

The EU 2nd and 3rd Directive on Driving Licences 91/439/EC and 2006/126/EC

Directives to reform the way driving licences are handed out, with special emphasis on motorcycles.

Cost - [£71m to comply by building 66 new off-road test centres](#)

Talking Points

Costs of Short sightedness

The [British Motorcycle Federation](#) slammed the Driving Standards Authority for not properly paying attention to the directive consultation or be aware that sections of the EU-driving test couldn't be carried out properly on British roads. As such, delays for new qualified motorcyclists ensued from the transposition of the 2nd Directive.

A cost not worth fighting against?

In negotiating the 2nd Directive, the British government abstained in the Council of Ministers as "it was not persuaded of the cost effectiveness of the proposed test requirements, but the amendments were passed nonetheless" ([source](#)). So we now that even if the UK government opposes something at the Council of Ministers, harmful amendments to the British economy will be passed regardless.

What is it?

Directives changing the way motorcycle licenses are handed out. They set licensing regulations for cars, lorries and other vehicles that mandate compulsory re-testing every 10 years and possible medical checks.

The 2nd Directive came into force in 2009.

The Directive required the motorcycle test to become more rigorous. This included manoeuvres that can't legally be done on British roads, such as an emergency stop at 50km per hour (as per the directive, in metric, 31mph in imperial) and breaks the 30mph limit in built up areas. It also required 'off-road' manoeuvres that required the expensive test centres to be built to accommodate these and the aspects of the test that can't legally be done on British roads.

[Suzuki Slip Stream magazine](#) described how the DSA complied fully with the Directive: "The EU has decreed - and the DSA has embraced that decree fully - that the extra part of the test will contain a set of more demanding manoeuvres, at least two of which will be carried out at low speed, including a slalom course."

The 3rd Directive is due to come into force, fully, in 2013.

This third directive changes the categories of motorcycle licensing. The key difference will be the mandatory 2 year gap between categories and the test for each stage.

The Directive amends moped and motorcycle rules, making:

- a) Changes to size categories of motorcycles, including a new medium-sized category;
- b) An increase from 21 to 24 in the minimum age for motorcyclists gaining direct access to the most powerful motorbikes, and
- c) A new formal test, or a training programme, for younger motorcyclists wishing to progress in stages to the larger and more powerful machines (currently, unlimited access to all motorcycles is gained automatically after two years' experience on less powerful machines). ([Source](#))

Third Party Opinions

"It'll all get very expensive and difficult. It's forecast that the ultimate reduction in the number of new riders going through the new [licensing] system will be as much as 60%" [Motorcycle.co.uk](#)