



Vehicle Inspectorate

**MOT
SPECIAL
NOTICE
4/98**

May 1998

All Authorised Examiners and Designated Councils in Classes III IV V and VII

The last Special Notice was: 2/98 Class V
1/98 Class III IV VII

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Items 1 to 5 -- Technical information

Items 6 to 13 -- General information.

Welcome to special notice 4/98. We appreciate that this is larger than normal

S/N, so all relevant staff should take time to read it carefully

All Nominated Testers should sign below to confirm that they have read and understood the contents of this Special Notice relevant to NTs for the classes they test. AEs must keep a copy of the signed SN on their records.

MOT Policy Branch are currently reviewing previous Special Notices and

expect to be able to reduce the number you need to hold later this year

ITEM 1 STEERING JOINT SEPARATION
VARIOUS MANUFACTURERS

Road accidents have occurred where drivers have experienced complete loss of steering and control of their vehicle as a result of a steering ball joint separating. In some instances it has been within a relatively short time of a vehicle being tested and issued with a VT20 certificate.

any other indications that separation will occur.

Therefore, it is important when carrying out steering checks to pay special attention to steering joints, e.g: track rod ends, drag link ends, steering swivels etc.

Where a steering joint gaiter/seal is split or missing, water can enter into the joint causing the ball to corrode, also the socket may swell up within the joint assembly

If no defects are found on the steering system other than a split or missing gaiter/dust seal, then it should not be rejected, but the presenter should be advised .

In some cases, tightness or roughness may be felt in the steering system when carrying out the turn plate exercise, but there might not be excessive free play or

As this is a critical part of the test, it is essential that the turn plates are kept in good working order.

ITEM 2 CITROEN 2CV CHASSIS CORROSION

Some of these vehicles may be suffering from advanced chassis corrosion that is not immediately obvious.

The signs to look for are one or more of the following:

- Lower steering column universal joint fouls the floor pan, steering becomes stiff.

- The gap between the A post and the wing panel/valence closes noticeably.
- The chassis flange starts to ripple.
- Lifting the carpet (if not secured) reveals some distortion.

Should a 2CV exhibit any of the above signs, testers should examine the chassis with particular care.

ITEM 3 SEAT BELT PRE-TENSIONERS

Some seat belts are fitted with pre-tensioners. Once activated, a 'flag' or similar shows on the seat belt stalk. In itself, a seat belt that has had the pre-

tensioner activated is NOT a reason for failure.

However the vehicle presenter should be advised

ITEM 4 DUAL SIZE MARKING OF TYRES

Some tyre manufacturers are now dual marking certain sizes of the tyres that they produce.

For example, a 185/75R14 tyre may be dual marked 185/R14.

Where a tyre is found to be dual size marked on the side wall by the manufacturer, it is acceptable to pair with tyres of either size.

ITEM 5 CHECKING SIDELAMPS

Testers are reminded that the sidelamps operation check should, if possible, be carried out with the ignition off, to avoid confusion with dim dip headlamp

systems. (some cars have a separate switch fitted to allow this to happen)

ITEM 6 NEW STYLE VT20

A new style VT20 will soon be issued as standard that contains information about seat belt installations.

We will be issuing guidance on this new style VT 20 in the near future. If you start

using the new style VT20's you should enter "n/a" (for not applicable) in the extra boxes, until further instructions are received.

ITEM 7 TESTING STANDARDS

A recent survey of 50 MOT stations by ROSPA showed that not one station noticed an obvious 4mm cut in a front seat belt on a car presented for MOT test.

THIS IS **NOT** ACCEPTABLE.

Authorised Examiners must ensure that their testing staff do not skimp on any aspect of the test. cursory examination of any component means defects are likely to be missed and vehicles can incorrectly receive a MOT pass certificate.

Our records show that many testers who are found by the Vehicle

Inspectorate doing poor quality tests have recently demonstrated to their local Vehicle Examiner that they are perfectly capable of testing to a satisfactory standard.

The responsibility of achieving constant good quality testing lies with the Authorised Examiner. They should assess the effectiveness of their Quality Control system to ensure as far as possible that all their testers carry out every test according to the standards laid down in the MOT Inspection Manual.

Vehicle Inspectorate staff are available to give guidance if needed.

ITEM 8 EXHAUST GAS ANALYSERS

Class IV

Authorised Examiners are reminded that they only have until the end of the year to purchase a 1996 specification Exhaust Gas Analyser if they wish to retain their authorisation to test vehicles in Class IV.

Testing Stations which **do not** test Class IV vehicles but which test Classes V and/or VII, are currently under no obligation to update to a 1996 spec. Exhaust Gas Analyser by 31.12.98.

Any testing station authorised for Class V and/or Class VII only, has the option to test diesels only, or diesels and pre 1/8/92 petrol engined vehicles only.

Class V and VII

ITEM 9 SECURITY OF DOCUMENTS

Authorised Examiners are reminded of their responsibility to ensure the security of the VT20 pads and embossing stamp. Keys should NOT be kept in an unlocked drawer, on a shelf, or hung up, even if

this is within staff only areas. It is seen as a serious breach of security if losses occur due to poor security of keys, or if visiting VI staff find keys unattended.

ITEM 10 YEAR 2000

All Authorised Examiners should be making adequate checks to ensure that their MOT testing will not be affected by the 'Millennium Bug'. e.g. computerised VT12 register, Exhaust Gas Analyser, etc. Authorised equipment that cannot function correctly will mean testing having to cease until rectified.

difficulties for emissions test equipment. However, for your own peace of mind, we suggest that you seek specific confirmation from your supplier or maintenance contractor that the equipment you will be using will not be affected by the millennium.

VI has had a general assurance from the Garage Equipment Association that its members do not anticipate any

You may be using equipment where a test/calibration expiry date is required. Documents issued as early as December 1998 might be dated to expire in 2000.

ITEM 11 DATA CHARTS/BOOKS

Authorised Examiners are reminded that vehicle weight charts and ABS data should be updated annually.

(a Class IV petrol only VTS that does not do 'cat' testing is restricted to testing vehicles prior to 1/8/92, therefore a 1992 chart is acceptable)

ITEM 12 EGA and SMOKE METER PRINT OUTS

The print out from your EGA and Diesel Smoke Meter must include your station name, address, and VTS number as a part of the print process. (this is a specification requirement)

However, on a new Diesel Smoke Meter this may be added at the first on site calibration of your machine.

ITEM 13 INSPECTION CHECK LIST PRICE INCREASE

Please note the price of the MOT Inspection Check List was increased by

£1 making the price per pad £5.75

David Lees
MoT Scheme Manager