



Fleeting Times

This month represents a major leap in the evolution of fleet training and road safety, but it is actually the culmination of numerous step changes over a number of years. On the delivery side, these changes have affected the qualification process for ADIs wishing to join the Register of Fleet Trainers, along with new requirements for a statutory check test for those fleet trainers wishing to retain their registration. On the customer side of things, there have been changes, some of which appear to have little effect, whilst others have been quite far reaching.

So, whilst it is a significant month in legal terms, it also represents a lot of work over a long period of time to improve road safety in this important area of driver responsibility - it also represents another great opportunity for ADIs to play their part and raise their income.

The Fleet Trainer Register

Some years ago, when I was at BSM and first became involved with fleet training, or qualified driver training (QDT) as it was called then, the qualification process for joining the Fleet Trainer Register was very

straightforward. For most ADIs involved in the delivery of QDT at that time, it was simply a matter of having your application rubber stamped by the Driving Standards Agency under the euphemistic heading 'grandfather rights'. In other words, your ADI qualification and prior involvement in fleet training were enough to secure your place on the register without undergoing any formal verification of your ability to competently deliver such training (a rather simplistic, but essentially correct, definition). For those ADIs who did not meet the criteria for 'grandfather rights', there were two alternatives - successfully taking either the DSA Fleet

Trainer course or a DSA approved external fleet trainer course. With the abolition of 'grandfather rights', these last two options remain as the only ways to qualify now. The DSA launched the Voluntary Registration Scheme for Fleet Driver Trainers on 22 April 2002, the product of a joint working party involving DSA, employers, risk-managers, insurers and trainers, in consultation with other interested parties. The Government's 'Road Safety Strategy: Tomorrow's Roads - Safer for Everyone' announced that DSA would introduce such a scheme to set standards for instructors who specialise in providing this type of training, whilst raising the profile of the

training on offer to fleet drivers and their employers.

The DSA Route

The DSA route to Fleet Trainer qualification is similar to the ADI qualification process in as much as you have to pass a three-part examination. This consists of a multiple choice theory test paper, a practical test of driving ability and, finally, a practical test of instructional/coaching ability. All three parts of the exam must be taken in the above order and passed within a one-year period, and that one-year period starts from the date of the first attempt at the theory test. A candidate to complete the process within that time must



start again from the beginning and pass each part to qualify to join the Register, unlike the two years given for the basic ADI qualification process. Other differences include no Hazard Perception element and, whilst there are still 100 theory questions in four bands, the topic areas for the four bands are different.

The Theory Test:

Band 1 - driving practices and procedures, road and traffic signs, motorway driving.

Band 2 - driver attitude, driver and the law, environmental issues.

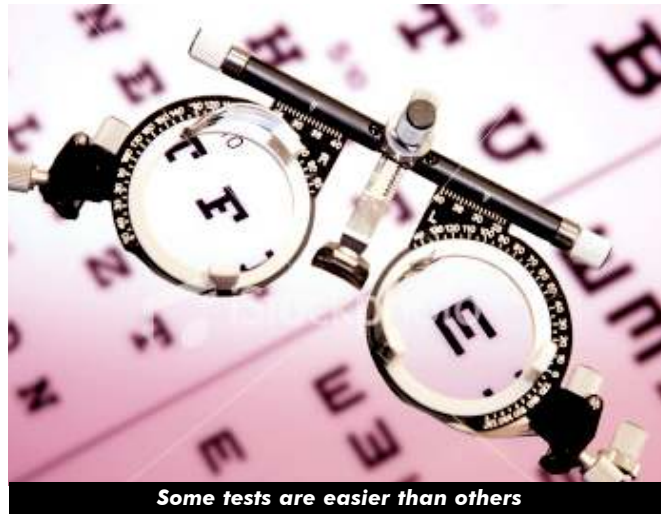
Band 3 - vehicle dynamics and handling, accident procedures.

Band 4 - instructional coaching techniques, hazard perception.

There are also some questions specifically about 'Roadcraft: The Essential Police Driver's Handbook'. The best advice, not only for the theory test, but for all three exams, is to obtain the 'Fleet Trainer Starter Pack' from the Register of Fleet Driver Trainers Section at DSA, priced £6.99. The pack contains the application form 'Fleet 1' (needed to make your application for registration once the exams have been successfully completed), the 'Notes for Guidance', and the theory test question bank. If you don't have a copy of Roadcraft, then you really need to get one, and make sure you become familiar with it before taking the theory test. The marking criteria are exactly the same as the ADI theory test, with the overall pass mark being 85% or above, and a minimum mark of 80% in each of the four bands.

Driving Technique (Test 2):

The practical driving test comprises tests of eyesight (conducted in exactly the same way as the ADI test, with the minimum distance criteria



being 27.5 metres) and driving technique. Like its ADI counterpart, it lasts for approximately one hour. Candidates are required to satisfy the examiner that they are skilled, safe and consistent drivers, and the result of the test will depend solely upon their driving performance under test conditions - and the test route will be demanding. After all, it is a test of an advanced nature and a very high standard of competence is required, so candidates must show that they have a thorough knowledge of the principles involved in good driving and road safety, and that they can apply them in practice. Excellent hazard perception and planning skills, along with a demonstration descriptive talk-through commentary whilst driving, for a period of not less than ten minutes, will be required, and even a reversing exercise selected at random by the examiner. However, there is no controlled (emergency) stop or eco-safe driving assessment. To pass the test, the candidate must not accrue more than four driving faults, not including a serious or dangerous fault.

As you can see, the standard required for a pass is somewhat higher than for the ADI Practical Driving Test. Unlike the ADI test, use of the

Roadcraft driving plan of information, position, speed, gear and acceleration is acceptable. If you are not familiar with the Roadcraft system, then you need to become familiar with it, not just for the driving test, but also for the theory test - the question bank does contain specific questions about this. I'm often asked the question about the apparently different driving techniques used for both the ADI and Fleet Trainer practical driving tests. My answer is that the ADI test gives the candidate an opportunity to demonstrate, in an expert way, their knowledge, understanding, attitude and ability to deliver the recommended syllabus used for teaching someone to drive. The main reference work for this would be the official publication Driving: The Essential Skills. I say the main reference work as, clearly, all of the official publications should be utilised. For the Fleet Trainer test, you can apply essentially the same definition but change 'teaching someone to drive' to 'coaching a qualified driver', and add Roadcraft as a reference work.

Instructional Coaching Ability (Test 3):

The objective of the one-hour test is to assess the value of the candidate's instructional

coaching ability. The examiner will sit in the driving seat and play the part of the customer, and the content and structure of the test is prescribed.

Candidates are made aware of this so that they can prepare fully. There are seven scenarios to cover and they are:

1. Give a short presentation no longer than 10 minutes and designed to raise initial awareness of occupational road risk (ORR). It should be interactive and contain validation to promote active participation from the recipient, and any facts quoted should be attributed to verifiable sources such as The Health and Safety Executive or The Department for Transport.
2. Involve the customer in an interactive practical vehicle check. This demonstrates knowledge of basic mechanical principles and legal requirements.
3. Demonstrate to the customer all necessary pre-start checks and be capable of discussing additional safety features such as ABS, traction control and impact protection systems.
4. Assess the customer's driving.
5. Effectively communicate to the customer a risk assessment.
6. Provide and demonstrate appropriate coaching methods that would reduce those risks identified.
7. Communicate a final risk profile of the customer's driving, highlighting key strengths and weaknesses where appropriate.

Yes, I did say the test lasted one hour, so fully understanding the content and structure of the test is imperative. While time management should be the responsibility of the candidate, the examiner will decide, if necessary, if any particular scenario has been adequately

Feature

covered and things need to move on. At the start of the test, the examiner will give an overview of how the test is to be conducted and the customer role they intend to use.

The marking sheet is divided into two columns - 'A' on the left, and 'B' on the right. 'Key Risk Area Topics' are twelve subjects listed down the left hand side and divided into two sections. The first six are:

- Risk Presentation
- Vehicle Safety Check
- MSM PSL
- Use of Speed
- Separation Distance
- Other Road Users

These subjects will always form part of the test criteria, and will be assessed as 'Not Covered', 'Unsatisfactory' or 'Satisfactory'. Two other additional subjects will be assessed from the remaining list of six topics:

- Attitude and Culture
- Legal Requirements
- Driver / Passenger Safety
- Vehicle Safety / Sympathy Drivers
- Dealing with Aggressive Drivers
- Environmental Effects

Subjects not tested during the examination will be ruled through.

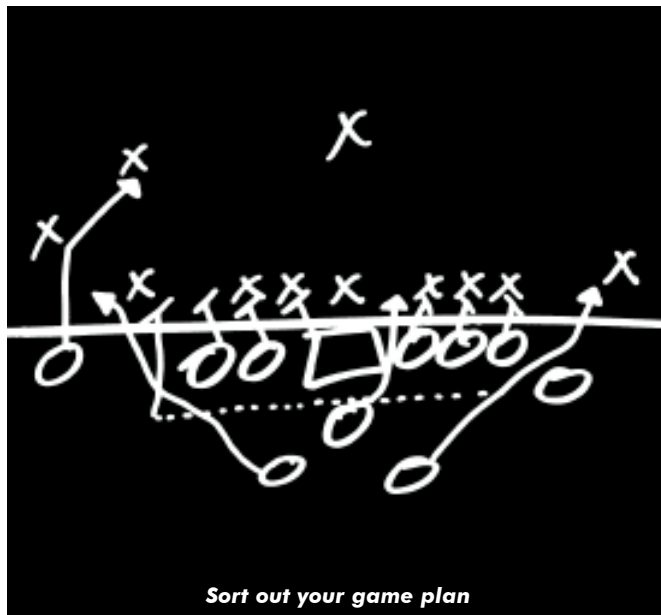
The right hand side (Column B) of the marking sheet will look very familiar to most ADIs, and lists the following items:

Core Competencies

Fault Identification - The ability of the trainer to clearly identify all the important risk areas committed by the customer and requiring development as part of an effective instructional coaching process.

Fault Analysis - The ability (having identified the risks) to accurately formulate a risk profile, which should be prioritised and then communicated to the customer along with their degree of importance.

Remedial Action - This relates



to offering constructive and appropriate coaching/advice to remedy a risk or fault that has been identified and analysed. The risk assessment need not be immediate if this seems inappropriate at the time, but it should be given at the first opportunity. A mark should be awarded on the scale from 1 to 6 for each of the subject headings in the right hand column.

The following notes should be the basis for the marking: Level

This must be matched to the ability and experience of the customer. If the customer is one that you have not instructed before, there will be a need to establish their level of ability at the start and continue to do so throughout the examination.

Planning/control

Having assessed risks and prioritised them, objectives should be defined and explained to the customer. This aspect also covers the planned and actual sequence of instructional coaching activity, together with the appropriateness and effectiveness of teaching methods used, taking due account of the objectives and

progress of the customer. The trainer should retain control of the session at all times. It will include the overall control of the session and the interaction processes within it. The allocation of time between training activities and methods used, such as the distribution between theory and practice, will also be assessed under this aspect.

Communication

Concerned with the customer's understanding of instructional coaching, appropriateness of language and use of jargon (with or without explanation). Includes the ability to adapt and use language, and terminology, likely to be familiar to the individual customer, whilst not overloading them with over-technical and complex explanations.

Question and answer technique

At appropriate points during the lesson, the trainer should ask questions that contribute towards realising the objectives of the session. Ideally, the questions should be simply worded, well defined, reasonable and relevant. There is a need for questions that are thought provoking and challenging, as well as ones that simply test a

pupil's memory. In addition, the trainer should encourage the customer to ask questions at appropriate times.

Feedback

This relates to the trainer's response to the customer's questions, answers and performance: praise, confirmation, reinforcement for effort/progress/achievement; correction/information when errors/faults occur.

Encouraging the customer is part of any teaching skill - after all, they need to know when they have done something well. This aspect is also used to rate the final risk profile towards the end of the instructional coaching ability examination. It should include mention of what a customer may be able to do to encourage self-development after the session.

Trainer's use of controls

The controls should only be used when necessary and the customer should be told when and why they have been used. In certain circumstances the controls may be used as an effective teaching aid during a demonstration.

Attitude and approach

This aspect should be dealt with as an overall assessment of the trainer's characteristics and is concerned with the skills used to create a relaxed but, supportive, learning environment. It is not to be used as a measure of the personality characteristics of the trainer, but as a measure of how effective the trainer is in establishing and maintaining a good rapport, and creating the best atmosphere for learning to take place. They should have a relaxed manner and be outgoing, but not over-familiar. They should be self confident and capable of transmitting confidence to the customer in a patient and tactful manner. Any unnecessary physical contact with the pupil will be reflected

in the marking.

The familiar 1 to 6 grading scale is used and, providing all of the marks in the Core Competency section are a 4 or above, the candidate will pass. For more detail on the Fleet Trainer examination process, I strongly recommend you read the official publication ADI-1, which is freely available from the DSA website.

External Course Route

The other option open to the aspiring Fleet Trainer is to enrol on one of the DSA approved fleet trainer courses offered by various organisations across the country. As with any investment you make, time spent on researching a course that suits you is important. The three main considerations are cost, content and location. All three can, and do, vary greatly, so make sure you know what is on offer before parting with your hard earned cash - the average cost seems to be around £800.

Content should not only include the three exams (or rather, validation sessions as the DSA like to call them) but also structured sessions to prepare candidates for the various elements of the course.

Having been involved in running an external course for some time now, I would say that the most important thing a candidate needs to do is prepare thoroughly for all three validation sessions. Therefore, you need to ensure your theoretical knowledge is sound, particularly in respect of the four bands used for the 100 question theory paper. Driving skills must be maintained to a high standard, as well as the ability to give a commentary whilst driving. In my experience, the



Potential money-spinner?

most challenging part of the process is the validation of coaching ability. If the candidate has limited experience of driver training with full licence holders, then they may find the concept of coaching a difficult one to grasp quickly. If this is the case, you'll need to do some research on the subject.

However, to put it into simple terms, instructing (in a driver training sense) is introducing new knowledge and skills to a person, and helping them develop those skills to the point where they become independent of such instruction.

Coaching is where existing knowledge and skills are explored, deficiencies or inconsistencies identified, and suitable remedial advice given. Remember, only a finite amount of time is usually offered on an 'external course' to become a Fleet Trainer. Be honest with yourself and only go ahead with such a course if you feel well prepared, fully understand what is expected of you, and you are fully prepared to do your

homework.

To find an external course you can look through the ads that appear in most ADI magazines or look on the DSA website in the fleet trainer section, where you will find a list of the courses they have approved.

What Will Your Customer Expect?

It seems like stating the obvious to say that customers expect a fleet trainer to be able to deliver competent in-car driver training and development to their employees. These days though, a qualified fleet trainer should be capable of providing more than just an in-car service. Because of the publicity generated by such headline grabbers as the new Corporate Manslaughter Bill, and the seemingly endless reporting of dangerous driving prosecutions involving someone who was driving as part of their work, there has been a significant raising of awareness among employers of their responsibilities towards not just their employees, who drive on behalf of the

company, but also any person likely to be affected by them. More and more, such an awareness is driven by the employer's insurance company, who are in a position to demand certain safeguards with regard to the company's drivers and vehicles that they are insuring.

As a consequence of this, fleet trainers should be able to advise their customers of the basic requirements of how to manage occupational road risk (ORR). There is a wealth of literature available from the recognised authorities on ORR.

The main two bodies are The Health and Safety Executive and the Department for Transport. Many other organisations such as RoSPA, BRAKE, ORSA etc also have very informative websites that allow for the downloading of suitable reference material for the fleet trainer as well as for their customer.

Fleeting Opportunities

Over the last few years, there has been a shift in emphasis away from fleet trainers solely providing in-car training and giving the occasional seminars to company car drivers, over to advising employers how to set up their ORR management procedures.

This is backed up by the number of companies specialising in providing ORR solutions and varying degrees of on-line driver assessment tools.

With the DSA also taking a more pro-active interest in fleet driver training in all its aspects, the DSA Registered Fleet Driver Trainer is set to become a key figure in the future of managing work related road safety.

For the ADI, it can only mean more potential business and career opportunities! **adi**

Derek Bryan is the Operations Manager for DriveLegal (www.drivelegal.co.uk), a division of LVG Ltd specialising in ORR solutions. A highly respected ADI of long standing, Derek is also an ORDIT and Fleet Registered Trainer. He has recently completed the re-accreditation of a Fleet Trainer course on behalf of DriveLegal.