

CPC CHIEF EXAMINERS REPORT

095

Subject:	Certificate of Professional Competence
Stage/Scheme:	Unit 5
Series and/or year of examination:	June 2009

N.B. The substance of this report will be published by OCR (please follow guidance given in 'Instructions for Examiners').

General report and review of paper – overall impression of candidates' performance and comments on those parts generally well done or poorly done; any additional comments on accuracy, spelling, layout, expression etc. would be useful.

Following the general report please provide more detailed comments on the quality and accuracy of the candidates answers against each qualification.

In general terms, candidates performed reasonably well. As is often the case though, there were many who failed to read the question properly. It would appear that they saw a key phrase, such as drivers' hours or operator licence, and then wrote as much as they could about that topic without a) examining the specific requirement of the question and b) applying the information in the scenario.

Candidates must be properly prepared to sit an examination of NVQ Level 3 standard, and this means that when asked to identify or describe something, they do not simply write a list of single words. The candidate must make it clear what it is they are identifying.

Question 1.

The Managing Director of OCR Transport Ltd has expressed doubt concerning the accuracy of the costings for the summer Lake District tours. Prepare a cost schedule for a single tour and include the profit requirement. Show all your workings.

Most candidates answered this question very well. They correctly identified the costs for the vehicle to be used and applied this to the information in the scenario and question.

A small number of candidates made the mistake of allowing for five overnight payments; on a five day tour, there would be only four overnight payments.

Some candidates added a footnote that the fuel and tyre costs in the scenario were unrealistic. There was no evidence at all that any candidate was confused by this, all using the figures as printed in the scenario.

Question 2.

The local bus service drivers have asked you to clarify for them the provisions relating to rest periods. You intend to do this by giving them written details of the relevant provisions.

Write, in the form of an instruction, the rest period provisions for the drivers who are employed only on services 2 and 5, explaining to the drivers why they apply.

Each service is registered as an end-to-end operation.

Very few candidates achieved anything approaching maximum marks in what is a crucial area of a transport

manager's job.

Two main problems were manifest.

The first was not knowing which set of drivers' hours applied to the services. As these services had single journey distances in excess of 50k, they would be operated under EU hours regulations.

The second was failing to read the question. In both paragraphs, the words "rest periods" appeared. A large majority of candidates wrote at length about driving time, breaks from driving, weekly driving etc, and only briefly covered daily and weekly rest periods. Consequently, those candidates obtained few marks as the question was quite specifically about rest periods.

The few candidates who scored well were those who concentrated on daily rest periods, the rules on splitting a daily rest period, weekly rest periods and the rules that apply if a reduced rather than regular weekly rest period is taken.

A very small number of candidates made reference to the Road Transport Working Time Directive rest period rules; where they correctly quoted these rules, marks were awarded.

Question 3.

If the result of the Public Inquiry is favourable, the Directors intend to wind up RSA Travel Ltd and to increase the O Licence authorisation of OCR Transport Ltd by an equivalent number of vehicles. In relation to operator licensing, what action must be taken and what criteria must be satisfied to enable OCR Transport Ltd to incorporate the operation of RSA Travel Ltd?

Unfortunately this was another badly answered question.

It was not, as some candidates thought, asking about making an application for a new Operator Licence. OCR Transport Ltd already holds a licence and therefore what they were doing was applying for a variation of that licence to add vehicles.

Those candidates who said that OCR Transport Ltd would have to apply for a variation to authorise additional vehicles on the Operator Licence, and described the criteria that would have to be satisfied **for a variation** were the ones who did well.

Answers that included the process for winding up RSA Travel Ltd as a company, or referred to parking of vehicles, did not attract any marks. Some candidates referred to timescales which related to the time it would normally take to obtain a new Operator Licence, not something that applied to this question.

Question 4.

The Managing Director has asked you to investigate the problem with vehicle records. Prepare a report for the Managing Director detailing what records the company must have available for inspection by VOSA, and for how long they must be retained.

Once again, the question was not well answered due to candidates not addressing the content of the question.

The first sentence referred to the vehicle records and the second those that a VOSA inspector would expect to see.

A reasonable number of candidates did identify some records, even though these tended to be mixed in with a lot of answers about the content of drivers' daily walk-round reports, and the process for dealing with defect reports.

Candidates who included answers about vehicle inspection reports, drivers' daily walk-round reports, vehicle certificates, VOSA enforcement forms etc, and that most of these needed to be retained for at least 15 months, achieved good marks.

Candidates who did not do well were those who spent time writing about the content of a drivers' walk-round report, or the way in which a workshop should be managed to ensure that defects were rectified.

Question 5.

The Engineering Manager has spoken to you expressing concerns that too many people are giving her instructions and as there is no organisation chart, she is unsure who has the authority over her. You have concluded that this problem is one that affects other staff too. Produce an organisation chart for OCR Transport Ltd, showing clear reporting lines for all staff.

Generally this question was answered well.

As with any organisation structure, the fine detail is dependent on local circumstances and therefore the examiners awarded marks to any logical structure, where reporting lines were clear and made sense. As an example, some candidates had the Accounts Assistant reporting to the General Manager, others to the Administration Manager and marks were awarded for either answer.

In contrast, candidates who showed drivers reporting to the Transport Manager direct, rather than Traffic Supervisors were not awarded marks.

Question 6.

You are required to deal with the incident involving Nash and Clarke. Set out the process that should be followed to comply with both legislative requirements and best practice.

Most candidates started their answers well, but then seemed to run out of ideas.

The key features that the examiners were looking for included initial suspension of the staff involved, gathering evidence, arranging a meeting with each member of staff involved, setting out the procedure for that meeting, considering the evidence, reaching a decision, communicating it to Nash and Clarke and advising them of their rights of appeal.

Quite a few candidates said that they would try to sort the dispute out informally, by getting the two members of staff to resolve the problem between them. Given that there was an assault, regardless of provocation it is unlikely that such an approach could be considered best practice.

Question 7.

Susan Walker has asked you to provide her with a report setting out the ways in which OCR Transport Ltd could meet the desires of the local authorities with regard to environmental issues.

- a) If OCR Transport Ltd purchases new buses, what features of these vehicles will offer environmental benefits?**
- b) What operational practices could OCR Transport Ltd introduce to reduce the environmental impact of the company's bus service operations in the city**

It was gratifying that many candidates were able to write a reasonable answer to this question, at least as far as part (a) was concerned. Vehicles with lower emissions, and better fuel consumption/alternative fuels were commonly identified and this was what the examiners hoped to see.

Part (b) was less well answered, with quite a few candidates simply repeating what they had written in part (a). The question talks about operational practices, and so a candidate who included switching off engines during stand time, reducing stand time, linking services or bus priority, gave the right answers.

Some candidates were clearly prepared for a question on environmental matters, and wrote good answers to a general question about what would be good environmental practice. Whilst some of this was relevant to the question, most was not and therefore although the information showed a good grasp of how an operator should act responsibly these candidates did not obtain many marks.

Question 8.

The Tours Manager is reviewing the days of departure of the extended tours. You have been asked to investigate how this will affect the way the vehicles are scheduled.

- a) Produce a four-week schedule for the vehicle which currently departs on a Monday to Torquay.**
- b) Explain the impact on the vehicle requirement if the day of departure of the tour to the North Pennines and Dales were to be changed from Saturday to Friday.**

There have been many papers which include some form of scheduling question and yet very few candidates seem to have prepared themselves to answer a question on this topic. This question was no exception.

The scenario made it clear that there are four vehicles available and that there are five tours to be operated, Therefore allocating one vehicle to a tour means that there are insufficient vehicles to operate all five tours. The only way of covering five tours with four vehicles is to interwork them. There were two possible schedules that would have outlined, both of which would have met the requirement to run with four vehicles and allow two free days for safety checks.

Many candidates were awarded one mark for correctly saying when answering part (b) that an additional vehicle would be needed even though it was clear from their answer to part (a) that they did not know why.

Pass Rate: 37%