

The Department for Transport (DfT)  
The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA)  
Consultation  
Allowing learner drivers to take lessons on motorways



Response from:  
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#### **COMMENT**

*We support, the changes proposed in this consultation. However, we are concerned that it has taken more than thirty-years campaigning by this organisation and many other road safety groups to get to a consultation stage.*

*There was an EDM in the 1997-98 parliamentary session nearly 20 years ago, calling for action to be taken to address the problems of proficiency of motorway driving, another EDM in 2005 urged the Government to introduce measures for new drivers to “undertake some form of motorway tuition.” The House of Commons Transport Committee Novice Drivers Report in 2007 recommended “allowing learners onto motorways—in a dual-controlled vehicle.”*

*The Parliamentary Under - Secretary of State at Department for Transport speaking in the House of Commons in 2011 stated “we will pass regulations to allow qualified driving instructors to take learners on to motorways”*

*Two years ago, the DfT Road Safety Statement - Working Together to Build a Safer Road System promised “We will consult on legislative changes to allow ADIs with dual-controlled cars to offer lessons on motorways to learner drivers”*

*New drivers have waited long enough for this opportunity now is the time.*

#### **COLLECTIVE VIEW**

The Motor Schools Association of Great Britain (MSA GB) makes the following response to the Department for Transport (DfT)/ Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) Allowing learner drivers to take lessons on motorways - Consultation

We are members of The National Associations Strategic Partnership (NASP) and fully support their collective statement, which is attached as an appendix, this document expands on that statement to include the views of MSA GB members.

#### **WHO WE REPRESENT**

MSA GB is the national trade association for driving instructors and schools founded in 1935. Members of the association are in the main Driving Standards Agency Approved Driving Instructors (DVSA ADIs). We also have a partnership with the Institute of Large Goods Vehicle Driving Instructors and represent their interests together with those of potential driving instructors and a number of bus/coach instructors and motorcycle instructors. MSA GB is the voice for around 7,500 driver/rider trainers.

## **HOW WE GATHERED VIEWS**

To gather the views of MSA GB member's details of the consultation were circulated, via the relevant chairs, to all of the nine MSA GB committees of the regions and nations of Great Britain. Details of the consultation were published in our news magazine Newslink and on the associations' web site at [www.msagb.com](http://www.msagb.com). In addition, the information was transmitted to followers of MSA GB on social media sites.

In Newslink we published an indication of our intended response and invited members to comment.

## **PUBLICATION OF MSA GB COMMENTS**

We are content for our response to this consultation to be published.

## **QUESTIONS WE HAVE ANSWERED**

We have responded to all the questions raised in the consultation.

## **CONSULTATION QUESTIONS**

1. Do you think that learner drivers should be allowed to take lessons on motorways, subject to certain safeguards?  
Yes
2. Do you think that lessons on motorways should be optional for learner drivers?  
Yes – However, we believe that where motorways are within a reasonable distance of the learners base they should be actively encouraged to drive on them.
3. Do you think that motorway lessons for learner drivers should only be provided by a fully qualified approved driving instructor?  
Yes
4. Do you agree that trainee driving instructors (potential driving instructors) should not be allowed to provide learner driver motorway lessons?  
Yes
5. If you are an ADI, do you feel that the current training and testing system provides sufficient grounding for you to provide pre-test motorway lessons? If not, where should it be strengthened?  
Yes - That is the view of our members.
6. Are there any specific issues you think should be included in guidance to ADIs?  
Yes – We support the advice being prepared by NASP and have contributed to it.
7. Do you agree that ADIs should exercise their discretion in providing a motorway lesson to a learner driver with whom they have had no previous contact?  
Yes – We believe this situation is somewhat hypothetical. No ADI will take any student onto a motorway unless they believe that the learner is at an appropriate stage to be safe and to benefit from a lesson on the motorway.
8. Do you agree that learner driver motorway lessons must only take place in a car where the accompanying ADI has a dual control brake (and clutch in manual vehicles)?  
Yes, we would suggest that in the interest of road safety, learners on motorways must be in dual controlled vehicles as an ADI is experienced and competent in their correct use and an accompanying driver hiring a dual controlled vehicle, may not be.

9. If people learning to drive in specially adapted vehicles wish to take motorway lessons, should those vehicles be fitted with dual controls? If yes, should this be advisory or mandatory?

Yes, this should be mandatory. Specially adapted driving school vehicles are fitted with dual controls and the ADIs who train learners in these vehicles are usually specially trained ADIs. If a learner is having lessons in a specially adapted driving school car without dual control(s) they should not be allowed on the motorway.

10. Do you agree that motorway lessons for learner drivers who are provisional licence holders should only be permitted in motor cars?

Yes, we feel this would be the safest option and that it would not be appropriate to allow learner motorcyclists to ride on motorways as they cannot be accompanied in the same way that learner drivers are.

11. Do you agree that there is an increased risk using a top box on a motorway lesson and they should therefore be removed?

We have reservations regarding this matter, as a rule roof box manufacturers guarantee their magnets up to 70mph. However, there have been some mishaps with roof boards coming off at high speed. If using only L plates, these must be securely fastened to the vehicle as some magnetic Ls blow off at speeds lower than 70 mph.

12. Do you have any comments on the potential impact of the proposal to allow learner drivers to take lessons on motorways? If yes, please specify who you consider will be affected and provide examples of any costs where applicable.

We do not believe this will mean an increase in the cost of learning to drive.

## **IN CONCLUSION**

After thirty years of campaigning to allow learner drivers to take lessons on motorways we urge the introduction of this change at the earliest opportunity.