

# Driver licences – check them out with FTA

Health and safety legislation requires vehicle operators to have a robust procedure and audit trail when it comes to driver licence checks. FTA's Driver Licence Checking Service has been developed in conjunction with Licence Bureau, the country's leading provider of secure driver licence checks, to manage this labour-intensive job on members' behalf. This ensures that the business will be operating legally whilst providing immediate benefits from time and cost savings. **JULIE MADDOCKS** reports.

Internal checking of licence documents can be time consuming, labour-intensive and expensive, and does not always identify revoked, disqualified, provisional and expired licences. However, the FTA Driver Licence Checking Service enables operators to quickly perform licence checks for all drivers against current records, which are continually and automatically re-checked.

Since its launch in 2003 the Licence Bureau has checked more than one million UK drivers' licences; in that time they have discovered that five in every thousand professional drivers shouldn't be driving on the roads in the UK. There is no doubt that the Bureau has a job on its hands – DVLA figures show that there are 150,000 disqualified drivers and a further 500,000 licences that have been revoked.

The FTA Licence Checking Service system ensures that the user is constantly informed of all relevant compliance issues, thus ensuring control of driver management, vehicle, fleet, costs and risks.

Members of the service benefit from access to daily driver reports, which include information on:

- licence status
- licence category detail – expiry dates, information codes etc
- details of disqualifications, offence dates, conviction dates etc
- licence and photocard expiry alerts
- LGV/PCV entitlement and category expiry alerts

This unique approach minimises the risk of operators employing disqualified drivers, ensuring that the business complies with complex legislation, reducing corporate risks and, possibly, even resulting in lower insurance premiums. All services and results are available 24/7 via a web-based management tool, with access to online driver reports, and the ability to produce personalised tailor-made reports.



*Malcolm Maycock, Director of Licence Bureau*

Malcolm Maycock, Director of Licence Bureau says "Licence Bureau allows each user to access their own web portal showing all their drivers' details and what they are entitled to drive, and provides them with a full audit to show the process they have gone through to ensure they are compliant with the regulations set out by the Health and Safety Executive".

In addition, membership of the scheme enables early identification of drivers who may affect users' compliance through same day alerts of revoked, disqualified, provisional drivers and expired licences.

The initial benefits of using the scheme are obvious, but for some the FTA Driver Licence Checking Service is far more than just peace of mind. XL Video is a worldwide video production and broadcast company and had previously used a manual checking service which involved comparing the drivers' cards against the paper licence – a process which was carried out on a regular basis. The company has recently changed its method of checking driver licences and now uses the FTA Licence Bureau Checking Service.

Kevin Webb, UK Operations Manager XL Video said "The decisions which led us to change to using FTA's service were primarily the security of the electronic system. Also, it is not only a better system but it's faster, and 100 per cent accurate. We feel secure in the knowledge that it uses live data from the DVLA so that we are notified straight away if there should be any irregularities on any of the drivers' licences. The FTA service is a great benefit to XL Video as it ensures that we are more compliant and it provides us with peace of mind and the knowledge that licences are more stringently checked".

An added benefit of the FTA scheme is that by undertaking the service, all drivers at work are entitled to a free £20 Specsavers voucher. Research which Licence Bureau research carried out among 10,000 drivers showed that 41 per cent had not had their eyes tested in the last two years. Eye tests are recommended every two years and Licence Bureau wants to proactively help address this. Eyesight can deteriorate over time without the individual noticing and it's particularly important for drivers to ensure they have good eyesight. Maycock said "We want to raise awareness of the importance of good eyesight for drivers and we're very pleased to partner with Specsavers Corporate Eyecare to encourage more regular eye tests".

And users of the scheme also have the opportunity to manage their road risks more efficiently with a year's free subscription to the Fleet Safety Forum, which would normally cost £155 plus VAT.

Prices for using the FTA Driver Licence Checking Service are dependent on the number of drivers and the frequency of checks. To celebrate the 125th anniversary of FTA, we are offering the service for £125 for 20 checks a year, during February, March and April 2014 (providing an additional £25 saving on our 20 checks deal). For a price application form please visit [www.fta.co.uk/licencecheck](http://www.fta.co.uk/licencecheck)