

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 and Rostering (B&R)* 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 B&R, 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 (B&R) 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 and Rostering (B&R)* 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 B&R, 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. The NI 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 (B&R) 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. Since 4th September 2021, the test has been administered in Northern Ireland by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) under contract with the DfI through DVA. Prior to this date, the driver theory test was administered by Pearson VUE.

Data Source and Coverage

NISRA statisticians derive the statistics from returns provided by DVSA 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 topics 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

A review of data quality assessment will be carried out on theory testing data in 2023/24. Provisionally data assessment is Good – all data in the theory test section were derived from a single administrative system with full coverage and incorporating various validation checks.

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 Practice 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	B&R 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	B&R 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	B&R 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
B&R	Booking and Rostering 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

Contact Details

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<https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/driver-and-vehicle-agency-monthly-tests-conducted-statistics>

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