



Meeting Minutes

Subject:	Industry and DIT	Date:	7/02/2024
Location:	Level 9.05 Dr Alice Rigney Conference Room	Start:	1.30pm
Note taker:	K Bower	Finish:	4.00pm
Attendees:	Stuart Gilbert (SG), Andre Simmonds (AS), Linda Jackson (LJ), David Whomes (DW), Elio Pisaniello (EP), John Cicchiello (JC), Matthew Woodman (MW)		

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the Country throughout South Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land and waters. We pay our respects to the diversity of cultures; significance of contributions and to Elders past, present and emerging.

1 Welcome and apologies

2 Minutes of previous meeting were approved.

3 Action items were discussed. (See Appendix attached).

4 Moratorium and industry reform

SG advised that the Minister is looking at the reform proposals currently, but the Department is still unaware of what direction will be taken as no advice has been received as yet. Cabinet support will be required to implement change of any kind.

Industry members were assured that new Motor Driving Instructors (MDIs) are still being approved. There were 607 new MDIs to the end of 2023. The Standards Unit receive as many applications per month as it received historically for a whole year.

Whilst the Moratorium for new Authorised Examiner approvals is still in place, DIT are not progressing applications pending the reform outcome.

DIT assured industry members that it is constantly reviewing and planning with a view to continuing processing of applications for exemption from the moratorium as soon as possible.

JC advised that from an industry perspective, it is difficult to manage customer expectations at present with long lead times for final driving assessments.

5 ADTASA ITEMS

5.1 VORT Start times for Sunday (7:30AM) needs to be revisited. Alignment of Class "C" Sunday Start times with Heavy Vehicle VORT TEST Start Times of 7:30am on Sundays.

AS followed up with the Road Traffic Centre and they advised Sunday morning traffic is light. He advised DIT will consider a 9.00am start but no earlier due to existing noise restrictions and to be respectful to residents in assessment areas.

DIT (SG) will also consider an extra hour at night in the summer while it is still light however due to changes that would be required, this will not occur in the current summer period as TRUMPS changes will be required to accommodate any changes to times made.

Action: DIT to consider extending the summer testing period to allow testing later in the day and starting time for Sundays to be earlier.

5.2 Outcome of the effectiveness study of the online learners permit test conducted in Queensland

This study is being conducted now and once results are available DIT will advise industry. (See previous meeting Action Item 5.9.)

5.3 Progress of hub locations at Mitcham and Modbury

Letters have been sent however no response has been received from the two councils as yet.

Action: DIT to follow up

5.4 Appointment or advertisement of new Deputy Registrar position

The position filled recently to replace Clare Heathcote was for the Manager of Compliance, Investigations and Prosecutions. Kate Williams has been appointed in this role.

DIT clarified that there are several Deputy Registrars, including Stuart Gilbert, however this is not a part of Kate's duties.

5.5 Allow more than 8 VORTS per day, back to unlimited, to help ease the waiting lists. (This has come from several instructors.)

Several industry members have asked for DIT to allow more than eight assessments to be conducted per day.

Industry members discussed this and recalled the history of the original decision to limit the testing to eight per day. This included the management of fatigue and being able to offer an acceptable standard of service to each client. After some discussion it was agreed by industry members that eight tests per day is entirely an acceptable number.

As per the discussion in 5.1, all agreed that the range of hours could be altered to accommodate testing later in the day during summer months.

5.6 OVERSEAS LICENCE CONVERSIONS (S80 Temporary Driver's Permits) – extension of permit validity period from the current 90 days to 120 days (including extension period from 90 days to 120 days)

JC asked if there is any information available to overseas drivers when they obtain their permit. He advised that people need more education and should be encouraged to undertake some lessons even if they have been driving for years. Many are unaware of the details of the VORT and the level of competency required for passing this test without undertaking any lessons.

Many overseas licence holders wait until their permit is about to expire, take the VORT and fail and then realise they would benefit from lessons but their permits are about to expire and having to default to Learner Permit conditions is unacceptable to many who do not have the option of a QSD.

Action: AS will seek guidance from the policy team regarding the extension of permits and to discuss overseas licencing generally.

5.7 New MDI Support from DIT (all classes) ie Hub locations, new MDI information pack

JC supports people preparing for Regulator Assessments therefore speaks to many MDI applicants and new MDIs.

He asked if DIT can supply a 'pack' of information to new MDIs with information such as:

- Where hubs are in order to assist students with assessment locations;
- Explain expectations such as not training on routes or using hub car park areas (which has historically created traffic congestion);
- Code of Conduct, and
- Where to find support within the industry including the associations and where to locate information on the Government website.

He sees there is room for improvement with regards to what information could be provided upon issue of a new MDI accreditation.

SG agreed that more information provided to new MDIs would be helpful.

Action: DIT to investigate the concept of developing a 'Welcome Pack' or more information than supplied at present.

5.8 MENTORING of NEW MDI's/AUTHORISED EXAMINERS (AEs - all Classes)

John asked how the knowledge of AEs can be harnessed and would like to see DIT offer a mentorship program to support new MDIs and Authorised Examiners.

SG advised that DIT would be happy to provide some guidance to small mentor type groups such as that run by some industry members however to do this well would be extremely resource intensive therefore cost prohibitive at this time.

SG also pointed out that the associations could provide this assistance to their members if they desired.

DW advised that the PDTA funds some members to train others as a form of professional development.

5.9.1 ROAD SAFETY INITIATIVE – PROFESSIONAL DRIVER TRAINING MANDATORY?

From a road safety perspective industry members asked whether Task 22 and Task 28A of the CBTA manual should be signed off by an Authorised Examiner for VORT applicants as they feel there is a safety issue with not mandating the country drive and driving on unsealed roads as is done via the alternative process of CBT&A.

AS thanked JC for this suggestion and advised that this is something that can be discussed further with the DIT Road Safety team.

Action: AS to discuss with the DIT Road Safety team.

5.9.2 LESSONS with a PROFESSIONAL DRIVER TRAINER worth double the time of standard driving time with a qualified supervising driver

JC believes there must be a benefit to using an instructor and advised other states use this model to encourage learners to take lessons.

Clients are presenting for a VORT without any decent training and industry's aim is to encourage learners to undertake lessons early in the process.

The concept was discussed with no action to be taken at this time.

5.10 National Heavy Vehicle Competency Framework (NHVCF) progress (timing, structure, implementation, and stakeholder engagement)

AS advised that this national program (that has been agreed to in-principle by Australia's transport ministers), has several different streams with parts being worked on in different sections.

No further progress has been communicated to DIT to date and AS will inform industry when there is information available.

AS advised that DIT Standards Unit training staff are currently updating all heavy-combination (HC) (TILE) and multi-combination training manuals to deliver and planning the rollout of the Registrars theory courses.

All heavy vehicle manuals (for all classes) have been updated and some consultation is being done at present and the plan of roll out is in progress.

The manuals will match and, in some instances, exceed the requirements of the NHVCF and we are mindful of that and are trying to ensure that we don't make the requirements too difficult ie online theory course, so as not to disadvantage people in the industry.

Consultation was done with industry during the process and a lot of the work was done by Philip Neill, a subject matter expert and previous DIT employee from the Standards Unit.

6 PDTA ITEMS

6.1 The shortage of Authorised Examiners in the system - are there any plans for more CBT&A and or VORT Courses planned?

AS advised that none are planned at present however DIT is always reviewing rural demand in order to ensure delivery of services continue within reasonable timeframes for testing.

6.2 Progress of Authorised Examiner Payment online (Item 4.2)

This has been approved and progressed to being scheduled for implementation as soon as possible.

However, the demand for changes across DIT is high therefore it is unknown when this change will be made in MySAGov.

6.3 New start points for Mitcham & Modbury – (see Action Items)

AS is open to looking at hubs in areas that need them, however due to congestion in Gawler a return of starting points in the town centre in the future is unlikely. Somewhere nearby maybe an option.

MW advised he contacted the Tea Tree Gully Council and received a response that the netball association site cannot be used because of specific times and not on weekends or after 4.00pm

weekdays. Industry asked if this could be a part-time hub however other sites will be investigated instead.

DIT's multi-level carpark facility is not used on top levels however AS has approached the Department's Asset Management group who manage this facility to discuss using this as a testing start point. Regrettably they advise it is not available for use as a start point.

AS will try to re-engage with this group again.

Action: AS to discuss again with DIT regarding use of the DIT Park n ride car park.

6.4 Online bookings system down without notification to AE's of the planned outages

Industry members advised they would like notification of planned MySAGov outages.

SG advised that outage notifications can be passed onto industry when they occur.

6.5 VORT manual progress

AS advised the VORT manual update is still in progress.

6.6 VORT Recording sheets clarification regarding IFI's at traffic lights

Industry asked for clarification of the scenario; When a student fails to enter the intersection on a green light when safe to do so and doesn't impede traffic, what is the road law if they wait to the next cycle?

All agreed that context of the situation must be considered. AS advised, there is no road law regarding a driver having to enter an intersection. It was agreed that this can be clarified in the bulletin to all industry members.

Action: Explain this scenario and the acceptable outcomes via the industry bulletin.

6.7 Reiterate dress standards in next industry bulletin

SG advised that we do not ask industry members to comply with certain dress standards so it is difficult for DIT to mandate what industry members should wear. Industry identified that it is possible that each instructor's comprehensive insurance policy may specify the type of footwear to be worn in order to be eligible for cover in the event of an accident in their vehicle.

AS advised that industry members may perhaps advise their students of what would be considered as appropriate footwear for driving.

Action: Remind industry members, via the bulletin, to communicate that appropriate footwear should be worn during a driving lesson or assessment.

6.8 Update of the start points for CBT&A and VORT for metro and country

Industry would like to see the updated list of start points for assessments available online.

DIT suggested this can be added to the website and also mentioned in the next industry bulletin.

6.9 Complex U-turn issue

Recently an issue emerged with examiners being advised by SA Police that they are in contravention of Australian Road Rule 132 when their test applicant is attempting a U-turn where a centre dividing line exists on the side road and the driver drives over this line in.

AS advised that this appears to be an interpretation by SA Police and that any examiner wishes to express concern or query this, they must do so with SA Police.

AS did advise that the Driving Companion and CBT&A manual shows drawings of the scenario above and pictures showing the centre line are being removed.

6.10 How amendments are communicated to update the Authorised Examiner manuals

AS advised that changes to the manuals are version controlled and will be provided on the SA government website prior to release. They will also be noted in the industry bulletin with information on what the changes are and where they can be found.

6.11 Status of vehicle cameras

AS advised that DIT are working towards trialling cameras in the near future.

6.12 Status of the Deed (Crown Law update)

AS has received advise from the Crown Solicitors Office relating to request for footage should a practical driving assessment be conducted in a MDI vehicle. The advice is that requests for footage will need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis. As a result, there can be no blanket policy for industry to request footage.

There was some confusion about what the Deed Poll was for.

During the discussion EP suggested all testing should be conducted in a dual-brake vehicle.

AS advised that Authorised Examiners have a responsibility under WHS legislation to ensure a safe environment for themselves their clients and other road users. With this in mind, it is entirely up to the individual industry member make the choice to undertake testing in client's vehicle with or without a dual-brake.

Several industry members advised that Professional Indemnity and Public Liability insurance does not generally cover the examiner if there is an accident when using a client's vehicle for an assessment.

6.13 Any updates to Austroads national approach with heavy vehicles and DIT

See Item 5.10

Other Business (OB)

1. MW advised of a few changes that are required to the CBT&A logbook in line with wording recently changed to replace the words 'hand brake' with 'park brake'. He identified a diagram in the CBT&A logbook showing a handbrake as well as Task 5 of CBT&A logbook both use the outdated wording.
2. Some national work has been done on driver assistance systems guidelines. DIT is currently working on guidelines and will provide these to industry once developed.

Action: DIT to update before next edition is updated.

3. MW sought clarification that a digital licence is accepted in place of a physical card and DIT confirmed that is the case.
4. JC enquired on the status of the ultra-high performance vehicle licensing on-line program. AS advised that the content has been agreed and development of the program is currently underway. DIT will provide relevant information to stakeholders and the public well ahead of time for those requiring this new licence class.
5. Since the mandating of the Working with Children Check (WWCC) in 2019 for Motor Driving Instructors it was pointed out that this year many instructors WWCC will expire as they are issued for five years. DIT will advise industry via the bulletin to check the expiry date as no advice is sent of a pending expiry but the issuer, the Department of Human Services.

Action: Send a communication to industry via the bulletin as a reminder to check their WWCC expiry date.

Next Meeting: 8th May 2024 at 1.30pm