



**New era for goods vehicle suppliers,  
manufacturers and operators**

# **NO APPROVAL** **NO SALE**

## **Introduction**

Most industry sectors are subject to some form of approval or certification system to ensure products are manufactured to agreed safety and performance standards. In the automotive industry, the operation of such a scheme is particularly important given the role of road vehicles in our everyday lives.

From 29 April 2009, the current Directive on EC Whole Vehicle Type Approval (ECWVTA)

will be extended from cars to new passenger vehicles including minibuses and motorhomes, buses, coaches, plus commercial vehicles including vans, trucks, trailers and some special-purpose vehicles.

The new legislation will help make sure that vehicles are safer on the road and have a lower impact on the environment, without there being the need to inspect and test every single one.






**TYPE APPROVAL**  
Is your business ready?

## Will it affect me?

You will be affected if you manufacture, convert, build, import or sell trucks, vans or any other goods vehicle for use on the public road.

You should take particular note of the new legislation if you do any of the following:

-  Manufacture, supply or import vehicles for sale, modification or adaptation
-  Build bodies onto an existing chassis
-  Contribute a construction stage or element of a vehicle in the categories affected

Once ECWVTA is in place, new vehicles cannot be sold or registered for use on the road without an approval, so you need to know what it means for your business.



The goods vehicle sector has been more aware than some other parts of the industry, of the production and export benefits of ECWVTA. Some key businesses have even been 'early adopters' and are already compliant with, or well-prepared for, the legislation which becomes mandatory for some vehicle types in October 2010.

However, some firms involved in the construction of goods vehicles face a unique set of challenges, since many are built in more than one stage. For example, a chassis and powertrain may come from one source, a cab unit from another, a body added by a further contractor, and so on. In these instances, high levels of communication and co-operation are needed from all businesses in the chain to ensure that ECWVTA procedures are adhered to at each stage.

And it's because of the sometimes-complex nature of the legislation that you will need to decide sooner rather than later on the approval schemes that are right for you. The scheme(s) you choose will depend on factors including the number and types of vehicles you produce each year, and where you sell them.

## How do manufacturers obtain Type Approval?

You must obtain Type Approval before your vehicles can be sold and registered for use on the road. To achieve Type Approval you will need:

-  A thorough examination of your pre-production vehicles (including some destructive testing where appropriate) to ensure that the vehicle meets rigorous safety and environmental standards
-  Your production process to be subjected to a Conformity of Production (CoP) Assessment. You will need to provide detailed documentation of the production process to demonstrate that all vehicles of the same type manufactured following the process will conform to the type approved specification

Once Type Approval has been awarded, you, as the manufacturer, will be solely responsible for maintaining the CoP for the period for which the approval is valid. You will then be able to issue a Certificate of Conformity (CoC) for each vehicle of that type which you produce.

## What is the main Type Approval scheme?

The main purpose of the new legislation has been to create a standard vehicle approval scheme that operates across the European Union, facilitating the free movement of



goods and creating a level playing field. If you are a producer or sell in to one or more EU member state then the following scheme will be particularly relevant:



**EC Whole Vehicle Type Approval (ECWVTA)** – aimed at vehicle manufacturers who produce large numbers of units. ECWVTA can be applied to a design of chassis, design of body or a complete vehicle; small variations of the design need not be separately type approved.

The key advantage of ECWVTA is that the manufacturer is free to sell the approved product in any EU member state without having to go through additional testing

#### **What if I do not sell vehicles outside the UK?**

The UK Government recognises the uniqueness of the UK automotive industry and the fact that a number of businesses do not trade outside the UK. Consequently, the Government is introducing two national schemes:



**National Small Series Type Approval (NSSTA)** – this is a UK national scheme applicable to the UK only and for low volume manufacturers.

The advantages of NSSTA are a reduced CoP requirement, some technical requirements are cut back and inspections can be carried out at the manufacturer's premises. Once the design is approved, individual vehicles do not need to be tested and the manufacturer can issue the approval certificate



**Individual Vehicle Approval (IVA)** – this is a UK national scheme applicable to the UK only and the most likely route for those manufacturing single vehicles or very small numbers.

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IVA does not require CoP. For those involved in a multi-stage build a formal link with the previous stage manufacturer is not required, although most bodybuilders and converters will work with the manufacturers to ensure there is no warranty compromise.

Under IVA, a vehicle has to be taken for examination to a the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) test station in Great Britain or a Driver Vehicle Agency (DVA) in Northern Ireland test station for approval

Unlike ECWVTA, NSSTA and IVA certificates will not be accepted automatically by other EU member states. Producers who want to export, but whose vehicles only have national certification, will need to apply directly to the Type Approval authority in the relevant country.

#### **When will the new approval schemes become law?**

The Directive will come into effect from 29 April 2009 and will be phased in over a period of five years. The dates from which ECWVTA will be enforced will vary for each vehicle category.



**A full timetable can be found at [www.dft.gov.uk/typeapproval](http://www.dft.gov.uk/typeapproval)**

#### **What are the timelines for approval certificates?**

If you sell or plan to sell across Europe, you should consider obtaining European Type Approval available from April 2009. Other relevant dates are:



**29 October 2010** New incomplete and complete types of light goods vehicles



**29 October 2010** New incomplete and complete types of larger goods vehicles



**29 October 2011** New completed types of light goods vehicles



**29 October 2011** Existing incomplete and complete types of light goods vehicles



**29 October 2012** New completed types of larger goods vehicles



**29 October 2012** New special-purpose types of all goods vehicles



**29 October 2012** Existing incomplete and complete types of larger goods vehicles



**29 April 2013** Existing completed types of light goods vehicles



**29 October 2014** Existing special-purpose types of all goods vehicles



**29 October 2014** Existing completed types of larger goods vehicles

## Be prepared, don't get caught out!

You're strongly advised to act now and plan what you need to do. If you leave it too late and don't adapt in time you will not be able to sell your product.

Manufacturers and importers must ensure products have the necessary approvals by the dates set out in the Directive. Retailers will need to be able to check the validity of an approval certificate and keep a record at the time of sale.

The industry is being encouraged to be ready – and to be prepared for the change. If you don't get organised and your competitors do, you could get left behind. It's as simple as that.

## KEEP UP TO DATE ON PROGRESS!

For further information and to keep up to date with developments regarding ECWVTA, visit your trade association or the following Government websites:

DfT	Directive and policy information <a href="http://www.dft.gov.uk/typeapproval">www.dft.gov.uk/typeapproval</a>
DVLA	Vehicle registration <a href="http://www.dvla.gov.uk">www.dvla.gov.uk</a>
DVA	Vehicle registration and Individual Vehicle Approval services in Northern Ireland <a href="http://www.dvani.gov.uk">www.dvani.gov.uk</a>
VCA	Type Approval services <a href="http://www.vca.gov.uk">www.vca.gov.uk</a>
VOSA	Individual Vehicle Approval services <a href="http://www.transportoffice.gov.uk">www.transportoffice.gov.uk</a>

Alternatively, you can email your questions to us at:

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