



Driver & Vehicle
Standards
Agency

Annual Review 2017

We are



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This review covers the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017

Foreword



Gareth Llewellyn, Chief Executive Officer



Bridget Rosewell, Non-executive Chair

In this annual review you'll read about DVSA's highlights of the last operational year. And, most importantly, we'd like to introduce you to some of the people who made them happen.

In April 2017 we published our 5 year strategy, which sets out our ambitious plans to modernise the driving test, raise vehicle standards and do more to take dangerous drivers and vehicles off our roads.

This review includes stories which link to the themes of our strategy and which will also give you an idea of why DVSA is a great place to work.

In the last year we started work to modernise our services and put the right people in the right places to deliver them. But this is just the beginning, and we'd like to introduce you to the work we're planning over the coming years.

Through this work, DVSA will have a huge influence on improving road safety and supporting the economy by keeping the traffic moving.

Of course, an organisation is only as good as the people who work there, and we know that the pride and care the DVSA team takes in its work brought about last year's successes. We'll continue to focus on creating an even better place to work, making everyone feel valued, motivated and as proud as we are to be part of DVSA.

Helping you through a lifetime of safe driving

2.2 million
driving theory tests

2 million
practical driving tests

Reduced average
waiting time for
vocational tests to under
3 weeks

97%
of theory test
candidates got an
appointment at their
preferred test centre
within 2 weeks

Reduced average
car test waiting time
from 12 weeks to under
6 weeks

Our stories

We've halved the car test waiting time

Reducing waiting times for the car practical test was a priority for us this year. In June 2016 the average waiting time was 11.9 weeks, but by February 2017 we'd brought it down to 6 weeks. We recruited 350 new driving examiners and put them in the test centres where they were most needed.

Working in a busy test centre with demand for test growing, I was happy to work evenings, weekends and bank holidays to help bring waiting times down. In fact 60 examiners, including me, volunteered to carry out driving tests on Boxing Day to deliver a service to our customers. This is typical of the spirit of driving examiners and I'd happily do it again.



Amjad Ali
driving examiner



Sarah Scott
deputy head of publishing

We've sold over 1 million theory test apps

We developed our app to help people to learn and understand driving theory, and this year we sold our millionth download! The app's available in iOS and Android and is consistently at the top of the charts, with some cracking reviews (you can read one over the page). We designed it for learners to study each topic, practise answering questions and then finally take a mock test; a process which helps embed the knowledge they need for a lifetime of safe driving.

We've made a difference to the transport industry

We trained new examiners and put all qualified examiners in the right places at the right times to bring down the LGV test waiting time. It dropped from a national average of 6.4 weeks to less than 3 weeks. This meant that haulage companies were able to get drivers out and earning more quickly.



Ian Gainford, LGV team

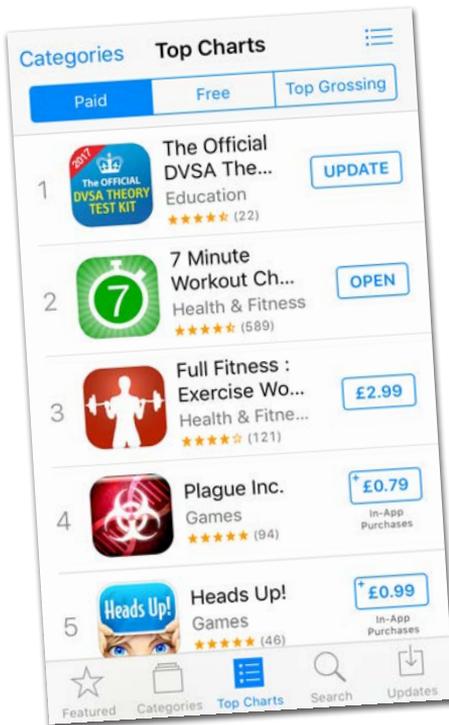


The rider policy team:
Mark Winn, Chris Parr and Chris Howes

We've been working with the motorcycle industry to improve training

We've introduced new ways to improve the quality of motorcycle training. For example, we introduced unannounced visits to motorcycle trainers, to clamp down on poor training. We've also updated the trainer standards check to bring them in line with the check for approved driving instructors. And we're encouraging trainers to introduce training which is focused on the learner's needs.

Our customers say...



“Two years ago at my local centre the waiting time for a test was 16 weeks. This had a terrible effect on my students who’d failed. They had to pay for many more lessons until the next slot came around, or ended up going out with their mum or dad, instead of getting proper driving lessons.

I was really impressed with the flexibility DVSA showed last year to meet demand. They took on new examiners and introduced extra test slots, which meant that my students could get a new test date so much more quickly.”

Keith Metcalfe, Approved driving instructor, Rochdale.

“DVSA’s efforts to bring down LGV waiting times helped our business and meant we were able to get our drivers on the road more quickly to start earning. We got 17 drivers through the Driving Academy and they earned around £1,500 each in that additional time. That’s a total of £25,500.”

Mark Cowan, Wear Mini Mix Ltd and Oracle Training Solutions Ltd

“My driving instructor recommended the DVSA theory test app to ‘walk me through my theory test’... and it literally did! I’ve been recommending it to all my friends who’ve been learning to drive, and it’s done the same for them. Brilliant. It’s a better price than buying hard copies of the books, and more handy, as it also includes hazard awareness videos! Absolutely brilliant, I very highly recommend this!”

Appstore review

Looking ahead

Changes to the car driving test

We're bringing in changes to the driving test on 4 December 2017. They include increasing the independent driving part of the test from 10 to 20 minutes, and asking most candidates to follow directions from a sat nav.

In last year's consultation people widely agreed that the new elements would be more representative of what a new driver will be doing in their everyday driving. Using a sat nav during the independent driving section will encourage a wider range of training. And it'll also prepare new drivers to drive safely on rural roads and to manage distractions.

Better information to choose a driving instructor

We're improving the information on GOV.UK to help you make better choices when trying to find an approved driving instructor (ADI). There'll be links to ADIs' websites or Facebook pages, so you can read all about them and their service.

You'll also be able to filter search results for ADIs in your area to see what DVSA standard they've reached, and whether they're involved in continuing professional development.





ADI qualification and quality assurance

We're modernising the ADI qualification process. There are currently three parts to the process, and part three tests an instructor's ability to give instruction. We'll be replacing this with a standards check - this is the check that all qualified ADIs undergo every 4 years. We'll also make sure that ADIs are tested on the new car practical test, so they're able to provide the best level of instruction to the people they'll be teaching.

For qualified ADIs we'll increase the overall number of standards checks we carry out, targeting poor performance and those ADIs who haven't yet undergone a new standards check.

Better communications with drivers

We want to give drivers at all stages of their driving career better support, so we're improving the way we communicate with them. Whether they're learning to drive, have just passed their test, or are more experienced, we'll be sending targeted messages via email and social media to give them the advice they need. And, rather than just tell them what they should and shouldn't do, we'll first try to understand the driver's motivations and needs in a given situation.

**Helping you keep your vehicle
safe to drive**

964,000
vehicle tests

37.8 million
MOT certificates issued

99%
availability of MOT
testing service

99.6%
of confirmed reservations
honoured at ATFs

64,000
MOT testers completed
their annual assessment

Our stories



Danny Charles, MOT team

We've improved the MOT testing service

Since the introduction of the new MOT testing service we've made 25 improvements. One of the main ones was to add technical information for vehicles so that testers can test them safely and correctly. We've also made it easier for testers to find and add defects they've identified on a vehicle. They'll also be able to remove defects when they're carrying out a retest.

The technology we used supports a dynamic and changing service, and has been described by Cabinet Office's Government Digital Service as 'one of the best IT projects in government'.

We've set the syllabus to train MOT testers

We've introduced new ways of training and assessing MOT testers. They now have to complete 3 hours of training per year and pass an assessment to be able to continue testing. The new qualification, as well as the annual training and assessment, will continue to build on the professional reputation of the MOT industry. It'll also help us to regularly assess the standard of the industry and quickly address any problems that arise.

By March 2017 around 64,000 MOT testers had completed their annual assessment.



Michala Reith, MOT team



Richard Northern
content design manager

We created a trailer safety campaign

In 2014 3-year-old Freddie Hussey was tragically killed by a trailer that had become detached from a passing vehicle. Last year we began working with Freddie's parents, Donna and Scott, on a campaign to highlight the importance of carrying out basic safety checks before towing a trailer.

We updated our content on GOV.UK, linking to a new YouTube video showing the trailer checks. The campaign reached over 94,000 people on social media and the video was viewed over 41,000 times. The video was also featured on broadcast news and in the press.

We exceeded our vocational vehicle testing target

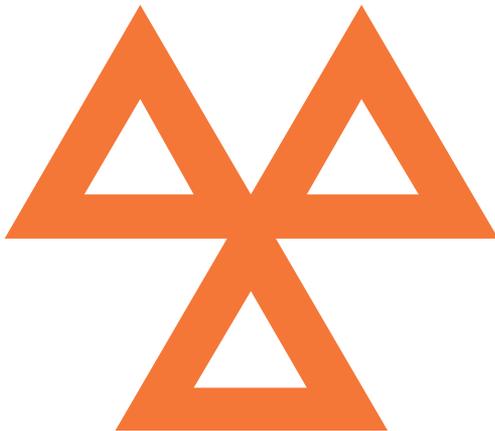
We continued with the rollout of our Next Generation Testing programme of work during 2016 to 2017.

Even with an increase of 10% in Authorised Testing Facility bookings from 2015 to 2016, we managed to exceed our target of honouring confirmed reservations. We achieved an impressive 99.62%, and this was down to the huge effort from all of our staff – not only in the vehicle testing team, but also from other members of staff who were involved in recruiting and training additional vehicle testers.



Jasvinder Sagoo
network business manager

Our customers say...



“I’ve had lots of positive feedback on the ‘Tow Safe for Freddie’ campaign. I spoke to ITV West tonight and the National Press Association phoned today for a quote, so it’s all been manic. Thank you for listening to us and making this happen.”

Donna Hussey

“The DVSA has changed over the last few years and their approach is more customer-focused. I believe it’s more like partnership working now.”

From the **Authorised testing facility relationship survey, 2017**

...of the new MOT testing service:

“Massive improvements over the first system and much easier to use”

“This system is easier to use compared to the old system, much better and faster.”

From the **MOT customer relationship study 2017**

Looking ahead

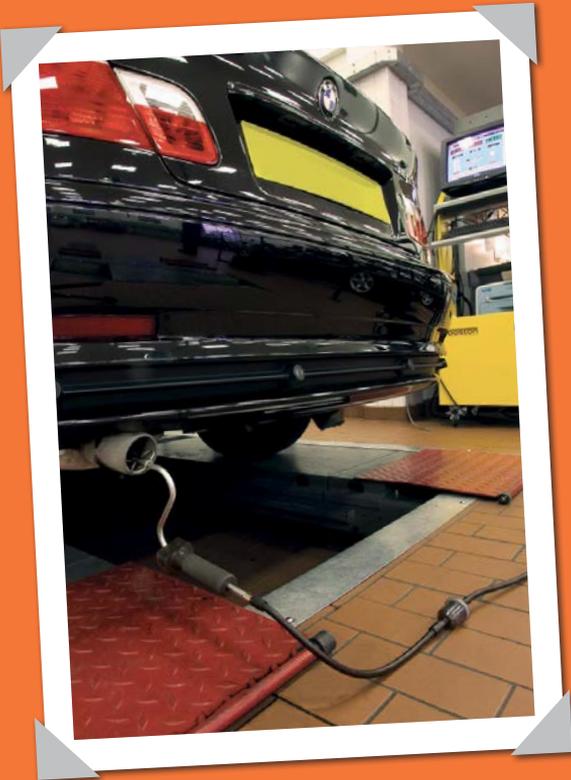
MOT test reminders and history service

We're developing an MOT reminder service to nudge vehicle owners to take their vehicle in for testing on time. Motorists will be able to sign up to receive email alerts, which we'll send 4 weeks before their MOT test is due, then 2 weeks before. We'll run a consumer campaign when the service is ready to launch. This'll contribute to making sure all vehicles are safe and legal to drive.

We'll also run a campaign to promote our 'Check the MOT history of a vehicle' service. It allows people who are thinking of buying a used car to see its MOT history, giving them an idea of what it's failed on and how well the car's been maintained.

Modernising the commercial vehicle service

We're going to look at using new technology to provide streamlined processes for our commercial vehicle testing service. We want to improve our testers' access to vehicle information at the time of testing, and capture and produce test results digitally. We also aim to improve the service to our customers by simplifying the current payment process, making it easier for them to make payments and view their account in real time.



Better guidance on keeping vehicles safe

We'll publish improved guidance for vehicle operators and transport managers about the systems and processes they need to have in place to keep their commercial vehicles safe to drive.

We'll also make better guidance available for drivers of heavy goods vehicles and public service vehicles on what they should look out for on daily walkaround checks. This'll include new videos showing drivers how to do the checks.



Helping people to tow safely

This summer we'll be launching phase 2 of the 'Tow Safe for Freddie' campaign. We know that this is a time when many people will be hiring a trailer for the first time – for example, to go camping or to transport bikes – so we'll give them the information they need to tow safely. Through social media we'll be directing people to our video, which explains the 4 basic checks they need to make. The campaign will be supported by the National Trailer and Towing Association and other motoring organisations. Follow the campaign at **#TowSafeForFreddie**.

Protecting you from unsafe drivers and vehicles

223,000
roadside checks

4 million
tachograph checks

92

convictions of fraud against
theory and practical
test cheats

189,000
compliance checks

2.3 million
vehicle safety recalls

23,000
vehicle safety
defects detected

Our stories

We've dealt with unsafe drivers

I'll give you a couple of examples of what we found on the road last year. We stopped one lorry driver who'd driven from Spain with an oven on his dashboard! We gave him a fixed penalty for having a restricted view of the road, but then we found that his vehicle and trailer were overloaded so his vehicle was immobilised.

We also stopped a pair of drivers who'd driven one lorry for 29 hours and 40 minutes without taking any rest. They were absolutely exhausted. This is as dangerous as drink driving, so we made these guys take a 9 hour break. Then we fined them £980 each.



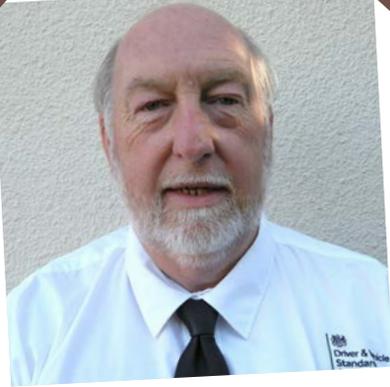
Emma-Jane Morris
traffic examiner



Helen Jacquest, MOT team

We've tackled MOT fraud

Last year we investigated 511 garages and 483 testers. As a result, we stopped 45 garages and 111 testers from testing. In some of these cases there were administrative errors, but the more serious cases involved testers who'd issued MOT certificates without actually testing the vehicle. In the most severe cases we took the testers to court, and some received prison sentences.



Gary Ford
vehicle examiner

We gave evidence to convict 2 hauliers of gross negligence manslaughter

In 2015 a truck with faulty brakes careered down a hill, tragically killing 4 people in Bath. One of the victims was a 4-year-old girl. I gave evidence on behalf of DVSA at the trial at Bristol Crown Court in 2016.

The owner of Grittenham Haulage and his mechanic were each convicted of 4 counts of gross negligence manslaughter. They were jailed for 7 and a half years, and 5 years and 3 months.

Another haulier, who was linked to Grittenham, also lost his operator's licence after DVSA gave evidence showing that his business didn't meet driver and vehicle safety regulations.

We've tackled Bluetooth fraud

Last year, following my team's investigation, West Mercia Police arrested a man for 11 counts of Bluetooth fraud in the theory test. He was sentenced to 32 months in prison.

It's not common, but Bluetooth fraud involves the theory test candidate wearing a hidden device, linked to a mobile phone. They can then listen to someone (like the man who's been convicted) outside, giving them the answers to the questions. If you can't answer the theory test questions yourself, then you're not safe to be on the road, and we take this very seriously. This guy's sentence sends a clear message that we'll do everything we can to bring fraudsters to justice.



Mark Dunnery
fraud & investigations team

Our customers say...

Guardians of the road

Following a visit to one of our enforcement sites, one MP wrote: “I’m really grateful that the guardians of our roads - the staff of the DVSA - are there, potentially keeping all of us that bit safer.”

Bravery award

Two of our enforcement officers were commended by police for their bravery and quick-thinking in 2 incidents on the M6. Neil Whitehouse helped to prevent a suicide attempt by a teenager in Staffordshire, and Paul Harding helped police to catch a suspect who’d been running from the police on the motorway.

Head of the Central Motorway Policing Group, Superintendent Dean Hatton, said: “Neil and Paul went above and beyond their duties to help save lives. They’re a credit to DVSA and I’d like to commend them for their brave actions.”



Paul Harding and Neil Whitehouse

Looking ahead

‘Earned recognition’ pilot scheme

We’ll be working with commercial vehicle operators on a live pilot scheme for ‘earned recognition’. It’s been designed so that haulage and bus companies can share information with us, demonstrating their high levels of safety compliance. We’ll then carry out fewer compliance checks on their vehicles. This’ll allow us to concentrate more of our resources on tackling rogue operators who intentionally break the law.

HGV emissions enforcement

In August 2017 we’ll start to carry out roadside checks which target lorry drivers and operators who cheat on vehicle emissions. The crackdown is based on evidence that some drivers and operators are using cheat devices to cut the cost of operating. This enforcement will help make vehicles safer by cutting the amount of harmful pollutants they produce.





Using intelligence to take law-breakers off the road

We'll continue to use intelligence and disruptive operations to target fraudsters and other law-breakers. Our 3 units – intelligence, criminal analysis and strategic traffic management - will identify high-risk vehicle operators and MOT garages, and illegal driving instructors.

The information our units gather will tell us what illegal activity is occurring, and where we need to target our enforcement to take non-compliant individuals and operators off the road.

Market surveillance

Our market surveillance unit (MSU) was set up to check that vehicles comply with the standards they were approved to at the time of manufacture. We test cars, vans, trucks and buses for emissions – making sure they comply with laboratory limits.

From September 2017 new standards will be introduced and vehicles will also have to pass 'real driving' emissions tests on the road, as well as in the laboratory. Our MSU will carry out this testing on vehicles entering the market, to check compliance with the new standards.

DVSA: a great place to work

1,865

driving examiners

690

enforcement staff

350

new driving
examiners

459

vehicle testers

40

apprentices



A great place to work

Here at DVSA we have some very talented and dedicated people, who all contribute to the agency's success. In this section you'll read about some of the things we've been doing for our people, making DVSA a great place to work.

We're focused on making sure that colleagues have exactly what they need to do their job and to feel valued whilst they do it. The basics include giving them the right equipment – from their IT to their vehicles – and making sure the buildings and bases they use have the best facilities. It's essential that our people feel engaged and supported, so we're also working hard on the best ways to communicate with, recruit, train and develop our staff.

We're making DVSA an even better place to work.

Our stories

We have an award-winning apprentice

Since September 2016 DVSA has recruited more than 40 apprentices. I'm one of them, and I joined the contract management team in Bristol last year after finishing sixth form. I couldn't have asked for a nicer group of people to start my career with.

DVSA fully supports its apprentices; we're encouraged to meet each other regularly and we get lots of opportunities to learn more about the business.

To top it all, I won a Department for Transport Special Recognition Award for my hard work and performance!



Gareth Llewellyn with our award-winning apprentice, **Emily Thompson**



Dave Aaron
digital graduate programme

We have a graduate recruitment scheme

I graduated in computer science 10 years ago, then took a job in HR. I always wanted to get back into IT, so when the opportunity to join the Digital Graduate Scheme came along, I grabbed it. I was fortunate enough to be selected and, since then, I've been undergoing intensive training. Now an exciting career is opening up for me in something I really love!

The scheme also has huge benefits for the business. We've increased our internal digital capability and reduced our reliance on external contractors. We've started work on improving the systems used for MOT testing, helping keep vehicles safe to drive.

We promote diversity and inclusion

I was nominated for the Championing Minority Ethnic People Award at the Civil Service diversity and inclusion awards. This was for my work as chair of DVSA's black and minority ethnic (BME) staff network group, embRACE. The nomination was a huge personal honour, but it also reflected the work of the group. Together, we support DVSA's commitment to removing barriers, and improving the working experience of our BME colleagues.



Nadeem Aziz
business change manager



Brian Faulkner
chair of Pride

We have 5 staff network groups (SNGs)

Our SNGs include employees who understand the challenges that staff with certain characteristics can face. They help DVSA become a more inclusive employer. The SNGs are for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people, black and minority ethnic colleagues, women, disabled members of staff, and those with caring responsibilities.

In February our LGBT group, Pride, led in celebrating LGBT history month with blog posts, videos and drop-ins, highlighting what it means to be an LGBT member of staff. This is important as we don't want to live double lives or pretend to be something we're not. We can actually come to work and be ourselves.

Our stories

We've improved IT for staff

We provided the technology our frontline staff need to deliver services to our customers, and contribute to improved road safety. This included enhanced wifi connectivity and software to improve vehicle checks. We also upgraded our computers and improved mobile connectivity in our admin sites and migrated to a single email, calendar and instant messaging cloud service. Staff can use this remotely, enabling flexible, collaborative working.



Richard Sims
platform engineer



Nicola Stokoe
estate manager

We've improved our buildings

We've improved our enforcement estate by developing High Risk Traffic Initiative sites (HRTIs). These sites target lorries entering and leaving the country, and international freight transport companies.

The HRTIs have large inspection areas and the latest technology and facilities. These allow examiners to check high volumes and conduct mechanical examinations they wouldn't be able to do at the roadside.

There are HRTI sites at Glenluce, Ashford, Chilcomb and Elmswell, with more planned.



John Allen
driving examiner

We're giving our staff what they need

The procurement and contract management team work closely with staff to get a clear understanding of the goods and services they need to do their job.

To find out exactly what we bike examiners need, the procurement team asked us to complete an online survey. We shared our views on the bikes we currently use, and others as possible options for the future.

Mine was one of many responses and I was impressed with the choice of different styles and sizes of motorbike from a range of manufacturers. This was a good, forward-thinking piece of work from the DVSA; my colleagues and I are looking forward to riding our new machines.

We're in the media

We take great pride in our work, and it's really encouraging and important to us when the media take a positive interest. There was lots of media interest when we announced the changes to the driving test.

Driving examiner, Graham O'Brien, appeared on Radio 5 Live to put one of the presenters through a 'new' test at Cheetham Hill test centre. We also featured on Gogglebox, Sky News, numerous local radio stations and the One Show. And I told viewers about the changes from the BBC Breakfast sofa!



Lesley Young, chief driving examiner, with Dan Walker and Louise Minchin

Looking ahead



Improving our workplaces

We're starting a national programme to improve the working environment for our frontline staff. The programme will include maintenance, repairs and new building work to give everyone a decent place to work. This summer we've completed work on a new office and canopy at Leatherhead, and further improvement schemes for enforcement are in the pipeline.

Tackling discrimination, bullying and harassment

Discrimination, bullying and harassment aren't welcome at DVSA and we're working to stop these behaviours. We've asked staff how we can tackle this and have been working with the trade unions and staff network groups to bring in a number of initiatives.

By the autumn we'll have a team of mediators to help staff work through difficulties and disputes they experience at work. And, by the end of the year, we'll have a team of investigators who'll deal with all discrimination, bullying and harassment grievances.

On top of this, we're also rolling out 'leading inclusive teams' training for all managers, and training for everyone on 'building respect in the workplace'.



Training our staff

This year we'll be running a pilot management training programme for staff across a range of grades. Their development will cover various skills, such as objective setting and building effective teams. When the programme's been evaluated we hope to make it available for all members of staff who are, or want to become, managers.

We'll also train our driving examiners to meet the terms of the EU 3rd directive legislative requirement to have mandatory driver training. It's a 5 day course where driving examiners will learn about the new driving test, and be able to test the latest gadgets such as driving cars fitted with park assist and assisted braking.

Recruitment

In the autumn we'll bring in changes to help make recruitment easier and reduce the time it takes. For example, we'll be moving towards a process that gives us the opportunity to consider candidates' strengths in situations that are relevant to the post. We'll also give our people more support in recruiting their staff.

Recruiting frontline staff will continue to be a top priority, and we'll evaluate and develop our recruitment to make sure we have the right people in place to deliver our 5 year strategy. And we'll attend recruitment events and improve the information we give in our job adverts, to attract people from a wide range of backgrounds and with a wide range of experiences.

Giving our frontline staff the digital kit they need

Over the coming months we'll be providing our enforcement staff with smartphones. This'll make working remotely easier as they'll have access to more information, like technical guidance and email. They'll also be able to use the phones to record evidence.

And we're developing an app to support enforcement staff in their work. Its functions will include a search facility to access our vehicle databases, and one to check if commercial vehicles have the correct tread patterns on their tyres.

Apprenticeships

We'll be working with the Department for Transport and other agencies to improve and grow all of our apprenticeship schemes. And DVSA will be taking on apprentices from the Vehicle Certification Agency.

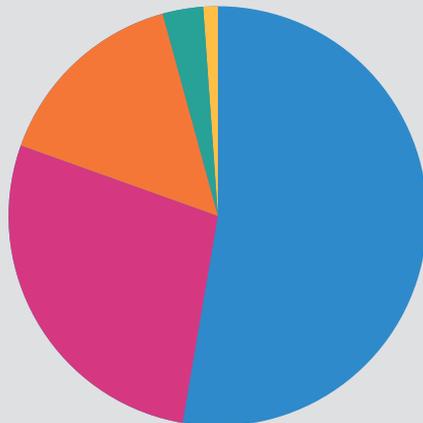
We already have over 40 apprentices, who represent about 1% of our workforce. In the longer term, we aim for apprentices to represent 2.2% of our workforce by 2020, contributing to the Department for Transport's aim of employing 20,000 apprentices across the travel sector.



Our income and costs

In the financial year 2016 to 2017 we made a surplus of £30.7 million which we'll invest to improve our services by:

- improving mobile technology for our frontline staff
- developing our MOT service
- modernising some of our buildings
- investing in our enforcement activities to concentrate on those operators whose vehicles and practises compromise road safety.

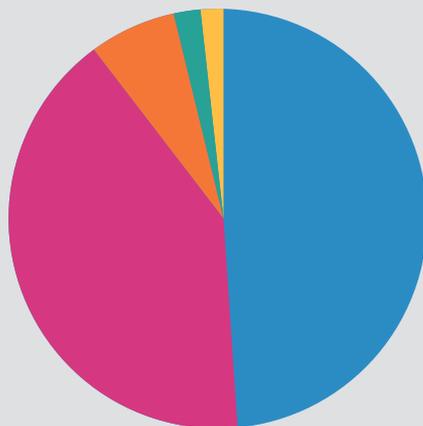


Income: £393.5 million

Driver services	£207.4m
Vehicle services	£107.2m
MOT services	£61.3m
Licensing services	£13.3m
Other services	£4.3m

Our people

We have around 4,600 members of staff. The majority work on the frontline, in operational roles like driving examiner, vehicle examiner and enforcement officer. The rest work in dozens of supporting roles, and everyone contributes to making Britain's roads safer.



Costs: £362.8 million

Staff costs	£177.5m
Other operating charges	£147.7m
Asset disposal	£24m
Net finance costs	£7.3m
Dividend payable to DfT	£6.3m

We're listening

By listening to our customers and putting things right quickly, we managed to reduce the overall number of complaints by 26% compared with 2015 to 2016. Our call centre staff in Newcastle and Swansea received some great feedback, which shows how their dedication contributed to this massive improvement. Here's just one comment:

"A customer of mine had many problems, but the team have been fantastic and very professional. A special thank you to Ian & Isabelle on the call centre team for getting him his test today." **Chris, London**



facebook.com/dvsagovuk



[@DVSAgovuk](https://twitter.com/DVSAgovuk)



www.gov.uk/dvsa

We listen to what our customers and stakeholders have to say about DVSA services at regular face to face industry meetings and events. And last year we conducted customer insight studies with motorcycle candidates and trainers, MOT service users and users of our ATFs. We'll use the information they gave us to improve our services and help you stay safe on Britain's roads.

We respond to your feedback about our GOV.UK pages too. We look at your comments, where you click and what you search for to improve our content. We make things easier to find and give you the information you've asked for. For example, last year we updated all the information about the theory and practical driving tests.

Helping you stay safe
on Britain's roads

We're also listening to you through our social media channels. You can tell us what you're thinking on Twitter and Facebook and one of our team will get back to you. Join us on: facebook.com/dvsagovuk or [@DVSAgovuk](https://twitter.com/DVSAgovuk) on Twitter. Or, if you have a question and can't find the answer on GOV.UK, tweet [@DVSA_helpme](https://twitter.com/DVSA_helpme).