

LEGAL
UPDATE

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Baumot emission system fire warning

SAFETY

DVSA has been working with the bus industry on an investigation into three recent bus fires caused by emissions control equipment made by Baumot. This equipment is fitted to improve the vehicle's emissions standards and is often fitted to service buses used in low-emission areas.

Since Baumot UK Ltd entered administration in January 2021, DVSA has been unable to trace which vehicles these components have been fitted to. That Baumot has entered administration also means the manufacturer cannot carry out a recall, which DVSA would usually oversee.

It is understood that the components are usually fitted to Scania or Cummins engines, and the fire risk has been linked to the electrical power supply to the equipment.

Operators that have this equipment fitted should bring the issue to the attention of transport managers and maintenance providers. Particular attention should be paid to the robustness of the electrical parts, as this is where the fires appear to have started. As the original manufacturer is unable to provide further support, you may need to seek professional support from elsewhere – trade associations may be able to assist.

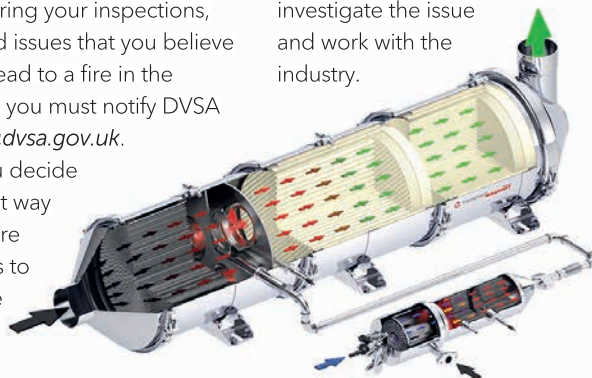
If, during your inspections, you find issues that you believe could lead to a fire in the system, you must notify DVSA at vsb@dvsa.gov.uk.

If you decide the best way to ensure safety is to remove or disable

the equipment, you will need to remember that the vehicle will revert to its original Euro rating, which could affect where a particular vehicle can be used.

DVSA is contacting TfL and other authorities where this type of equipment is used to explain the safety concerns, and that bus companies may have some short-term challenges arising from this.

In the meantime, the organisation is continuing to investigate the issue and work with the industry.



Fact File

IT'S A DATE

Because of the annual test exemptions that DVSA offered last year due to COVID-19, DVSA annual inspections for trucks and trailers are no longer evenly spaced throughout the year. It warns that the August to November period is 'significantly busier than usual.'

"This will put pressure on the wider industry, including those involved in preparing vehicles for test and maintaining them throughout the year, as well as the capacity available at ATFs," it said.

As a result, it is suggesting that operators consider pulling forward tests for vehicles that are due in this period to June and July.

Those months, again because of the pandemic, are much less busy.

It says: "For peace of mind, we are advising operators with tests in August, September, October and November to move to May, June or July and avoid the busier months later in the year. Doing this will also help you to avoid issues in future years."

A new web service indicates the availability of test slots at local ATFs. It is available via www.is.gd/obuhav

REGULATORY

Speed limiter response no longer tested

The testing of speed limiter response speeds in vehicles with an analogue tachograph will no longer be part of the annual test on heavy vehicles.

This change means all Authorised Testing Facilities (ATFs) will be able to test vehicles fitted with analogue tachographs. Previously only certain ATFs could perform annual tests on vehicles fitted with this type of tachograph, due to the equipment needed.

The procedure has been

suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic, but will stop being part of the annual test permanently from 1 May this year. This will mean there will be no requirement for ATFs to own or calibrate this equipment after this date.

REGULATORY

Test monitors now connected

From 1 May, exhaust gas analysers and diesel smoke meters are able to connect directly to the MOT testing service. From that date, this equipment must be installed in any MOT centres which meet

certain criteria, that test certain types of commercial vehicles.

It is required for those testing cars and light vans (class 4), commercial vans (3-3.5t gvw; class 7) and private buses and coaches with more than 13 seats (class 5). Centres must have this equipment if they are: opening a new MOT centre, reopening a closed MOT centre (this applies regardless of how long it's been closed), changing ownership (where the MOT centre moves from one authorised examiner (AE) to another) or replacing emissions testing equipment. Those who

applied before 1 May 2021 are not affected. DVSA plans to introduce other types of connected equipment following successful trials, including headlamp beam testers. It expects to publish a notice about this later in 2021.

REGULATORY

Safety first

A new pre-start walkaround check has been published by DVSA for public service vehicle (PSV) drivers. It covers checks from the driver's seat, inside and outside the vehicle; it's available via www.is.gd/coxuko