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# Practical Driver Testing Services Procurement

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Who has been selected as the preferred supplier of practical driver testing services?

Following a robust procurement process, Vehicle Testing New Zealand (VTNZ) has been selected as the preferred supplier to take over as the sole provider of practical driver testing services from New Zealand Driver Licensing Ltd (NZDL) on 1 May 2015.

### How does the selection of VTNZ as the preferred supplier of practical driver testing services relate to the recently announced driver licensing review?

The selection of VTNZ as the preferred supplier for practical driver testing services does not relate to the review of the driver licensing system announced by Associate Transport Minister Craig Foss on 4 December 2014.

More information on the review of the driver licensing system can be found at  
[www.transport.govt.nz/dlr](http://www.transport.govt.nz/dlr)

### When does the change happen?

VTNZ will start offering practical driver testing services on 1 May 2015.

### What are practical driving tests?

As part of getting your car or motorcycle driver licence you must pass two practical driving tests. The two tests are:

- the restricted licence practical driving test, which you must sit to get your restricted licence
- the full licence practical driving test, which you must sit to get your full licence.

For both tests you will drive with a driver testing officer, who will observe your driving and assess whether it is good enough to progress to the next level of driver licence.

### Is VTNZ the preferred supplier for both the restricted and full practical testing?

Yes, VTNZ have been selected as the preferred supplier for both the restricted and full practical driving tests, as well as all classes of test (classes 1 through to 6 and the on-road safety test).

## How does this change affect people about to sit their practical driving test?

There is no change for people who are preparing to sit, or have booked, a practical driving test. You should go ahead and book your test via one of the existing options listed below.

## Do I have to book my practical test through VTNZ? How do I book a practical driving test?

Practical tests can still be booked in-person at any of the Transport Agency's driver licensing agents. Refer to their websites for a full list of locations:

- The Automobile Association (AA - [www.aa.co.nz](http://www.aa.co.nz)),
- Vehicle Testing New Zealand (VTNZ - [www.vtnz.co.nz](http://www.vtnz.co.nz))
- Vehicle Inspection New Zealand (VINZ - [www.vinz.co.nz](http://www.vinz.co.nz)).

You can also book online at [www.nzta.govt.nz/online](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/online) or ring our contact centre on 0800 822 422 who will book a test for you.

## Does this affect other driver licensing services?

This change only relates to practical driving tests. The process for applying for a driver licence is not changing.

You can still apply for, or renew your driver licence or licence endorsement in person at any of our agents: The Automobile Association (AA - [www.aa.co.nz](http://www.aa.co.nz)), Vehicle Testing New Zealand (VTNZ - [www.vtnz.co.nz](http://www.vtnz.co.nz)) or Vehicle Inspection New Zealand (VINZ - [www.vinz.co.nz](http://www.vinz.co.nz)).

For more information on driver licensing services visit <http://nzta.govt.nz/licence/getting/where-to-go/index.html>.

## Does this affect the learner licence theory test?

No, the learner licence theory test will not change as a result of the change in providers.

## Where can I find more information about what is required to pass a practical driving test?

More information about what is required to pass a practical driving test can be found on the Transport Agency website at <http://nzta.govt.nz/licence/photo/new-tests.html>.

Guides are available that provide detailed information about the class 1 (car) driver licence test:

Restricted licence test guide (class 1): <http://nzta.govt.nz/licence/photo/docs/restricted-test-guide.pdf>

Full licence test guide (class 1): <http://nzta.govt.nz/licence/photo/docs/full-test-guide.pdf>

## Will the practical driver tests be changing? Will they be made easier or more difficult?

No, the content of the practical driver tests themselves will not change at all as a result of the change in providers. The level of skill and competencies required to pass the practical test will remain the same.

Practical tests were made more challenging in 2012 as part of the Government's Safer Journeys Strategy, in order to raise the skill level of young drivers, reduce crashes and prevent avoidable deaths and injuries.

## **Will practical testing services still be provided in all of the centres which currently have practical testing?**

Practical driver testing services will continue to be provided in the same towns and cities as are currently available.

## **Will VTNZ be providing practical testing in any new towns, or in any of the towns where testing was stopped in February 2012?**

No, not at this stage. The application of the test criteria requires a testing environment where the applicant is able to demonstrate safe driving and decision making skills in a variety of driving situations. This means testing is not able to be held in some towns that do not offer the necessary variety of driving situations and levels of traffic.

The Transport Agency will continue to monitor existing and potential test locations. Where a new location is identified then testing may become available in that location. Just as where an existing location no longer meets the criteria, testing is removed from that location.

## **Will the cost of the practical driver tests change?**

No, the cost of the practical driver tests are regulated fees set out in legislation, and will not be changing at this time. A list of the licensing fees can be found at <http://www.nzta.govt.nz/licence/photo/fees-refunds.html>

## **Who is the current provider of practical driver testing services, and how long have they held the contract for?**

New Zealand Driver Licensing 1998 Ltd (NZDL) have provided practical driver testing services in New Zealand since 1998. Their current contract with the Transport Agency will end on 30 April 2015.

## **Why has the Transport Agency reviewed the contract for practical driver testing services?**

With the existing contract with NZDL due to expire, the Transport Agency took the opportunity to review the delivery of practical driver testing services in 2013. The purpose of the review was to identify and make recommendations regarding the most appropriate future business model for the provision of driver testing services. The review recommended that the Transport Agency continue to outsource the practical driving test as it offers better value for money.

The Transport Agency commenced a procurement process, known as competitive dialogue in January 2014. VTNZ is the successful provider as a result of the procurement process, and will commence practical driver testing services when the current contract with NZDL ends.

## **Why were VTNZ selected?**

VTNZ was selected because the Transport Agency believes that they are best equipped to deliver on the Transport Agency's goals of continuing to enhance customer service and delivering practical tests at a consistently high standard.

## **Why is the practical drivers test important to the Transport Agency?**

The practical driver test is an important opportunity to positively influence new and novice drivers and to help ensure safe driving choices are embedded in their day-to-day driving habits.

## **Did the Transport Agency consider moving to multiple providers instead of using a single provider?**

Yes, the procurement process explored a range of options, including the use of a single provider model versus a multiple provider model. A single provider model was decided on as it provides the most consistent service levels, the most consistent customer experience, and the best value for money. A multiple provider model carries an increased risk of imbalanced service levels and associated customer dissatisfaction, as well as higher costs.

## **Why doesn't the Transport Agency conduct practical driver testing services instead of contracting them out?**

The Land Transport Management Act requires that the Transport Agency must consider contracting out practical driver testing where it is efficient and effective to do so. The practical driver testing services review in 2013 found that contracting out practical driver testing continues to provide better value for money.

## **What will the change in providers mean for current testing officers?**

Practical driver tests must be conducted by qualified testing officers (the majority of whom are currently employed by NZDL).

VTNZ will be responsible for ensuring they have sufficient numbers of qualified testing officers to meet their contractual obligations and the demands of testing at each test location. Testing officers currently employed by NZDL can choose to seek employment with VTNZ. Those testing officers will need to meet VTNZ's requirements.

## **Will VTNZ provide practical driver testing services in all of the same locations currently serviced by NZDL?**

Practical driver testing services will continue to be provided in the same towns and cities as are currently available. The locations the tests commence from may change within the current towns and cities. For example, it may be appropriate to move the start/finish point of some tests from their existing locations to the local VTNZ premises.

## **Will there be more practical driver testing available in some locations to meet the demand?**

VTNZ will ensure practical driver testing is available to meet the demand in all locations. Test hours at some of the test locations will be expanded to meet demand.

## **Will an applicant be able to choose a testing officer or know in advance who will conduct their practical driver test?**

No, applicants cannot currently choose a testing officer, or know who has been assigned to conduct their test. This is not changing as a result in the change in providers.

## **Will there be more flexibility when an applicant is late for their practical driver test?**

Over the coming months we will be working with VTNZ to look at ways we can allow more flexibility when a customer is late for their test. , However for the immediate future the existing criteria will not change as a result in the change in providers. In fairness to other applicants testing officers must stick to their schedule of practical driver tests each day to make sure that all tests throughout the day start on time.

## **How will the Transport Agency ensure continuity of service with the new provider?**

The Transport Agency will work closely with both NZDL and VTNZ to ensure there is a smooth transition of providers. An implementation plan is being developed for the next six months to ensure practical driver testing services transition smoothly from NZDL to VTNZ. The implementation plan will be developed in partnership with both providers.

## **How will the Transport Agency ensure that the level of customer service does not drop in the next few months before services are transitioned?**

NZDL are required to provide practical driver testing services until 30 April 2015. The Transport Agency will work closely with them to ensure service levels are maintained until that date. The Transport Agency has developed a service continuity plan to ensure services continue to be delivered at the agreed standard throughout the transition period

## **What improvements can customers expect to see with the move to the new provider?**

The practical driver test will continue to be conducted by a qualified testing officer and the fundamentals of the test will remain unchanged. However, VTNZ are able to offer wrap around services that are designed to enhance the customer experience by making it easy for drivers to access and comply with the graduated driving licensing system (GDLS).

For example, in the future VTNZ will be able to leverage their existing business by sending text/email reminders to applicants about to sit their practical driver test, use in-car technology to record the practical driver tests, and provide post-test debrief reports to the applicant.