

## Introduction

The Operator Compliance Risk Score (OCRS) system was developed by the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) as a way of assigning goods and passenger vehicle operators a rating to identify which vehicles are most likely to be non-compliant.

VOSA has used the system at the roadside since 2006 to flag operators as having a green, amber or red status, with those that are green most likely to be compliant and those that are red least likely. Generally, an operator with a red score is more likely to be checked than an operator with a green score.

VOSA has carried out a root-and-branch review of the OCRS system and is proposing some significant changes to the way in which the score is calculated.

This guide aims to explain the changes and how they are likely to affect your own organisation's OCRS scores. It assumes a good working knowledge of the OCRS system – more information can be found in the FTA compliance guide: Understanding and managing your OCRS score. Members can call the FTA Member Advice Centre on 0870 60 50 000 for a copy, or can download it at [www.fta.co.uk/complianceguides](http://www.fta.co.uk/complianceguides).

## A summary of the changes

At the time of writing, the key changes are:

- removal of predictive scoring
- change in targeting priorities
- OCRS band changes
- larger data sets calculated more often
- weighting factor according to age of event
- changes to points
- new events included
- straight-to-red for prosecutions and most serious infringements

- changes to timescales of point allocation for prosecution

## Removal of predictive scoring

Currently, there are two ways of calculating an operator's score.

Where VOSA has details about an event that has taken place over the last two years, such as an annual test of a vehicle or a VOSA enforcement encounter, a historic score is calculated. Points are attributed where infringements or defects are found, added together and divided by the number of events to create an index score.

Where there is no such data, a predicted index score is calculated based on information on other operators with similar characteristics (such as the number of vehicles and type of licence).

Predictive scores are more common for goods vehicle operators' traffic enforcement score, where it is more likely that there have been no events over a two-year period. Whereas roadworthiness scores include annual test information, which is likely to mean there will be some relevant data to create a historic score.

A predictive score bears no relation to the actual record of the individual operator, so VOSA proposes to remove this predictive calculation and instead show that there is no score by using the colour code 'grey'.

## Change in targeting priorities

VOSA's policy for deciding which vehicles to inspect will change from red first, then amber, last green to include a priority for a grey status – see below.

### Traffic enforcement

- Red
- Grey (operators with no score)
- Amber
- Green

### Roadworthiness

- Red
- Amber
- Grey (operators with no score)
- Green

This means that operators with no score will take priority for VOSA targeted enforcement over those with amber or green scores. For traffic enforcement scores this will equate to around 58 per cent of goods vehicle operators.

## OCRS band changes

Currently the index scores for both predictive and historic scores are turned into relative groups by being placed into a league table. This allows VOSA to compare each operator with its peers – hgv operators are compared with other hgv operators and psv operators are compared with other psv operators. Each operator is listed in order from those with no points to those with the highest index score. Those operators with an historic score of zero points are placed into group 0 and the rest are grouped into 10 percentiles – the first 10 per cent are in group 1, the next 10 per cent in group 2 and so on.

VOSA proposes to replace these 11 groups with four bands, based entirely on index scores – which VOSA now refers to as an operator's baseline score, as the table overleaf.

This means that operators will no longer be graded by comparing them to their peers. Instead VOSA will use absolute performance measures. Therefore, under the proposed scheme, an operator's score will only move because of changes to their enforcement and test history.

In theory this type of banding system could lead to every operator being banded as green or, indeed, red. However, of course, VOSA will be able to change the banding parameters so that the Agency can effectively target its enforcement resources and it is expected to happen quite regularly.

# Changes to OCRS

Band	Roadworthiness	Traffic enforcement
Red	Baseline over 25	Baseline over 30
Amber	Baseline over 10 and up to 25	Baseline over 5 and up to 30
Green	Baseline up to 10	Baseline up to 5
Grey	No baseline score	No baseline score

## Larger data sets calculated more often

OCRS scores are currently calculated to the end of the previous month using two years' worth of enforcement and test data. VOSA proposes to change this to a weekly calculation (to the end of the previous Friday) using three years' worth of data. The calculation process will be run over the weekend.

Increasing the time period of the data set should reduce the number of 'grey' operators with no baseline score, but will mean that it will take longer for clear and unclear events to drop off the OCRS system.

## Weighting factor according to age of event

VOSA intends to introduce a weighting factor for points attributed at an event based on when the event occurred. This will mean that an event recorded in the current year will attract more points than when the event becomes more than a year old, and the points will also decrease again when it is more than two years old. The weighting should go some way to mitigating the negative effect of increasing the time period of the data set from two to three years.

In terms of weighting, the following factors will be applied to points.

- Up to 12 months old – multiplied by 1
- Over 12 months and up to two years old – multiplied by 0.75
- Over two years old – multiplied by 0.5

VOSA's database splits the three years into six month blocks, so it is possible for the weighting factors to become more complex in time.

## Changes to points

VOSA intends to make a number of changes to the way points are allocated to infringements or defects, including points for prosecutions.

The number of points allocated for a prosecution will depend on whether the operator and/or driver(s) are prosecuted. Operators' offences dealt with by way of prosecution attract more points than those of their drivers.

Description	Points
Prosecution case	500
Prosecution per operator offence	100
Prosecution per driver offence	50

Offences will be categorised according to seriousness and those in each category given a set number of points – at the moment individual infringements are allocated points by way of look-up tables. However, the principle that S marked (those that are considered to have been the result of a significant failure of the preventative maintenance system) and immediate (rather than delayed) prohibitions will attract more points will be retained.

Vehicle defects detected at the roadside are currently given more points than if those same defects were spotted during an annual test. This will change so that the points attributed are the same, regardless of where they were discovered.

### Roadworthiness points

Cat			S marked
1	Immediate prohibition Tyres, brakes and steering	200	400
2	Immediate prohibition All other defects	100	200
3	Delayed prohibition Tyres, brakes and steering	50	100
4	Delayed prohibition All other defects	25	50
Test fail	Tyres, brakes and steering	50	NA
Test fail	All other defects	25	NA

As you can see in the table above, defects for tyres, brakes and steering attract more points than other defects. This reflects the fixed penalty system, which includes penalty

points as well as fines for these types of defects.

The relevant Inspection Manual (IM) numbers for these defects are as below.

### Roadworthiness defects for tyres, brakes and steering

IM number	Description
7	Size and type of tyres
8	Condition of tyres
12	Trailer parking and emergency brakes and air line connections
30	Steering control
34	Pressure and vacuum warning and build up
36	Lever operating mechanical brakes
37	Service brake pedal
38	Service brake operation
39	Hand operated brake control valve
54	Steering mechanism
58	Additional braking devices
59	Brake systems and components
71	Service brake performance
72	Secondary brake performance
73	Parking brake performance

Traffic enforcement points are banded according to the seriousness of the offence (by penalty level). This banding is applied to prohibitions as well as events that are dealt with by way of a penalty.

### Traffic enforcement points

Band	Penalty	Points
0	Verbal warning	0
1	£30 fixed penalty	25
2	£60 fixed penalty	50
3	£120 fixed penalty	100
4	£200 fixed penalty	200
5	Prosecution	500

Operators should remember these could be subject to further change by VOSA.

## New events included

Currently only prohibitions, prosecutions and defects detected at the roadside or test are included in the OCRS calculation. VOSA intends to include fixed penalties for both roadworthiness and traffic enforcement calculations. Fixed penalties will only be counted where a prohibition has not been issued for the same offence.

Also, for the first time checks by VOSA examiners on rules on the carriage of dangerous goods by road (known as ADR) will be included in the score. Clear ADR checks will count as a separate encounter and any infringements will attract points. The recalculation of OCRS scores will include any ADR enforcement events over the past three years, including clear encounters.

## Straight-to-red for prosecutions and most serious infringements

VOSA wants to introduce two situations that will mean an operator's score will go straight to red, regardless of their baseline score.

Where an operator (rather than one of their drivers) is successfully prosecuted by VOSA, the OCRS will move automatically to red for a calendar year from the date of conviction. Also where one of the most serious offences listed below are detected, the operator's OCRS score will move straight to red for six months. The relevant most serious offences are:

- exceeding the maximum six day or fortnightly driving time limits by margins of 25 per cent or more
- exceeding, during a daily working period, the maximum daily driving time limit by a margin of 50 per cent or more without taking a break or without an uninterrupted rest period of at least 4.5 hours
- not having a tachograph or speed limiter, using equipment that interferes with either device, or falsifying tachograph charts or data
- driving with someone else's driver card or one that has been falsified or obtained with false documents or declarations
- transporting dangerous goods that are prohibited from being transported, without them being identified as dangerous, or contained appropriately that creates such an immediate risk to road safety that the vehicle was prohibited

The straight to red trigger will only have an effect on the operator licence in the traffic area related to the prosecution. Licences held by the same legal entity in other traffic areas will not be affected.

At the time of writing, it is expected that after its introduction, VOSA will investigate a mechanism for an operator to revert

back to the OCRS colour applicable to its baseline score in a shorter time period that shown above (12 months following prosecution, six months following a most serious infringement).

## Changes to timescales of point allocation for prosecution

At the moment where VOSA intends to pursue a prosecution, OCRS points are added at the time that it sends the paperwork to a court to issue a summons. In law, you are innocent until proven guilty and so it seemed unfair that an operator's record is blighted before the court hearing. This will be changed so that points are only allocated once a guilty verdict has been reached.

## What will this mean to my organisation's OCRS?

It depends. For many operators, we suspect that the 'swings and roundabouts' nature of the changes may mean that their colour status may not change.

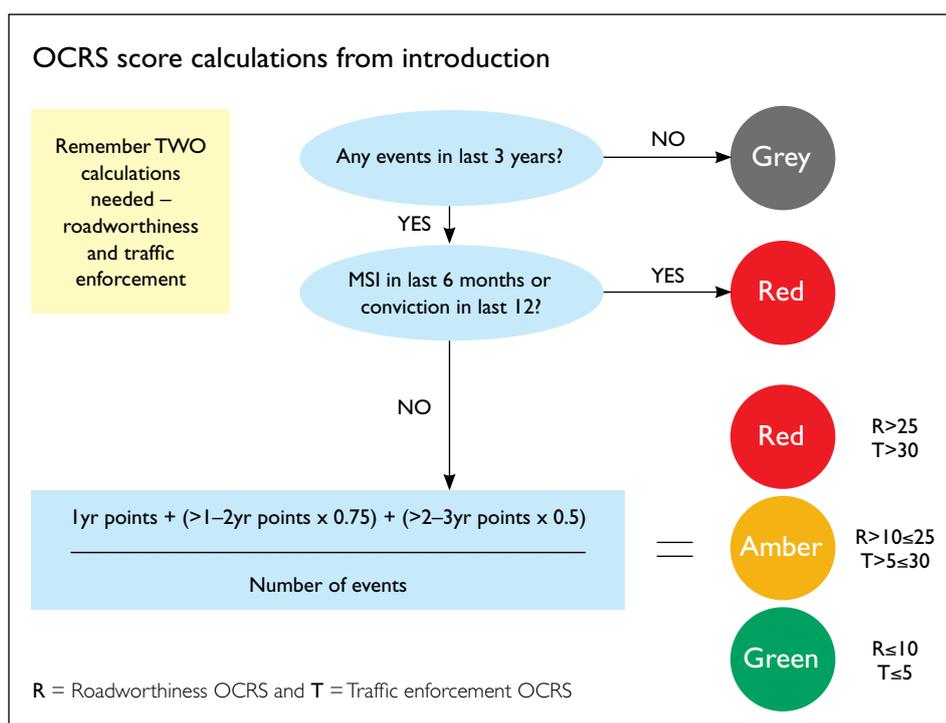
If you have no VOSA encounters for a three-year period your score will no longer be predicted. This is more likely to affect your traffic enforcement score, rather than the score for roadworthiness. Where this applies, you will be given a grey score and

you will then move to be second priority in terms of VOSA targeting for traffic enforcement and third in priority for roadworthiness checks.

The introduction of set bands for OCRS means that an operator's baseline score will only change because of:

- new encounters with points **increasing** the baseline score
- new clear encounters **decreasing** the baseline score
- existing encounters with points that have reduced because of age weighting **decreasing** the baseline score
- existing encounters with points that are no longer counted because they are more than three years old **decreasing** baseline score
- existing clear encounters that are no longer counted because they are more than three years old **increasing** baseline score

If you have accumulated points for events that have happened between two and three years ago, these will continue to be part of your encounter history and will mean your score will remain higher for longer than it would (but remember the points for those events are halved). However, points for events that happened between one and two years ago will be reduced by the new weighting system.



Clear events that happened between two and three years ago will continue to be part of your encounter history and will mean your baseline score will be reduced by these for longer. Because there are no points, there is no weighting with this.

Unless you have had no infringements or defects over the last three years, the changes to number of points allocated for each infringement or defect will immediately affect your score, and depending on the detail of your enforcement record, you may be better or worse off. Operators who carry dangerous goods should be aware that any problems detected will have a detrimental effect on their OCRS score but, likewise, clear encounters offer an opportunity to reduce them.

Operators who are taken to court by VOSA will not be issued points until, and unless, they are found guilty.

Those operators who have been prosecuted by VOSA for a traffic enforcement or roadworthiness offence in the last three years will go straight to red for 12 months. Similarly, those who have been found to infringe one of the relevant most serious offences in the last three years will go straight to red for six months. Look out for further details on how those periods could be reduced in FTA e-news and *Freight* magazine.

Members should note that the scoring system is now much more flexible to change. VOSA intend to regularly review and change the system parameters accordingly. Future changes to weighting factors, points,

bandings and straight-to-red triggers will all significantly affect your score.

## What happens next and where can I get further information?

Your organisation's OCRS score will be recalculated using the new criteria following introduction. You will be able to access it in the usual way through the online service. Make sure you access your vehicle encounter and vehicle test history reports as well. FTA members should contact the FTA Member Advice Centre on 0870 60 50 000 or email [mac@fta.co.uk](mailto:mac@fta.co.uk) to learn more or discuss their individual circumstances.

At the time of writing, VOSA is expected to announce an introduction date once the new system has been fully tested.

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Registered in England Number 391957  
04.12/ST\_12069