

From: \*\*\*\*\*

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**BY EMAIL**

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Tel: \*\*\*\*\*

Fax: \*\*\*\*\*

Date: 25 July 2006

Our Ref: \*\*\*\*\*

Dear \*\*\*\*\*

Thank you for your email requesting comparative information about school bus inspections in Merseyside, Cheshire and Lancashire.

I regret that VOSA is unable to provide the information requested, for the following reasons;

i) *our records do not allow us to distinguish 'school buses' from other types of public service vehicle (PSV)*

Any vehicle, by virtue of its use, may be defined as a 'school bus'; accordingly, these vehicles do not form a separate category for MoT purposes. Although any company operating passenger vehicles with more than nine seats for profit is required to hold a public service vehicle operator's licence, an additional permit is not required for school runs. An operator holding a valid licence could contract to perform school runs and could use vehicles which, at other times of the day, were employed on other routes.

ii) *our records do not allow us to distinguish Merseyside, Cheshire and Lancashire as a separate geographical area*

For operator licensing purposes, the country has been divided into regional Traffic Areas. Merseyside, Cheshire and Lancashire fall within the North Western Traffic Area which also includes Cumbria and Derbyshire. The same area is split between three VOSA enforcement areas.

However, the annual Effectiveness Reports, published on our website

[www.vosa.gov.uk](http://www.vosa.gov.uk) at <http://www.vosa.gov.uk/vosa/aboutvosa/corporatereports.htm>

contain a wealth of background information which may interest you. Annex 2 includes details of MoT tests, maintenance inspections (and prohibition notices issued for defects identified) and prosecutions. Many of these statistics are also presented by Traffic Area, allowing you to compare the figures for the North West with the national average.

Earlier Effectiveness Reports will also include statistical reports for Operation Coachman, a nationwide initiative which targeted public service vehicle (PSV) operators with schools contracts. Operation Coachman was last run in 2003/04 (see Tables A2.31 and A2.32 in the Effectiveness Report 2003/04). Since then it has been the responsibility of individual VOSA Area Managers, working in conjunction with local authorities, to determine when and where school bus checks should take place. However, for the reasons detailed above, we are not able to separate inspections in the requested area from records of other PSV checks.

**Advice and assistance**

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact us, quoting reference \*\*\*\*\*. The attachment included with this letter provides further information, including details of our complaints procedures.

Yours sincerely

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