

News story: More than 100 lorry operators caught deliberately damaging air quality

In August 2017, DVSA started to include checks for emissions cheat devices in roadside checks of lorries at 5 locations across Great Britain.

By the end of November 2017, DVSA examiners had searched 3,735 lorries at these locations and found 293 lorries with a cheat device fitted.

The drivers and operators were given 10 days to fix the emissions system, or face a £300 fine and having the vehicle taken off the road.

Where a driver or operator repeatedly offends, DVSA can take the vehicle off the road immediately.

Where the vehicle was registered	Percentage of vehicles without a cheat device	Percentage of vehicles with a cheat device	Total
Great Britain registered	91.5%	8.5%	100%
Northern Ireland registered	79.6%	20.4%	100%
Registered outside the UK	95.1%	4.9%	100%
Total	92.2%	7.8%	100%

How cheat devices damage air quality

Cheat devices cut the cost of operating, but give false emissions readings which can result in the release of excessive emissions into the atmosphere.

Some of the way this is done include:

- using devices designed to stop emissions control systems from working
- removing the diesel particulate filter or trap
- using cheap, fake emission reduction devices or diesel exhaust fluid
- using illegal engine modifications which result in excessive emissions
- removing or bypassing the exhaust gas recirculation valve

Checking more than 100 operators' fleets

Following the roadside checks, DVSA examiners are inspecting more than 100 operators' vehicle fleets for emission cheat devices. Some of the companies being inspected operate up to 80 vehicles.

DVSA is passing its findings on to the Traffic Commissioners for Great Britain, who have the power to take away an operator's licence.

Working with EU agencies to deal with polluters

DVSA is also working with its counterpart agencies across Europe to make sure that all offences committed by hauliers from outside Great Britain are dealt with in the country they're based.

Following the success of this operation, DVSA will start checking for emissions cheat devices at more locations across Great Britain from Spring 2018.

Damaging air quality and risking public health

Poor air quality is the largest environmental risk to public health in the UK.

It's known to have more severe effects on vulnerable groups, for example, the elderly, children and people already suffering from pre-existing lung and heart conditions.

The government is committed to taking action against poor air quality. The checks support the government's [plan for reducing roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations](#).

This includes looking at ways to reduce emissions produced by vehicles, including those used commercially.

Protecting you from unsafe drivers and vehicles

Gareth Llewellyn, DVSA Chief Executive, said:

DVSA's priority is to protect you from unsafe drivers and vehicles.

We are committed to taking dangerous lorries off Britain's roads. Stopping emissions fraud is a vital part of that.

Anyone who flouts the law is putting the quality of our air and the health of vulnerable people, at risk. We won't hesitate to take action against these drivers, operators and vehicles.

Richard Turfitt, Senior Traffic Commissioner, said:

Traffic Commissioners welcome the steps being taken by the enforcement agency to identify emissions cheats.

Use of these devices threatens to undercut responsible and compliant operators as well as damaging the environment and public health.

Traffic Commissioners will look to take action wherever an operator

seeks an unfair and illegal advantage over the rest of industry.