

# PSV Fleet Compliance Check 2009

Prepared by the In House Analytical Consultancy  
for VOSA



*Department for*  
**Transport**



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## 1. Management summary

- 1.1. In 2009 the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA), together with the In House Analytical Consultancy (IHAC) in the Department for Transport, devised a new methodology for carrying out a Public Service Vehicle (PSV) Fleet Compliance Check.
- 1.2. Previous PSV Fleet Compliance Checks in 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001 had involved the Police's Operation Tourist. The samples of PSVs selected by Operation Tourist did not closely represent the British PSV fleet, therefore an improved methodology was sought. The revised methodology used in the 2003 and 2006 checks delivered a far more representative sample of PSVs. However, this new method used an approach that meant that survey forms were sent around the country. This resulted in a high proportion being misplaced which subsequently affected the quality of reported results.
- 1.3. In 2009 a different methodology was used which focussed on three PSV operation types: school buses, coaches and service buses, and attempted to make the end to end process more streamlined and user friendly for frontline staff. This resulted in a higher proportion of the requested checks being conducted and included in the 2009 check (95.2%) than in 2006 (69.2%). This resulted in 612 (59%) more vehicles being included in the 2009 check. Each area was asked to carry out an equal number of checks on the three types of PSV. The roadside checks were carried out between June and September 2009.
- 1.4. Of the 1643 checks on PSVs in 2009, 14.4% were committing at least one traffic offence<sup>1</sup>. The results by PSV type were:

	Service bus	Coach	School bus	Other PSV
Proportion of checks	28.5%	40.6%	29.8%	1.1%
Checks committing at least one traffic offence	3.2%	24.1%	11.5%	27.8%
Checks resulting in a prohibitable offence	1.3%	7.0%	1.0%	5.6%

1.5. 43 GFPDs were issued which totalled £6,170.

1.6. The most commonly occurring traffic offences were for:

- Drivers' hours offences, 1.1% of service bus checks, 12.3% of coach checks and 2.7% of school bus checks resulted in a driver's hours offence
- Tachograph offences, with 0.4% of service bus checks, 9.9% of coach checks and 1.8% of school bus checks resulting in a tachograph offence

1.7. The following significant results were found:

- Coaches licensed in the North Eastern Traffic Area had a higher offence rate than coaches in other Traffic Areas
- School buses licensed in the West Midland Traffic Area had a higher offence rate than school buses in other Traffic Areas
- Coaches aged less than 2 years old had a lower offence rate than older vehicles

<sup>1</sup> Where offence includes verbal warnings.

## 2. Introduction

### 2.1. Background

- 2.1.1. In 1997, the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA, then known as the Vehicle Inspectorate) carried out the first annual random checks on Public Service Vehicles (PSVs) for roadworthiness defects, with checks carried out at bus and coach operators' premises. A method for carrying out random checks on PSVs for compliance with traffic regulations was sought to complement the roadworthiness checks. This was more problematic, as the PSVs were required to be in operation at the time of the check, and this was likely to result in inconvenience to passengers on board. As a result VOSA decided to assist the Police with Operation Tourist, and use checks carried out as part of this operation to form the basis for the PSV Fleet Compliance Check.
- 2.1.2. Operation Tourist involved Police Forces carrying out checks at motorway service areas around Great Britain. This involved stopping summer tourist coaches only. The number of PSVs checked as part of this operation decreased over the four years since VOSA started their involvement in 1998, and by 2001 only 805 checks had been conducted. In addition, national coverage was being eroded, as fewer police forces and VOSA Areas were involved each year.
- 2.1.3. As a result of this, the methodology for the PSV Fleet Compliance Check was revised in 2003, and was used for a second time in 2006. In the 2003 and 2006 Checks examiners recorded registration marks of all types of PSV seen on the road, and checked that PSV at its depot at a later time. This delivered a far more representative sample of PSVs but was difficult for practical reasons, particularly around recording registration marks of moving vehicles and tracing them at a later stage, and where the PSV was located in a different VOSA enforcement area to where it had been spotted.
- 2.1.4. The methodology for 2009 is different from the methodologies used in the past. Both of the past methodologies have been rejected in favour of the current methodology, which focussed on three PSV operation types: school buses, coaches and service buses, and attempted to improve the end to end process.
- 2.1.5. While this new process gives more information on each of the PSV types, there is no way of knowing what percentage of each vehicle type forms the total number of PSVs on the road nationally. This means that a national PSV figure on compliance is not recorded.

### 2.2. Methodology

- 2.2.1. The methodology is described in detail in Annex A.
- 2.2.2. Checks were carried out on randomly selected PSVs stopped at a number of different locations around Great Britain, and Traffic Examiners carried out an inspection of the PSV/Operator/Driver.
- 2.2.3. The checks focused on three different PSV operation types, and the methodology aimed to sample equal numbers of PSVs from these operation

types to enable a comparison between these groups to be made. The three operation types were:

- School buses
- Coaches
- Service buses

2.2.4. Each VOSA Area decided on 15 check sites (five for each of the above operation types) in their locality; sites that would provide sufficient PSV traffic to conduct the check. Five PSVs were randomly stopped and checked at each check site. IHAC provided advice on the selection of roadside check sites.

2.2.5. VOSA carried out roadside checks over two different periods to ensure that both school term time and school holidays in all parts of Great Britain were covered. The purpose of which was to help obtain the required number of school buses during term time and coaches during holidays. The check periods were:

- Between 05/06/09 and 31/07/09 (England and Wales) and
- Between 24/08/09 and 20/09/09 (Scotland)

2.2.6. During the inspection, a paper survey form was completed, and these were returned to one contact in VOSA for data entry. The inspection was also entered into the Mobile Compliance (MC) system. The analysis did not include vehicle condition data taken from the MC system, but the MC system data was occasionally used to provide more information in order to confirm the outcome of the traffic check.

2.2.7. The 2009 sample contains 1643 PSVs from all 23 VOSA Enforcement Areas. The data collected during the checking process was collated and analysed.

2.2.8. Previous PSV Fleet Compliance Checks have stratified the sample by road type, which means that the check sites used were located on specific road types. The purpose of this stratification was to ensure that the PSVs selected in that check represented all PSVs on the British road network. However, for the revised methodology used in this check it would be difficult for areas to carry out the required number of checks at the specified sites – for example the only way to ensure a check will stop a school bus is to carry out that check at or near school premises, regardless of road type. To ensure a robust number of each PSV operation type was included in the 2009 sample, the location of the check sites were decided by VOSA Areas. However, the selection of vehicles at each site where there were more vehicles present than were being checked was random.

2.2.9. The aim of the analysis was to generate baseline results on offence rates for each PSV operation type: school buses, coaches and service buses.

### **2.3. Results and Analysis**

2.3.1. The outcome of any check was classified as one of the following:

- No offence
- Verbal Warning

- Offence Rectification Notice (ORN)
  - Graduated Fixed Penalty Deposit (GFPD)
  - Prohibition
  - Report for Further Investigation (RFI)
- 2.3.2. Every check was classified as either compliant (no offence) or non compliant (verbal warning, ORN, GFPD, prohibition or RFI). Therefore, throughout the report, any reference to offence will include verbal warnings.
- 2.3.3. It should be noted that RFI could result in no offence having been committed. The final outcomes of the checks that resulted in a RFI are not contained within this report. This should be borne in mind when reviewing the non-compliance information contained in the body of the text and diagrams.
- 2.3.4. Where a vehicle/driver/Operator was committing more than one offence, the most serious offence was used to classify the severity of the overall non-compliance.
- 2.3.5. GFPD and prohibitions may both be issued for the same offence. Where this was the case, both were noted in the analysis but the outcome of the check would have been classified as prohibition as this has the higher severity
- 2.3.6. The survey form used in the 2009 PSV Check did not contain 'Offence Rectification Notice' as an option for the offence outcome. However, a number of examiners noted this offence outcome in the free text section of the survey form. Therefore, offence rectification notice has been used an offence outcome in the analysis and reporting. It is possible that all offence rectification notices may not have been captured on the survey form (and therefore included in the reporting) and this should be borne in mind when interpreting the results.
- 2.3.7. The traffic offences in the check were categorised into nine offence types:
- VED (Vehicle Excise Duty)
  - Speed Limiter
  - Tachograph
  - Driver Licence
  - Drivers' Hours
  - Illegal Operator
  - Operator Licensing – Other Offences
  - Testing and COIF (Certificate Of Initial Fitness)
  - Other Traffic Offences
- 2.3.8. The offence rate for an offence category was calculated as the proportion of vehicles of an operation type in the 2009 PSV sample that committed that particular offence. Since a number of vehicles committed multiple offences in the check, the quantity of vehicles that committed an offence does not equal the total number of offences.

- 2.3.9. Where possible, the age of each PSV was determined from the vehicle registration mark (VRM), otherwise the age was determined from the date of first registration for the vehicle, or the year of manufacture.
- 2.3.10. A comparison to previous PSV Fleet Compliance Checks has not been provided because the 2009 check was designed to provide robust results for each PSV type (service bus, coach, school bus) by sampling approximately an equal number of each PSV type. Previous PSV Fleet Compliance Checks were designed to produce an overall PSV result, which is representative of the National PSV Fleet. Combining the outcomes of all the checks in 2009 does not produce a robust representation of the overall National PSV Fleet comparable with previous years' checks. Likewise, previous years' checks did not produce results by PSV type<sup>2</sup> which would be comparable to the 2009 results. Additionally, different offence classifications were used in the 2009 check compared with previous checks.

## 2.4. Accuracy of results

- 2.4.1. In general, the larger a sample is, the greater the accuracy of the results, i.e. the more likely it is that the results generated from the sample closely resemble corresponding results from the population being sampled. The sample size was selected to give an acceptable margin of error whilst remaining achievable and practical. For more details on sample sizes, see Annex A.
- 2.4.2. Throughout this report, wherever a difference is said to be 'statistically significant', it means that it can be said with 95% confidence that the difference/relationship between two groups is not due to random sampling variation and does demonstrate a significant difference 95% of the time (or in 19 out of 20 samples).
- 2.4.3. The accuracy of the results is dependent on the cluster size (number of PSVs spotted at each location) and the extent to which PSVs spotted at a given site might share the same offence characteristics. For this check the number of vehicles checked at each site was low – usually 5 vehicles but at most 10<sup>3</sup>. The overall sample size also has an effect on accuracy, as do potential biases in the data set. Annex A details the accuracy bounds for this study but in summary the accuracy bounds for all offences:
- On service buses was +/- 3.3%
  - On coaches was +/- 4.8%
  - On school buses was +/- 4.1%

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<sup>2</sup> PSV type in previous checks only indicated the number of decks.

<sup>3</sup> With the exception of three sites, which checked 11 to 18 PSVs

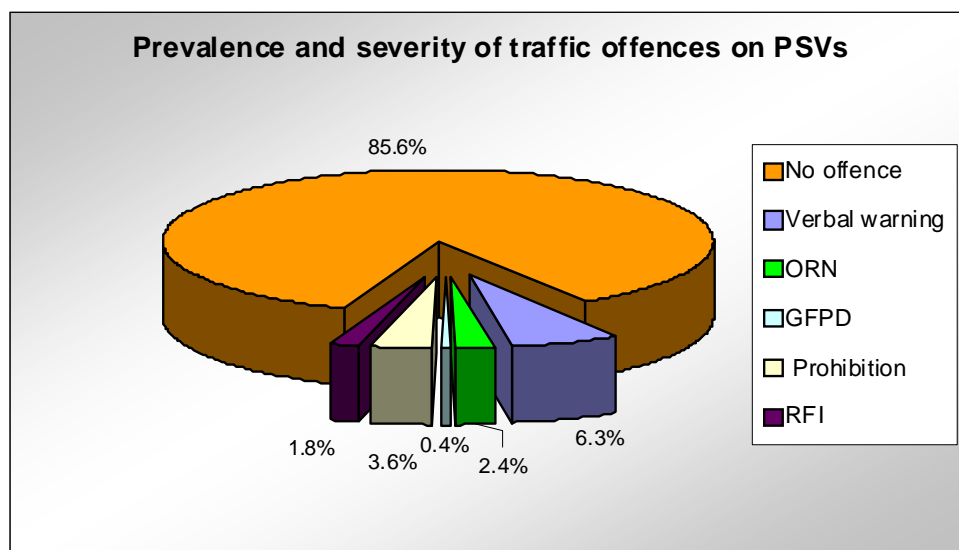
### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Headline Offence Rates

##### 3.1.1. All PSVs

3.1.1.1. The 2009 PSV Fleet Compliance Check found that 85.6% (1406) of vehicles checked were compliant. The remaining 14.4% of checks resulted in at least one offence. Of those, 59 (3.6%) resulted in a prohibition, 29 (1.8%) resulted in an operator or driver reported for investigation, 6<sup>4</sup> (0.4%) a graduated fixed penalty notice (GFPD), 39 (2.4%) resulted in an offence rectification notice. The remaining 104 (6.3%) resulted in a verbal warning.

3.1.1.2. The chart below shows the prevalence and severity of these offences.



**Figure 1**

3.1.1.3. As the 2009 check aimed to achieve robust results for each of the three PSV types, the sample aimed for a similar number of each PSV type. Therefore the overall sample may not be representative of the PSV National Fleet. This should be borne in mind when interpreting the 'all PSVs' results. The actual proportions of each PSV type in the sample (below) and the compliance rates within those PSV types needs to be considered.

3.1.1.4. The majority of PSVs checked were coaches (667, 40.6%), followed by 489 (29.8%) school buses then 469 (28.5%) service buses. The remaining 18 (1.1%) checks were carried out on mini buses, a stretched limousine and an army vehicle. For the purpose of the report these remaining checks will be called 'other'.

3.1.1.5. Of the 237 checks resulting in offences, 208 checks resulted in one offence, 23 resulted in two offences and six checks resulted in three or more

<sup>4</sup> Note that there were GFPDs (37) issued to PSVs that also had a prohibition or RFI and these have been classified as their most severe offence (i.e. prohibition or RFI), as shown in Figure 1. One PSV was issued with two GFPDs.

offences. The total number of offences detected during the 2009 PSV check was 280.

3.1.1.6. There were 43 GFPDs issued which totalled £6,170.

### **3.1.2. Service Bus**

3.1.2.1. The 2009 PSV Fleet Compliance Check stopped 469 service buses and found that 454 (96.8%) were compliant. The remaining 15 (3.2%) had at least one offence.

3.1.2.2. Of the checks resulting in an offence, the most severe offence was a prohibition for 6 (1.3%) service buses, another 6 (1.3%) resulted in verbal warnings, 2 (0.4%) were reported for further investigation and 1 (0.2%) was issued with a graduated fixed penalty deposit (GFPD). No checks resulted in an offence rectification notice being issued.

3.1.2.3. There was one £30 GFPD issued to a service bus driver.

### **3.1.3. Coach**

3.1.3.1. Of the 667 coaches checked, 506 (75.9%) were compliant and 161 (24.1%) resulted in at least one offence being detected.

3.1.3.2. 47 (7.0%) of the 667 checks resulted in a prohibition, 12 (1.8%) were reported for further investigation and 4 (0.6%) checks resulted in coach drivers issued with a GFPD. 20 (3.0%) coach operators received an offence rectification notice and 78 (11.7%) coach drivers received a verbal warning.

3.1.3.3. In total, 39 GFPDs were issued for coaches totalling £5,820. They were issued in the following amounts: 2 x £30, 10 x £60, 3 x £120 and 24 x £200. One coach driver received two GFPDs (£60 and £200).

### **3.1.4. School bus**

3.1.4.1. 433 (88.5%) of the 489 school buses checked were compliant and 56 (11.5%) were committing at least one offence.

3.1.4.2. 5 (1.0%) school buses were prohibited, 14 (2.9%) were reported for further investigation, 18 (3.7%) resulted in offence rectification notices issued and 19 (3.9%) in a verbal warning. In no case was the most serious offence for a school bus a GFPD.

3.1.4.3. There were two £60 GFPDs issued to school bus drivers – one of these was also given a prohibition and one a report for further investigation.

### **3.1.5. Other PSV**

3.1.5.1. There were 5 (27.8%) of the 18 PSVs in the 'other' category found to be non-compliant. One check resulted in a prohibition, one PSV was reported for further investigation, one received a GFPD, one resulted in an offence rectification notice being issued and one received a verbal warning.

3.1.5.2. The one GFPD issued for 'other' PSVs was for £200.

### **3.1.6. Comparison of PSV types**

3.1.6.1. The highest non compliance rate was observed in the 'other' PSV group where 5 of 18 (27.8%) PSVs were non compliant. However, the small

sample of these vehicles means their offence rate is subject to error/random variation. Nearly a quarter (24.1%) of coaches checked resulted in an offence, which was significantly more than the non compliance rate for school buses (11.5%). The lowest non compliance rate was observed in service buses, where 3.2% were non-compliant, which was significantly lower than both the coach and school bus non compliance rates.

3.1.6.2. Comparing the four PSV types, significantly more prohibitions were issued for coaches (7.0% of coach checks). Checks on service buses and school buses resulted in similar proportions of prohibitions, 1.3% and 1.0% respectively, both significantly less than coaches. The following results were also found to be significant:

- More school buses (2.9%) and fewer service buses (0.4%) were reported for further investigation
- More school buses (3.7%) received offence rectification notifications
- More verbal warnings (11.7%) were issued to coach drivers and fewer to service bus drivers (1.3%)

3.1.6.3. The numbers were too small to carry out significance testing on the GFPD results and the offences detected from the checks on 'other' PSVs.

3.1.6.4. The following chart compares the prevalence and severity of offences for service buses, coaches and school buses.

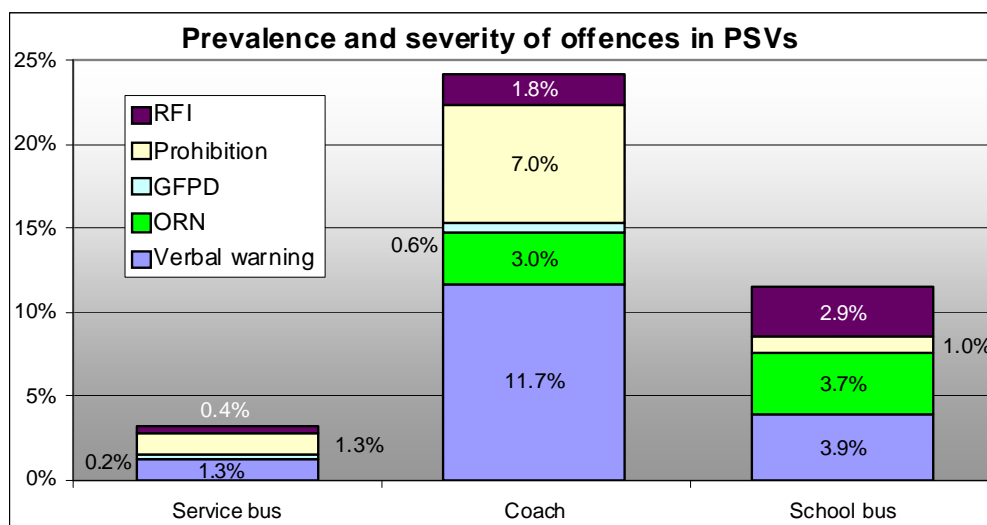


Figure 2

## 3.2. Traffic Offence Type

### 3.2.1. Service bus

3.2.1.1 Of the 15 service bus checks resulting in offences, 14 checks resulted in one offence and one check resulted in two offences. Therefore the total number of traffic offences detected was 16. The service bus that committed two offences received a prohibition for both tachograph and drivers' hours offences.

3.2.1.2 No service bus checks resulted in VED, illegal operator or other Operator Licensing offences. The traffic offences reported on service bus checks were:

- 2 (0.4%) speed limiter offences
- 2 (0.4%) tachograph offences
- 5 (1.1%) drivers' hours offences
- 1 (0.2%) testing and COIF offence
- 2 (0.4%) driver licence offences
- 4 (0.9%) other offences

3.2.1.3 7 of the 16 (43.8%) traffic offences resulted in prohibitions. The highest rate of prohibitions was 0.9% (4) issued for drivers' hours, followed by 2 (0.4%) for other offences and 1 (0.2%) for tachograph.

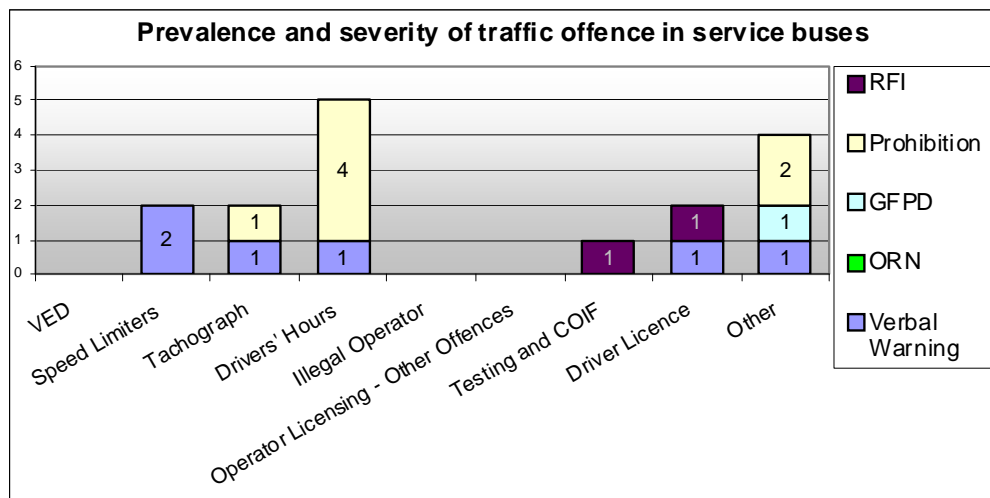
3.2.1.4 Two service buses were reported for further investigation, one offence each (0.2%) for testing and COIF, and driver licence.

3.2.1.5 Verbal warnings were issued on 2 (0.4%) service buses for faulty speed limiters and 1 (0.2%) for tachograph, drivers' hours, driver licence and other offences. No ORNs were issued for traffic offences.

3.2.1.6 Offences in the 'other' PSV category were comprised of the following: 2 (0.4%) prohibitions for an oil leak and inoperative brake lights, 1 (0.2%) GFPD (for £30) for leaving the vehicle unattended with the engine running and 1 (0.2%) verbal warning for an out of date first aid box.

3.2.1.7 Due to the small number of traffic offences, it was not possible to carry out statistical testing between offence types on service buses.

3.2.1.8 The chart below highlights the prevalence and severity of traffic offences in service buses.



**Figure 3**

### 3.2.2. Coach

3.2.2.1. Of the 161 coach checks resulting in offences, 143 checks resulted in one offence, 16 resulted in two offences and two checks resulted in three or more offences. The total number of traffic offences detected was 187.

3.2.2.2. The traffic offences reported on coaches were:

- 2 (0.3%) VED offences
- 3 (0.4%) speed limiter offences
- 66 (9.9%) tachograph offences
- 82 (12.3%) drivers' hours offences
- 2 (0.3%) illegal operator offences
- 2 (0.3%) other operator licensing offences
- 6 (0.9%) testing and COIF offences
- 5 (0.7%) driver licence offences
- 19 (2.8%) other offences

3.2.2.3. 26.7% (50) of traffic offences resulted in prohibitions. As with service buses, the highest rate of prohibitions issued was for drivers' hours where 4.5% (30) of checks resulted in a traffic offence prohibition. Coaches committed 13 (1.9%) tachograph offences and 3 (0.4%) speed limiter offences that resulted in a prohibition. 4 (0.6%) other offences that resulted in a prohibition, were for a defective driver's card, a locked emergency door, failure to produce records and documents and for a fuel leak. Compared with all the offence categories, significantly more drivers' hours and tachograph checks resulted in prohibitable offences.

3.2.2.4. 21 traffic offences committed by coaches were reported for further investigation. Testing and COIF had 0.9% (6) checks reported for further investigation, which was the highest proportion. No coaches were reported for further investigation for speed limiters.

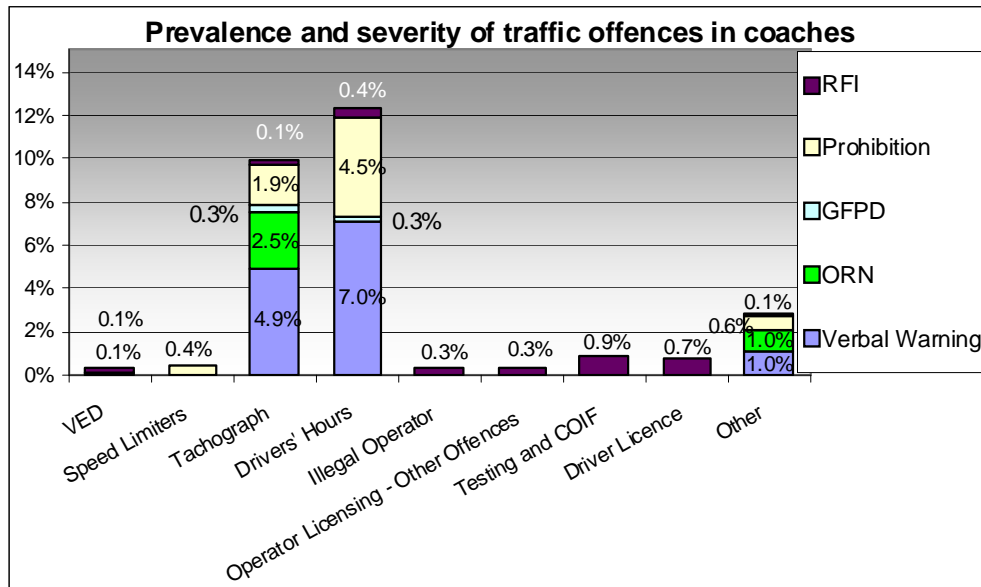
3.2.2.5. The 39 GFPDs issued for coach offences were:

- 22 GFPDs issued for drivers' hours offences totalling £4,010 (1 x £30, 1 x £60, 1 x £120 and 19 x £200)
- 14 GFPDs issued for tachograph offences totalling £1,510 (1 x £30, 8 x £60 and 5 x £200)
- 2 GFPDs issued for speed limiter offences totalling £240 (2 x £120)
- 1 GFPD for an 'other' offence for £60. This was issued together with a prohibition for a defective driver's card.

3.2.2.6. Offence rectification notices were issued for tachograph checks at a rate of 2.5% (17) and for other offences at 1.0% (7). The 7 other offences were; 4 legal lettering offences, 2 no seating capacity notice offences and one manufacturers plate offence.

3.2.2.7. Compared with all the offence categories, significantly more verbal warnings were given for both drivers' hours 47, (7.0%) and tachograph checks 33, (4.9%). 7 verbal warnings were given for 'other' offences.

- 3.2.2.8. Looking at offence rates, drivers' hours and tachograph emerged again with significantly more offences than would be expected, with 82 (12.3%) and 66 (9.9%) offences respectively. There were significantly less offences in all the remaining offence categories, with the exception of 'other' offences.
- 3.2.2.9. The numbers were too small to carry out statistical testing for offence rectification notices, GFPDs and offences reported for investigation.
- 3.2.2.10. The chart below shows the breakdown of offences for coaches. The significant numbers of drivers' hours and tachograph offences are clearly visible.

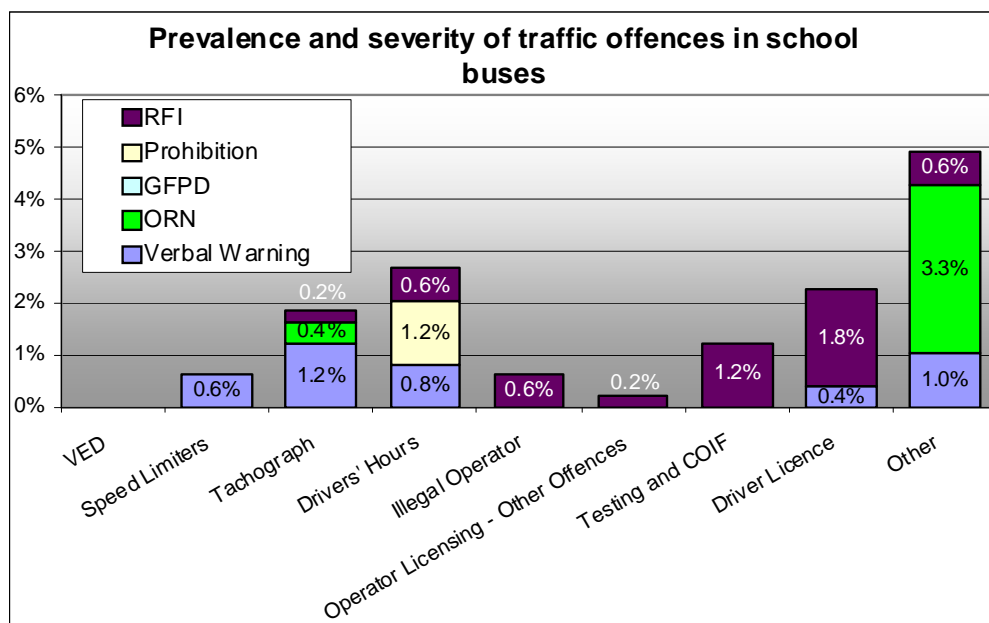


**Figure 4**

### 3.2.3. School bus

- 3.2.3.1. Of the 56 school bus checks resulting in offences, 47 checks resulted in one offence, five resulted in two offences and four checks resulted in three or more offences. The total number of traffic offences detected was 70.
- 3.2.3.2. No school bus checks resulted in VED offences. The traffic offences reported on school bus checks were:
- 3 (0.6%) speed limiter offences
  - 9 (1.8%) tachograph offences
  - 13 (2.7%) drivers' hours
  - 3 (0.6%) illegal operator offences
  - 1 (0.2%) other operator licensing offence
  - 6 (1.2%) testing and COIF offences
  - 11 (2.2%) driver licence offences
  - 24 (4.9%) other offences
- 3.2.3.3. For school buses, the only category where prohibitions were issued was drivers' hours at a rate of 1.2% (6).

- 3.2.3.4. 26 school buses were reported for further investigation. The highest rate of checks reported for investigation was for driver licence at 1.8% (9) and the lowest rate for tachograph and other operator licensing offences, both with 0.2% (1).
- 3.2.3.5. The two £60 GFPDs were both issued for drivers' hours offences.
- 3.2.3.6. Offence rectification notices were only issued for tachograph offences at a rate of 0.4% (2) and other offences at 3.3% (16). The 16 other offences were; 7 no child sign offences, 7 no school bus sign offences, one legal lettering offence and one no seating capacity notice offence.
- 3.2.3.7. The highest rate of verbal warnings, 1.2% (6 of 489) were given for tachograph traffic offences and the lowest rate, 0.4% (2) were given for the outcome of driver licence results. No verbal warnings were issued for VED, illegal operator offences, other operator licensing offences, and testing and COIF. There were 5 other offences that resulted in a verbal warning; 4 no child sign offences and one misuse of a permit offence.
- 3.2.3.8. Due to the small number of traffic offences, it was not possible to carry out statistical testing on school buses between offence types.
- 3.2.3.9. At a higher level, comparing the offences with the no offence rates, there were significantly more drivers' hours offences with 2.7% (13) and other offences with 4.9% (24) of 489 PSVs checked. The offence rate for other operator licensing offences was significantly lower with 0.2% (1) of the 489 PSVs checked having an offence.
- 3.2.3.10. The chart below shows the offence rate for school buses for each offence category.



**Figure 5**

### 3.3. Traffic Area of Operator

Analysis was carried out to look at the rates of traffic offences committed in the area where the traffic operator was licensed.

#### 3.3.1. Service bus

- 3.3.1.1. Service bus operators sampled for the South East and Metropolitan Traffic Area and the Eastern Traffic Area were fully compliant.
- 3.3.1.2. Service bus operators from the North Eastern Traffic Area had the highest non-compliance rate of 6.9% (6 of 87 checks), followed by the Welsh Traffic Area with 6.7% (2 of 30) non-compliance rate and the Scottish Traffic Area with 5.6% (4 of 71).
- 3.3.1.3. Of the 6 traffic offences that were prohibitable offences, 5 were for service bus operators from the North Eastern Traffic Area and 1 for an operator from the Welsh Traffic Area. Both of the service bus operators who were reported for further investigation were licensed in the Scottish Traffic Area.
- 3.3.1.4. No offence rectification notices were issued to service bus operators. 6 traffic offences resulted in verbal warnings, 2 were issued to operators from the Scottish Traffic Area and one each to the following: Western, West Midland, North Western and North Eastern.
- 3.3.1.5. The one check that resulted in a GFPD was issued to an operator in the Welsh Traffic Area totalling £30 for operator licensing – other operator licensing offence<sup>5</sup>.
- 3.3.1.6. Verbal warnings were issued at the highest rate of 2.8% (2 of 71 checks) to operators licensed in the Scottish Traffic Area.
- 3.3.1.7. The number of offences was too small to carry out statistical testing for service bus offences in the area where the PSV was licensed.
- 3.3.1.8. The chart below shows the breakdown of service bus offences by the Traffic Area where the operator was licensed.

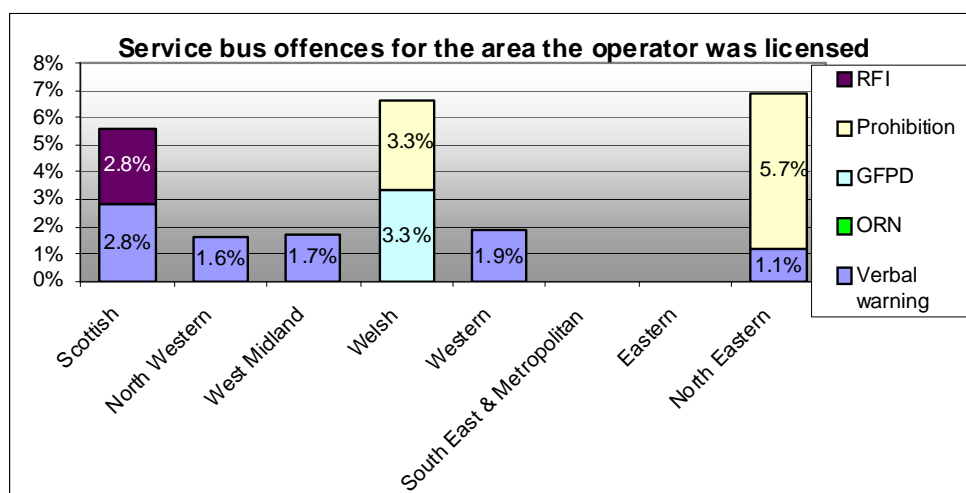


Figure 6

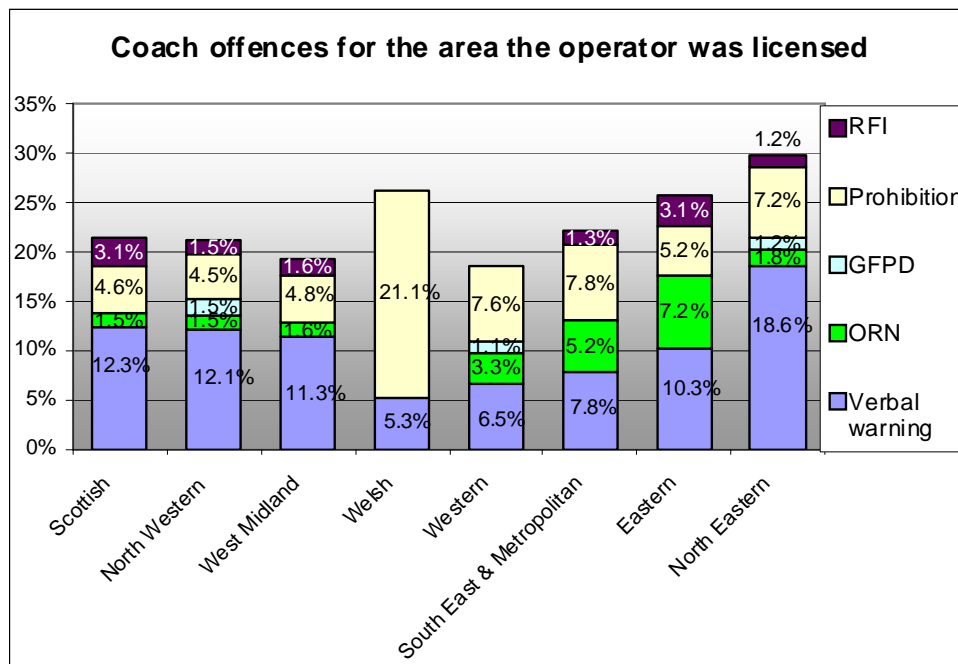
<sup>5</sup> Offence - leaving the vehicle unattended with the engine running.

### 3.3.2. Coach

- 3.3.2.1. All Traffic Areas had coach operators with a degree of non compliance. Coach operators with the highest rate of non compliance were licensed in the North Eastern Traffic Area, where 29.9% (50 of 167 coaches checked) had at least one offence, which was significantly higher than coaches licensed in other Traffic Areas. The lowest rate was found in coach operators from the Western Traffic Area, where 17 of 92 (18.5%) coaches were non-compliant.
- 3.3.2.2. Coach operators from the Welsh Traffic Area were issued with the highest rate of prohibitions, 8 of 38 (21.1%) coaches checked. The lowest rate was coach operators licensed in the North Western Traffic Area, where 3 of 66 (4.5%) coaches checked resulted in prohibitable offences.
- 3.3.2.3. All Traffic Areas had a coach operator reported for further investigation except the Welsh and Western Traffic Areas. The highest rates were 3.1% (3 of 97) from the Eastern and 3.1% (2 of 67) from the Scottish Traffic Areas.
- 3.3.2.4. A total of 39 coach operators<sup>6</sup> from the following Traffic Areas<sup>7</sup> were issued with GFPDs totalling:
- £520 from North Eastern
  - £460 from West Midlands
  - £900 from Wales
  - £1,010 from Western
  - £660 from South Eastern and Metropolitan
  - £860 from Eastern
  - £1,210 from North Eastern
- 3.3.2.5. Offence rectification notices were issued to coach operators in all but one Traffic Area, the Welsh Traffic Area. The highest rate of offence rectification notices were issued to coaches licensed in the Eastern Traffic Area, where 7 of 97 (7.2%) coaches checked resulted in an offence rectification notices. The lowest rates were the Scottish and North Western Traffic Areas, where one coach licensed to each area was issued with an offence rectification notice.
- 3.3.2.6. Verbal warnings were issued to coach drivers of coaches licensed in the North Eastern Traffic Area at a rate of 18.6% (31 of 167) of coaches checked. This was significantly high compared with the other Traffic Areas.
- 3.3.2.7. The chart below shows a breakdown of offences for each Traffic Area where coaches were licensed.

<sup>6</sup> Some of these 39 coach operators also had a prohibition or RFI and hence have been classified as their most severe offence (i.e. prohibition or RFI).

<sup>7</sup> £200 of GFPDs was issued to coach operators where their licensed Traffic Area is not known.



**Figure 7**

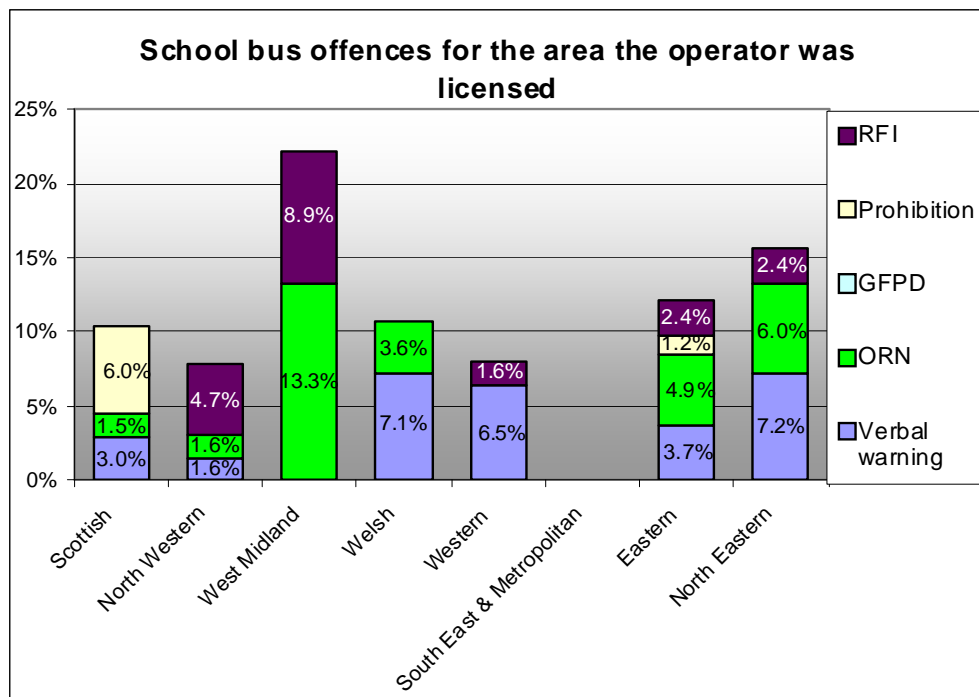
### 3.3.3. School bus

- 3.3.3.1. The school bus operators sampled from the South East and Metropolitan Traffic Areas were fully compliant.
- 3.3.3.2. The highest non compliance rate was found in school buses licensed in the West Midland Traffic Area where 22.2% (10) of 45 school buses checked were non-compliant, significantly higher than school buses licensed in other Traffic Areas.
- 3.3.3.3. Of the 6 school bus checks resulting in prohibitable offences, 4 (6.0% of 67 checks) of the operators were licensed in the Scottish Traffic Area and 1 (1.2% of 82 checks) was licensed in the Eastern Traffic Area.
- 3.3.3.4. 12 of 453 (2.6%) school buses checked were reported for further investigation. The highest rate of school buses reported, 8.9% (4 of 45) were licensed in the West Midland Traffic Area. In no case was the most serious offence for a school bus a GFPD<sup>8</sup>.
- 3.3.3.5. 18 school buses checked (4.0%) were issued with offence rectification notices. Two Traffic Areas, the Western and South East and Metropolitan received no notices. Operators of school buses licensed in the West Midland Traffic Area were issued with the highest rate of notices, where 13.3% (6 of 45) school buses checked resulted in an offence rectification notice.
- 3.3.3.6. The operators whose checks resulted in verbal warnings were licensed to six Traffic Areas. The West Midland and South East & Metropolitan Traffic

<sup>8</sup> There were two £60 GFPDs issued to school bus drivers – one of these was also given a prohibition and one a report for further investigation, both were licensed in the Eastern Traffic Area.

Areas received no verbal warnings. The highest rate of verbal warnings was to operators from the North Eastern Traffic Area, where 7.2% (6 of 830) of school buses checked receiving a verbal warning.

3.3.3.7. The chart below shows the offence rates for school buses by the Traffic Area where the school bus was licensed.



**Figure 8**

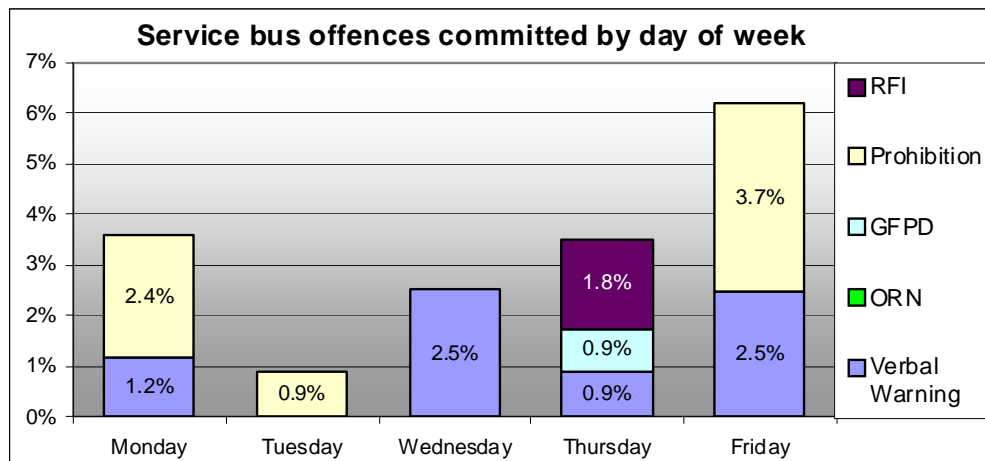
### 3.4. Day of Check

- 3.4.1. The 2009 PSV Fleet Compliance checks were carried out between June and September 2009. They covered each day of the week.
- 3.4.2. The day of the week with the highest proportion of checks differed for each PSV group. Nearly a quarter (24.3%) of service bus checks were carried out on a Thursday, the highest proportion for one day. The highest proportion of coach checks were carried out on a Wednesday (21.6%), and school buses on a Tuesday (28.0%).
- 3.4.3. No checks were carried out on service buses on Sunday or school buses on Saturday or Sunday. With the exception of the days with no checks, the lowest numbers of service bus checks were carried out on Saturday (0.2%), Sunday (1.8%) for coaches and Friday (15.5%) for school buses.

#### 3.4.4. Service bus

- 3.4.4.1. Service buses checked on Friday had the highest rate of non compliance with 6.2% (5 of 81) checks resulting in an offence, followed by Monday with 3.6% non-compliance (3 of 84 checks). The one check carried out on Saturday had no offences.

- 3.4.4.2. Of the 6 service bus checks that resulted in prohibitable offences, the highest prohibition rate was Friday, when 3 prohibitions were issued. No prohibitions were issued on Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday.
- 3.4.4.3. 2 service buses were reported for further investigation and both were checked on a Thursday. The one GFPD issued, was also on a Thursday. 6 checks resulted in a verbal warning. No offence rectification notices were issued to service bus operators.
- 3.4.4.4. The numbers were too small to carry out statistical testing for service bus offences for checks carried out by day.
- 3.4.4.5. In the chart below offences are shown across the days of the week.



**Figure 9**

### 3.4.5. Coach

- 3.4.5.1. The day of the week that had the highest rate of non compliance for coaches was Sunday, where 58.3% (7 of 12) coaches checked were non compliant. This was followed by Wednesday with 29.9% (43 of 144). The lowest rate of non compliance was Monday where 17.4% (20 of 115) coaches checked were non compliant, three times less than on a Sunday. There were no significant differences between the non compliance rates on different days.
- 3.4.5.2. Prohibitions were issued on each day of the week for coaches. The highest prohibition rate for coaches fell on Sunday with 33.3% (4 of 12) of checks resulting in a prohibition. The lowest prohibition rate was on Friday where 2.8% (4 of 142) of coaches checked were prohibited.
- 3.4.5.3. Coaches were reported for further investigation on every day of the week except Wednesday. The highest rate occurred on Sunday where 8.3% (1 of 12) were reported.
- 3.4.5.4. A total of 39 coach operators<sup>9</sup> were issued with GFPDs on the following days, totalling:

<sup>9</sup> Some of these 39 coach operators also had a prohibition or RFI and hence have been classified as their most severe offence (i.e. prohibition or RFI).

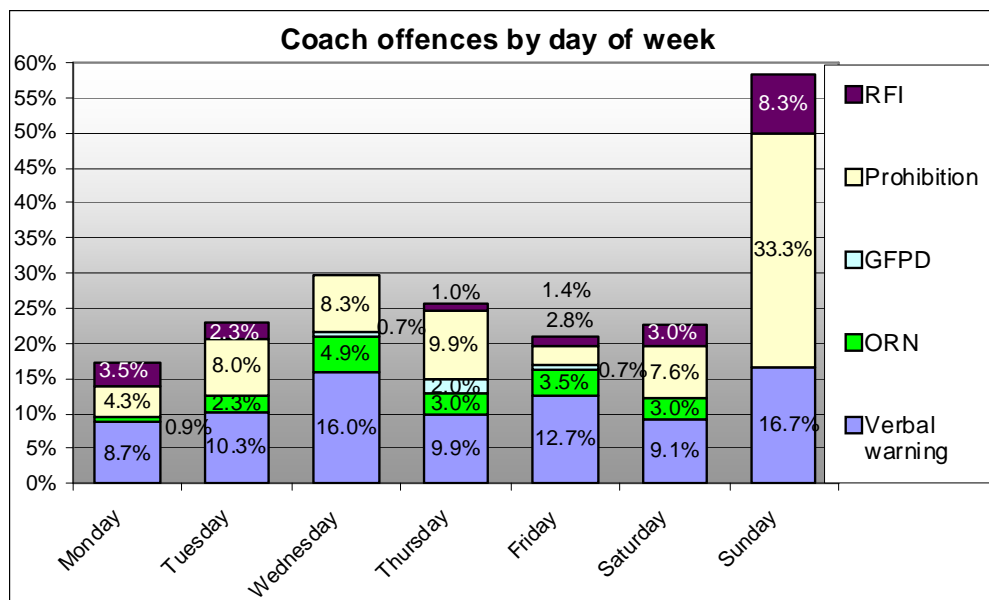
- £520 on Monday
- £860 on Tuesday
- £1,920 on Wednesday
- £1,220 on Thursday
- £580 on Friday
- £720 on Sunday

3.4.5.5. A total of 20 offence rectification notices were issued across the days of the week except Sunday when none were issued. The highest rate of issue was on Wednesday with 4.9% (7).

3.4.5.6. Verbal warnings were given on each day of the week. The highest rate on Sunday with 16.7% (2 of 12 checks) and the lowest rate on Monday, 8.7% (10 of 105).

3.4.5.7. The statistical significance of these differences by offence category is not possible to test as the number of offences is small.

3.4.5.8. In the chart below coach offences are shown by day of week.



**Figure 10**

### 3.4.6. School bus

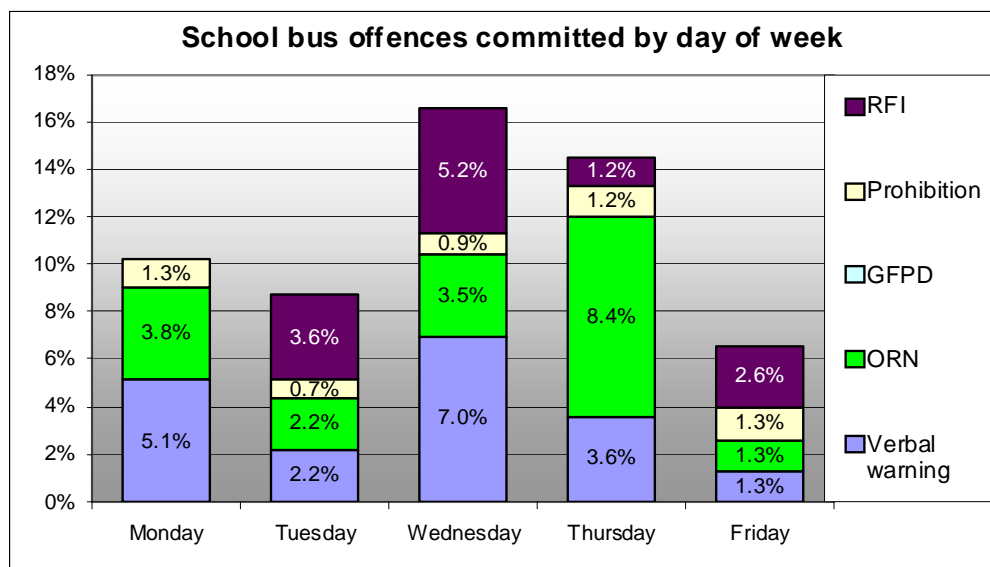
3.4.6.1. The highest rate of non compliance for school buses was Wednesday with 16.5% (19 of 115) checks resulting in at least one offence. The lowest rate of non compliance fell on Friday with 5 of 76 (6.6%) checks being non-compliant. No checks were carried out at the weekends. There were no significant differences between the non compliance rates on different days.

3.4.6.2. Of the 5 checks on school buses which resulted in a prohibitable offence, one fell on each day of the working week.

3.4.6.3. School buses were reported for further investigation on each day of the week except Monday. The highest rate was Wednesday where 5.2% (6 of

115) school buses were reported for further investigation. In no case was the most serious offence for a school bus a GFPD.

- 3.4.6.4. Offence rectification notices were issued for each day of the week. The highest rate of issue was on Thursday with 8.4% (7 of 83) and the lowest rate with 1.3% (1) was issued on Friday.
- 3.4.6.5. Verbal warnings were given on each day from Monday through to Friday, with the highest rate on Wednesday, 7.0% (8 of 115 checks) and the lowest rate on Friday, 1.3% (1 of 76).
- 3.4.6.6. The statistical significance of these differences by offence category is not possible to test as the number of offences is small.
- 3.4.6.7. The offence rates and severity of school bus offences for each day of the week are shown in the chart below.



**Figure 11**

### 3.5. Time of check

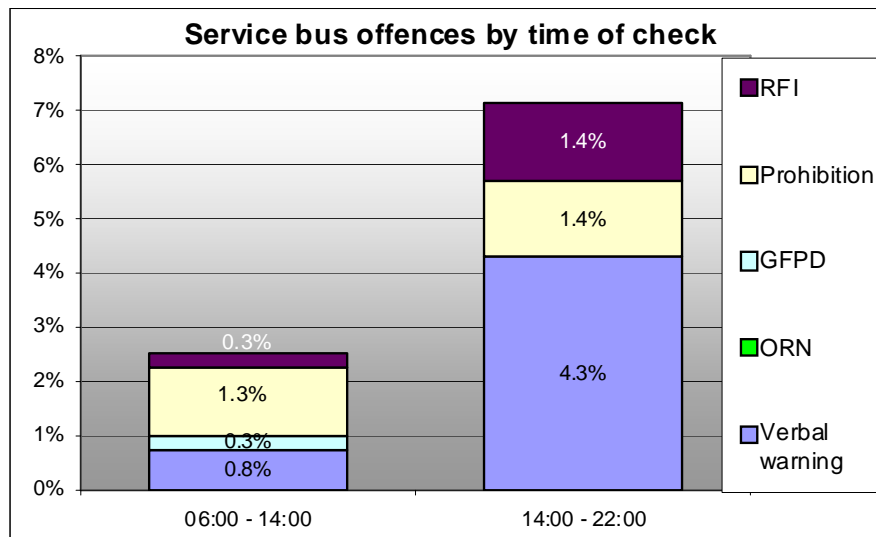
- 3.5.1. The checks were divided into two time periods, morning (06:00 - 14:00) and afternoon (14:00 - 22:00).
- 3.5.2. The vast majority of all checks were carried out in the morning period: 85.1% (399) service bus checks, 91.6% (611) of coaches and 97.5% (477) school buses. As a result, the afternoon sample was comparatively small (especially for school buses), which means the afternoon offence rate is subject to error/random variation.

#### 3.5.3. Service bus

- 3.5.3.1. Service buses checked in the afternoon period had the highest rate of non compliance with 7.1% (5 of 70) checks resulting in an offence. 2.5% (10 of 399) of checks in the morning period resulted in an offence.
- 3.5.3.2. Prohibitions were issued at a similar rate in the morning and afternoon period, with 1.3% (5 of 399) and 1.4% (1 of 70) respectively. Two service

buses were reported for further investigation, one from each time period. The one GFPD was issued in the morning period.

- 3.5.3.3. No offence rectification notices were issued. 6 verbal warnings were given, 3 (4.3%) in the afternoon period and 3 (0.8%) in the morning period.
- 3.5.3.4. The numbers of offences were too small to carry out statistical testing for service bus by time of check.
- 3.5.3.5. Service bus offences across the morning and afternoon time periods are shown in the chart below.



**Figure 12**

### 3.5.4. Coach

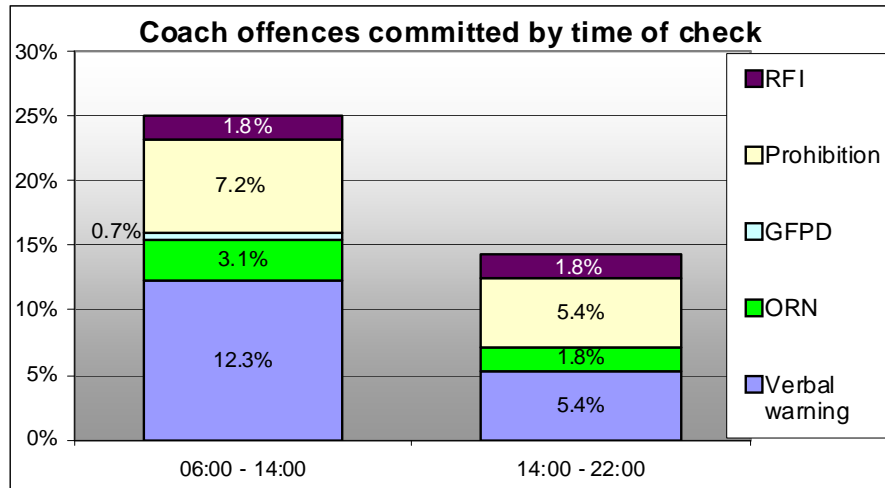
- 3.5.4.1. Coaches checked in the morning period had the highest rate of non compliance with 25.0% (153 of 611). However, this was not significantly higher than the non compliance rate in the afternoon of 14.3% (8 of 56).
- 3.5.4.2. The highest rate of prohibitable offences occurred in the morning time period with 7.2% (44 of 611). 5.4% (3 of 56) of coaches checked in the afternoon had a prohibitable offence.
- 3.5.4.3. Coaches reported for further investigation were in the same proportions for both time periods (1.8%), with 11 of 611 coaches checked in the morning and 1 of 56 in the afternoon reported for further investigation.
- 3.5.4.4. A total of 39 coach operators<sup>10</sup> were issued with GFPDs totalling £5,820 and all were issued in the morning time period.
- 3.5.4.5. Offence rectification notices were issued during both time periods, at a rate of 3.1% in the morning (19 of 611) and 1.8% in the afternoon (1 of 56).
- 3.5.4.6. The highest rate of verbal warnings was given in the morning at a rate of 12.3% (75 of 611) coaches checked. The afternoon verbal warnings were

<sup>10</sup> Some of these 39 coach operators also had a prohibition or RFI and hence have been classified as their most severe offence (i.e. prohibition or RFI).

given to 3 of 56 (5.4%) coaches checked. There was no significant difference between these rates.

3.5.4.7. With the exception of verbal warnings, the numbers of offences were too small to carry out statistical testing for coach offence outcome by time of check.

3.5.4.8. The chart below shows coach offences across the morning and afternoon time periods.



**Figure 13**

### 3.5.5. School Bus

3.5.5.1. School buses checked in the morning period had the highest rate of non compliance with 11.5% (55 of 477). Only 1 of 12 (8.3%) coaches checked in the afternoon had an offence and this resulted in a report for further investigation.

3.5.5.2. Of 477 school buses checked in the morning, 5 (1.0%) had a prohibitable offence, 13 (2.7%) were reported for further investigation, 18 (3.8%) were issued with an offence rectification notice and 19 (4.0%) were given a verbal warning. In no case was the most serious offence for a school bus a GFPD.

3.5.5.3. The numbers were too small to carry out statistical testing for school bus offences for checks carried out by time.

3.5.5.4. In the chart below school bus offences are shown across the morning and afternoon time periods.

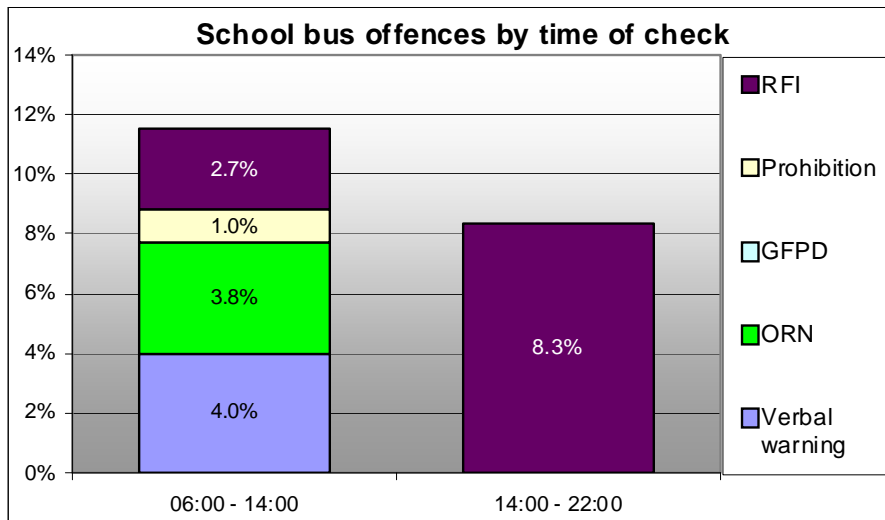


Figure 14

### 3.6. Age of PSV

#### 3.6.1. Service Bus

3.6.1.1. The age of the service buses checked was fairly evenly spread amongst the age categories with the exception of the up to 2 years old, which had the smallest proportion of checks (7.7%) and the 14 year old and over which had the highest proportion of checks (18.2%). Figure 18 shows the age distribution of service buses checked.

3.6.1.2. Service buses aged 14 years and over had the highest proportion of checks that resulted in an offence (5.9%, 5 of 85), followed by service buses aged under 2 years old (5.6%, 2 of 36). No checks on service buses aged 6 to 7 years old resulted in an offence.

3.6.1.3. As only 15 service bus checks resulted in an offence, it was not possible to carry out statistical testing on offences by age of service buses.

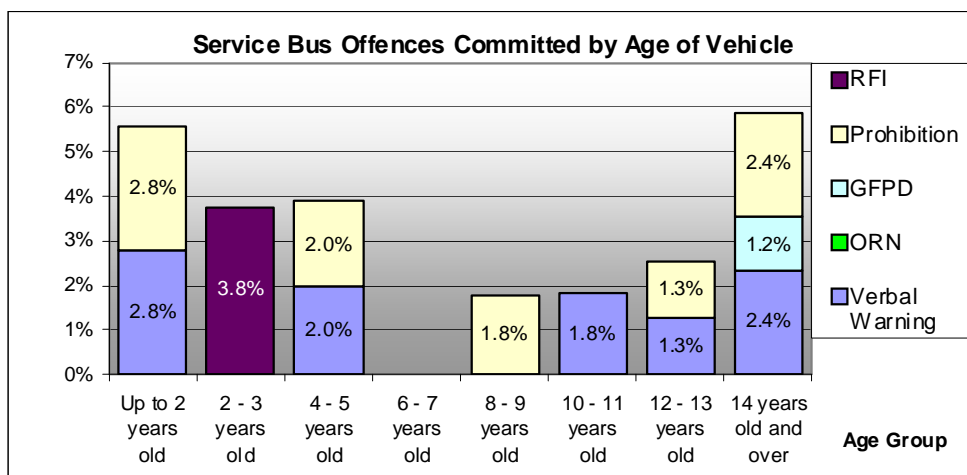
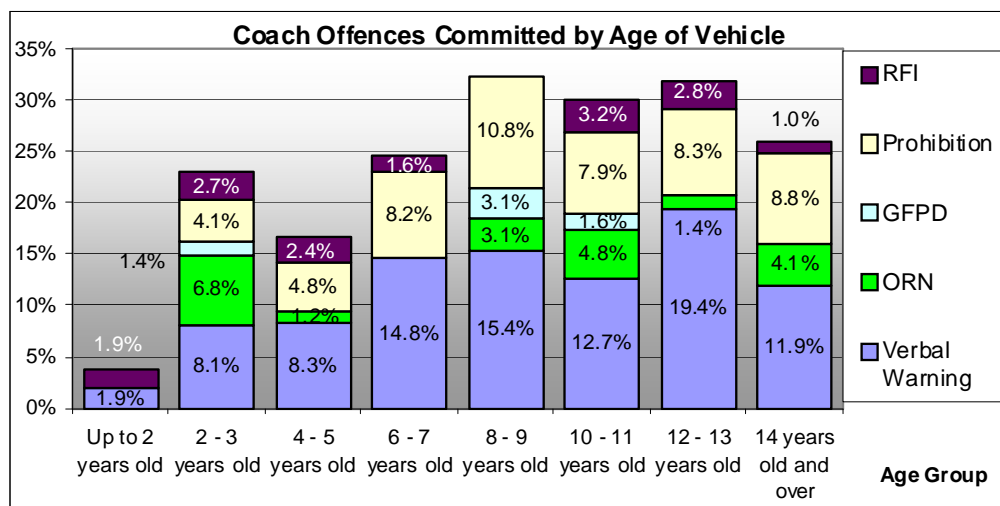


Figure 15

### 3.6.2. Coach

- 3.6.2.1. Nearly a third of coach checks (29.0%) were carried out on coaches aged 14 years old and over. The remaining (81.0%) checks were distributed fairly evenly across the other age categories. Figure 18 shows the age distribution of coaches checked.
- 3.6.2.2. The four oldest PSV age categories had the four highest proportions of coach checks that resulted in offence, all with offence rates above 25%. The highest proportion of checks that resulted in an offence were for coaches aged 8 to 9 years old (32.3%, 21 of 65), followed by coaches aged 12 to 13 years old (31.9%, 23 of 72) and coaches aged 10 to 11 years old (30.2%, 19 of 63).
- 3.6.2.3. The lowest proportion of checks that resulted in an offence was for coaches aged less than 2 years old (3.7%, 2 of 54), which was significantly less than that of other coach age categories.



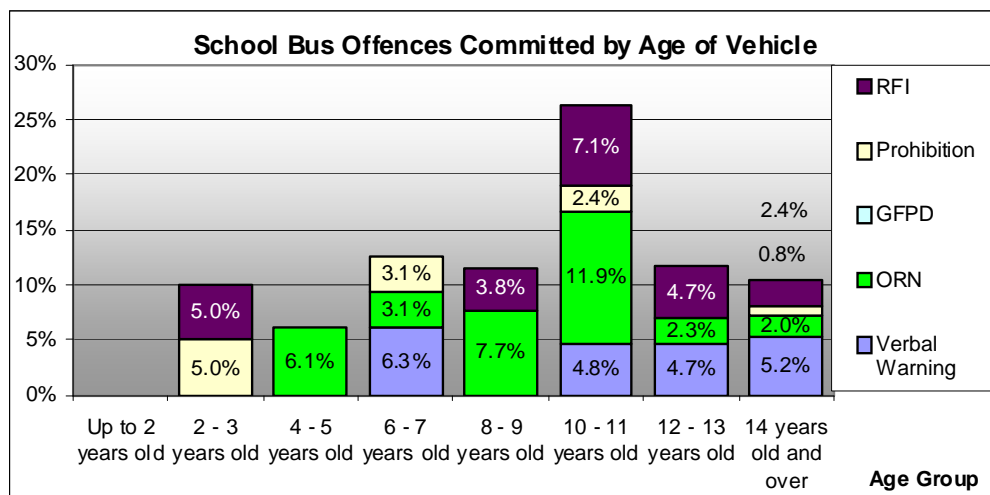
**Figure 16**

- 3.6.2.4. Coaches aged 8 to 9 years old had the highest proportion of checks (10.8%) that resulted in a prohibitable offence. Neither of the two offences committed by coaches aged less than 2 years old were prohibitable offences. Coaches aged 2 to 3 years old and 4 to 5 years old had a similar proportion of checks that resulted in a prohibitable offence, 4.1% and 4.8% respectively. With the exception of coaches aged 8 to 9 years old, coaches in age categories of 6 years and over had a similar proportion of checks that resulted in prohibitable offences, ranging from 7.9% to 8.8%.
- 3.6.2.5. The highest proportion of checks that resulted in a verbal warning offence were for coaches aged 12 to 13 years old (19.4%, 14 of 72), which was significantly higher than that of other coach age categories. There were significantly fewer checks resulting in a verbal warning offence for coaches aged less than 2 years old (1.9%, 1 of 54) compared to other coach age categories.

### 3.6.3. School Bus

3.6.3.1. Over half of the school bus checks (51.1%) were carried out on school buses aged 14 years and over. School buses aged up to 2 year olds had the smallest proportion of checks (3.5%), followed by school buses aged 2 to 3 years old (4.1%). Figure 18 shows the age distribution of school buses checked.

3.6.3.2. On school buses aged 10 to 11 years old, more than one in four checks (26.2%) resulted in an offence. No offences were reported on school buses aged less than 2 years old. The offence rate for school buses in the remaining age groups was similar, ranging from 10.0% to 12.5% (with the exception of those aged 4 to 5 years old).



**Figure 17**

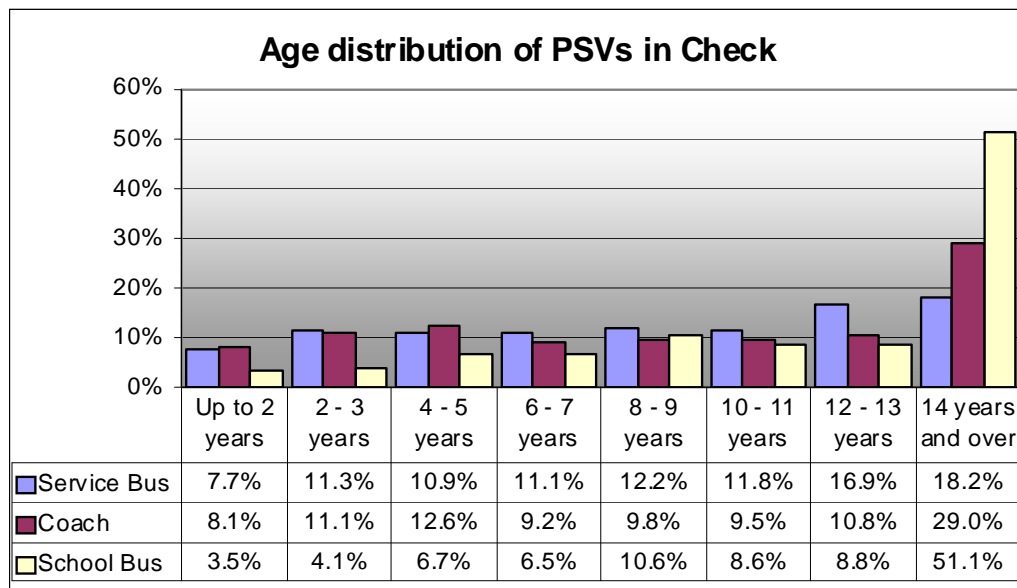
3.6.3.3. The 5 prohibitions were spread across a number of school bus age groups, one for a school bus aged 2 to 3 years old, one aged 6 to 7 years old, one aged 10 to 11 years old and the remaining two aged 14 years and over.

3.6.3.4. The largest proportion of checks that resulted in a particular offence type was offence rectification notices for school buses aged 10 to 11 years old (11.9%).

3.6.3.5. Due to the small numbers of offences it was not possible to carry out statistical testing on offence type by age of school bus.

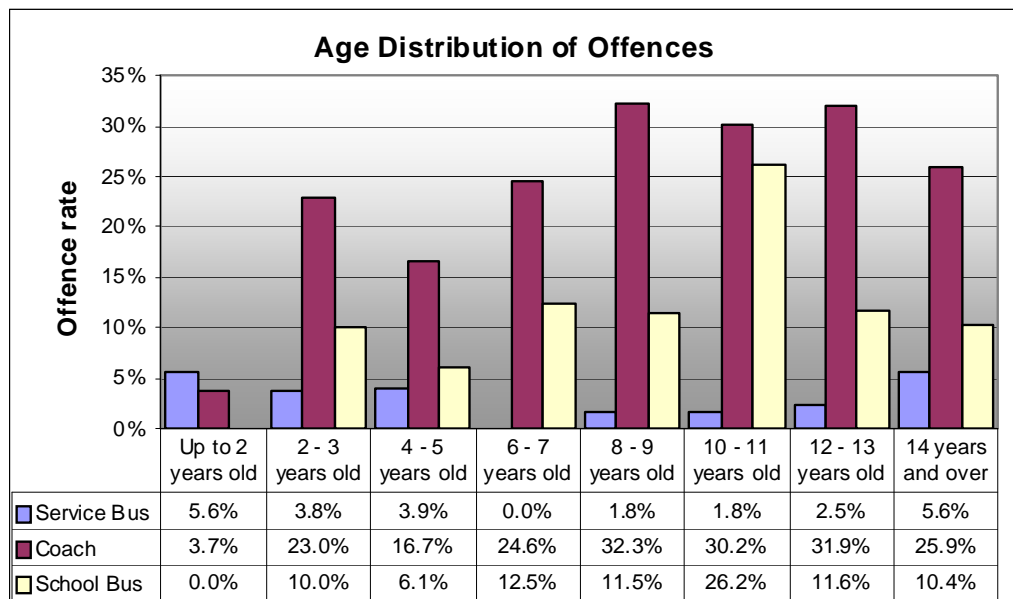
### 3.6.4. Comparison of PSV Type

3.6.4.1. The age distributions of each of the three PSV types appear to divide into three age brackets: older PSVs, which had the highest proportion of checks, young PSVs, which had the lowest proportion of checks and the middle age groups of PSVs, which had a similar proportion of checks to one and another.



**Figure 18**

- 3.6.4.2. The oldest PSV age group (14 years and over) had the highest proportion of checks for each of the three PSV types but ranged from accounting for over half of the school bus checks (51.1%), to over a quarter of the coach checks (29.0%) and less than a fifth of service bus checks (18.2%).
- 3.6.4.3. The PSV type with the most evenly spread age distribution of checks were service buses. With the exception of the 14 year old and above age group, coach checks were fairly evenly spread across the age groups too. School bus checks had the most variability between age groups, with a comparatively older age profile.
- 3.6.4.4. Figure 19 compares the offence rate for each age group of PSV across the three PSV types. For every age category of PSV, except those aged less than 2 years old, coaches had the highest proportion of checks that resulted in an offence. Excluding the youngest coaches (aged less than 2 years old), the lowest proportion of coach checks that resulted in an offence rate was 16.7% for coaches aged 4 to 5 years old, which is a higher proportion of offences than any other PSV age group except school buses at 10 to 11 years old (26.2%).



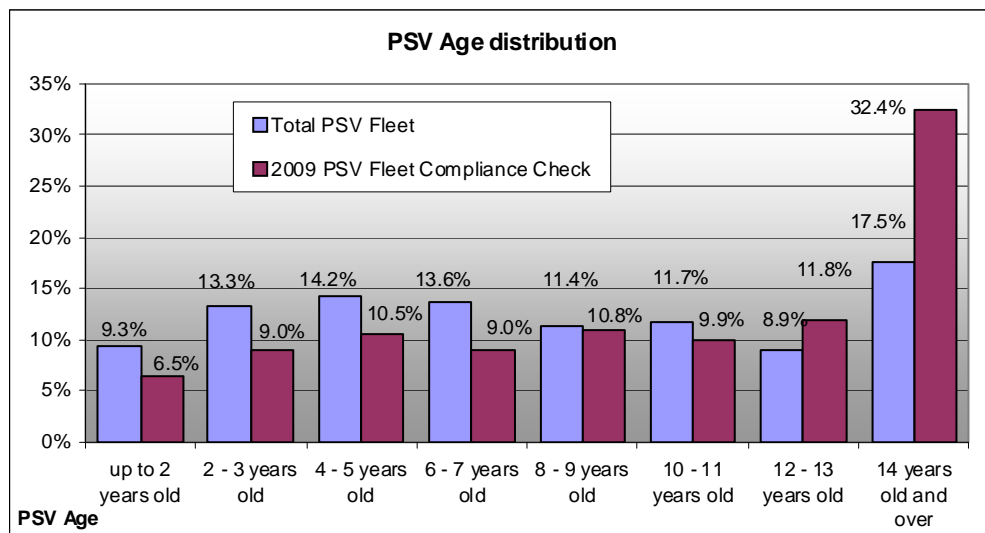
**Figure 19**

- 3.6.4.5. Checks on school buses aged less than 2 years old and service buses aged 6 to 7 years old did not result in an offence.
- 3.6.4.6. Service buses had the lowest offence rate in every age group compared with coaches and school buses, with the exception of the youngest PSVs (aged less than 2 years old) where the reverse was true (service buses had the highest offence rate).
- 3.6.4.7. For both coaches and school buses, their lowest proportion of checks resulting in an offence was found in the youngest age group. This was not the case for service buses, where buses aged less than 2 years old had the second highest proportion of checks resulted in an offence (5.6%).

### 3.6.5. Comparison to National PSV Fleet

- 3.6.5.1. The age distribution of each PSV type (service bus, coach, school bus) is not available. Therefore analysis was carried out to compare the age distribution of PSVs in the 2009 sample with the age distribution of PSVs licensed in the whole PSV population<sup>11</sup>. Figure 20 shows the proportion of PSVs in the check and national population for each age category.

<sup>11</sup> Source: Department for Transport, Transport Statistics Bulletin, Vehicle Licensing Statistics 2009.



**Figure 20**

- 3.6.5.2. Nearly a third (32.4%) of the checks were carried out on PSVs aged 14 years and over, which is significantly higher than the proportion of PSVs aged 14 years and over (17.5%) in the national PSV population. This suggests that the results may be more representative of the PSVs in this age group.
- 3.6.5.3. There were significantly fewer checks carried out on PSVs aged six to seven years old (9.0%) than the proportion of the PSVs aged six to seven years old in the national PSV population (13.6%). This suggests that the results may be less representative of the PSVs in this age group.
- 3.6.5.4. There were no other significant differences between the age distribution of the sample and the national PSV population.

## 4. Conclusions

### 4.1. Headline Results

- 4.1.1. Of the 1643 checks on PSVs, 14.4% were committing at least one traffic offence<sup>12</sup>.
- 4.1.2. The majority of PSVs checked were coaches (40.6%), followed by school buses (29.8%) then service buses (28.5%). The remaining 18 (1.1%) checks were carried other types of PSV.
- 4.1.3. Of the checks on service buses, coaches and school buses (where offence includes verbal warning):

	<b>Service bus</b>	<b>Coach</b>	<b>School bus</b>
Committing at least one traffic offence	3.2%	24.1%	11.5%
Most severe offence:			
a report for further investigation	0.4%	1.8%	2.9%
a prohibitable traffic offence	1.3%	7.0%	1.0%
a GFPD <sup>13</sup>	0.2%	0.6%	0.0%
an offence rectification notice	0.0%	3.0%	3.7%
a verbal warning	1.3%	11.7%	3.9%

- 4.1.4. Given the sample size, return rate and sampling methodology the above figures have the following 95% accuracy confidence intervals. This means that in 95% of samples taken, the values will be in the interval given.
- The proportion of service bus checks that resulted in at least one traffic offence was 3.2% +/- 3.3%, e.g. between 0.0% and 6.5%.
- The proportion of coach checks that resulted in at least one traffic offence was 24.1% +/- 4.8%, e.g. between 19.3% and 29.0%.
- The proportion of school bus checks that resulted in at least one traffic offence was 11.5% +/- 4.1%, e.g. between 7.3% and 15.6%.
- 4.1.5. Significantly more checks on coaches resulted in offences and significantly fewer checks on service buses resulted in offences. Also, significantly more checks on school buses than service buses resulted in offences.
- 4.1.6. The 43 GFPDs issued totalled £6,170 and were issued to:
- One £30 GFPD issued to a service bus driver
  - 39 GFPDs issued to coach drivers totalling £5,820
  - Two £60 GFPDs issued to school bus drivers

<sup>12</sup> Where offence includes verbal warnings.

<sup>13</sup> Note that there were GFPDs issued to PSVs that also had a prohibition or RFI and these have been classified as their most severe offence (i.e. prohibition or RFI).

- One £200 GFPD issued to the driver of an 'other' PSV

4.1.7. The following results were also found to be significant:

- More prohibitions were issued for coaches
- More school buses and fewer service buses were reported for further investigation
- More school buses received offence rectification notifications
- More verbal warnings were issued to coach drivers and less to service bus drivers

4.1.8. The most frequently occurring traffic offences were:

- Drivers' Hours offences, 1.1% of service bus checks, 12.3% of coach checks and 2.7% of school bus checks resulted in a traffic offence in this offence category.
- Tachograph offences, with 9.9% of coach checks resulting in a traffic offence in this offence category.

## 4.2. Other Findings

4.2.1. Analysis was conducted to investigate whether any of the characteristics of the PSV or the operator had an effect on offence rates. The following significant results were found:

Coaches licensed in the North Eastern Traffic Area had a higher offence rate than coaches in other Traffic Areas

School buses licensed in the West Midland Traffic Area had a higher offence rate than school buses in other Traffic Areas

Coaches aged less than 2 years old had a lower offence rate than older vehicles

4.2.2. For all the other analyses carried out, where testing was possible no significant differences in offences rates were found. In particular, there were no significant differences in offences rates for:

Day of the week

Time of day

4.2.3. It was often not possible to carry out statistical tests of differences in the rate of offences for particular groupings due to the small number of offences, especially for service buses where 15 checks resulted in offences.

## 4.3. Future Considerations

4.3.1. The new methodology used for this check was the result of a recommendation from IHAC regarding the need to review the methodology following the previous PSV Fleet Compliance Checks. The aim of the new methodology was to provide results by PSV type that would produce more robust results for the subsequent report. As this was the first PSV check using the new methodology, it is recommended that the methodology is reviewed again before being repeated for any further PSV Fleet Compliance Checks. In particular the following should be considered:

- Whether a national PSV result is required. As the sample is stratified to obtain a robust number of PSVs in each PSV type, it is difficult to provide an overall PSV result which accurately reflects the national PSV fleet.
- Whether a yearly comparison is required. A comparison to previous PSV Fleet Compliance Checks has not been provided due to the difficulty of obtaining (explained above) a single overall PSV result and that previous checks did not report by PSV type<sup>14</sup>. Also different offence classifications were used in the previous checks.
- Whether to include ORN on survey form. It was not specifically included in this years survey form but the information was provided in the 'other' offence section of the survey form.
- Whether to capture the age of the PSV as part of the check. The age of many PSVs had to be found out after the check as it could not be identified from their Vehicle Registration Mark (VRM).
- Whether the oldest PSV age group (14 years and over) should be broken down into a number of age groups. If age analysis is valued by VOSA, then this would be especially important for school buses where over half of school buses checked were 14 years old or over.

4.3.2. The sample size will need to be increased if a more detailed analysis of offences is required;

- Some Areas were unable to complete the full quota of checks. This reduced the actual number of checks that could be analysed and reported on.
- The majority of checks were carried out on coaches. This reduced the actual number of service bus and school bus checks and hence offences that could be analysed and reported on.

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<sup>14</sup> PSV type in previous checks only indicated the number of decks.