

**For Information**

**LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PANEL ON TRANSPORT**

**Voluntary Registration Scheme for Vehicle Mechanics**

**PURPOSE**

This paper reports on the latest development of the voluntary registration scheme for vehicle mechanics.

**BACKGROUND**

2. With a view to enhancing the standard of the local vehicle maintenance trade, a voluntary registration scheme has been introduced for the trade. The scheme allows vehicle mechanics in possession of the necessary qualifications and/or experience in connection with vehicle maintenance to be registered. It will facilitate the public to identify registered vehicle mechanics easily and will uplift the image of the vehicle maintenance trade. At the Panel meeting of 27 May 2005, Members supported the proposed voluntary registration scheme.

**DEVELOPMENTS**

3. To ensure that the registration scheme meets the needs of the trade, the Vehicle Maintenance Technical Advisory Committee (VMTAC) was established. It comprises members from trade associations of vehicle mechanics and vehicle maintenance workshops, professional institutions, training institutes, transport operators employing large numbers of vehicle mechanics, vehicle suppliers' and owners' associations, relevant Government departments, and an independent person nominated by the Home Affairs Bureau.

4. The Vehicle Maintenance Registration Unit (VMRU) has been set up under the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department. The VMRU provides administrative support to the VMTAC and is responsible for day-to-day management and operation of the registration scheme.

5. The VMTAC has thrashed out the implementation details of the registration scheme including registration classifications, registration and renewal requirements, application and registration logistics, training and performance monitoring, appeal mechanism, and launching and publicity programme. To facilitate effective discussion, three subcommittees have been formed under the VMTAC to consider registration, training & monitoring and publicity aspects of the scheme. The deliberations represent the collaborative efforts of the trades, professional bodies and the Government.

6. In general, there will be different classifications for registration, and the requirements for registration will be based on experience, training and/or trade test. Each registration is valid for three years and renewal of registration is required. Details are in the **Annex**. To encourage vehicle mechanics to register, the registration fee will be waived.

## **LATEST PROGRESS**

7. The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department has just launched the registration scheme on 4 January 2007. Apart from the organisation of seminars to brief members of the trade about the scheme, a series of publicity activities, including television and radio Announcements of Public Interest and print advertisements, will also be rolled out.

8. Members are invited to note the latest development in regard to the voluntary registration scheme for vehicle mechanics.

## **VOLUNTARY REGISTRATION SCHEME FOR VEHICLE MECHANICS**

### **Registration Classification**

There are three main services for registration, namely Mechanical Services, Electrical Services and Body Services. Another service class of Restricted Services is introduced to cover those specific works related to vehicle maintenance but do not fully fit in with the three main Services. Further classifications are made under various services to cater for the differences in techniques and business for repairing/servicing vehicles as well as the actual trade practice.

### **Registration Requirements**

Vehicle mechanics may apply for registration with a primary service class under Mechanical Services, Electrical Services or Body Services following one of the three routes below:

- (i) pass in the relevant trade test organized by the Automobile Training Board; or
- (ii) relevant craft certificate or above offered by a local training institute or equivalent and a minimum of 5 years' prior relevant working experience; or
- (iii) a minimum of 10 years' prior relevant working experience.

Application for additional service class registration on top of the primary service class under the Mechanical Services, Electrical Services or Body Services will generally require a pass in the relevant trade test of the additional service class. Application for registration with a service class under Restricted Services will be based on prior relevant working experience only, since there are currently no local formal qualifications available for such service class. The minimum number of years of working experience varies from one to five, depending on the complexity and skill required for the service class concerned.

## **Renewal Requirements**

Each registration and renewal will be valid for three years. For renewal, two years' relevant in-service record for the relevant service class and at least twenty hours of continuing professional development record within the previous three years registration period will be required.

## **Application Procedures**

Application for vehicle mechanic registration should be made to the Vehicle Maintenance Registration Unit (VMRU) of the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department. A "How to Apply" leaflet with details of the application procedures has been issued to provide guidance to applicants.

## **Registration Documents**

A registration card and a registration certificate specifying all the registered service classes will be issued to every registered vehicle mechanic. The registration card and the registration certificate will be valid for three years. The registered vehicle mechanic will keep the registration card while the registration certificate may be displayed at his/her vehicle maintenance workshop subject to the consent of the workshop operator for easy identification by the public.

## **Recognized Qualifications for Registration**

There is a list of recognized local qualifications for registration, based on the training courses and trade tests that are available locally. The list will be reviewed and updated regularly. If there are applications based on overseas qualifications, advice from the Education and Manpower Bureau will be sought to ascertain their comparability with the local qualifications.

## **Continuing Professional Development**

To enhance technical competence and upgrade personal skills and knowledge, registered vehicle mechanics are required to take within the 3 years' registration period a minimum of 20 hours of continuing professional development.

## **Code of Conduct for Registered Vehicle Mechanics**

Registered vehicle mechanics are required to follow a set of code of conduct. A sample log sheet has been formulated for registered vehicle mechanics to keep good record of vehicle maintenance work if the workshops where they work do not have a job record system.

## **Performance Monitoring**

The performance of registered vehicle mechanics will affect the safety of the vehicle under maintenance as well as the image of the trade. To monitor the performance of registered vehicle mechanics, a performance monitoring points system is developed. Contravention of the responsibilities part of the code of conduct will incur certain points and the level of disciplinary action to be imposed on non-performing vehicle mechanics will depend on the accumulated points. Inspectors of the VMRU will conduct surprise visits or inspections on a sampling basis to verify the registration documents and understand the works of registered vehicle mechanics. Inspections will also be conducted to follow up complaints or investigate incidents where appropriate.

## **Appeal Mechanism**

While the VMRU will process the registration applications and monitor the performance of registered vehicle mechanics, an independent appeal mechanism has been established to ensure that the registration assessment process for any applicant is fair and the disciplinary actions imposed by the VMRU on non-performing registered vehicle mechanics are reasonable. An applicant who apply for registration as a vehicle mechanic or a registered vehicle mechanic who is aggrieved by any decision or action of the VMRU may firstly initiate a review request to the VMRU and, if he/she is still not satisfied with the VMRU's review decision, may then appeal to the Appeal Panel which comprises members from the Vehicle Maintenance Technical Advisory Committee and government officers.