



Driver & Vehicle
Standards
Agency

Scheme guide

DVSA Earned Recognition

Helping you stay safe
on Britain's roads

DVSA/ERSG/Version 2.0

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Section 1: Introduction

1.1 About this Guide

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) has produced this guidance document to explain everything you need to know about how the scheme works and how to gain DVSA Earned Recognition status. It also explains how to become an authorised audit provider and a validated systems supplier.

1.2 What is the DVSA Earned Recognition Scheme?

The DVSA Earned Recognition scheme is a voluntary scheme for all operators who can demonstrate a strong track record of compliance and adherence to standards. Operators must be able to show that they have robust systems and processes that promote effective and proactive transport management. Once successfully accepted into the scheme, these operators will enjoy the benefit of a reduced burden of enforcement.

Operators who successfully achieve DVSA Earned Recognition status will possess a proven culture of compliance. By allowing DVSA to remotely monitor their compliance systems, checks can be carried out which will provide the assurance and confidence that the operator is effectively managing the transport operation and functioning in a compliant manner. In exchange, these operators may benefit from a reduced number of inconvenient and costly roadside checks and visits from enforcement officers thereby reducing the administrative burden of regulation on those who achieve high levels of compliance.

This scheme ensures that compliant operators with DVSA Earned Recognition status obtain best business value from the enforcement regime and creates a model that will drive up compliance and enable others to aspire to. It also enables DVSA to divert its resource to target the seriously and serially non-compliant where the risks to road safety are highest.

1.3 Overview of attaining DVSA Earned Recognition status

A basic overview of the steps involved in the application process is shown below:

- Operators must meet the eligibility criteria set out in Section 1.4
- Operators should select an [authorised audit provider](#) from the list.
- Operators should apply by completing the [application form DVSAER01](#)
- DVSA will carry out an application review at which point we will request the last 3-month's tachograph data from the operator.
 - If this is successful and an audit hasn't already been completed, the operator will be advised that arrangements can be made with their nominated authorised audit provider to conduct the audit.

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- If the operator has already had an initial audit carried out by an authorised audit provider within the 3 months prior to the application review this will be sent to DVSA on application.
 - If the application is rejected, the operator will be advised
 - DVSA will review the initial audits and advise the operator whether or not they have attained DVSA Earned Recognition status
 - If the earned recognition standards are met, the operator will be granted accreditation into the scheme, receive a unique identification number, be granted the use of the official marque and will be published on GOV.UK
 - If operators do not meet the required standards and the auditor is satisfied that the standards can be met within a three month period, an improvement plan can be agreed with the operator and the auditor.
 - Operators that successfully achieve DVSA Earned Recognition status must undergo a periodic audit every two years.

1.4 Eligibility

DVSA Earned Recognition is open to all GB operator licence holders who meet the following criteria:

- The operator must have held an operator's licence for a minimum of 2 years before an application to join the DVSA Earned Recognition scheme can be made
- Full compliance in all aspects of all operator licence's involved in the application
- The Operator must have fully electronic management systems for maintenance and drivers' hours that will alert the operator and DVSA of compliance issues. Operators must use [validated IT system suppliers](#)
- A history of good compliance measured against DfT's National Fleet Compliance Survey and with no regulatory action by a Traffic Commissioner for at least 2 years other than warnings
- A legal entity controlling multiple operator licences can only be considered for accreditation on the business as a whole and not on individual licences. Operators that hold multiple licences must report the data for all the operator licences that are in their control
- An organisation containing multiple legal entities operating under one group using the same management systems and measures may choose to make a single group application. The audit standards and key performance indicators would apply and be measured over the group as a whole. An individual legal entity cannot be removed from the group accreditation unless it changes ownership or ceases to exist.
- DVSA must be notified of any material changes to the legal entity of the accredited operator. Accredited operators acquiring a business, which is an operator licence holder but not accredited into the scheme and incorporated in to the legal entity or in the case of a group accreditation part of the group, must meet the Earned Recognition standard by the next periodic audit or as agreed with DVSA. During this period, those operator licence(s) will not be subject to the benefits of Earned Recognition status.

When an accredited operator is acquired, merges or is incorporated into the entity of an operator who does not have Earned Recognition status, the DVSA must be notified. If the entity remains predominantly unchanged, with the agreement of the DVSA, the Earned Recognition status can be maintained. If, however, the change means the operator cannot meet the requirements for Earned Recognition the accreditation may be withdrawn by the DVSA.

1.5 Benefits

For the operator

- Be an exemplary operator, and be able to prove this when you bid for contracts
- Be less likely to have your vehicles stopped at the roadside for inspections
- Be less likely to have DVSA enforcement staff visit your premises
- Be able to use the DVSA earned recognition marque on your website and other publicity materials (but not on your vehicles)
- Direct access to the DVSA earned recognition business team

Other benefits

- Improved road safety due to re-investment of DVSA resources to focus activities on the non-compliant
- Provides a platform for future DVSA initiatives

Section 2: Glossary of Terms

Phrase	Meaning
Accreditation	Accreditation as an Accredited Operator for the purpose of the DVSA Earned Recognition Scheme
Accredited operator	An operator who has gained accreditation in line with the Terms and Conditions, and appears on the DVSA Published List of Accredited Operators.
Adverse decision	Is a decision by the Scheme Manager to refuse an application for Accreditation or remove an Accreditation
Application Period	3 months before an application is received and 3 months after receipt.
Audit	Either an initial audit, periodic audit or follow up audit carried out by a DVSA authorised audit provider to establish compliance with the Earned Recognition standards.
Driving activities	Any driver related activity, including drivers hours, working time, unaccounted mileage, most serious infringements and any other requirement specified in the key performance indicators
DVSA	Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency
DVSA Appeals Department	The independent appeals department working directly for the DVSA Chief Executive's Office
DVSA Authorised Audit Provider	An individual or organisation authorised by DVSA to provide a systems audit for the purposes of the DVSA Earned Recognition Scheme.
DVSA Published List of Authorised Auditors	The list of authorised auditors appearing on the gov.uk web page
DVSA Published List of Accredited Operators	The list of accredited operators appearing on the gov.uk web page.
DVSA Earned Recognition Scheme Guidance Document	The document published by DVSA detailing how the scheme works and how to gain DVSA Earned Recognition status. It also explains how to become an authorised audit provider and validated systems supplier.
Effective	Meaning 'successful in producing the desired or intended result'
Enforcement Action	If a driver has received a fixed penalty or an operator has been prosecuted by DVSA, Police or other agencies
Fleet Size	Authorised vehicles and trailers in possession
HGV	Heavy goods vehicle – a goods vehicle with a gross weight over 3,500Kgs
KPI	Key Performance Indicators that are published at part of section 3.3 of this document.
KPI Measurement Period	A period of four consecutive weeks from 0000hrs Monday to 2359hrs Sunday used to measure key performance indicators
Legal Entity	An individual, partnership, organisation or company that have legal rights and responsibilities

Maintenance Activities	Any maintenance related activity, including inspection intervals, correctly completed documentation, driver defect reporting systems, MOT pass rates and any other requirement specified in the key performance indicators
Multiple Licence Holder	A legal entity which holds an operator's licence in more than one Traffic Area
Operator	A person who uses a vehicle or vehicles requiring an operator licence under Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act 1995 or Public Passenger Vehicles Act 1981
Operating Centre	Any place which is an operating centre for vehicles used by an operator under their operator's licence or licences
PSV	Public Service Vehicle - A bus or coach with nine or more passenger seats
Regulatory Action	Formal disciplinary action (not including warnings) taken by the Traffic Commissioner
Renewal	The renewal of the Accreditation
Reportable Illegality	Most Serious Infringements detailed in Regulation EC 1071/2009
Responsible Person	The person within the business, at senior level, with responsibility for the transport operation.
Scheme Manager	Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency
Tachograph Record	A record made by the driver using either analogue or digital equipment.
Terms and Conditions	The terms and conditions of the DVSA Earned Recognition Scheme
The Scheme	DVSA Earned Recognition Scheme
Validated System Supplier	An individual or organisation whose systems have been validated by DVSA as being capable of capturing data and reporting specified key performance indicators for the Earned Recognition Scheme.

Section 3: Audit Standards and Key Performance Indicators

3.1 HGV and PSV Standards Documents

There are two types of audit standards documents, the [HGV Audit Standards](#) and the [PSV Audit Standards](#). If an entity operates both HGVs and PSVs, all applicable sections must be completed.

Operators must be audited by DVSA authorised audit providers against a defined set of standards that must be met in order for the operator to achieve Earned Recognition status. There are nine sections to these standards:

1. Operator's Licence
2. Transport Manager
3. Vehicle Standards
4. Drivers' Hours
5. Operational Management
6. Driver Management
7. Training and Driver Behaviour
8. Driver Related Policies
9. ADR (HGV Standards) or Service Work (PSV Standards)

In each section, the standard is explained and describes the level of performance required to attain the required standard. Assessment requirements indicate how the standard is achieved together with what systems and documentation will be checked by the auditor. Auditor guidance is provided to inform where to look for evidence to meet the standard

Each of the criteria detailed in the standards documents must be met in order to pass the audit.

All sections of the audit document must be completed. However, not all sections of the audit are applicable to every operator and where this is the case the auditor will mark the relevant section with 'not applicable' or 'n/a'.

Only one audit is required for each operator or group. This audit is carried out at the main administrative centre and where required a number of verification checks will be carried out at other operating centres, depending on the operating systems, number of operating centres and fleet size (see section 3.2). If more than one location is to be visited, this will be agreed between the auditor and the operator before the initial audit visit. However, if it is found at the time of the audit that the location or locations identified do not enable a comprehensive audit to be completed, further visits may be required. DVSA reserve the right to direct the auditor to a particular location.

If the operator is involved with the carriage of dangerous goods, either some or all of that section may apply. This depends on the type of goods carried and how often. If the operator is involved but considers they are exempt from some or all aspects of the ADR regulations they should explain to the auditor the reasons why, and these should be recorded on the audit form. Further advice can be obtained from the [HSE website](#) (Carriage of Dangerous Goods). Where further clarification is required, reference should be made with the scheme manager.

3.2 Audit Sampling

To provide a representative sample, the number of audits that will be required per initial audit or periodic audit will depend on the size of the operator's business. Audit sampling will be based on the following areas of measurement and considerations.

Audit sampling needs to be based on the following areas of measurement and considerations.

Areas of measurement:

- Vehicles
- Drivers
- Operating Centres

Considerations:

- Type of management system and span of control should be considered in relation to sampling size
- Where different management systems are used sampling must cover all of these
- DVSA ER may wish to direct the audit or stipulate measures
- Audit and verification checks should only be carried out at operating centres that have an administrative or management function
- The auditor check should include a minimum of one month's operator analysis and subsequent actions
- In addition to the audit at the main operating centre and where required any verification checks at other operating centres must be rotated at the periodic audit
- Maintenance records should conform with the current DVSA Guide to Maintaining Roadworthiness
- The sample must be representative of the fleet including **all** types of vehicles, trailers, and age range
- Audit checks must sample records across all types of maintenance providers (for example manufacturers, independents and in-house)
- Sampling from each operator licence
- If an operator carries out ADR activities then at least one ADR centre will be part of the audit.

Fleet Size(in possession)	Vehicle/Trailer Records	Drivers Records
1-5	All	All
6-100	2 checks per operator licence (minimum 5 checks in total)	2 checks per operator licence (minimum 5 checks in total)
101+	5 checks per operator licence (minimum 10 checks in total)	5 checks per operator licence (minimum 10 checks in total)

Number of operating centres	Operating Centres
1-5	Main administrative centre
6-20	Main administrative centre + 1
21+	Main administrative centre + 2

Examples of sampling sizes:

Operator size			Sampling levels			
O Licences	Fleet size	Op Centres	Vehicles	Trailers	Drivers	Centres
8	3365v 5000t	560	20	20	40	3
8	888v 81t	20	36	4	40	2
2	46v 92t	4	5	5	10	1
3	117v	3	15		15	1
2	42v 38t	3	3	2	5	1

Very large operator

8 x O Licences = 3365v 5000t, 560 op centres

5 checks / O licence = total 40 fleet checks (20 vehicles and 20 trailers) 40 driver checks

Centres - main administration site and 2 others

Large operator

8 x O licences = 888v 81t, 20 op centres

5 checks / O licence = total 40 fleet checks (36 vehicles and 4 trailers) 40 driver checks

Centres – main administration site and 1 other

Medium size

2 x O licences 1 x 26v 53t
 1 x 20v 39t

4 x centres only one managerial function.

5 checks / O Licence = total 10 fleet checks (5 vehicles and 5 trailers), 10 driver checks,

Centre - main administration centre only

Medium size PSV

3 x O Licences 1 x 15v
 1 x 14v
 1 x 88v

3 x Operating centres

5 checks / O licence = total 15 fleet checks (all vehicles) 15 driver checks,

Centre - main administrative centre

Medium size

2 x O licences 1 x 12v 12t
 1 x 30v 26t

3 x Operating centres

2 checks @ licence 1 = 1v 1t

3 checks @ licence 2 = 2v 1t 5 drivers

Centres -main administration centre

3.3 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

1. Key performance indicators are used to measure an operator's compliance for both maintenance and driving activities. They are designed to measure one hundred percent of the records across all of the licences held by the operator that are included in the scheme.
2. The operator agrees that upon becoming part of the scheme, it will have a DVSA validated management system capable of monitoring key performance indicators and automatically reporting exceptions as detailed below.
3. Tolerances have been built in so that operators will be alerted when a key performance indicator is missed. These may not automatically trigger to DVSA. It will depend on the amount it exceeds the key performance indicator.
4. The key performance indicators and trigger points are set by the scheme manager. The scheme manager reserves the right to add or delete KPIs and amend trigger points where deemed necessary. Any changes to key performance indicators notice will be given and a suitable period of time will be allowed for the operator to meet the new obligations.
5. It is a condition of the scheme that an operator meets all of the KPI measures in order to attain the required standards of the audit.
6. If agreed by the scheme manager an operator will be permitted to manually upload to the DVSA validated electronic management system completed inspection reports that have been quality checked and verified by the operator. This concession will be permitted for up to three years from the scheme activation date.
7. For a limited period, and only if agreed by DVSA, an operator with multiple licences will be allowed to report the maintenance key performance indicators for individual sections of the business. The operator must provide assurance that by the agreed date all parts of the

business will have a DVSA validated maintenance system capable of monitoring key performance indicators and reporting exceptions.

Operators benefiting from this concession will be required to undertake an annual maintenance systems audit. Failure to have a fully automated reporting system by April 2021 will result in the operator accreditation being removed.

There is a requirement to operate within all relevant legislation. KPI tolerances are only in place to monitor infringements. Compliance with legislation will be reviewed and reported on at periodic audit and further action may be taken by the scheme manager if the parameters of legislation are regularly breached but the KPI tolerance is not.

It should also be noted that if a driver and vehicle belonging to an accredited operator is subjected to an enforcement inspection by any relevant authority, failure to adhere to any of the regulations will result in the same sanction as any other operator not part of the DVSA Earned Recognition Scheme.

3.3.1 Key Performance Indicators for maintenance

There are five measures for maintenance:

Code	Maintenance Requirements	Key Performance Indicator	Trigger 1 2%+	Trigger 2 1%<2%	Trigger 3 <1%	Note - For fleets less than 20 vehicles including trailers the KPI will be set at no more than 1 breach in the reporting period
M1	Complete set of safety inspection records	100%	98%	99%	99.99%	VOR reports will be validated against drivers hours records during the periodic audit
M2	Safety inspection records are completed correctly including all relevant sections and signed off as being roadworthy	100%	98%	99%	99.99%	
M3	Safety inspections are within the stated frequency	100%	98%	99%	99.99%	VOR reports will be validated against drivers hours records during the periodic audit
M4	Driver defect reports where road safety related items have been reported are appropriately actioned	100%	98%	99%	99.99%	
Reported on acceptance to the scheme and each subsequent anniversary						M5 will not trigger independently
M5	Vehicle & trailer MOT initial pass rates*	95%	93%	94%	94.99%	Where the fleet size is 20 or less the KPI is no more than one failure in 13 rolling periods
*will be reported to DVSA yearly on the anniversary of acceptance to the scheme, additionally will be included in KPI report following a trigger for M1, M2, M3 or M4						

3.3.2 Key Performance Indicators for driving activities

The key performance calculation for driving activities data is based on the total number of infringements against the total number of tachograph days; this is shown as a percentage. As this calculation may involve many drivers from many depots it is possible that drivers who persistently infringe may be hidden by drivers with fewer or no infringements therefore a key performance indicator has been added to identify repeat offenders.

Key performance indicators are aligned with the fixed penalty band specified in Section 96(11) Transport Act 1968 table 1 & 2, The Road Safety (Financial Penalty Deposit) (Appropriate Amount) Order 2009. Please note this aligns with legislation only and does not take into account any other guidance or policy issued by DVSA or any other organisation.

There are nine key performance indicators for driving activities based on tachograph days.

Code	Drivers Hours Requirements (Based on tachograph days)	Key Performance Indicator	Trigger 1 2%+	Trigger 2 1%<2%	Trigger 3 <1%	Notes - Where an operator reports less than 25 tachograph days in a KPI period the KPI will be set at no more than 1 offence in the reporting period
D1	Fixed Penalty band 1	1.30%	3.30%	2.30%	1.31%	
D2	Fixed Penalty band 2	1.20%	3.20%	2.20%	1.21%	
D3	Fixed Penalty band 3	0.80%	2.80%	1.80%	0.81%	
D4	Fixed Penalty band 4	0.70%	2.70%	1.70%	0.71%	
D5	Overall Infringements	4%	6%	5%	4.10%	
D6	Working Time	4%	6%	5%	4.10%	
Operator Performance Report						D7, D8 & D9 will not trigger independently
D7	Repeat Offenders *	0	1	1	1	Where a driver has any infringement 3 times in three rolling reporting periods. The action taken will be checked during the periodic audit
D8	Unaccounted Mileage **	0	1	1	1	If an operator can satisfactorily account for any missing mileage this should be validated through the system. The missing mileage may be grouped or reported individually depending on the preference of the operator. For example the operator may be satisfied that any distance less than 5km can be explained by driving on private land and may choose to group that mileage. This validation will be checked during the periodic audit.
D9	Most Serious Infringements *	0	1	1	1	See appendix 2
* included in Operator Performance report and additionally in KPI report following a trigger for D1, D2, D3, D4, D5 or D6						
** included in Operator Performance report only (available for audit purposes)						

3.4 Measurement Periods, Alerts, and Automated Triggers

3.4.1 - Measurement Periods

A measurement period is based on the ISO week date system.

All key performance indicators are measured every four weeks from 0000hrs Monday to 2359hrs Sunday– this is known as a KPI measurement period.

Example

Period 1 will be reported to DVSA on the first Monday of period 3

3.4.2 – Alert to Operator

An alert is the point at which a key performance indicator is exceeded but not sufficiently to notify the scheme manager. Action should be taken by the operator when a key performance indicator is exceeded to avoid recurrence of the issue.

Use one of the examples below

3.4.3 – Automated Trigger to Scheme Manager

Where an operator consistently fails to meet a key performance indicator or exceeds the tolerance, the scheme manager will be alerted by means of an automated trigger. This is an automated process through the system supplier.

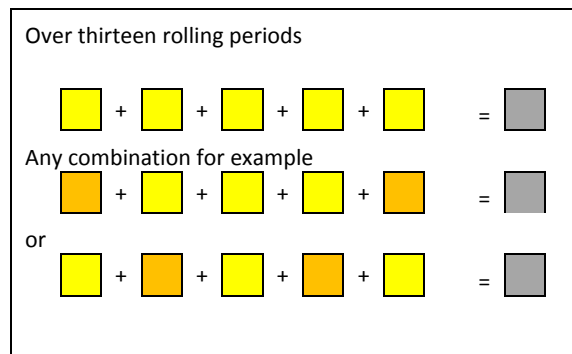
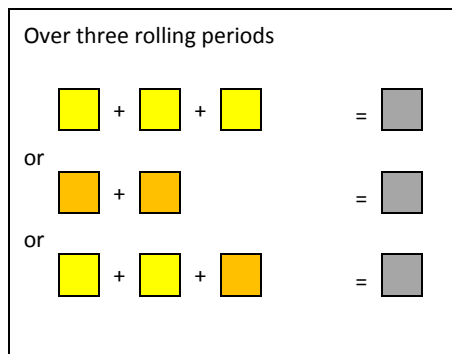
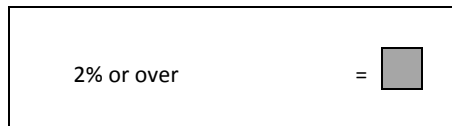
The scheme manager will be alerted when any of the criteria listed below have not been met. These apply to both maintenance and drivers' hours.

➤	Over three rolling KPI measurement periods, the operator fails to meet any one of the key performance indicators three times by less than one percentage point
➤	Over three rolling KPI measurement periods, the operator fails to meet any one of the key performance indicators twice by one percentage point or more
➤	During any KPI measurement period, any key performance indicator is exceeded by two percentage points or more
➤	Over 13 rolling KPI measurement periods, any key performance indicator is exceeded more than four times

Examples of trigger calculations based on the information in 3.3.1, 3.3.2 and 3.4.3 above

KPIs that are exceeded, but not sufficiently to trigger an alert to the scheme manager are highlighted in yellow and amber.

KPIs that trigger an alert to the scheme manager are highlighted in grey.



Section 4: How do I apply for DVSA Earned Recognition Status?

4.1 Before submitting the application form

1. Before an application is made, it is recommended that the operator carefully reads this document and has a full understanding of the audit standards document that applies to their operation, HGV, PSV or both and any other supporting guidance documentation.
2. A [self-assessment checklist](#) has been produced.
3. The operator may find it helpful to complete this prior to filling in the application form.

4.2 Submitting the application form

1. Operators wishing to apply for DVSA Earned Recognition status should complete the [application form \(DVSAER01\)](#)
2. Please read the [guidance notes on completing the application form](#) and advice about the declaration of convictions and penalties.

4.3 Application review

Completed applications for the scheme will be processed by DVSA when they are received.

- Failure to provide all the required information will result in the application being delayed or rejected. The review checks the validity of the information, enforcement history and information held by the Office of the Traffic Commissioner.
- Where non-compliance is identified, this will be reviewed on an individual basis.

4.3.1 – Compliance with Key Performance Indicators

The review will also ensure compliance with the Key Performance Indicators. To enable this the operator must provide the last 3 periods of driver and maintenance KPI results with their application. This information can be obtained from their validated IT system suppliers.

4.3.2 – Driver Card and Vehicle Unit Data

DVSA will contact the operator during the application review to request the latest 3 months drivers' hours data, from both driver cards (including agency drivers) and vehicle units, for all the vehicles used on all operator licences included in the application.

Digital data should be provided via email to dvsaer@dvsa.gov.uk in the form of a Zip file containing raw data for all the vehicle units and driver cards.

Analogue records, if applicable, must be presented for the 3-month period prior to the last 28 days in order to allow drivers to comply with drivers' hours regulations and should be sent by a secure method to DVSA, Remote Enforcement Office, Merebank Road, Bristol BS11 8AQ

Following the validation process all analogue data will be returned to the operator and copies of digital data will be securely destroyed.

4.3.3 – Missing Information or Records

If an application is deemed not complete and DVSA request missing information, a maximum of two requests for that information will be made within the three month period from the date the application review was started by DVSA. If any missing information has not been supplied within that timeframe, the application will be rejected.

4.3.4 – Outcome of the Application Review

If the application review is successful, the operator will be notified accordingly and asked to arrange the initial audit.

If the application review is not successful, the operator will be informed of the reasons why. Further applications will be considered.

4.4 Arranging the audit

- An audit can be carried out up to three months before or up to three months after the application has been received. If the audit is outside the three month window a new application would be required.
- Example – If an application is received on 1st July, the audit can be carried out in advance from 2nd April until 30th June.
- **Please note** – When your application is received DVSA will carry out an application review, if you have already had an audit we may request a directed validation check or may reject the application if it fails to meet the requirements.
- Operators must ensure that they have access to managing their operator licence online as they may need to provide specific reports to the auditor. To register operators should go to www.gov.uk/manage-vehicle-operator-licence Please allow at least a week for the registration process to complete.

Section 5: Initial audit

- The audit will be carried out using the appropriate audit standards document. Where an entity operates both HGVs and PSVs, all applicable sections must be completed.
- The audit will look at the processes involved in the transport management systems and how effectively they are managed, demonstrating that any compliance issues are investigated and appropriately actioned. Evidence must be provided by the operator to show continuous and effective control and risk management
- In preparation for the audit, the operator should ensure that all required evidence is readily available. Failure to comply may result in either a delay in acceptance or an unsatisfactory audit. At the discretion of the auditor, extra time may be given, subject to the time limits stated in section 4.4 of this guidance document, to produce the required supporting evidence.
- Vehicles will be selected for audit from every licence held by the operator in accordance with the audit sampling guidance found in section 3.2 – Audit sampling.
- DVSA may direct the focus of the audit in terms of the content or scope.
- The operator should ensure that the CPC holder or responsible person is available on the day of the audit. If these are not present, then the operator must provide a member of staff with a suitable level of seniority and managerial control who is able to access any required documentation, answer any questions from the auditor and sign the completed audit document.
- It is the operator's responsibility to demonstrate that the systems they have in place satisfy the required standards and to comply with any reasonable request relating to the audit process made by the authorised audit provider.
- The cost of the audit will be borne by the operator.
- If an operator disagrees with any aspect of the audit they must follow the auditor provider's complaints procedure.
- The audit may include wider criteria than that required for Earned Recognition, for example, to meet the standards for other schemes. However, it must be clear within the audit documentation which of the additional standards are not be compulsory for entry into the DVSA Earned Recognition Scheme.

5.1 Audit outcome

Operators will not be advised of the outcome at the time of the audit as the report must be sent to DVSA by the authorised audit provider. The final decision will be made by the scheme manager.

'Standards met'

If all of the audit standards are met, and this decision is supported by the scheme manager upon review, the operator will be informed and granted accreditation.

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- Accredited Operators will receive a unique identification number
 - Their OCRS status will be 'blue'
 - They will be entitled to the benefits detailed in section 1.5 of this document
 - Will be published on GOV.UK which can be found on www.gov.uk/dvsa/earned-recognition

DVSA will notify the operator's validated system providers of the requirement to report KPIs.

'Standards not met'

If the operator does not meet the required standards and the auditor is satisfied the standards can be met within application period an improvement plan can be agreed with the operator and the auditor.

It is important that there is independence between the audit process and any support, other than feedback, given to you to meet the required standards.

A further verification audit may be required if documentary evidence is insufficient.

If the standards cannot be met within the application period, the operator will need to re-apply when they think they meet the standards.

Section 6: Monitoring and Periodic Audits

6.1 Monitoring

The accredited operator will have a DVSA validated management system which monitors the key performance indicators used to measure an operator's on-going compliance. Trigger points are used to indicate to the accredited operator when any of the key performance indicators have not been met. Although these systems will report to DVSA on every KPI measurement period, they will only be notified of non-compliance when any key performance indicator exceeds acceptable parameters.

6.1.1 DVSAER112

If an accredited operator is involved in an incident, collision or any other event that may affect the reputation of the scheme the completion of a [DVSAER112](#) form may be required. The instructions on the form detail the occasions when a form is required and what information should be given

6.2 Periodic audits

An accredited operator must demonstrate they continue to maintain the scheme standards. To provide this reassurance, every two years an audit must be carried out by a DVSA authorised audit provider at the operator's cost. It is the accredited operator's responsibility to arrange this audit which must be completed no more than three months before the anniversary date of entry into the Scheme but no later than two years after the anniversary date of entry into the Scheme.

Example

An operator is accredited on 15 September 2018

The periodic audit must be completed anytime between 15 June 2020 and 15 September 2020

6.2.1 Maintenance concessions

Where operators benefit from an agreed maintenance concession, they will be required to undertake an annual maintenance systems audit. This will be based on section 3 of the relevant audit standards document and must take place up to 1 month before and no later than the anniversary date of entry into the scheme after year one and year three. A periodic audit of all the systems will be required at year two.

6.3 Audit outcome

'Standards met'

If all of the audit standards are met, and this decision is supported by the scheme manager upon review, the operator will be informed and will remain in the scheme.

'Standards not met'

If you do not meet the required standards and the auditor is satisfied the standards can be met within a 3-month period an improvement plan can be agreed with you and the auditor.

It is important that there is independence between the audit process and any support, other than feedback, given to you to meet the required standards.

A further audit may be required if documentary evidence is insufficient to assess if the standards are being met.

If the standards cannot be met within the 3-month period the operators accreditation status will be reviewed by the Scheme Manager.

Procedures for dealing with unsatisfactory audits can be found in section 7.

Section 7: If scheme standards are not met?

There may be occasions when issues or concerns are identified. These may be:

- when a KPI has not been met and an alert is triggered
- following an audit
- where a periodic audit has not been completed within the prescribed period
- if another compliance issue arises

In such cases a member of the earned recognition team will discuss the matter with the accredited operator and the scheme manager. The scheme manager will consider all the known circumstances and may use discretion to tailor any action to reflect the severity and culpability of the accredited operator. In deciding the appropriate course of action to be taken, shortcomings that constitute a threat to road safety will be treated with the utmost seriousness and carry more weight in determining the final outcome. In most cases, operators will be given the opportunity to resolve any shortcomings.

The course of action taken may be, but not limited to the following:

- a desk based assessment which may include a request for information
- a discussion
- a scheme manager instigated discussion and request for explanation, information or data
- a formal improvement action plan which may include a further audit
- removal from the scheme

All communication between the earned recognition team member, scheme manager and the accredited operator will be recorded.

Desk based assessment

The desk-based assessment would be carried out by a member of the earned recognition team and would consider areas such as key performance indicator trigger levels, audit failings, and information received from other sources. This assessment may result in no action being taken or alternatively being escalated to one of the other actions detailed in this section.

Discussion

A discussion would be where the operator, without prompting from either a member of the earned recognition team or the scheme manager, has identified an issue, which may result in the key performance indicators being triggered or the DVSA Earned Recognition standards not being met. They have been proactive in contacting the earned recognition team to highlight the potential problem and advise what remedial action they have taken or intend to take to rectify the issues. The earned recognition team will monitor the situation to ensure it is satisfactorily resolved to an agreed timescale, if it is not rectified the matter may be escalated to more formal action.

Scheme manager instigated meeting

The scheme manager instigated meeting and request for explanation, information or data may be as a result of a breach of the DVSA Earned Recognition standards or key performance indicators where further clarification is required. The scheme manager will contact the accredited operator to obtain any necessary information. If as a result, the shortcomings were found to be of a minor nature such as a low-level key performance indicator trigger then the operator explanation and assurances may be sufficient to close the action. Alternatively, more serious breaches, such as a significant

breach of the key performance indicator threshold may result in a formal action plan being considered.

Improvement action plan which may include a further audit

If an accredited operator has failed to maintain the standards required by the DVSA Earned Recognition scheme for example an unsatisfactory periodic audit or there has been a significant breach of the key performance indicators then the scheme manager may implement a formal improvement action plan.

- The scheme manager will contact the accredited operator in writing as soon as possible and in any case within 14 calendar days of identifying the non-compliance detailing the areas of concern
- Upon receipt the accredited operator will, within 14 calendar days, provide written assurances and an improvement action plan detailing how they intend to deal with the identified issues
- Both the scheme manager and accredited operator will agree the improvement action plan within a mutually acceptable timeframe. This may require a further interim audit to be carried out

If the accredited operator satisfactorily completes the improvement action plan they will continue to be a member of the DVSA Earned Recognition scheme. If however, the accredited operator fails to complete the improvement action plan as agreed or meet the required standards or criteria their accreditation will be removed by the scheme manager. See Section 8 – Leaving the Scheme.

Removal from the scheme

A serious failing on the part of the accredited operator such as providing false information to the scheme manager, a breach of the terms and conditions or insolvency may result in their removal from the Earned Recognition scheme. See Section 8 – Leaving the Scheme.

If following an agreed action plan and within the agreed time frame the accredited operator shows continued non-compliance and fails to achieve the required standards for Earned Recognition the Scheme Manager taking into account all circumstances may remove the accreditation.

Section 8: Leaving the Scheme

8.1 Voluntary Withdrawal from the Scheme

- Membership of the DVSA Earned Recognition Scheme is entirely voluntary and an accredited operator may leave the scheme at any point by giving notice of its withdrawal to the scheme manager
- Notice should be in writing and signed by a responsible person. A minimum of seven calendar days notice should be given prior to leaving
- Withdrawal from the scheme would mean the operator would be removed from the DVSA published list of Accredited Operators and no longer be entitled to the benefits detailed in section 1 of this Guidance Document

8.2 Refusal or Removal by DVSA

Refusal or removal will fall into two categories; operator behaviour or failure of the operator to meet the scheme standards listed below.

8.2.1 Operator Behaviour

- DVSA may, in its absolute discretion, refuse or remove accreditation if it considers that it is necessary to do so to prevent the scheme from being brought into disrepute. This may be when the actions of the accredited operator, their employees, agents or sub-contractors be such that it has an adverse impact on the integrity or reputation of the DVSA Earned Recognition Scheme
- DVSA will also terminate or remove accreditation if the operator becomes insolvent, bankrupt, ceases trading or the partnership is dissolved. Should the accredited operator be put into administration the scheme manager may consider removal or an action plan
- If in DVSA's opinion the operator has materially breached its obligations under the terms and conditions or protocol laid down in this guidance document the scheme manager may remove the accreditation
- If the accredited operator undergoes a change of control without prior agreement with the scheme manager the accreditation may be removed
- If the operator knowingly provides false information to the scheme manager or DVSA authorised audit provider the accreditation will be removed
- The scheme manager will provide in writing the accredited operator twenty-eight calendar days notification of the removal. The accredited operator will have a right of appeal detailed in Section 9 – The Appeal Process

8.2.2 Failure to Meet the Scheme Standards

The Accreditation may be subject to removal if the operator fails to meet some or all of the performance criteria set down in this document. This could include, but is not limited to, some or all of the following:

-
- If the accredited operator fails, refuses or delays the completion of a periodic audit outside the prescribed period
 - If the accredited operator fails to ensure that the scheme manager or DVSA authorised audit provider has access to management systems and data including remote monitoring
 - If during remote monitoring or a periodic audit the accredited operator is identified as having non-conformance issues identified against the published KPIs. These may relate to maintenance, drivers' hours or other management systems
 - If following an operator improvement action plan and within the agreed time frame the accredited operator shows continued non-compliance and fails to achieve the required DVSA Earned Recognition standard the scheme manager taking into account all circumstances may remove the accreditation.

8.2.3 Removal Process

- In the event that the scheme manager removes accreditation the operator will be notified in writing with twenty eight calendar days' notice and provided with a report detailing the reasons for the decision to terminate the accreditation
- In the event of withdrawal or removal from the scheme, DVSA will not be liable for any costs incurred by the operator
- The operator has the right to appeal the decision of the scheme manager to withdraw or remove their accreditation in accordance with the appeal process detailed in section 9.

Section 9: The Appeal Process

9.1 How do I appeal?

An operator who wishes to appeal an adverse decision by the scheme manager must do so in writing within fourteen calendar days of receiving the notice. The reasons for the appeal must be detailed and any documentary evidence should be included. This is to ensure that the DVSA Appeal Department are fully aware of all relevant issues and arguments when considering the appeal.

Any appeal should be sent to corporatereputation@dvsa.gov.uk.

9.2 The appeal

The Appeal Department may request additional information or clarification from the operator or for certain actions to be completed prior to deciding the appeal. The operator must cooperate with these requests in order to allow a decision to be made.

The Appeal Department will consider the appeal within twenty-eight calendar days of receipt. This may vary subject to the operator providing additional information, clarifications, or the completion of certain required actions.

Any decision by the DVSA to refuse or remove an accreditation will be suspended following a formal written appeal by the operator pending the decision of the Appeal Department.

9.3 The decision

The operator will be notified of the Appeal Department's decision in writing within seven calendar days of the decision being made. The decision of the Appeal Department is final.

Section 10: I want to be an Authorised Audit Provider (AAP)

10.1 What do I need to become an Authorised Audit Provider?

- APPs will need to show that they meet all the standards and criteria detailed in the [Terms and Conditions](#) and [Code of Practice](#)

DVSA will authorise either an individual or organisation to carry out auditing on their behalf. These authorised bodies will demonstrate high standards of professionalism and expert knowledge in the fields of transport and operator licensing.

To become an AAP you will need to meet a number of qualification and competence requirements on application.

10.2 How do I apply to become an AAP?

To apply to become an AAP you need to complete form [ERAAP1](#) and include the required supporting documentation and confirmatory statements.

The application form must be completed in full. Any missing information required as part of the authorisation process will result in the application being delayed or refused.

Completed applications should be submitted to: ER_AAP@dvsa.gov.uk at National Standards and Accreditation

10.2.1 AAP application review

This consists of a full review of the application form and supporting documentation submitted:

- Organisation Details
- Sectors
- Auditor Details
 - o Transport Manager CPC (detailed in code of practice section 19)
 - o Sector Experience (CV, FORS, CILT) (detailed in code of practice section 20)
 - o Audit Qualification (detailed in code of practice section 22)
- Evidence to support that their audit standards align with the Earned Recognition compliance module, performance criteria and assessment requirements. Alternatively they can adopt the DVSA audit standards (detailed in code of practice sections 6, 7 & 8)
[HGV Audit Standards](#)
[PSV Audit Standards](#)

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- A certificate from a recognised quality management system such as ISO9001:2015 (or equivalent). (detailed in code of practice section 9)
 - An Audit Summary sheet and supporting documentation. [Example of summary sheet template](#) (detailed in code of practice section 10)

10.2.2 Centre Verification

Following submission of a completed application and supporting documentation that meets the required criteria, the APP will receive a Centre Verification Visit (CVV) conducted by the National Standards and Accreditation team.

The purpose of the CVV is to review and confirm processes and documentation are in place.

AAPs will also be required to provide:

- An example copy of a written contract to be used between the AAP and the ER Operator prior to the systems audit taking place. (detailed in T&Cs section 14)
- Evidence of a complaints procedure being in place to allow the ER Operator to raise any complaints about the audit or audit process. (detailed in T&Cs section 16)
- Evidence to show their auditors will undertake a 2-day Transport Manager Certificate of Professional Competence refresher course at least once every 5 years, which shall form a part of a minimum 70 hours of continuing professional development in that 5 year period. (detailed in code of practice section 21)

Once a successful verification is completed, the APP will receive an authorisation letter, a certificate and will be included on the [AAP published list](#).

10.2.3 Initial audit observation (IAO)

At the earliest opportunity an Earned Recognition team member will carry out an initial audit observation of the Earned Recognition audit. This will include an assessment of audit documentation; systems and audit processes. This will ensure the standards are set at the correct level and are consistent across all AAPs.

During the IAO the auditor shall demonstrate that a process exists to prevent any conflict of interest in the relationship between the auditor and the operator.

The audit must also be carried out in a systematic and appropriate manner with a level of sampling that ensures an informed judgment and allows a sufficiently accurate measure of the operator's standards.

Any decision or observations identified during the audit that contribute to the operator's level of compliance must be fully justified, sufficiently explained and fully documented in the audit report form. The AAP auditor must provide objective evidence to substantiate the basis for reaching their conclusion in line with the ER audit standards.

During the audit process the AAP auditor should:

- Ask open and probing questions.
- Observe and record positive and negative reactions.
- Physically check policy and process documentation as well as accessibly.

Third party audit standards may include schemes other than ER, they are not compulsory for entry into the DVSA ER scheme but should be clearly stated within the audit documentation. However, it must be clear within the audit documentation which the additional standards are.

The audit must be applicable to the operation and should be conducted at a level that is relevant to the operating system, number of operating centres and fleet size. The AAP auditor will need to evidence that the location(s) used provide a comprehensive audit that satisfactorily measures DVSA ER standards.

10.2.4 Periodic observations

To ensure the quality standard is maintained DVSA will audit documentation and carry out on-site quality assurance checks as required.

10.3 Refusal or revocation of AAP status

The DVSA may refuse an application or revoke an AAP if they fail to meet one or more of the following criteria:

- The AAP or individual auditors working on behalf does not comply with the responsibilities details in the Terms and Conditions or the Code of Practice.
- The AAP fails to maintain the required ER audit standards or competence qualifications and quality management systems accreditation. (T&Cs Section 10)
- The AAP is involved in or linked with any action which DVSA considers inappropriate or improper and likely to bring the DVSA ER scheme into disrepute. This would include but not limited to a loss of repute or being prohibited from being a Transport Manager by a Traffic Commissioner.

10.4 Can I appeal if DVSA refuse an application or revoke an AAP status?

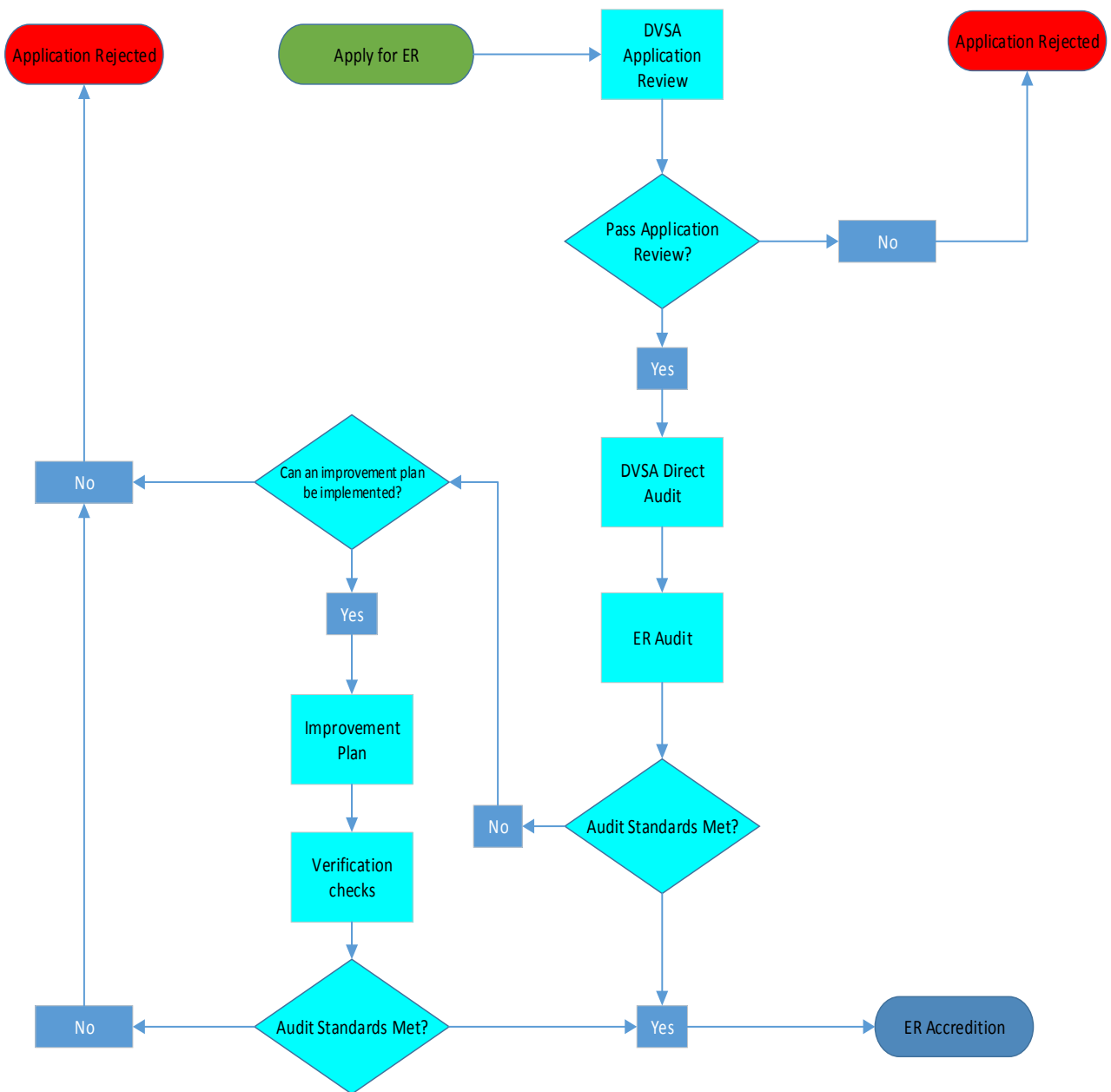
If the application is refused or authorisation revoked, the applicant/AAP will receive written notification from DVSA National Standards & Accreditation detailing the reasons for their decision.

Following the notification the applicant/AAP will have 28 days from receipt of the letter to make representation detailing any facts or circumstance they wish DVSA to take into account.

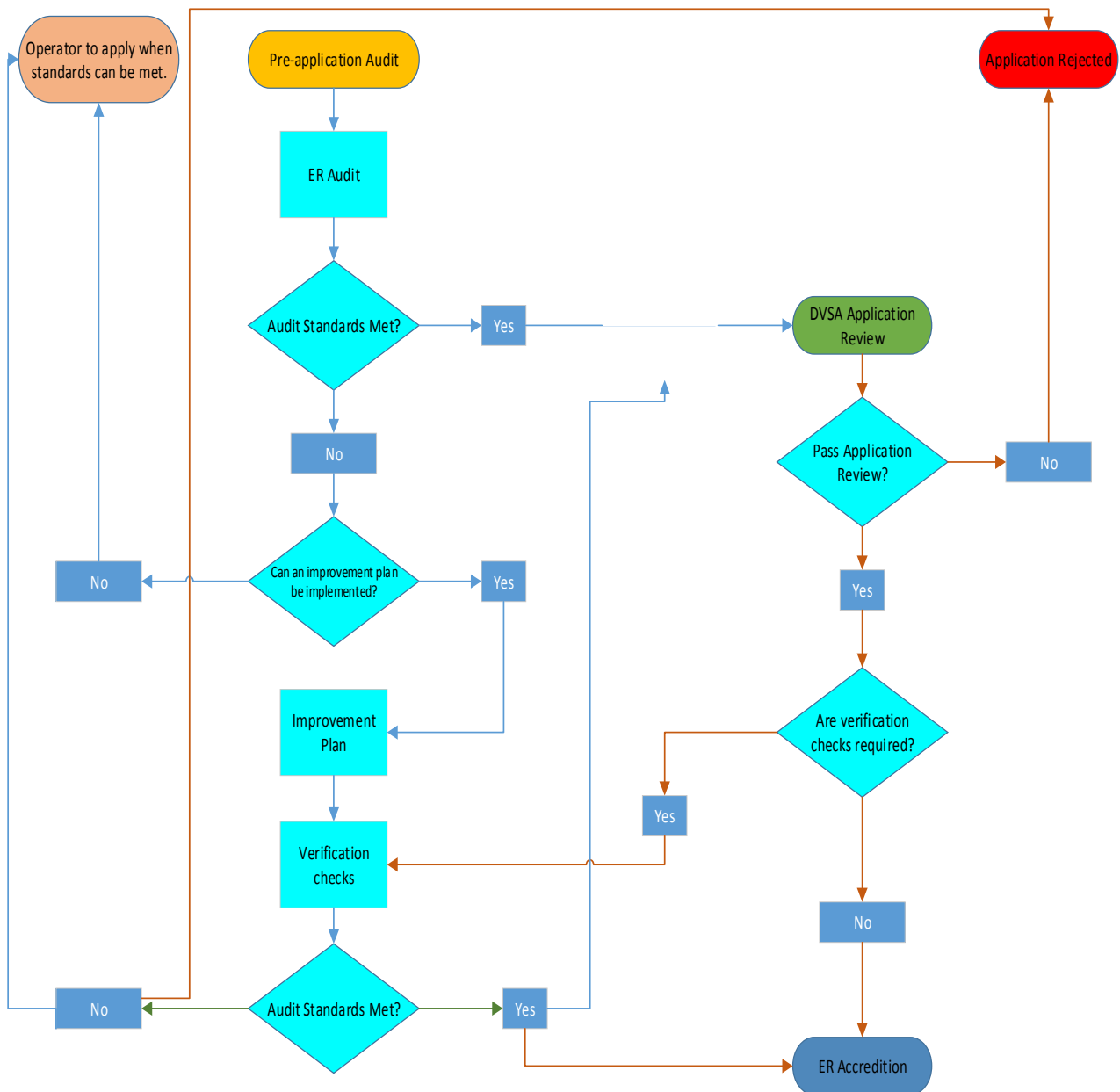
Written representations will be considered by DVSA who will decide if the actions is proportionate and reasonable and whether or not to uphold the decision.

If the APP is still not satisfied with the decision/response, they can refer the matter to DVSA Customer Complaints Coordinator corporarereutation@dvsa.gov.uk

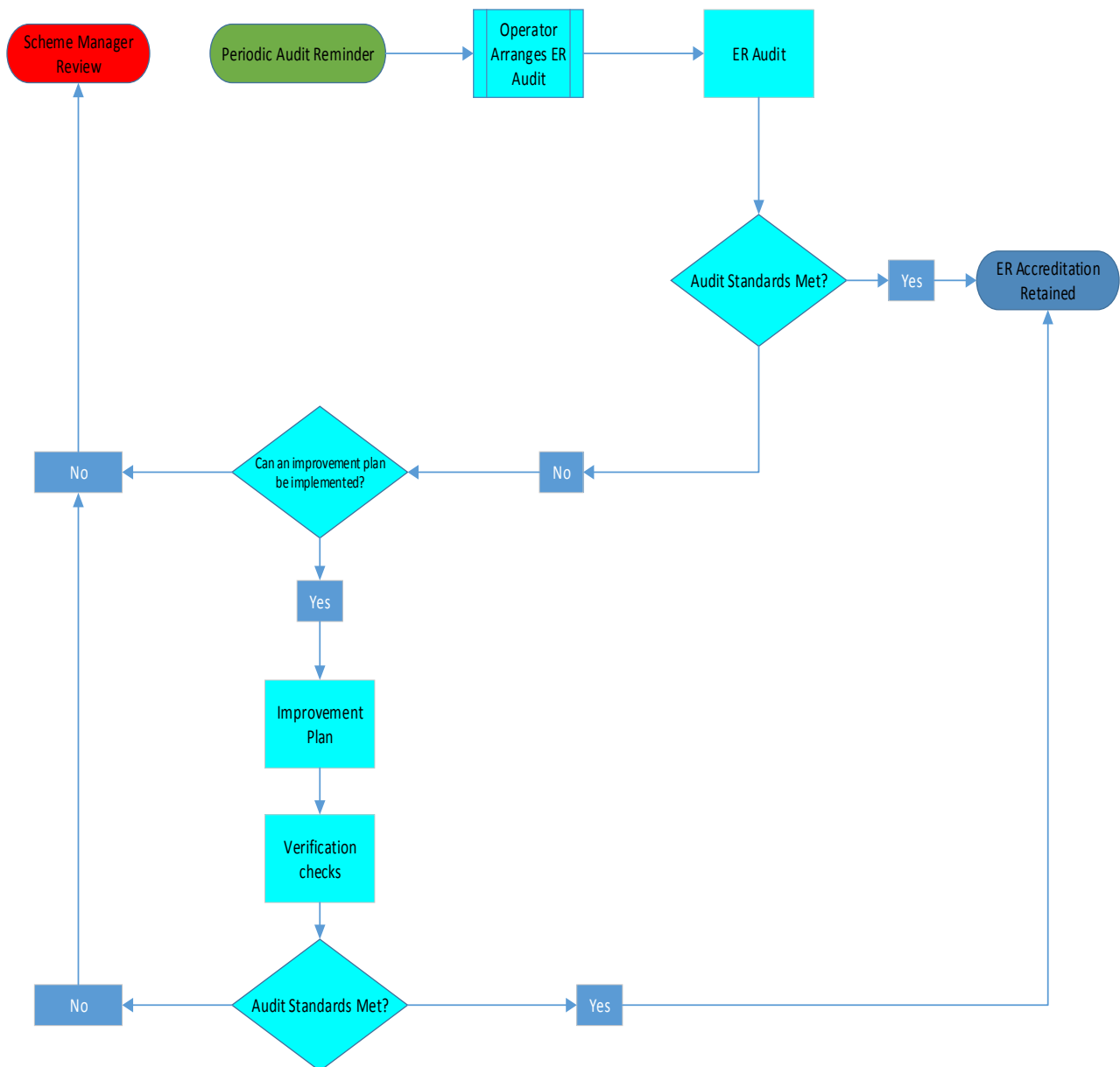
Application Process (Initial Audit)



Application Process (Pre-Application Audit)



Periodic Audit Process



Section 11: I want to be a Validated System Supplier

11.1 What do I need to become an IT Systems Provider?

An IT systems provider will need to satisfy the requirements of the technical specification document and for the system to pass a validation process before that system can be used by an earned recognition operator.

11.2 How do I apply to become an IT Systems Provider?

To apply to become an authorised audit provider you will need to complete form ERVITS1 - [Application to become an IT Systems provider](#).

This form must be completed in full including system name, whether it is a maintenance or drivers hours system, contact details and name of operator using the system. Any missing information required as part of the process will result in the application being delayed or rejected.

If it is your intention to receive data from external sources details of those systems are required including whether or not those systems are already validated for earned recognition.

Maintenance only – The system must be fully electronic but may for a period of no more than three years from the go live date allow for input of manual safety inspection records. If the system is measuring manually completed 'safety inspection' and driver defect report documents details must be included on how these are uploaded to your system and how the data is extracted to record the required key performance indicators. Manual uploading of driver defect reports will be allowed after the 3-year period as long as the system captures the information electronically.

The application must be able to demonstrate that the system meets all the IT reporting requirements for earned recognition as detailed in the system requirements document and must include an example of the periodic reporting form.

Operators will be expected to submit three periods of data on application from either an existing earned recognition operator or a new applicant. This data may be used for validation purposes.

11.3 Why has my application been rejected?

An application to become an validated IT systems provider must be fully completed with all required information.

If the scheme manager considers that an application does not meet the required standards, then it will be rejected and the applicant informed.

11.4 System Validation

Data from your systems and either an existing earned recognition operator, where they are intending to use your system, or a new applicant will be used to carry out the validation process. Where the data is deemed to be insufficient to carry out a full validation process you may be required to supply supplementary data or undertake an additional validation process.

Maintenance

System validation will be carried out over a minimum of three but no more than thirteen measurement periods using a minimum of 150 safety inspection documents.

When a suitable operators data has been identified validation dates will be agreed and the safety inspection documentation will be checked to identify the registration number, date of inspection, all required fields are completed and all defects have been rectified and the documentation has been signed off as being roadworthy. The frequency will be checked against the requirements of the operators licence. A further check will be made to confirm the number of defects raised during the validation period.

This data will be compared to the results from your system for the same time period, at this stage of the system validation alerts and triggers will be checked to confirm these are recording correctly.

On successful completion of the system validation process, you will be accepted as a system provider and allowed to report for earned recognition operators.

If your system fails to meet the required standards a further full system validation would be required, until that is successfully completed your system would not be acceptable for earned recognition purposes.

Re-validation will take place no longer than two years after the last full system validation.

Drivers Hours

System validation will be carried out over a minimum of three but no more than thirteen measurement periods using a minimum of 3000 tachograph records.

When a suitable operator has been identified validation dates will be agreed and tachograph raw data for both the driver and vehicle unit will be requested. This data will be analysed into the four fixed penalty bands, overall infringements and overall working time. Repeat offenders and most serious infringements will also be identified

This data will be compared to the results from your system for the same time period, at this stage of the system validation alerts and triggers will be checked to confirm these are recording correctly.

On successful completion of the validation process you will be accepted as a system supplier and allowed to report for earned recognition operators.

If your system fails to meet the required standards a full system validation process would be required and until that is completed your system would not be acceptable for earned recognition purposes

Re-validation will take place no longer than two years after the last full validation.

11.5 Quality Assurance

Random checks may be carried out on any validated system to ensure the integrity of the data, this will follow the same system validation process but use a smaller sample.

If problems are found the scheme manager will contact you to discuss the details. If the fault is found to be system related a suitable time period will be given to rectify the problem, failure to meet this period may result in the validation for your system being removed.

11.6 What happens if I alter my system specification?

In normal circumstances you would not be expected to tell us about normal system upgrades, however we would expect you to have a robust system in place to check the system output has not been affected by the change. You would be expected to tell us if an unexpected problems was found that could affect the output.

You will need to notify the scheme manager if changes made to your system would affect the reporting of key performance indicators, this could result in a full or partial system validation

You will need to notify the scheme manager if you intent to add a data source from a non-validated system, the integrity of this source would need to be checked prior to acceptance.

A new product or a fundamental change to the existing system would require system validated before being accepted and may require a detailed application form to be completed.

11.7 Can my Validated IT System provider status be removed?

The scheme manager may remove the status to be a validated IT system Provider if they fail to meet one or more of the following criteria.

- If the validation process fails and changes are not made within the time period
- If major changes are made to the system that affect the recording of required results
- If the system providers fail to report as required
- If the validated IT system provider is involved in or linked with any action which DVSA considers inappropriate or improper and likely to bring the DVSA earned recognition scheme into disrepute, status will be removed

11.8 Can I complain about being rejected or removed from IT System provider status?

If the application or validated status is rejected or removed, the IT system provider will receive 14-calendar days written notification from DVSA detailing the reasons for their decision to terminate the agreement.

If the IT system provider is not satisfied with the response, they can refer the matter to DVSA Customer Complaint Coordinator corporatereputation@dvsa.gov.uk.

Section 12: Use of the Marque

All accredited operators, authorised audit providers, and validated system suppliers will be entitled to use the official marque.

Guidelines on how to use the marque will be sent to you when your status is confirmed.