Member Briefing Webinar – Vehicle Maintenance:
- Working with Gas Vehicles
- MOT Failures

Questions and answers – working with gas vehicles

Q: What are the main differences between LNG and CNG gases?

A: They are both natural gas, what differs is the way that the product is stored. CNG is compressed and stored on the vehicle in high pressure cylinders. Whereas LNG is cooled and liquified, storage on the vehicle is in what is effectively a large thermos flask. Because of the density of the fuel in its liquid state, an LNG tank can be smaller than CNG tanks and it is down to the manufacturer to which solution they offer.

Q: Would transport managers need any training to deal with gas vehicles?

A: Unless they were directly involved in the operation or maintenance of the vehicles then there would be no immediate requirement for training. Level one familiarisation may be useful to ensure they are sighted on the main differences and risks the vehicle's present.

Q: DVSA provided guidance that when presented for MOT, LNG vehicles with a tank pressure in excess of 13 bar would be refused test. To accommodate different manufacturers this was going to be amended to 14 bar, has this happened?

A: DVSA looked at this and agreed to up the pressure to 14 bar and was implemented in November last year.

Q: Has Logistics UK got a risk assessment that could be used?

A: No, each hazard needs to be individually assessed by a competent person. There is a contact in the guidance document who can help with this.

Q: Are there any common problems happening with gas vehicles?

A: One of the most common things are where drivers have connected to refill, and then driven off with the hose still attached!

Q: If there are no gas courses available, how am I going to train workshop staff?

A: If your buying new vehicles, the OEMs will often provide training for your technicians. However, this won't be the case for the second hand market and is a challenge.

Q: Do you have to replace or clean out filters or similar items while servicing these types of vehicles?

A: Gas is a much cleaner burning fuel than diesel so there are differences in the servicing required, as well as possible variations between different manufacturers. Refer to your manufacturer's instructions for individual servicing requirements.

Questions and answers – MOT failures

Q: When analysing a brake testing report, what is the minimum weight of 65% the test needs achieve? Is it the Gross Vehicle Weight or the Gross Train Weight?

A: The minimum weight of 65% refers to the weight imposed on the axle at the time of test to ensure that an effective test is carried out. The total of effort generated by the brakes is totted up and must be more than 50% of the plated Gross Vehicle Weight for vehicles, or more than 45% of the design Total Axle Weight for trailers.

Q: We had a prohibition for a vehicle tyre, the size was 295/80 on one side and 315/80 on the other. How can I get my drivers to check this when they carry out their walk round checks?

A: You could implement tyre specific training into their continuous professional development to make sure they have the right training. Then a simple process could be when carrying out the check to note the size of the first tyre you come to, then as you go round the vehicle during your check you can compare the noted size to the other tyres. If sizes are different, they too can be noted and a conscious decision then made on whether or not they are acceptable.

Providing the sizes are the same across an axle, there shouldn't be an issue. Our Tyre Husbandry guide offers some top tips on looking after your tyres.

Q: We check headlamp aim by driving up to a wall, what are your thoughts on whether this is acceptable?

A: Failures occur when the height of the beam is incorrect, not from the sideways position of the beam pattern. Using a wall provides an indication that the beam height is correct, particularly if you have a fleet of the same make/model of vehicles.

Q: Can you provide an explanation regarding temperature testing for brakes?

A: When using a decelerometer to check the brake efficiency, an accompanying temperature check of each wheel station after the vehicle has been driven provides an indication that braking is taking place at that wheel, evidenced by a rise in temperature of the brake components in relation to ambient temperature.

Q: If a vehicle is presented for an MOT on 1st April and passes, but is then presented for MOT again on 7th April, and fails. Although this vehicle has failed and it says so in the MOT history, it will show as having a valid MOT on GOV.UK, even though it has failed its most recent test?

A: This is correct. This is because the original MOT test on the 1st April still stands until it's expiry date. It would be the same if you presented a vehicle for test within a month before an MOT expiry, if it fails, the original expiry date is still valid. Just to add that although using a vehicle in this scenario with a known defect would not affect the MOT, under Construction and Use regulations you could be liable.