

REPORT ON THE PRACTICAL TEST

Categories B and B+E

MAY 1998

Report on the practical test for category B(+E)

Commission Internationale des Examens de Conduite Automobile, CIECA

The "Commission Internationale des Examens de Conduite Automobile" (CIECA) is an organisation for authorities in the field of driver licensing and was founded in 1956. It has an official status as observer to the United Nations. The European Commission decided to subsidize a project entitled "Comparative analysis and practical guide on driver licensing in the European Union". To this end, several workshops were organised, two of which dealt with the practical test for category B(+E). This report is also available in German and French.

Editors:
Ms M. ter Braak
Ms H. Groot
Mr H. Ruyters

With the collaboration of:

Mr J. Aubert	Mr S. Myntinen
Mr W. Pecinovsky	Mr K. Hakuli
Mrs C. Perez	Mr J.B. Watson
Mr W. Vanbroeckhoven	Mr A. Peoples
Mr A. Serra Amaral	Mr J.S.T. Duncan
Mrs M. Goretti Faria da Costa	Mr N. Sayadi
Mr R. Vihmann	Mr A. Meddeb
Mr T. Kangur	Mr G. Heintz
Mr T. Saimre	Mr P. Schmitz
Mr M. Saik	Mr M. Hermanis
Mr G. Buzási	Mr J. Teteris
Mrs M. Szebényi	Mr Z. Uzant
Mr J.P. Fougère	Mr B. Herdan
Mr E. Seul	Mr R. Cummins
Mr H. Duenbostel	Mr I. Smoljan
Mrs K. Pedersen	Mr N. Zuber
Mr E. Janby	Mr I. Baković
Mr W. Weinheber	Mr C. Lozano
Mr W. Petzholz	Mr F. Muñoz Peláez
Mr H. Mattsson	Mr H. Westerveld
Mr Ö. Ellström	Mr F. Korpel
	Mr J.P. Vaessen

The authors of this report can not be held responsible for possible errors it may contain; all data presented by the members have been collected with the utmost precision.

The report on the 'Practical Test for category B(+E)' has been partly realised with the support of the Directorate General for Transport of the Commission of the European Union.

ISBN: 90-76408-04-1

© CIECA, Brussels, 1998

Foreword by the CIECA President

It is an honour for me to present this report on the practical test for category B(+E). The fact that the European Commission has given CIECA the task to organise these workshops, demonstrates that our knowledge and experience are appreciated at an international level. The “Österreichische Vereinigung für Sachverständige nach dem Kraftfahrrecht” (ÖVSK) in Vienna and the “Direction Générale de la Sécurité et de la Circulation Routières” in Lille were proud to host the two workshops, which served as a basis for this report. This study forms part of the project “Comparative analysis and practical guide on driver licensing in the European Union”. I am grateful to the Directorate General for Transport of the European Commission for subsidizing this project. Herewith I would also like to thank the experts from the 20 countries who participated to these workshops. This report would not have been possible without their expertise and hard work. I look forward to the presentation of this report at the CIECA congress in Tunis, in May 1998.

J.P. Vaessen

Summary

This report describes the recommendations the experts arrived at during two workshops, as well as the discussions which preceded them. These workshops have been organised within the framework of a project entitled "Comparative analysis and practical guide on driver licensing in the European Union". The workshop participants are experts, not political delegates and the recommendations therefore reflect their expert opinions.

Directive 91/439/EEC served as a starting point for discussions. Certain points stipulated in this Directive have been analysed and restructured. Agreement was reached on the following items: the location of the practical test, the contents (including the special manoeuvres), the assessment criteria for both category B and B+E, the test result form, the criteria for testing vehicles, the use of safety belts, the definition of category B+E and the practical test for this category.

In the course of the presentations and discussions, it became clear that large differences still exist between the participating countries in certain other areas. For this reason, the experts decided not to make any recommendations on the following points: the use of a special testing ground; flexible versus set routes; the place of the examiner and the presence and place of the instructor.

The above-mentioned recommendations constitute minimum requirements, based on best practice solutions. This implies that countries can impose stricter requirements if their legislation demands this.

Table of contents:

Foreword by the CIECA President	2
Summary	3
Introduction	6
1. Location of the practical test	8
1.1 Flexible versus set routes	10
2. Contents of the practical test	12
3. Assessment criteria	15
4. The test result form	18
5. Duration of the practical test	19
6. Place of the examiner	21
7. Presence and place of the instructor	22
8. Criteria for testing vehicles for category B	23
8.1 The use of safety belts	24
9. The definition of category B+E	25
9.1 Criteria for testing vehicles for category B+E	26
9.2 The practical test for category B+E	27
Conclusions	29
Annexes	31

Introduction

In the course of 1997 and 1998 two workshops were organised by the "Commission Internationale des Examens de Conduite Automobile", CIECA, to analyse in detail the practical test for category B(+E) and to outline joint recommendations for future developments. The workshops were attended by experts in the field of driver licensing. The outcome of the workshops, detailed in this report, will be forwarded to the General Assembly of CIECA for approval before being sent on to the European Commission. This project was partly subsidised by the European Commission.

It was decided that only the category B practical test would be analysed. First of all, 90 % of all driving tests concern category B. Secondly, an applicant for a driving test in categories C and/or D must have first passed the test for category B. The practical test for the other categories should be analysed at a later stage.

The first workshop on the practical test for category B was held on 29 and 30 September, 1997, and was hosted by the Österreichische Vereinigung für Sachverständige nach dem Kraftfahrrecht (ÖVSK) in Vienna, Austria. It was attended by experts from the following 18 countries:

Austria (**A**), Belgium (**B**), Croatia (**HR**), Germany (**D**), Spain (**E**), Estonia (**EST**), France (**F**), Finland (**FIN**), Great Britain (**GB**), Hungary (**H**), Luxemburg (**L**), Latvia (**LV**), Norway (**N**), Northern Ireland (**NI**), the Netherlands (**NL**), Portugal (**P**), Sweden (**S**) and Tunisia (**TN**).

The second workshop was hosted by France and organised in Lille by the 'Direction Générale de la Sécurité et de la Circulation Routières' of the French Ministry of Transport on 5 and 6 March 1998. Experts from Israel (**IL**) and Monaco (**MC**) joined the group, bringing the total of participating countries to twenty.

The working method for this research project was as follows: participants' responses to questionnaires were used to draw up a working document, which then became the basis for discussions during the workshops. The first workshop started with the presentation of diagrams with data concerning the practical test for category B. These diagrams have been added to this report as an annex. The workshops allowed the experts to analyse and discuss all subjects in depth. The minutes of the workshops were sent to the participants for approval, after which they were elaborated in this report. The entire process was guided by the Steering Committee, who evaluated the workshop results and put forward recommendations and guidelines for further research based on best practice amongst the countries represented within CIECA.

Many differences exist in the contents and form of the practical test in the participating countries. Therefore it is important to note here that the recommendations resulting from these workshops are the product of wide-ranging discussions amongst the field experts themselves and do not reflect the present situation in the countries which they represent.

This report is structured as follows: each chapter starts with a short description of the current situation in the countries represented at the CIECA workshops. This description is followed by the workshop discussions and each chapter ends with recommendations and/or conclusions. If no recommendations were made, the chapter ends with conclusions. At the end of the report you will find two annexes:

- I: the diagrams mentioned above;
- II: the names and addresses of the workshop participants.

1. Location of the practical test

No disagreement was expressed regarding the use of motorways or similar roads or of locations inside and outside built-up areas. Discussion was limited to the compulsory use of residential areas and a special testing ground, as there are countries that do not use these areas for the practical test at present. Directive 91/439/EEC, Annex II, point 13 stipulates the following standards for the location of the test:

The part of the test to assess the applicant's technical control over the vehicle may be conducted on a special testing ground. Wherever possible, the part of the test to assess behaviour traffic should be conducted on roads outside built-up areas, expressways and motorways, as well as on urban streets which should represent the various types of difficulty likely to be encountered by drivers. It is also desirable for the test to take place in various traffic density conditions.

Current situation

In most participant countries, the practical test is conducted both inside and outside built-up areas (A, B, E, EST, D, F, FIN, GB, H, IL, L, LV, N, NI, NL, P, S, TN). In L and TN, the practical test is not conducted on motorways because of the limited road network there. In F, it is not always possible to conduct practical tests on motorways, but all candidates are required to drive a certain part of the test at a speed of 80 km/h on motorways or similar. In HR, the entire practical test takes place inside built-up areas. Further detailed information on where the practical test *should* take place according to the experts, can be found at the end of this report, in the tables of Annex I (p.1).

Ten countries (A, B, EST, FIN, H, L, LV, N, S and TN) make use of a special testing ground. In eight of them (A, B, EST, FIN, H, L, LV and TN), it is used for manoeuvres. N and S use the special testing ground only for skid exercises. E also has special testing grounds, but only makes use of them occasionally, when traffic does not allow for special manoeuvres.

Discussion

Inside and outside built up areas

All countries indicated that the practical test should be conducted both inside and outside built-up areas.

Motorways or similar

The experts agreed that practical tests should also be conducted on motorways. However, it was decided to add the term 'or similar' to cover those locations in certain countries where this is not possible. There are a number of testing centres in rural and peripheral areas that do not dispose of any motorways in the immediate surrounding. Sometimes, the motorway available is a toll road and can not be used for a practical test either, because the stretches are too long. Therefore, the wording was adapted to 'motorways or similar' and some characteristics have been summed up, such as lane separation, acceleration and deceleration lanes and the presence of more than one lane in each direction. Most important is the fact that the minimum allowed speed is over 80 km/h. Further discussions centered on the use of residential areas and a special testing ground.

Residential areas

The experts from E, L and NI were of the opinion that no special items could be tested in residential areas and that these should therefore not be part of the practical test. The experts from S, F and NL specified that driving in residential areas should be a part of the practical test for several reasons:

- Drivers are able to show they can adjust their speed to the surroundings as well as to traffic signs, which is a demanding task. Furthermore, this is a realistic situation which should be covered by the practical test.
- It is important to see if a candidate takes good notice of pedestrians and children in traffic.
- Residential areas are expanding in big cities, creating differences between normal speed zones and the 30 km speed limit in new neighbourhoods. Drivers should be familiar with all of these zones.

Driving test authorities should insure that these areas can be covered in each practical test. Drivers will be driving in these different types of infrastructure and will be confronted with the difficulty of changing between these different types.

Including all these areas in the practical test would at least ensure that driving schools use them as locations to teach their candidates. How often these areas are used is a question that should be left to the driving test authorities to decide.

Special testing ground

The Directive does not stipulate the compulsory use of a special testing ground. Therefore the experts compared its advantages and disadvantages. The discussion then mainly focused on the benefits of testing manoeuvres on a special testing ground and those of testing in real traffic.

The following advantages of special testing grounds were mentioned:

- psychological advantage: manoeuvres can be carried out alone in the vehicle, which is less stressful to the candidate;
- practical advantage: a suitable area for performing the manoeuvres is always available;
- objectivity: the conditions are equal for all candidates;
- safety: traffic density makes testing in real traffic dangerous; if a candidate performs poorly, he/she has the opportunity to fail before facing real traffic.

The following advantages of testing manoeuvres in real traffic were then pointed out:

- better preparation of the candidate: in real situations a driver must also take other traffic into account;
- more accurate assessment of the candidate's abilities: if candidates must be able to perform the manoeuvres in real traffic they must also be assessed in real traffic. Assessing them on special testing grounds does not guarantee that candidates will also perform them correctly in real traffic.

Conclusions/recommendations

It is recommended that the practical test include the following traffic zones:

- motorways or similar if available (minimum speed over 80 km/h, lane separation, acceleration and deceleration lanes, more than one lane in each direction)
- outside built-up areas
- inside built-up areas
- residential areas

The experts were unable to make any recommendations on the compulsory use of a special testing ground, as both special testing grounds and testing in real traffic have their advantages. Therefore it was concluded that the decision should be left to the countries themselves.

1.1 Flexible versus set routes

Current situation

In most participating countries, the driving test consists of flexible routes with certain fixed points which must be checked (**B, L, H, NL, S, FIN, P, LV, EST, D, TN**). In only a few countries the routes are fixed (**N, E, GB, NI, F**).

There appear to be two tendencies in Europe, one towards more flexible routes and the other towards set routes. The licensing authorities in Norway switched from flexible routes to fixed routes after it was discovered four years ago that examiners generally kept to the same routes. However, some examiners used easy routes and others chose difficult ones. The licensing authorities therefore decided to impose set routes in order to guarantee objectivity. The test is expected to cover the curricula, and examiners now have less freedom. Every test centre provides ten to fifteen different routes from which the examiners can choose.

In most countries, there is a combination of set and flexible routes. In Sweden the routes are flexible, but the candidate is assigned the task of driving to a certain location so that the candidate has to follow the traffic signs. The examiner may give indications, and there will be certain coordination points, but the candidate may also make his/her own decisions on how to arrive at the destination. In Hungary, the routes are flexible, but a candidate has to drive to certain traffic check points. The candidate receives a sheets with ten traffic check points and the examiner then communicates the routes.

Discussion

A sizeable group of experts was in favour of flexible routes on condition that the items on the list (see "contents" below) are checked during each practical test.

The advantages of set routes:

- Set routes ensure the objectivity, validity and fairness of tests. A testing agency can verify exactly what skills examiners are assessing.
- Use of specially designated areas cause no hindrance to other road users.

The advantages of flexible routes:

- If examiners have doubts about the candidate's performance on certain parts of the practical test, they can double check.
- Flexible routes give examiners a more complete picture of the candidate because there are more options for the examiner to pursue.

Conclusions

The different uses of set and flexible routes within Europe prevented conclusions from being reached on this subject. It will have to be left to countries themselves to decide whether examiners should have the freedom to choose their routes or not.

2. Contents of the practical test

Two main points were discussed: the number and the type of compulsory parts of the practical test; and the number and kind of compulsory manoeuvres.

Time constraints precluded a detailed examination of all the parts of the practical test in each country. Instead, the participants were asked to indicate which items from the following list need to be tested, in order of importance, so as to make recommendations for best practice: exiting a driveway, driving on straight roads and around curves, through crossroads and junctions, changing direction, overtaking, changing lanes, approaching and exiting motorways, as well as railway crossings, roundabouts and manoeuvres. Their answers can be found at the end of the report, in the tables of Annex I (p. 2).

Special manoeuvres were dealt with in two questions on the questionnaire preceding the second workshop: those regarding the number and type of manoeuvres to be performed. On average, 4 to 5 manoeuvres are to be performed, out of which turning the vehicle around and parking are the most common (in 16 countries). The number of manoeuvres and type of manoeuvres by country can be found in the tables of Annex I (p. 3, 4), at the end of this report.

Discussion

The experts were of the opinion that a list of contents is just as important for examiners as for candidates. Candidates should know what to expect in the practical test, and driving instructors have to integrate the list of contents into their training programme. The experts decided that the points mentioned in the Directive should be regrouped. The experts prescribed that *what* is tested should be described in the contents, and *how* it is tested should be described in the assessment criteria.

The Steering Committee was requested to take a closer look at the grouping of the list of items. These were discussed at length, upon which the Steering Committee ranked them in chronological order and regrouped certain items. The experts then agreed with the new list. Countries may add extra items to this list and change their order if they wish. Upon request, special manoeuvres were added to the list of contents.

Special Manoeuvres

Special manoeuvres are considered an extra part of the practical test and were therefore discussed separately. The number of manoeuvres was the second point of discussion affecting the location of the practical test. According to Annex II of the Directive, two out of three manoeuvres are obligatory, one of which is reversing. This manoeuvre is one of the top ten reasons for failing the driving test in Great Britain. Given the difficulty examiners experience in finding a proper place to perform manoeuvres in residential areas, the British experts wished to limit the number of manoeuvres to one and leave it to the examiner to choose which one.

Certain experts (FIN, S, NI) were of the opinion that one manoeuvre is enough. Manoeuvres show the driver's technical control of the vehicle, and this is not generally considered to be a problematic aspect. The main argument against performing only one manoeuvre is that certain driving schools do not teach all manoeuvres unless they are a compulsory part of the practical test. Therefore, other experts (D, TN) felt that at least two manoeuvres should be compulsory, and that three would be even better. These manoeuvres could be considered a separate part of

the practical test and be chosen in advance. Two experts (A, H) recommended five compulsory manoeuvres. In the end, the experts decided that the minimum of two manoeuvres, as stipulated by the Directive, ought to be maintained. In the highly urbanised areas of Europe, parking without causing hindrance to other traffic is considered an important manoeuvre.

Conclusions/recommendations

This list constitutes but a minimum requirement based on best practice. Countries may add extra items to this list and change their order if they wish, but the contents of the practical test for category B should contain at least the following items:

1. Safety check of the car: tyres, oil, stoplights and indicators;
use of accessories (windscreen wipers, windscreen heating, ancillary controls);
2. Getting in and out the car:
use of and adjusting of safety belt and head rest;
opening /closing the door;
adjusting rear-view mirrors;
adjusting seat;
3. Driving away:
after parking, after a stop in traffic;
exiting a driveway;
4. Driving on straight roads:
meeting oncoming traffic;
5. Driving in bends;
6. Crossroads:
approaching and crossing of intersections and junctions;
7. Changing direction:
left and right turns;
changing lanes;
8. Approach/exit of motorways or similar, if available:
joining from the acceleration lane;
leaving on the deceleration lane;
9. Overtaking/passing, if possible:
overtaking other traffic;
driving along obstacles, eg. parked cars;
being overtaken by other traffic;

10. Special parts of the road, if available:
roundabouts;
railway crossings;
tram/bus stops;
pedestrian crossings;
driving up/downhill on long slopes.

11. Special manoeuvres:
at least two manoeuvres should be performed, of which one should be parking.

3. Assessment criteria

The assessment criteria are also described in Annex II of Directive 91/439/EEC. As already mentioned, the experts were not asked to describe the assessment criteria in their current form. The aim was to come to best practice recommendations. Driving at night was the only item which needed further explanation, it being an important part of the training/practical test in the curriculum of some (although not all) countries. What the experts felt should be the assessment criteria can be found at the end of the report, in the tables of Annex I (p. 5).

Driving at night

8 participating countries impose some form of driving at night certificate (**D, IL, FIN, N, EST, A, H, HR**). In Norway and Hungary, candidates must have a certificate to prove that they can drive at night before they are admitted to the practical test. In Finland, a certificate of night driving is part of their two phase driving licence. In Sweden, driving at night can be part of the practical test. In Germany, driving at night forms part of the practical training. In most countries, and depending on the season, some practical tests are conducted before sunrise or after sunset.

Discussion

The experts were requested to respond to the list of criteria in the working document, which contained the following items: handling the car; controlling the car; adapted (safe) and determined driving; attitude towards other road users; perception; priority/giving way; place on the road; keeping distance; speed; traffic lights and other signals; road signs; signalling, braking and stopping. As with the discussion regarding contents, the experts were asked to rank the list, this time in order of importance, and provide additional criteria, if necessary.

Defensive driving

Defensive driving reflects the overall style of driving, just like social driving behaviour. This is also why they were both put at the top of the list. Although defensive driving was considered an important item, the experts decided not to assess it separately. They were of the opinion that this would be impossible. Examiners should assess defensive driving from the moment a candidate enters the car to the moment he exits the car. It is a general item which needs to be assessed throughout the entire test.

Economical/environmentally friendly driving

Economical driving can be seen as a part of defensive driving, as the two are closely related. Some questions on this subject may be added to the theoretical test, as required by Directive 91/439/EEC. These could deal with the manner of accelerating; checking tyres, roof rack and open windows. However, including these items in the practical test could be counterproductive because candidates would most likely refrain from accelerating sufficiently. Only on rare occasions will a candidate accelerate too quickly or speed. However, this very behaviour would make him/her fail the other aspects of the test that demand greater attention, such as defensive and social driving behaviour or observation.

Environmentally friendly/economical driving constitutes an important item for category B that could be practised during advanced/experienced driver training using the econometer, cruise control or the right gear.

Driving at night

A certificate of night driving should be obtained from a driving school, and should then be presented at the practical test. The experts felt night driving should not be included in the practical test because it cannot be assessed during normal working hours. Secondly, they did not see the absolute necessity of teaching night driving everywhere in Europe.

Conclusions/recommendations

The following list met with the general agreement of the experts. A smaller working party can try to draw up a more detailed description of the criteria in the near future:

0. Defensive and social driving behaviour:

- adapted and determined (safe) driving
- taking into account road and weather conditions
- taking into account other traffic
- taking into account the interests of other road users (particularly the vulnerable)
- anticipation

1. Controlling the car:

- proper use of safety belts, rear-view mirrors, head rest, seat
- proper use of lights and other equipment
- proper use of clutch, gearbox, accelerator, brakes, steering wheel
- controlling the car under different circumstances, at different speed
- steadiness on the road
- taking into account the size and characteristics of the car

2. Observation:

- all-round observation
- proper use of mirrors
- long, near, middle distance vision

3. Priority/ giving way:

- priority at crossroads, intersections and junctions
- giving way at other occasions (eg. changing direction, changing lanes, special manoeuvres)

4. Correct position on the road:

- proper position on the road, in lanes, on roundabouts, in bends
- pre-positioning

5. Keeping distance:

- keeping adequate distance from other road users

6. Speed:

- not exceed the maximum speed
- adapt speed to weather/traffic conditions and where possible up to national speed limits (drive at such speed that stopping within distance of the visible and free road is possible)

7. Traffic lights, road signs & other conditions:

- acting correctly at traffic lights
- obey indications from traffic controllers
- acting correctly at road signs (prohibitions or commands)
- take appropriate action of road markings

8. Signalling:

- give signals where necessary, correctly and properly timed
- indicating directions the right way
- take appropriate action of all signals by other road users

9. Braking and stopping:

- decelerating in time, braking or stopping according to the circumstances (drive at such speed that stopping within distance of the visible and free road is possible)

Specific themes:

● Environmentally/economically friendly driving:

This item should not be a part of the practical test, but should be trained during an advanced/experienced driver training.

● Driving at night:

A certificate of night driving, which candidates must have obtained during their training, is recommended. It should not form part of the practical test.

4. The test result form

This subject was not dealt with in the questionnaire. Therefore, the current situation will not be described here.

Discussion

In the conditions under which the test is to be conducted, Directive 91/439/EEC does not specify when and how test results should be issued. Discussion during the workshop mainly revolved around the moment the test result form should be given to the candidate, a topic of interest in more and more countries. Test centres in certain countries hesitate to issue test results immediately because examiners often have to deal with failed candidates who become aggressive. One solution considered was to send the results later by mail, although this would not be ideal from a pedagogical point of view. Finally, a majority of experts decided that it would be better to give candidates direct feedback after the practical test. The debriefing is used to explain the mistakes the candidate has made. It is also for this reason that the presence of the instructor is favoured or even mandatory in many countries. The examiner's remarks can be used for further training, and it would not be fair to punish all candidates because of the aggressive behaviour shown by a few. The layout and presentation of the test result form were not discussed.

Conclusions/recommendations

- The test result form is handed out immediately after the practical test.
- The test result form should state if a candidate has failed or passed and it should also explain the reasons in some detail.
- An oral explanation given by the examiner based on the assessment criteria should be included.
- The presence of the instructor is recommended.

5. Duration of the practical test

The total time spent on the practical test can be divided into two parts:

- net driving time
- time spent on manoeuvres, entering and exiting the car, briefing and debriefing and the safety check.

The discussion focussed mainly on net driving time, or 'time spent driving on the road'.

Point 12 of Annex II of Directive 91/439/EEC stipulates the following conditions on the length of the practical test:

The length of the test and the distance travelled must be sufficient to assess the skills and behaviour laid down in (...) In no circumstances should the time spent driving on the road be less than 25 minutes for categories A, B and B+E.(...)

This implies that the preparation of the vehicle, the technical check, the special manoeuvres, the briefing and debriefing are excluded from these 25 minutes.

Current situation

The diagrams in Annex I (p. 6) present information on total time, net driving time and time spent on manoeuvres. The total time for the practical test varied from approximately 20 minutes to 80 minutes. In most countries the total time spent on the practical test is between 30 and 50 minutes.

Of this total, net driving time varies from approximately 15 minutes (F, TN) to 65 minutes (N), and in most countries it varies from 20 to 40 minutes. In 7 countries, manoeuvres take 5 minutes to complete (A, EST, D, LV, NI, E, TN). In other countries, manoeuvres take considerably more time: 10 (H, L) to 15 minutes (B). Two countries did not specify the time spent on manoeuvres.

Discussion

The lengthy discussion on this subject showed the need for clarification of the definitions used. A majority of those who attended the workshop in Vienna (F, TN, HR, P, FIN, NI, L, GB, B) was in favour of a longer practical test of at least 30 minutes. The Steering Committee was requested to present good arguments for prolonging the net driving time.

It came with several reasons for this at the second workshop:

- the psychological point of view: the first 10 minutes of a practical test are routine and relatively unchallenging;
- 25 minutes are not sufficient to check all items that should be assessed in every test (taking into account the place, the contents and the criteria that have been defined);
- the actual traffic density makes it often difficult to conduct a practical test in such a short period of time.

Some experts (E, D, A, N, NL) expressed the opinion that if examiners have to drive outside built-up areas, the minimum time in traffic should even be at least 45 minutes.

The Steering Committee also pointed out that two scientific studies are currently being carried out in this field: one by Prof. Hebenstreit in Switzerland and one by the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) in Great Britain. Prof. Hebenstreit's study is attempting to find out if there is any relationship between the length of the practical test and the occurrence of accidents in the first two years of possession of the driving licence. The outcome of this study will be published in May/June this year. The Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) is carrying out a three-year study on the practical test. This research is still ongoing.

The preparation of the vehicle, the technical check, the manoeuvres, the briefing and debriefing of a candidate take about 15 minutes altogether. Some experts within the Steering Committee, and other experts present at the workshops, felt that these parts could take less time depending on the circumstances under which the practical test was conducted. As these aspects vary from country to country, it is crucial to set a minimum net driving time instead of an overall duration for the entire practical test.

During the discussions at the second workshop it became clear that 10 experts were in favour of at least 40 minutes net driving time. 9 experts were in favour of 30 minutes and 1 delegation favoured 35 minutes. A compromise of 35 minutes minimum net driving time was then accepted.

Conclusion/recommendation

The 25 minutes stipulated in the Directive do not suffice if examiners have to assess all the criteria agreed upon. Moreover, the current traffic density requires a longer practical test. Therefore the experts recommend a minimum net driving time of 35 minutes.

6. Place of the examiner

The place where an examiner sits in the car during the practical test is important because he/she should be able to see the candidate's (eye) movements in order to assess his driving skills and behaviour. The issue of the examiner's place is also closely related to the presence and place of the instructor, because in certain countries the instructor is the legal driver of the test vehicle. The presence and place of the instructor will be discussed separately below. Although the current situation regarding the place of the examiner was not explained, the experts were asked to give their opinion on best practice instead.

Discussion

Eleven countries (**EST, F, FIN, GB, IL, LV, N, NI, NL, S, TN, P**) indicated that the examiner should be seated in front, and eight countries (**A, B, D, E, H, HR, L**) indicated that the examiner should be seated in the rear.

The following arguments favour placement in the front seat:

- If the examiner is seated in front he/she has access to dual controls and extra mirrors when necessary.
- The examiner should have the same view as the candidate in order to judge driving behaviour. He/she should also be able to see the traffic signs and traffic lights.
- The examiner can obtain a better idea of the driving speed and can anticipate events quicker if he/she is seated in front.
- If seated in the rear, the examiner's view will be obstructed by the head rests.
- The examiner has more immediate contact with the candidate if seated in front.

The following arguments favour placement in the rear seat:

- The examiner should sit in the rear to allow the instructor to be seated in front; the instructor knows the candidate better and can intervene more effectively.
- The candidate feels more at ease with the examiner in the rear seat. The performance of candidates is usually under par due to nerves. However, it should not be difficult to observe the candidate using a mirror.
- The examiner should sit behind the driver, in good view of the candidate.

Conclusions/ recommendations

The CIECA experts were divided about this subject.

The place of the examiner should be left to countries themselves.

7. Presence and place of the instructor

The current situation regarding the presence and place of the instructor was not described, but the experts were asked to outline best practice recommendations instead.

Discussion

Certain experts (**S, F, FIN, NL, EST**) felt that the instructor should be present at the request of the candidate. Thus they recommended the presence of the instructor but did not impose it. On the other hand, another group of experts (**NL, GB, A, D, E, H, L**) was of the opinion that the instructor should be obliged to accompany the candidate during the test.

There are several arguments in favour of the instructor's presence:

- The instructor should be present during the evaluation at the end of the practical test, so that if a candidate fails the instructor can take the candidate's problems into account in further training.
- In many countries all the examiners are male; female candidates might protest that the assessment of their skills suffers from a gender-bias on the part of their examiner.
- The examiner can communicate the outcome of the practical test to the instructor; furthermore, the instructor is a witness of the proceedings and can vouch for the test result. He/she is already familiar with the candidate's strong and weak points.
- The instructor should be present for safety reasons, so that he/she can intervene if necessary, but this only applies if the instructor is seated in the front. In this manner, the examiner can devote his/her full attention to observing the candidate's performance.

For this last reason, the presence of the instructor is compulsory in several countries (**A, D, E, H, L**). However, if the candidate does not wish the instructor to be present, or if the instructor prefers not to be present, these wishes ought to be respected.

Conclusions

In general, the presence of the instructor is considered a positive factor, but no recommendation is made on this subject.

8. Criteria for testing vehicles for category B

Point 8.1.2. of Annex II of the Directive stipulates the following criteria for category B vehicle equipment:

Four-wheeled category B vehicles capable of a speed of at least 100 km/h;

The experts examined the criteria for testing vehicles from a practical point of view, also bearing road safety in mind. Thus, the following subjects came under discussion: should the testing vehicle have five doors, rear-view mirrors on both sides, dual controls, head rests and visible speedometers? Should the vehicle fulfill ECE R32 ISO requirements? The answer to the question: What should be the minimum criteria for category B(+E) test vehicles, can be found in the tables of Annex I (p. 7).

The issue of safety belts will be discussed separately below, as their presence is not a requirement for testing vehicles in particular.

Discussion

ECE R32 ISO requirements

All the above-mentioned items were discussed by the experts and rediscussed by the Steering Committee. Both parties decided not to recommend the ECE R32 ISO test requirements (to prevent rear collisions) because they were considered to be unnecessarily strict.

Speedometer

In certain cars the speedometer is not visible from the examiner's seat, which could hinder an examiner in his work. An examiner who allows a candidate to exceed the speed limits stipulated by the regulations breaks the law. Therefore, examiners should easily be able to see if candidates have exceeded the maximum speed allowed. Nevertheless, the visibility of the speedometer was not recommended as a minimum requirement. There are more ways of registering speed than by looking at the speedometer. The examiner should not feel at risk at the speed the candidate is driving regardless of whether the speedometer is visible.

Dual controls

Examiners in the vast majority of the countries represented at the workshops work with dual controls for safety reasons. The experts therefore agreed to recommend the presence of dual controls as one of the criteria for testing vehicles.

Head rests and rear-view mirrors

The presence of head rests and of rear-view mirrors on both sides was considered important for safety reasons. Head rests can prevent drivers from severe injuries. In France, this issue had been discussed with inspectors and doctors. The head rests were considered appropriate for reasons of comfort and safety. Safety depends on the proper position of the head rests. When adjusted correctly, they can prevent whiplash during a rear collision. Rear-view mirrors, on the other hand, perform a preventative function. They allow drivers to spot other road users from a wider angle and look further back to the rear.

Number of doors

Testing vehicles have either three or five doors in most countries. The experts differed in opinion as to whether five doors are really necessary for practical reasons. Some experts argued that the number of doors has no bearing on the test, and that the minimum overall size of the car is more important. Others, e.g. from **S** and **FIN**, felt that it would be going too far to impose five doors solely because in their countries candidates may take the driving test in their own car. The Steering Committee argued that for safety reasons, and because in many countries the instructor as well as the examiner are present during the test, the testing vehicle should have five doors. For example, in France and Spain the vehicle is often occupied by four people: the examiner, the instructor and two candidates. Furthermore, inspectors must also be able to ride along in order to carry out quality controls on the examiners. Testing vehicles with three doors are allowed in countries where there are usually no more than two persons in the car - the examiner and the candidate. In order not to cause problems for the testing agencies in these countries, the clause 'if there are more than two persons present in the car' was added to the recommendation.

Conclusions /recommendations

- The vehicle does not have to meet the ECE R 32 ISO requirements, nor is the visibility of the speedometer required.
- The testing vehicle for category B should have dual controls, head rests and rear-view mirrors.
- The testing vehicle should have 5 doors if there are more than 2 occupants in the car.

8.1 The use of safety belts

Directive 91/671/EEC deals with safety belts in vehicles of less than 3500 kg. The final implementation report COM (96) 244 from the European Commission on this Directive mentions some countries that allow their examiners not to wear a safety belt. The experts were of the opinion that the use of safety belts during the practical test should be compulsory for examiners in all countries. Therefore, they recommend that the special exemptions in this Directive regarding the use of safety belts by examiners in some countries be removed.

Conclusion/recommendations

- The experts recommend that this special exemption be omitted.
All examiners should use safety belts during the practical test.

9. The definition of category B+E

The definition for category B+E in Directive 91/439/EEC is derived from the definition for category B and therefore both definitions are quoted below. Article 3 of the Directive stipulates the following definitions for category B and B+E vehicles:

Category B

Motor vehicles with a maximum authorized mass not exceeding 3500 kilograms and having not more than eight seats in addition to the driver's seat; motor vehicles in this category may be combined with a trailer having a maximum authorized mass which does not exceed 750 kilograms;

Combinations of a tractor vehicle in category B and a trailer, where the maximum authorized mass of the combination does not exceed 3500 kilograms and the maximum authorized mass of the trailer does not exceed the unladen mass of the tractor vehicles;

Category B+E

Combinations of vehicles consisting of a tractor vehicle in category B and a trailer, where the combination does not come within category B;

The Steering Committee advised the workshop participants that all trailers of over 750 kg should fall within category B+E, regardless of the weight of the towing vehicle. The reasons for this shift in the definition of categories B and B+E are the following:

- Only the weight of the towing vehicle or the weight of the trailer will make certain combinations fall within category B and others within category B+E. This means that a driver is suddenly obliged to obtain a B+E licence when buying a new car or caravan, which does not seem logical.
- The length of such a car and caravan combination, which can easily exceed 10 m, is reason alone to urge for a change in the definition.
- The behaviour of the combination, its correct loading, route planning in cities, reversing, (un)coupling and maintenance are all reasons for a change in definition and should be included in the practical and theoretical tests.
- The analogy with categories C and D, where only a trailer of 750 kg is allowed for free with these licences.
- In accordance with type approval rules, all trailers over 750 kg must be equipped with a brake; the type of brake has no influence on this shift in definition.

This recommendation was agreed upon by all experts, leading to the following definition for category B+E:

- All trailers of over 750 kg fall within category B+E, regardless of the weight of the towing vehicle.

9.1 Criteria for testing vehicles for category B+E

Point 8.1.2. in Annex of the Directive stipulates the following criteria for category B+E testing vehicles:

Combinations, made up of a category B test vehicle and a trailer with a maximum authorized mass of at least 1000 kilograms, capable of a speed of at least 100 km/h, which do not fall within category B;

Discussion

The weight of the trailer was discussed at length during the workshops: should it be laden or unladen and how much weight should be towed? The weight of the load is an important factor in the behaviour of the combination. A load alters the suspension, changing the stability of the trailer, which then affects braking and accelerating performance. For this reason it was felt that the trailer should be loaded during the practical test for B+E.

The issue of coupling and uncoupling by jockey was also discussed, but did not result in any recommendations. No particular type of axle for the trailer was recommended either; this choice was left to the countries themselves. To avoid confusion, the following definition has been given at the beginning of the discussion on the definition of the criteria for the trailer: Maximum Authorized Mass (MAM) = Unladen Mass + Maximum Permissible Load.

The initial proposal of the Steering Committee was as follows:

- towing vehicles fall within category B (100 km/h, 4 doors, double pedals, head rests) trailer:
- minimum 1000 kg unladen mass
- minimum 50% of the maximum permissible load
- the combination should have a minimum length of 7.5 m
- the combination should be capable of a speed of at least 80 km/h
- a closed body of 1.5 m high (and not less than the height of the towing vehicle) and 1.5 m wide (and not less than the width of the towing vehicle)

However, it became clear that this proposal, although well-suited for caravans, would not cover industrial trailers, which have a low unladen mass but can transport very heavy loads. Therefore, the first two criteria for the trailer were reworked to include industrial and other trailers as well as caravans. It was decided that the criteria for the trailer should be as follows:

- minimum MAM of 1,100 kg
- at least 90% of its MAM presented at the driving test
- combination should be driven at up to 80 km/h and should have a 7.5 m minimum length
- a closed body of at least 1.5 m high (and not less than the height of the towing vehicle) and at least 1.5 m wide (and not less than the width of the towing vehicle).*

* to avoid that the candidate can see to the rear through the interior rear-view mirror.

During the discussions it emerged that rear-view mirrors would also need to be covered. Therefore, the workshop decided to add a supplementary criterion for category B+E: rear-view mirrors should allow both the examiner and the driver a proper view to the rear.

Conclusions/recommendations

- towing vehicle falls within category B (100 km/h, 5 doors, dual controls, head rests), mirrors should give both the examiner and the driver a proper view to the rear
- trailer:
 - minimum MAM of 1.100 kg.
 - at least 90% of its MAM for the driving test
 - combination should drive up to 80 km/h and should have a 7.5 m. minimum length
 - closed body of at least 1.5 m. high (and not less than the height of the towing vehicle) and at least 1.5 m. wide (and not less than the width of the towing vehicle)

9.2 The practical test for category B+E

The definition of category B+E affects the practical test. Therefore, the experts also discussed the length, place, contents and criteria of assessment.

Length of the test

Discussion centered on whether the practical test should be longer than the driving test for category B. It was thought that assessing the special manoeuvres with a trailer would require more time, just as it does for categories C+E and D+E. Certain countries argued that the practical test for B+E should have the same duration as for C+E because it is given at the same centres as C+E. Others argued that the B+E practical test should have the same length as the category B test, but that manoeuvres should be carried out on a special testing ground.

A great majority of the experts present were in favour of requiring the same minimum time in traffic as for category B. The extra time for manoeuvres could then be left to the countries themselves to determine.

Location of the test for category B+E

The traffic zones could be the same as for category B. However, it would be wiser to avoid testing a category B+E combination in residential areas because of parked cars, playing children, narrow passages, road humps, etc. Instead, special manoeuvres focussing on these aspects could be included to help drivers practise leaving their own residential areas in car-caravan combinations.

Contents of the practical test for B+E

The contents of the practical test for category B+E should be the same as for category B. However, particular attention should be paid to the overall driving style, taking into account the length, weight and behaviour of the combination, e.g.:

- when accelerating, braking, driving up or downhill, changing lanes, approaching intersections and junctions;
- the effect of side-wind;
- special manoeuvres like coupling and uncoupling, reversing, parking, loading and maintenance;
- route planning, etc.

Special attention should be paid to the fact that the combination demands a different, more cautious driving style, such as more frequent use of the side-mirrors.

Criteria for assessment

These could be the same as for category B.

Conclusions

The aim of this research project was to reach agreement on various aspects of the practical test for category B(+E). To this end, experts in the field of driver licensing participated in two workshops, organised by CIECA. The experts reached agreement on significant points, which would constitute major improvements. Moreover, European legislation could be further elaborated on the basis of the advice regarding: the location of the practical test, the contents (including the special manoeuvres), the assessment criteria for both category B and B+E, the test result form, the criteria for testing vehicles, the use of safety belts, the definition of category B+E and the practical test for this category.

The contents of the practical test have been outlined exclusively on the basis of best practice. The order of the contents of the practical test is now structured more logically, i.e. chronologically, and special manoeuvres are included because they are considered to form part of the contents. The same applies for the assessment criteria, which are minimum requirements and listed in order of importance. Defensive driving is placed at the top of the list, as it reflects the overall style of driving. Environmentally friendly/economical could be practised during advanced/experienced driver training. A certificate of night time driving is recommended, but should not be part of the practical test.

The test result form is seen as a means of communication with the candidate. If a candidate fails the driving test, the test result form should be handed out immediately afterwards and be accompanied by both a description of the mistakes made, on the basis of the assessment criteria and an explanation by the examiner. The presence of the instructor is recommended because he should hear the explanation of the examiner as well, so that he can use it for the continuation of the training.

Directive 91/439/EEC stipulates a net driving time of 25 minutes, but all the experts agreed that this was too short. If examiners have to check all the items agreed upon and taking into account high traffic density, the practical test should be lengthened substantially. Therefore the experts recommend a minimum net driving time of 35 minutes.

Certain criteria for testing vehicles were easily agreed upon, such as the presence of dual controls, head rests and rear-view mirrors, for reasons of safety. The discussion on the number of doors was more involved, as 5 doors would seem superfluous in countries where only the examiner and a candidate are present during the driving test. The final compromise states that a testing vehicle should only have 5 doors when more than 2 people are present in the car.

The use of safety belts is closely linked to the criteria for testing vehicles. Directive 91/671/EEC stipulates the presence of safety belts, but the COM (96) 244 implementation report makes an exception for examiners in some European countries. However, the experts soon reached agreement on this point: safety belts should not only be present, but they should also be used by the examiner during the practical test.

The definition of category B+E was also easily agreed upon, as was the practical test for category B+E, but the criteria for testing vehicles for category B+E presented some difficulty. The initial definition only covered caravans and not industrial trailers. However, the final criteria managed to include the definitions of the trailer and the maximum authorized mass, as well as the maximum load, so that all possible combinations now are covered.

The practical test for category B+E should be approximately the same as for category B, with the exception that special attention should be paid to the different driving style and greater vigilance demanded from the driver because of the behaviour of the combinations. It should be left to the countries themselves to determine if extra time should be spent on manoeuvres.

During the course of the presentations and discussions, it became clear that on certain points large differences still exist between the participating countries. For this reason, the experts decided not to make any recommendations on the following points: the use of a special testing ground; flexible routes versus set routes; the place of the examiner and the instructor.

Annexes

Annex I

Tables and Diagrams

Annex II

List of Participants

Austria:

Mr. W. Pecinovsky

Magistrat der Stadt Wien
Schlechterstrasse 2
A - 1030 WIEN

Mrs. C. Perez

Federal Ministry for Science and Transport
Radetskystraße 2
A- 1030 WIEN**Belgium:**

Mr. W. Vanbroeckhoven

Groupement des Organismes agréés de Contrôle
Automobile (GOCA)
Rue de la Technologie 21/25
B - 1080 BRUXELLES**Croatia:**

Mr. M. Paynic

Hrvatski Autoklub (HAK)
Draskoviceva 25
HR - 10000 ZAGREB

Mr. D. Hmelina

Hrvatski Autoklub (HAK)
Draskoviceva 25
HR - 10000 ZAGREB

Mr. N. Zuber

Hrvatski Autoklub (HAK)
Draskoviceva 25
HR - 10000 ZAGREB**Estonia:**

Mr. T. Kangur

Estonian Motor Vehicle Registration Centre (ARK)
Lohu 12
EST - EE0026 TALLINN

Mr. R. Vihmann

Estonian Motor Vehicle Registration Centre (ARK)
Lohu 12
EST - EE0026 TALLINN

Mr. T. Saimre

Estonian Motor Vehicle Registration Centre (ARK)
Lohu 12
EST - EE0026 TALLINN

Mr. M. Saik

Estonian Motor Vehicle Registration Centre (ARK)
Lohu 12
EST - EE0026 TALLINN

Finland:

Mr. Hakuli

Motor Vehicle Administration Centre
P.O.B. 108
FIN - 00531 HELSINKI

Mr. S. Mynttinen

Motor Vehicle Administration Centre
P.O.B. 108
FIN - 00531 HELSINKI

France:

Mr. J.P. Fougère

Sous-directeur Ministère de l'Équipement, des
Transports et du Tourisme/ Direction de la Sécurité et
de la Circulation Routières /Sous-Direction de la
Formation du Conducteur
Arche de la Défense Paroi Sud
F-92055 PARIS la Défense Cedex 04

Germany:

Mr. W. Weinheber

Verband der T.Ü.V. e.V.
Kurfürstenstrasse 56
Postfach 10 38 34
D - 45038 ESSEN

Mr. E. Seul

TÜV Rheinland/Berlin-Brandenburg
An der Krimm 23
D-55029 MAINZ

Mr. W. Petzholtz

DEKRA e.V.
Technische Prüfstelle
Liebstädter Str.5
D - 01277 DRESDEN

Great Britain:

Mr. B. Herdan

Driving Standards Agency (DSA)
Stanley House
56, Talbot Street
GB - NOTTINGHAM NG1 5GU

Mr. R.G. Cummins

Driving Standards Agency (DSA)
Stanley House
56, Talbot Street
GB - NOTTINGHAM NG1 5GU

Hungary:

Mrs. M. Szabényi

Közlekedési Főfelügyelet/ Képzés-és Vizsgafelügyeleti
Főosztály
Pf. 102
H- 1389 BUDAPEST

Mr. G. Buzási

Közlekedési Főfelügyelet/ Képzés-és Vizsgafelügyeleti
Főosztály
Pf. 102
H- 1389 BUDAPEST

Israel:

Mr. Z. Uzant

Ministry of Transport
8 Hamelakha St.
IL 61570 TEL-AVIV

Latvia:

Mr. M. Hermanis

Latvijas Republikas Satiksmes Ministrija
Celu Satiksmes Drošības Direkcija
Miera iela 25
LV-1001 RIGA

Mr. J. Teteris

Latvijas Republikas Satiksmes Ministrija
Celu Satiksmes Drošības Direkcija
Miera iela 25
LV-1001 RIGA

Luxemburg:

Mr. G. Heintz

Ministère des Transports
19-21, Boulevard Royal
L-2938 LUXEMBOURG

Mr. P. Schmitz

Ministère des Transports
19-21, Boulevard Royal
L-2938 LUXEMBOURG

Monaco:

Mr. J. Aubert

Département des Travaux Publics et des Affaires
Sociales
Service du Contrôle Technique et de la Circulation
Section des Titres de Circulation
23, Av. Prince Héritaire Albert
B.P.699 \ MC 98000 MONACO

The Netherlands:

Mr. H. Westerveld

Centraal Bureau Rijvaardigheidsbewijzen (CBR)
Postbus 5301
NL - 2280 HH RIJSWIJK

Mr. F. Korpel

Centraal Bureau Rijvaardigheidsbewijzen (CBR)
Postbus 5301
NL - 2280 HH RIJSWIJK

Northern Ireland:

Mr. J.B. Watson

Driver & Vehicle Testing Agency (DVTA)
Balmoral Road
NI - BELFAST BT12 6QL

Mr. J.S.T Duncan

Driver & Vehicle Testing Agency (DVTA)
Balmoral Road
NI - BELFAST BT12 6QL

Mr. A. Peoples

Driver & Vehicle Testing Agency (DVTA)
Balmoral Road
NI - BELFAST BT12 6QL

Norway:

Mrs. K. Pedersen

Vegdirektoratet\ Public Roads Administration
Grenseveien 92
N - 0033 OSLO

Mr. E. Janby

Vegdirektoratet\ Public Roads Administration
Grenseveien 92
N - 0033 OSLO

Portugal:

Mr. A. Serra Amaral

Ministerio da Administração Interna
Direcção Geral de Viação
Av.da República 16
P-1050 LISBOA

Mrs. M. Goretti Faria da Costa

Ministerio da Administração Interna
Direcção Geral de Viação
Av.da República 16
P-1050 LISBOA

Spain:

Mr. F. Muñoz Peláez

Dirección Gral. De Tráfico
C/ Josefa Valcárcel, 28
E - 28071 - MADRID

Mr. C. Lozano

Dirección Gral. De Tráfico
C/ Josefa Valcárcel, 28
E - 28071 - MADRID**Sweden:**

Mr. H. Mattsson

Driving Standards & Licensing Division
Swedish National Road Administration
S-781 87 BORLÄNGE

Mr. Ö. Ellström

Driving Standards & Licensing Division
Swedish National Road Administration
S-781 87 BORLÄNGE**Tunisia:**

Mr. A. Meddeb

Ministère du Transport
Direction Générale des Transports Terrestres
15, Rue de Jordanie-Lafayette
TN-1002 TUNIS

Mr. N. Sayadi

Ministère du Transport
Direction Générale des Transports Terrestres
15, Rue de Jordanie-Lafayette
TN-1002 TUNIS**European Commission, DG VII:**

Mr. H. Ruyters

Commission européenne, DG VII, B.3
Avenue de Beaulieu 31, k. 6.50
B - 1160 BRUXELLES**Workshop President:**

Mr. J.P. Vaessen

Centraal Bureau Rijvaardigheidsbewijzen (CBR)
Postbus 5301
NL - 2280 HH RIJSWIJK**CIECA office:**

Mrs. H. Groot

Mrs. M. ter Braak

Centraal Bureau Rijvaardigheidsbewijzen (CBR)
Postbus 5301
NL - 2280 HH RIJSWIJK