

**Certificate of Professional Competence - Managing  
 International Passenger Transport - Unit P2 (05678)  
 March 2012**

**Candidates' performance**

This paper required candidates to apply knowledge to a given scenario that was not pre-released. This was a new format for the CPC examination. Candidates were able to take any written or printed material of their choice into the examination room to assist them in answering the questions. Candidates did not generally perform well on the paper, and to a certain extent this is unsurprising given that the format was new to them. However, the most common problem, as it has always been with CPC papers, was with candidates not reading the question. Additionally, although candidates could look up an answer, the inability of many to do so successfully suggests that few candidates were either sufficiently prepared for, or of the required standard needed to sit, a Level 3 examination with any success.

It was disappointing to see at this level that some candidates offered single word lists. When we use the words 'explain' or 'describe' in a question, candidates must remember that a single word response is unsatisfactory.

<b>Question number:</b>	<b>1 (a) i</b>
Candidates were asked to describe five criteria that the Traffic Commissioner will consider when reviewing the operator licence for the company given in the scenario.	
<b>Assessment objective reference:</b>	F2.1

The majority of candidates did not read the question and treated it as a new application and not a review of an existing licence. Candidates who understood this was a review gained most of the marks available.

<b>Question number:</b>	<b>1 (b)</b>
Candidates were asked to use the guide to safety inspection intervals shown in the scenario and, referring to the vehicles belonging to a company in the scenario, calculate the safety inspection intervals required.	
<b>Assessment objective reference:</b>	G5.1

It was rare to come across a correct answer for part (b). The principal problem was an inability to calculate the distance travelled per day, the most common error being failure to work out the number of single journeys made. Even though the scenario told candidates that usage was Line B, a number made reference in the answer to usage being line A or C.

<b>Question number:</b>	<b>1 (c)</b>
This question was concerned with changing PMI intervals to the maximum permitted by VOSA due to a reduction in vehicle usage and explaining the procedure required to undertake this change.	
<b>Assessment objective reference:</b>	G5.1

Most candidates were able to state that VOSA or the Traffic Commissioner or CLO Leeds must be notified but many did not go on to explain that it must be within 28 days and the normal maximum interval permitted which was revealed on the chart given in the scenario.

<b>Question number:</b>	<b>2</b>
This question required the candidate to undertake a costing exercise in order to ascertain whether the operation was more profitable using the existing minibuses or by using 35-seat buses.	
<b>Assessment objective reference:</b>	E 7.1 + E7.2

Although two separate costing exercises were necessary, the procedure for each was the same. In order to start this exercise it was necessary to calculate the vehicles required to operate the service and the kilometres travelled by the vehicles. Many candidates failed to do either and therefore the costings were inaccurate. Candidates who did this part correctly went on to make simple errors in calculation but at least were able to gain some marks. Despite the number of drivers required for the operation being given in the question, a lot of candidates failed to use this information when answering the question.

<b>Question number:</b>	<b>3</b>
This question asked the candidate to draft a driver's schedule for a single outward journey from the operator's depot in the UK to a destination in France using the channel tunnel and showing local times throughout.	
<b>Assessment objective reference:</b>	C4.1

This question was more difficult than usual because in addition to the normal breaks, an additional rest break was required after 10 hours of driving. Only two of the available 10 marks were affected by this requirement. However, even with that given, and considering its importance in the role of a Transport Manager, I was still surprised at the overall candidate performance (in terms of other aspects of candidates' attempts at the question). If the scenario (or, in the real world context, a customer) says that departure time from a specific place (in this case Oxford) is 07.00, then all calculations must be based around that departure time and from that place. Unfortunately, many candidates decided to leave Oxford at a different time. Similarly, having been told in the scenario that Shuttle departures were at 20 past each hour, some candidates invented a different departure time. Of the minority who were still on track by the time they arrived at Calais, most failed to convert to local time in France, which the question required. I would also point out the following problems:

- Very poor layout such that at times it was difficult to identify timings
- No timings given at all such that a schedule was not produced
- Many candidates did not start from the depot but the pickup point
- Some candidates invented their own start and shuttle departure times
- Many candidates only took a 15 minute break when arriving in France producing an illegal schedule

As it was felt that the difficulty of the question could have confused candidates, the overall pass mark for the paper was reduced to reflect the ability of candidates to perform in this question. However, I must stress that there was little evidence for any potential confusion being the source of candidates' difficulty in all but a small minority of cases. A number of candidates did identify the rest requirement, and gained the available marks for doing so, but the majority fell short of the marks required because of the issues mentioned above.

<b>Question number:</b>	<b>4 (a)</b>
Candidates were required to construct a return timetable for a coach operating a contract between England and Scotland the details of which were given both in the question and the scenario.	
Assessment objective reference:	F7.3

This should have been the question for which candidates could have obtained a significant proportion of the marks necessary to achieve success. Sadly, this was not the case, which is possible evidence to support the view that this particular cohort of candidates were not performing at the normal standard.

There was a mixed response to this question. Most candidates that understood I was asking for a vehicle timetable and NOT a drivers' hours schedule performed well and gained most of the marks, although many candidates did not produce the return leg. The average speed for the whole operation was the same, with distances that made time calculation easy, so candidates should have had little difficulty answering the question, provided they applied it to the scenario

<b>Question number:</b>	<b>4 (b)</b>
The candidate was asked to review the current lost property procedure given in the scenario by identifying any procedures that did not meet the legal requirements and amending them such that they would.	
Assessment objective reference:	A5.6

Some candidates appeared to have seen the words "lost property" and felt they could answer the question by copying out the Lost Property Regulations (or an abbreviated form thereof), without reference to the question which required them to show which of the items in the scenario were wrong, and the correct procedure for those items.

<b>Question number:</b>	<b>5 (a)</b>
This question required the candidate to identify the action required to remove a restriction code or upgrade a licence category entitlement. The codes were 107, 103 and 78.	
Assessment objective reference:	H1.1

This question was generally answered quite well; however whilst a PSV Transport Manager might encounter employees with licence restriction codes 103 and 107, these would be in relation to those who also hold LGV licences. Although this means that it was possible for candidates to give correct answers to items 1 and 2, and quite a number did, it was felt that those candidates who did not might be disadvantaged and so restriction codes 107 and 103 were discounted and the pass mark arrived at with them excluded.

<b>Question number:</b>	<b>5 (b)</b>
Candidates were asked to complete a table showing the minimum age requirements for drivers of various vehicles and operations given in the scenario.	
Assessment objective reference:	H 1.1

Given that the candidate had their notes available it was disappointing to see so many believe that 21 was the minimum age for ALL the vehicles. Although it is now almost a year since the minimum age qualification for driving a PSV altered (in Great Britain), the majority of candidates seem unaware of the change.

<b>Question number:</b>	<b>6 (a)</b>
This question required the candidate to construct a Company organisation chart from personnel information given in the scenario showing clearly all lines of communication	
<b>Assessment objective reference:</b>	E 8.3

This question yielded a rather patchy response. It was clear that many candidates did not know what an organisation chart should look like whilst those that did produced a strange combination of reporting lines. Normally, the organisation chart question is answered well, with many candidates gaining maximum marks. This paper was an exception, with few candidates managing to obtain maximum marks for drawing a credible organisation chart.

<b>Question number:</b>	<b>6 (b)</b>
This part of the question gave the candidate an abbreviated organisation chart, which should have helped the candidate in part (a), and describing how the National Transport Manager co-ordinator may improve the group's ability to comply with the legal undertakings.	
<b>Assessment objective reference:</b>	E 8.3

The candidates that had managed to score well in other parts of the paper also performed well on this question. The majority of candidates just listed the legal undertakings as required by an operator who holds an operator licence.

## Summary

It must be noted that this paper did not examine any elements from this new syllabus that had not already been examined in the old syllabus. Whilst this is an international paper only the drivers' hours schedule had an international flavour to it. This case study paper is concerned with the candidate's ability to apply knowledge to situations that they may encounter in the workplace, so, especially with the new open book format, candidates must remember that it is not about simply listing items of information, or copying information from the notes they have to hand.

It would be easy to conclude that this was simply a difficult paper, given the poor performance of a high number of candidates. However, and even taking into account the short timescales experienced by centres, in my view a more likely cause for the poor performance is somewhat inadequate preparation, especially for a new format of examination, and possibly this particular cohort of candidates not being of the usual standard. Candidates must bear in mind that, although they have the opportunity to use any notes or materials in the examination, the examination is designed to test their ability to apply the knowledge that they can glean from those materials, and that a thorough understanding of the content is essential. Candidates should not rely on being able to simply take items of information from the notes or materials they use. This practice was evident in many candidates' answers and many marks were lost as a result.

I hope the comments made in this report will be helpful to centres in preparing candidates for this new qualification.

Pass rate: 20%