

Extracts from the Council's Policy Relating to the Testing of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles.

4. Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Testing

4.1 The Authority needs to be satisfied that licensed vehicles operating within its area are safe to do so. In addition, it must also aim to ensure that vehicles are comfortable, are of the appropriate appearance and also suitable for use as a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle in the East Lindsey District.

4.2 The Council appoints MOT garages in order to undertake the compliance testing of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles on its behalf. The compliance test consists of the normal MOT test plus additional items, which the Council considers necessary to safeguard the best interests of the travelling public.

4.3 Hackney carriage and private hire vehicles are normally granted licences for a maximum period of 12 months. Prior to being granted a licence each vehicle must be examined and tested at a vehicle testing station approved by the Authority. Once licensed the vehicle must undergo a further full examination and test at a vehicle testing station approved by the Licensing Authority at 6 monthly intervals.

4.4 In relation to paragraph 4.3 it should be noted that the Authority has waived the necessity for a vehicle to be mechanically tested if it is not more than six months old at the date of the application for a licence. In such a case, the first vehicle test will be due once the vehicle achieved six months of age.

4.5 **Certificate of Compliance:** The Council is authorised by the Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA) to test vehicles under a compliance testing scheme in accordance with the Motor Vehicles (Test) Regulations 1981 (as amended). The use of this compliance scheme means that, in addition to the standard MOT test, the Council can specify additional items, which it considers necessary to safeguard the best interests of the travelling public.

4.6 In line with the Certificate of Compliance scheme vehicles licensed by East Lindsey District Council are exempt from the requirement to possess an MOT certificate. If licence holders are requested to produce an MOT Certificate by the Police, etc. the vehicle licence and this Authority's Certificate of Compliance should be produced instead. Once the Council vehicle licence has expired, is suspended, revoked or cancelled, the vehicle reverts to the status of an ordinary private car and the normal traffic laws relating to vehicle excise licences and the holding of an MOT Certificate apply.

4.7 The Council's approved compliance testing stations will be strategically positioned within the East Lindsey District. The Authority has agreed a cap of 20 on the total number of approved testing stations. The purpose of the cap is to allow effective quality control inspection by the Authority. A list of the current approved testing stations is available by contacting the Council's Licensing Team. The total cost of the combined MOT and compliance test will be determined by the provider (the approved compliance testing station).

4.8 The minimum standard required, at the twice-yearly vehicle test, will be at least that of the current Department for Transport MOT test, in force as of the date of testing, plus the items listed in this Authority's testing manual. The additional items, listed in the Council's testing manual, include the checking of upholstery, roof lining and bodywork to ensure the vehicle is of the required standard. The additional items to the MOT test will include the following:

- The vehicle's bodywork must be in good order, free from significant dents and surface damage. All paintwork must be in good condition and there must be no significant mismatch of colour.
- Three-point seat belts must be fitted to all passenger seats. Lap belts will be acceptable in certain circumstances (e.g. specialist hire vehicles).

A copy of the current testing manual is available by contacting the Council's Licensing Team.

4.9 The physical condition of a licensed vehicle is an important criteria used when assessing the suitability of a vehicle. In exceptional circumstances a licence may not be renewed if the physical condition of the vehicle is not of a suitable standard despite having passed a MOT test.

4.10 Licensed vehicles that fail an authorised examination and test, and, are deemed unsafe as a passenger vehicle by the vehicle examiner, may result in the vehicle proprietor being issued with a suspension notice by the Licensing Authority in order to prevent the vehicle being used to carry passengers until the defect(s) is/are remedied. The suspension will not be lifted until the vehicle has undergone a further test, at the proprietor's expense, and been passed as fit for use by the Licensing Authority. If the defect is not repaired within 2 months from the service of the suspension notice, the vehicle licence will be revoked by the Licensing Authority.