

## PART C

### The Examination & Assessment of Vehicles

#### Vehicle Assessment

This part of the document has been produced in order to assist licensed drivers, hackney carriage proprietors and private hire operators. It sets out in clear and simple terms the items which are assessed and tested and the minimum standards which must be reached for licensed vehicles to pass the mandatory NFDC vehicle inspection(s).

Licensed vehicles are working vehicles which are liable to cover large mileages over short periods whilst carrying fare paying passengers. As a consequence the Council sets high standards for those vehicles which it does licence and it expects vehicle owners to ensure that the standards are maintained throughout the licensed period. Vehicles eight years and older are tested on application and thereafter at six monthly intervals.

The items marked with an asterisk (\*) are also examined during the MOT test and further requirements for assessment can be found in the current MOT Testers Manual. Where items are not subject to MOT examination then NFDC requirements are set out in the following document.

Inevitable some check items will be open to subjective judgement on the part of the NFDC examiner. NFDC will whenever possible minimise any possible variances by using the same, usually two, experienced and qualified technicians.

The vehicles test fee is included in the licence fee; therefore, providing the vehicle is in satisfactory condition and passes the test no further payment is necessary. However should the vehicle fail the test then a re-test fee will be charged at the current published rate. This fee must be paid before a re-test is carried out. The garage will require sight of the re-test fee payment prior to examining the vehicle. Re-tests are not encouraged as the vehicle should be presented in a satisfactory condition at the initial test.

#### Taxi Meter

The meter should accurately record the time and distance covered. It should be set to charge at the prevailing rate and this should be accurately reflected by way of charges. The meter should be sealed.

#### Interior

- **Trim** – clean, properly fixed in place with no rough or jagged edges. Window and door handles properly fixed in place and working effectively.
- **Seat Belts** – clean, not stretched, ripped, torn or worn. Properly fixed to allowable anchorage points with locks and buckles that operate smoothly and effectively. Belts must be available for the driver and front passenger, and in vehicles first registered from 1987 onwards, for passengers in rear seats.
- **Seats** – properly and securely bolted in place, on smoothly operating runners as applicable. Coverings should be clean and not worn, damaged or split.

- **Carpets** – clean and properly fitted. No holes or loose flapping ends or edges.
- **Cleanliness** – clean and polished interior and glasswork.

### Electrical Equipment and Accessories

- **Obligatory Front Lights** – working with constant, appropriate and even brightness. Lenses and reflectors to be clean with no rust and no cracks or holes in the lenses. White light to be shown at front.
- **Headlamps Dipped** – working and properly adjusted with constant, appropriate and even brightness. Lenses and reflectors to be clean with no rust and no cracks or holes in the lenses.
- **Headlamps Main** – working with constant, appropriate and even brightness. Lenses and reflectors to be clean with no rust and no cracks or holes in the lenses.
- **Indicators Front** – working with constant, appropriate and even brightness. Lenses and reflectors to be clean with no rust and no cracks or holes in the lenses. White or amber light to be shown with a flashing rate of approximately 1-2 flashes per second.
- **Horn** – must function and be audible to another road user. The horn control must be accessible to the driver.
- **Screen Washers** – delivers sufficient water to the windscreen to enable the windscreen to be cleared in conjunction with the windscreen wipers. All jets to be operative. Where rear washers are fitted the same requirements will apply.
- **Screen Wipers** – must work on demand and move over an adequate area of the windscreen. The rubbers must cover the whole length of the blade and not be cracked, perished or have solidified.
- **Instrument Controls etc** – all work to manufacturer's specification.
- **Obligatory Rear Lights** – working with constant, appropriate and even brightness. Lenses and reflectors to be clean with no rust and no cracks or holes in the lenses. Red lights to be shown at rear with no white light to be visible.
- **Brake Lights** – work when footbrake applied with ignition switched on. With a constant, appropriate and even brightness. Red light to be showing with no white light visible.
- **Indicators Rear** – working with constant, appropriate and even brightness. Lenses and reflectors to be clean with no rust and no cracks or holes in the lenses. Amber or red lights to be shown with a flashing rate of approximately 1-2 flashes per second. No white light to be visible.
- **Reversing Lights** – working with a constant, appropriate and even brightness. Lenses and reflectors to be clean with no rust and no cracks or holes in the lenses. Lights to work only when ignition is switched on and reverse gear selected.

- **High Density Rear Fog Lamps** – working with constant, appropriate and even brightness. Lenses and reflectors to be clean with no rust and no cracks or holes in the lenses. To be wired so as to operate only when dipped headlights or main beam selected. Red light to be showing with no white light visible.
- **Number Plate Illumination** – working with constant, appropriate and even brightness. Lenses and reflectors to be clean with no rust and no cracks or holes in the lenses.

## Engine

- **Performance** – should be such that the vehicle is able to perform to manufacturer's specification on pulling power, whilst carrying a full complement of passengers.
- **Excess Wear** – components of the engine should not be excessively worn, causing knocks, rattles etc.
- **Oil Burning** – must not be smoking from exhaust.
- **Emissions** – must be discharging a clear emission.

## Steering

- **Box & Idler** – units should be securely mounted to the chassis frame or body shell with no free play or oil leaks.
- **Racks** – units should be securely mounted to the chassis frame or body shell with no free play or oil leaks.
- **Power Assisted Steering** – units should be securely mounted to the chassis frame or body shell with no free play or oil leaks. Hydraulic lines and unions should be free from leaks and generally be in good condition.
- **Joints & Couplings** – should be secure with no excessive play.
- **Swivel Assemblies** – should be secure with no excessive play.
- **Gaiters** – must be fitted as appropriate and in good condition. Not split, cracked, perished or rendered inoperative by some other method.
- **Radius Arms & Tie Rods** – should be in good, sound condition and not excessively worn. Rubbers and seals should not be oil contaminated, split, perished or badly cracked.
- **Steering Wheel** – should be in good sound condition and securely mounted to the steering column with no free play.
- **Steering Column** – should be no movement whatsoever, in any direction, other than that due to the design of the mechanism.
- **Wheel Bearings** – there should be no excessive wear or play.

- **Bias (Left/Right)** – vehicle should drive in a straight line and not pull or veer to the left or to the right.

### Exhaust System

- **Silencer** – the exhaust system should be complete and in good, sound condition. It should be effective so as to reduce the exhaust noise to a level considered to be average for the vehicle.
- **Mounting Points** – should be secure and in good condition so as to fully support the exhaust system.
- **Leaks** – there must be no sign of exhaust leaks from any part of the system.

### Bodywork

- **Cleanliness & Condition** – exterior should be clean and polished. It must not have any bad dents or tears. Bumpers, number plates and vehicle ID plates should be securely fixed to the rear of the vehicle (not displayed in window).
- **Chassis** – must be of sound condition with no undue corrosion or visible distortions.

### Suspension

- **Coil Springs** – should be complete and not fractured or with a cross section so reduced by wear or corrosion that its strength is seriously reduced. They should be properly seated giving adequate clearance of the axle or suspension with the bump stop or chassis.
- **Damper Struts** – should be securely fixed and show no damage or corrosion of the casing to the extent that the unit does not function. Should have an adequate damping effect on the suspension and not give excessive bounce.
- **Mounting Rubbers** – should be in place and in good condition, not cracked, distorted or perished. Should not show signs of excessive wear.
- **Anti Roll Bushes** – should be in place and in good condition, not cracked, distorted or perished. Should not show signs of excessive wear.
- **Trailing Arms** – should be in place and in good condition, not cracked, distorted or perished. Should not show signs of excessive wear.
- **Trapezoidal Links** – should be in place and in good condition, not cracked, distorted or perished. Should not show signs of excessive wear.
- **Elliptical Springs & Shackles** – should be securely fixed and in good serviceable condition with no broken or cracked spring leaves. Shackles, pins and bushes should not show signs of excessive wear.
- **Hydro-Lastic Units** – should be securely fixed and in good serviceable condition, functioning normally and with no fluid leaks or cracked, perished pipes.

## Gearbox & Transmission

- **Clutch** – well adjusted with no judder or slipping. Pedal rubber must be in place and not excessively worn.
- **Gearbox Selection** – all gears attainable at first attempt with smooth changes.
- **Transmission Noise** – must not be excessive.
- **Syncromesh** – must work on all gears, where fitted, with no crunching.
- **Prop Shaft Universal Joints** – must be in good condition with no play in either the universal joints or the central bearing.
- **Front Wheel Drive Shafts** – must be in good condition with no play or excessive wear, with no knocking on full lock.
- **Final Drive** – must not be excessively noisy or suffer from bad oil leaks.
- **Automatic Transmission Inhibitor Switch** – must only be able to start vehicle when Park or Neutral has been selected.

## Braking System

- **Hydraulic Fluid** – filled to correct level and with no air bubbles when footbrake operated.
- **Master Cylinder** – firmly fixed to vehicle and in good working order with no leaks or excessive corrosion.
- **Pipelines & Unions** – properly fixed to vehicle with correct clips and hangers. Should be soundly constructed with no corrosion or leaks.
- **Flexible Hoses** – should be correctly fitted and protected as appropriate, be in good condition with no sign of perishing, cracking, bulging or leaking.
- **Discs & Callipers** – discs should not be excessively worn or contaminated by oil, brake fluid or grease. Callipers to be securely mounted and in good working order.
- **Wheel Cylinders** – should be firmly mounted and in good working condition. Seals and rubbers should not be perished, cracked or split. There should be no leaks and the pistons should not be seized.
- **Foot Pedal** – the fulcrum and clevis pin must not show signs of undue wear or play and the pedal rubber must be in place and not badly worn. The pedal travel should not be excessive. It must have adequate reserve travel and not be subject to creep under sustained pressure.
- **Handbrake Adjustment** – must be securely mounted and not be subject to excessive travel. As a general rule, three notches to full on covers the majority of vehicles.

- **Servo Equipment** – should be securely fixed to the vehicle and be in good working condition.
- **Mechanical Linkages** – should be in good condition, not suffer from excessive wear or intermittent operation and be properly lubricated as necessary.
- **Primary Brake Efficiency %** - minimum acceptable level is 65%.
- **Secondary Brake Efficiency %** - minimum acceptable level is 25%.
- **Brake Bias Left** – should not pull to left when brakes operate.
- **Brake Bias Right** – should not pull to right when brakes operate.
- **Brake Straight** – when brakes are applied, vehicle should brake in a straight line.

### Tyres

- **Tyres** – all tyres must be ‘first life’, not retreaded or remoulded. It must be of the correct size, in good condition with no bulges, cracks or cuts and not have any steel showing. The tread depth should be a minimum of 2mm over the whole of the tread area. The pressure of which must be as per manufacturer’s instructions.
- **Spare Tyre** – the tyre must be ‘first life’, not retreaded or remoulded. It must be of the correct size, in good condition with no bulges, cracks or cuts and not have any steel showing. The tread depth should be a minimum of 2mm over the whole of the tread area. The pressure of which must be as per manufacturer’s instructions.
- **Spare Wheel** – must be the original option as designed and delivered by the vehicle manufacturer. In the event of the need arising for the fitting of a space saver tyre or the use of a run flat tyre or an inflation kit then the appropriate remedial action to replace with ‘new’, as per original specification, must be undertaken upon completion of the journey.

### General

- **Door Locks & Handles** – should all operate to specification and be secure. Hinge pins not to be excessively worn and there should not be any cracks around hinges, locks or striker plates.
- **Windows** – should operate to specification. Windscreens should not be cracked or starred so as to impair driver vision.
- **Oil Leaks** – vehicle must not suffer from serious oil leaks.
- **Fire Extinguisher** – should conform to the current recognised standard and minimum rating for a public service vehicle. It must be located and fixed in an appropriate position within the vehicle.
- **Mirrors** – minimum requirement is for one centrally mounted interior mirror and an exterior mirror on both off and near side. They must be in good condition with no cracks in the glass nor have reflectors badly corroded.