

2008 CITA Conference, 6-8 May, Porto PORTUGAL

PTI – Approach of Latvia, Aldis Adins

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The View of the Operator (Speakers notes)

Ladies and gentlemen!

As mentioned earlier, Directive 96/96/EC (as amended) constitutes the core of the national framework for periodic technical inspection. All vehicles which are in the Register of Vehicles are subject to PTI except mopeds and snow bikes. The latter two have to be registered, and they have registration number plates. As far as frequency of PTI is concerned, the vehicles undergo actual testing starting with the second year in service. Brand new vehicles, in order to get a proof of passed PTI, must not possess any visual incompliance with the regulations. The only exception in this case is new ADR vehicles which have to undergo technical inspection, if the owner/holder of the vehicle applies for ADR certificate. More stringent requirements are applied to the vehicles used for commercial transport of passengers and practical training of driving. Those vehicles have to undergo PTI twice a year. The proof of passed PTI is a sticker in the lower right part of the windscreen. Assessment of the technical condition of vehicles is split into four categories - no defects, minor defects, serious defects (likely to present a risk for traffic safety, environment or health) and dangerous defects (risk for traffic safety, environment, health or life) - expressed respectively with marks 0,1,2 and 3. In case of the first two the proof is issued. In case of serious defects a vehicle has to be re-inspected within 30 days. If dangerous defects are found, the vehicle is prohibited from road traffic.

Latest amendments to the national regulations introduced with the aim of limiting the use of poorly maintained vehicles allow for re-inspection only two times within six months period. If the vehicle has not been brought into acceptable state, it is no longer allowed on the roads.

Road Traffic Safety Directorate (hereafter – RTSD; Latvian abbreviation CSDD) joined CITA in 1999. Since then we have actively participated in the work of WG3 “Quality” and WG6 “Inspection Content”. Lately we started to attend WG5 “Braking systems” and WG9 “Training”. Bearing that in mind, it can be said that our system quite closely and as far as practicable follows internationally recognized requirements and recommendations.

All PTI stations are equipped as listed. In case of disputes concerning tinting of rear lights (position markers and brake lights) we use candelometer. In the very near future device for measurement of the brake disks will be added to this list.

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PTI inspectors in Latvia are assigned three different categories, the third being the lowest. Those inspectors are carrying out only PTI. Inspectors of II category deal also with technical modifications of vehicles. Inspectors of I category, in addition to these tasks, are involved in certification of ADR vehicles, and issuing ECMT documents. A newcomer to the system or apprentice has to pass theoretical exam first. When that is successfully passed, the practical test takes place. Having passed that, the inspector acquires III category. At present there are about 220 inspectors who work at 31 PTI station. Of those 30 are employees of RTSD.

Inspectors are certified for the period of two years. Then there is a training course consisting of theoretical part and practical part, similar to initial one, but with a different emphasis as we expect that inspectors have learned by doing. In case of failing an exam, no sanctions are imposed. However, if bad results persist, there is a chance of downgrading an inspector. That has happened very seldom, and we consider each case individually due to the limited number of PTI inspectors.

As there is uniform legal framework in Latvia for PTI, drafted, adopted and enforced by RTSD, it facilitates supervision activities of the process. Apart from monthly meetings of top managers of all entities involved in PTI where it is possible to shift priorities depending on current needs, discuss different matters and to follow up all activities, supervision is divided in three levels.

The first level of supervision is staff of the Headquarters of RTSD which cover all PTI companies and do spot checks at random without prior notice. This first level is considered to be a general supervision which includes all stages and processes of the PTI. It should be noted that different methods are used for supervision purposes, including data analysis of the Register and video surveillance (recording) of the testing premises. The second level is chiefs of RTSD branches which have an obligation to supervise processes of RTSD activities locally and report accordingly. The third level is activities of the managers of PTI companies - that can be considered as internal supervision.

RTSD being in charge of the PTI system deals also with complaints and appeals.

Data of the Register are processed on monthly basis to establish any deviations in performance of the companies. Twice a year we have a closer look at individual performance of inspectors.

When doing spot checks at premises RTSD supervision inspectors are allowed to re-check the vehicles immediately after the PTI, to control the paperwork, to perform targeted control of the given vehicle. The Register allows for blocking the entering of the PTI data (of the given vehicle or at certain time) into Register, and in that case complete re-inspection is mandatory. This tool is often used when spotting visually bad-looking or evidently non-compliant vehicle

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somewhere on the streets and roads to ensure effective enforcement of the regulations.

Video surveillance in real time provided for a possibility to watch the PTI processes in order to discover incompliances and irregularities which usually do not occur during spot checks at premises. Furthermore, the recordings can be and are used in cases of appeals (if necessary). This tool is available for those involved in supervision on all three levels.

As to the advantages and disadvantages of the current set-up of the supervision of PTI process, the positive features, in our view are:

- very close co-operation of all parties involved;
- variety of tools and methods of supervision;
- easy rotation of inspectors;
- good communication possibilities.

The aspects considered as being negative might be as follows:

- impression of too tight control which can affect the outcome;
- possible opinion of PTI companies that RTSD cares more about their own inspectors (with regard to teaching);
- doubts concerning impartiality (with regard to supervision).

In general terms, there is an advantage of carrying out PTI and supervising the process, too, because thus it is possible to have “hands on” experience and feel of the situation in reality, not through any intermediaries. This better discloses hidden rocks and bottle-necks of the system.