

Extract from the DVSA's

Guide to maintaining roadworthiness Commercial goods and passenger carrying vehicles

(Revised 2018)

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Section 5: Safety inspection and repair facilities

Safety inspection facilities

Brake Performance Assessment

Contracted-out arrangements

Drawing up a contract

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Section 5: Safety inspection and repair facilities

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Brake Performance Assessment

In accordance with item 6 on page 9, every safety inspection must assess the braking performance of the vehicle or trailer. It is strongly advised that a calibrated roller brake tester (RBT) is used at each safety inspection to measure individual brake performance and overall braking efficiencies for the vehicle or trailer to the annual test standards. **However, it is also acceptable to use an approved and calibrated decelerometer to measure overall brake efficiency values for vehicles without trailers.**

In the case of trailers, an Electronic Braking Performance Monitoring System (EBPMS) may be used as a means to assess trailer-braking performance and provide a brake performance value while the vehicle is in service (for further details see EBPMS section).

Brake testing should be undertaken with the vehicle or trailer in a laden condition in order to achieve the most meaningful results; however, due to basic design limitations or restriction caused by the type of cargo normally carried, this is sometimes not possible. Further guidance regarding the use of RBT's can be found on GOV.UK.

A printout of the brake efficiency test from either the RBT **or decelerometer** should be attached to the safety inspection record. If the brake test equipment cannot produce a printout, efficiency results must be recorded by the inspector on the safety inspection report.

To help operators arrange a brake performance assessment with safety inspections, it is acceptable for a satisfactory brake performance assessment to be carried out within the same week of the planned safety inspection. Brake efficiency testing can be carried out by either an approved RBT or **decelerometer** test. Measured braking performance assessment can be carried out by means of EBPMS.

Where it is impracticable to obtain a brake efficiency test or a measured performance assessment on a safety inspection, the braking performance must still be checked by means of a road test carried out under controlled and safe conditions.

The use of brake temperature measurement can improve the effectiveness of a road test and is an established method to assess if individual brakes are operational. Brake disc/drum temperature readings should be compared across an axle after a laden road test or by in-service monitoring, using a brake temperature sensor, which can be a simple handheld device or using a more sophisticated remote monitoring system.

Brake temperature readings would need to be well above ambient temperature with relatively consistent readings taken for each brake across an axle. Brakes which are cold (ambient temperature), or showing an inconsistent reading from the brake on the opposite side on the same axle, should be investigated further.

The safety inspection record must be annotated how the braking performance was assessed. However, a road test to check the braking performance for all planned safety inspections will usually be inadequate. **It is therefore normally expected that the vehicle or trailer should complete at least three successful brake efficiency tests spread throughout the year in addition to the annual MOT test.**

If deficiencies in brake performance have been identified either during the use of the vehicle or trailer or at the safety inspection appropriate remedial action must be taken to address the issue. Where braking system rectification is not obvious, a laden measured brake efficiency test must also be carried out confirm the brakes are performing satisfactorily before the vehicle or trailer can be considered as roadworthy. The results of this brake test must be kept as evidence of repair with the operator's maintenance documentation and can be included as one of the brake tests required to meet the minimum requirement.

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[End of Extract].

*Formatting of **bold** text has been added by Bowmonk to highlight decelerometer-related information.*

"..." indicates text that has been left out of this extract.

The full version of the DVSA's Guide to Maintaining Road Worthiness can be downloaded from:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guide-to-maintaining-roadworthiness>.