partnerships are at the heart of tackling vehicle crime effectively. He also paid tribute to John Owen, Police Advisor to the Driver and Vehicle Operator Group, who died earlier this year.

Once again, Quentin Willson TV presenter, columnist, motoring aficionado and a keen supporter of DVLA's work played host. DVLTODAY

Chief Constable Med Hughes, South Yorkshire Police addressing the conference

BYRON ROBERTS reports on the success of DVLA's auction of personalised registrations

SALE OF THE CENTURY

For real excitement the only place to be last April was DVLA's 100th auction of personalised registrations at the prestigious Stapleford Park in Leicestershire.

Star of the show was undoubtedly when 51 NGH eventually sold for a mind boggling £253,000, a record for the sale of a DVLA Personalised Registration, beating the long-standing one set by K1 NGS which sold for £231,000 back in 1991.

Imagine the atmosphere. The auction room was packed to the rafters and a buzz of anticipation went around the room as auctioneer Dave Arnott announced 51 NGH. The phone lines were full, the audience, many armed with their mobile phones nervously taking last minute instructions from would be buyers. Bidding started at £10,000 and it became clear that three separate groups of bidders were the front runners. At a mere £120,000 one group went silent. This left just two; one immediately responded to the others bid with a flourish of his catalogue. The other party decided that brinkmanship was the order of the day, leaving it just before the hammer went down to increase their bid by another £10,000. The bidding was now at £170,000. One group started wavering which was sensed by their competitor. Then the one who had stopped bidding much earlier came in for one last throw of the dice, but to no avail, and a much quicker increased bid from the waverer seemed to have done the trick. Their elation was short lived, with a new bidder on the telephone making an all out attack at £200,000 to secure that elusive winning bid. The audience cheered and everyone was on a high. Throughout all of this, auctioneer Dave Arnott remained cool and invited the now anxious under bidder to go higher. A couple of minutes later, the hammer went down to huge cheers. Our intrepid telephone bidder had scored a last minute winner!

Dave Arnott auctioning registration mark 51 NGH

Star of the show was undoubtedly when 51 NGH eventually sold for a mind-boggling £253,000

The successful purchaser, now £253,000 the poorer (including costs and VAT), telephoned us a few minutes later just to ask us not to divulge his details to the waiting media. A little odd that. You've just handed over a quarter of a million pounds for the most distinctive numberplate in the country and you want to remain anonymous!

Just a word about the rest of the auction and the little matter of the other 1,199 registrations that were on offer. Well the total income raised for the Treasury came to a record (yes another one) £6.4 million. On the subject of records, net income of £82.4 million from DVLA's sales business in the past financial year has surpassed the highest previous total achieved in 2004/2005.

What an auction and it was one that DVLA's Byron Roberts will never forget. He has managed and attended all previous 99 DVLA sales and even he has never experienced anything like this. "I suppose nothing will surpass the first ever DVLA auction at Christies South Kensington back in 1988; that was unique because it had never been done before. But our 100th was something else and one that those who witnessed the sale of 51 NGH will never forget."

But as the old footballing cliché goes 'you're only as good as your next game' and no sooner had this auction finished than the next in Barnsley a few months later was under way. For the record, this 'normal' auction raised over £5 million – not bad going! DVLTODAY

personalised registrations

Which one would you choose?

Customers bid for a personalised registration at our 100th auction

…our net income of £82.4 million from the sale of marks in the past financial year has surpassed the highest previous total achieved in 2004/2005.

ANDREW RHODES reports on popularity of Electronic Vehicle Licensing

ELECTRONIC VEHICLE LICENSING

Since its national launch by Dr Stephen Ladyman, Minister of State for Transport and celebrity Jodie Kidd in January 2006, the electronic vehicle Licensing service has grown in success and popularity.

Motorists can now tax their vehicles 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by internet or telephone. The system automatically checks if the vehicle has a valid MOT (if needed) and if it has valid insurance, so there is no need to lay your hands on those documents. All you need now to relicence a vehicle is the V11 reminder reference number, sent in the post by DVLA, or the document reference number from the Registration Certificate, and a card to pay with.

Customers need to have a computerised MOT test certificate to be able to use the service. Since March 2006, all MOT centres have been issuing computerised MOTs, which are larger than the old MOT certificate and typed instead of handwritten. By April 2007, every vehicle that needs an MOT test certificate will have a computerised one.

This new service has become more and more popular with motorists throughout the UK. In August 2006 alone, over 620,000 vehicles were taxed or declared off the road using the online and telephone service – that's enough people to fill over 9,500 Routemaster buses.

Motorists can now tax their vehicles 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by internet or telephone.

www.direct.gov.uk/taxdisc

The number of people using the service is growing all the time. So far around 3.5 million vehicles have been taxed or declared off the road in this way. DVLA is now collecting nearly £70 million a month in vehicle excise duty (VED) through the internet and telephone services.

Customer feedback has been very positive and DVLA has had UK vehicle owners from as far away as China getting in touch about using the service. The main benefits customers are finding are:

- no need to find MOT and insurance documents
- very quick and easy to use
- posted straight to you, first class
- service available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

It is anticipated that over 6 million people will have used the online and telephone service by the end of this financial year and that as many as three times that figure will do so in the year afterwards. This great new service from DVLA can be found at: www.direct.gov.uk/taxdisc or 0870 850 4444 DVLTODAY

WAYNE THOMAS reports on registering vehicles in the UK

FOREIGN REGISTERED VEHICLES CIRCULATING IN THE **UK**

Providing a vehicle is correctly registered and licensed in its home state, and its keeper is not permanently resident in this country, a visiting vehicle may circulate in the UK for 6 months in any 12 before it must be registered and licensed here.

These rules are based in the International Circulation Order. For some time the problem of overseas registered vehicles circulating in the UK but not adhering to these rules has been growing. The non-compliance of foreign registered vehicles has become a regular topic of complaints from law-abiding motorists and members of the public.

In response to this growing issue, DVLA has established a limited pilot with EU partner organisations, that will enable checks to be carried out confirming the registration and licensing status of vehicles circulating here. To begin with, the target countries are Republic of Ireland, Lithuania and Poland.

The pilot is aimed at improving compliance through a targeted education message, warnings to keepers of unlicensed foreign vehicles and, finally, direct enforcement action – i.e. wheel clamping and impounding.

The non-compliance of foreign registered vehicles has become a regular topic of complaints from law-abiding motorists and members of the public.

The registration and licensing rules in the UK need to be fully understood by the drivers of foreign registered vehicles. The education element of the pilot started in January 06. It involves meeting with foreign communities and organisations as well as using Eastern European media based in the UK, to get the message across.

Organisations visited include the Lithuanian Embassy, Lithuanian community leaders and the Federation of Poles in Great Britain. Magazine and newspaper articles, websites and radio stations have carried information and DVLA staff were on hand to answer queries and spread the message during September's national Polish open day in London. Large numbers of information leaflets were distributed in the relevant languages to the appropriate target audience.

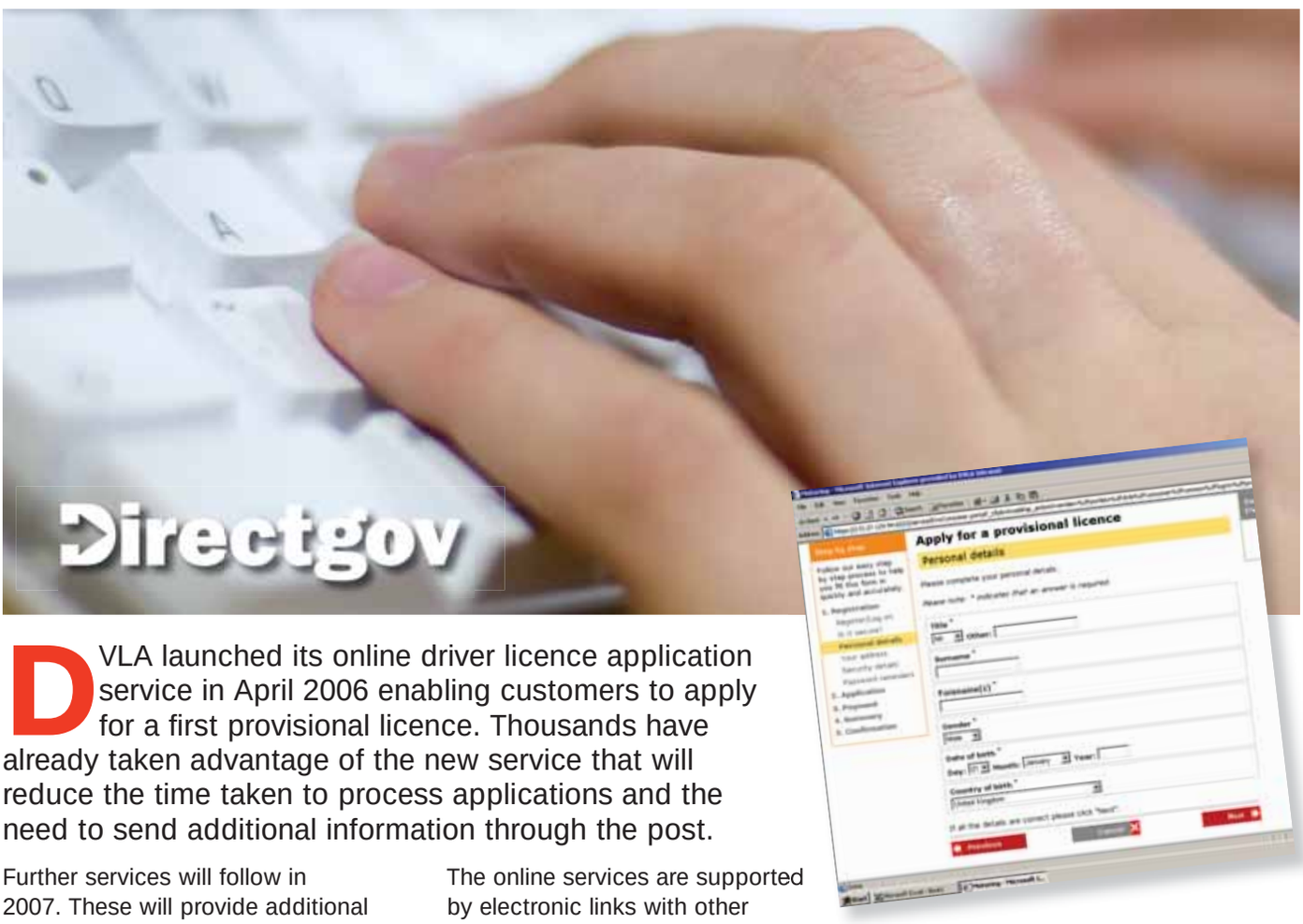
The length of time a vehicle is likely to have been circulating in the UK can be calculated from sightings of foreign vehicles from partners in the police service and local authorities and also from DVLA's own enforcement staff in the field and from members of the public. This allows the warning part of the pilot to take place which involves bilingual notices being placed on the windscreens of overseas registered vehicles suspected to be unlicensed in their home state or breaking the 6 months in 12 rule.

Those keepers who choose to ignore the warning notice will be subject to direct enforcement action. This enforcement part of the pilot started in September when DVLA's wheelclamping partner (NCP) begun wheel clamping and impounding such foreign registered vehicles.

The results of the pilot will be shared with EU partner organisations and the EU Commission. It could be adopted as an approach to enforcement against this particular problem throughout the EU. DVLTODAY

MARTIN HILLIER reports on the launch of the online driving licence application service

GOING FORWARD ONLINE



DVLA launched its online driver licence application service in April 2006 enabling customers to apply for a first provisional licence. Thousands have already taken advantage of the new service that will reduce the time taken to process applications and the need to send additional information through the post.

Further services will follow in 2007. These will provide additional customer choice, improve accuracy of information and enhance services for law enforcement.

From early next year, customers will be able to:

- exchange a paper licence for a photocard licence
- apply for a duplicate licence (if original's lost, stolen, damaged or defaced)
- renew a licence at age 70 or over
- change their address.

Customers who have applied online will also be able to track progress of their application or make an enquiry of their driver record using an ID number and password provided during their application.

The online services are supported by electronic links with other organisations to verify the identity of the customer and to capture a digital photograph where this is available. All online customer services will be available via www.direct.gov.uk

The migration of 65 million driver records to the new computer system has paved the way for 24/7 online enquiry access by law enforcement and government organisations. Now successfully piloted, the enquiry service will be made more widely available during 2007. Next year we will also introduce an online enquiry service for employers and commercial organisations that need to confirm an individual's entitlement to drive. This will require the driver's consent for the enquiry to be carried out. DVLTODAY

The migration of 65 million driver records to the new computer system has paved the way for 24/7 online enquiry access by law enforcement and government organisations.

KRISTIAN MILLER reports on our new look website

NEW LOOK DVLA WEBSITE **www.dvla.gov.uk**

The new DVLA website was launched in August 2006. Still at **www.dvla.gov.uk** it has been redesigned as a corporate website and provides the public with a wide range of easily accessible information.

It contains information on the DVLA organisation including current vacancies, publications and press releases. It highlights the accessibility of services such as taxing your vehicle online, applying for your provisional driving licence online and how to tell us that your vehicle is off the road.

For the last two years, the old DVLA website ran in parallel with Directgov and Transport Office. These sites now hold all customer service and commercial information formerly carried on the DVLA website. With the success of the Directgov motoring franchise, the team running the DVLA website redesigned the site, in line with the transformational government agenda, to a compact corporate site.

The redesign involved having to conform to government web guidelines and legal requirements of accessibility standards – quite a challenge. Elements considered when redesigning included display and structure of content; page consistency with different web browsers; accessibility for all users including those using screen readers and alternative keyboards.

> "DVLA is one of the first government websites to meet the AAA standard of accessibility".

The DVLA Systems Development team (DSD) opted for a system with a strong development architecture. The site has been built in such a structured manner that it can be presented dynamically in a wide range of graphic environments, this will allow the Agency to channel information in completely different media, such as mobile phone, digital TV or PDA.

This developing new website offers the viewing public a broad range of easily accessible, clear and understandable information and is poised for future demands.

DSD Head Mark Jones commented: "DVLA is one of the first government websites to meet the AAA standard of accessibility". DVLTODAY

WHAT **YOU** THINK OF **DVL TODAY**

GARETH HUGHES reports on DVL Today readership survey

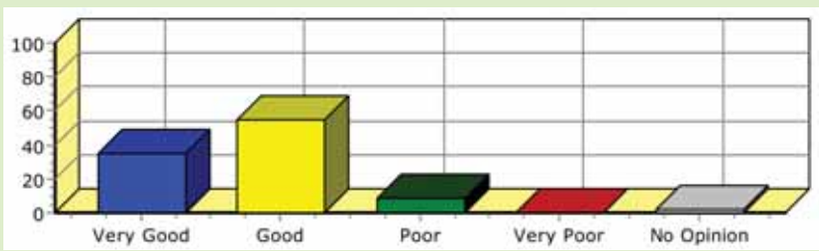
In the last edition of DVL Today, issue 30 we included a customer survey. I would like to thank all who took the time to respond to the questionnaire. Your comments and views will result in future editions of the magazine being more customer friendly and tailored to your needs.

The survey showed that 99% of respondents thought that the magazines design was good or very good with 97% of respondents rating the photography, length of articles and readability as good or very good. As for style of reading – 40% of you read it from cover to cover, with 43% reading articles that interest you. Over half are happy with the current issue frequency of twice a year, although over a third (38%) said that they would like an extra issue each year.

The survey also showed that DVL Today is being kept as a reference aid with 60% of respondents keeping copies for reference. What an endorsement! Thank You.

If you have any further comments please send them to me at: **events.dvla@gtnet.gov.uk** DVLTODAY

USEFUL CONTENT



DVLA CONTACT DETAILS

For general enquiries, or if you need further information about vehicle and driver registration and licensing, go to:

www.direct.gov.uk/motoring

VEHICLES

Customer Enquiries (Vehicles)
Contact Centre,
Sandringham Park, Swansea Vale
Swansea SA7 0EE

Phone: 0870 240 0010 between 8.00am and 8.30pm Monday to Friday and between 8.00am and 5.30pm on Saturday.

Fax: 0870 850 1285

DRIVERS

Customer Enquiries (Drivers)
Drivers Correspondence Section,
Driver Customer Services,
DVLA
Swansea SA6 7JL

Phone: 0870 240 0009 between 8.00am and 8.30pm Monday to Friday and between 8.00am and 5.30pm on Saturday.

Fax: 01792 786369

Note: Some calls will be monitored for quality and training purposes

MINICOM

Both our Enquiry Units take calls from Minicom systems if you have hearing difficulties.

Vehicles Minicom 01792 766426.

Drivers Minicom 01792 766366.

You cannot use these numbers with ordinary phones.

Personalised registration numbers from DVLA:
www.dvlaregistrations.co.uk DVLTODAY

DVLA LOCAL OFFICES

DVLA local offices are normally open 9.00am to 5.00pm from Monday to Friday.

To find your nearest local office, contact **0870 850 0007**