

# Digital Tachographs Customer Information

## Introduction

Since 1 May 2006, all new goods vehicles over 3.5 tonnes are legally required to be fitted with a digital tachograph. Digital tachographs introduce new technology to ensure the security of recording drivers' hours. The new system allows for easier and better control of drivers' hours by transport operators. The new generation of digital tachograph will also enable operators to utilise the technology to enable low cost expansion to support other functions for fleet management.

The biggest difference between analogue and digital tachographs is the use of a smart card instead of the record sheets (often called charts, discs, tachos) used in analogue tachographs.

## How does a digital tachograph work?

A digital tachograph works by storing data in its own memory and also by recording it separately on a Driver Card which is inserted into the digital tachograph unit to record the hours of driving, other work, breaks and rest periods.

The Driver Card will hold data on the driver's activities and the vehicles driven.

The digital tachograph holds data on:

- the drivers using the vehicle
- vehicle event data, e.g. fault, speed, etc.
- attempts to tamper with the on-board system
- use of the vehicle when no Driver Card has been inserted
- calibration details
- when data has been accessed

Transport operators are required to periodically download data from the digital tachograph (vehicle unit). A Company Card must be used to download the data from the vehicle unit. This data, once downloaded can be used for analysis and can also confirm that drivers' hours rules have been kept.

## Driver Card

The Driver Card is a smart card to be used by any driver of a vehicle equipped with a digital tachograph. It stores drivers' activities and has an average memory capacity of 28 working days.

Driver cards cost £38 each and can be obtained from the DVLA, by calling 0870 8501074 or your local DVLA / VOSA office. Bulk forms can be obtained by

faxing 01792 783525 or 01792 788027. Your request must be made on company headed stationery with details of the number of application forms required for both driver and company cards.

Cards should arrive within two weeks of the DVLA receiving the application. If the driver has a photocard driving licence the process is speeded up as the DVLA does not require identity documents since they already have a photograph and signature on file.

It is important to note that the driver is able to stipulate a start date for the card up to three months after the application date. This allows the driver to apply in good time before a card is required. Driver Cards are valid for five years.

Key areas for consideration:

- What do I do if I have lost a Driver Card?

You will need to notify DVLA that you have lost your card and request a replacement. Your employer will advise you what their policy is with regards to costs and whether you can drive whilst you are waiting for a replacement.

- What happens when a driver uses a vehicle with an analogue tachograph?

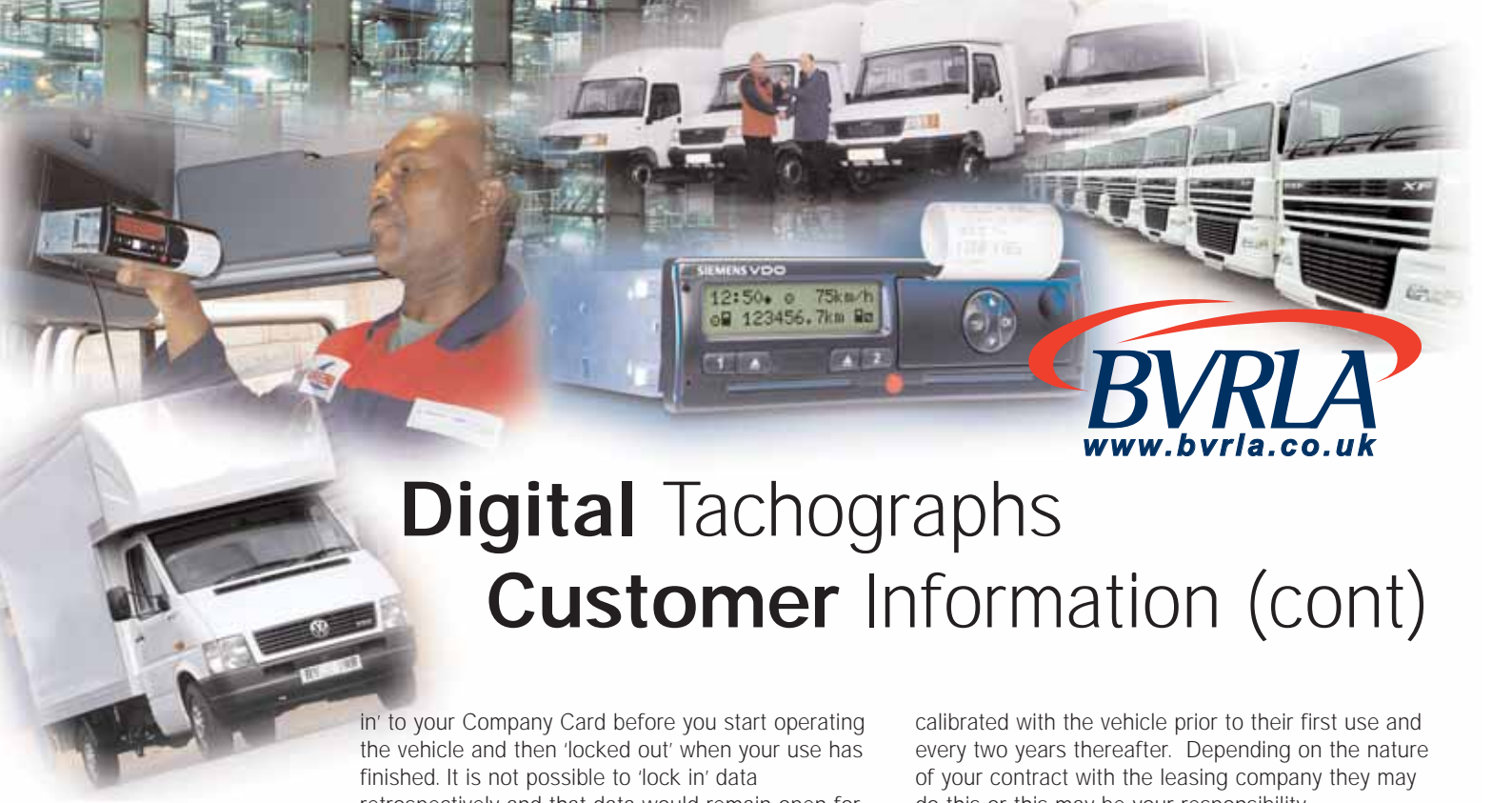
If a driver has a Driver Card and is using an analogue tachograph it is important that the driver carries his Driver Card with him. This will assist in a roadside inspection, where the driver can provide a full record of his hours from analogue and digital tachographs.

## Company Cards

The Company Card is a card that will help to lock and protect the data held in a tachograph. It does not store any data. You will need to do this in order to ensure that you protect the personal information of you and your driver(s), and details of work patterns and times from competitors.

The Company Card will allow the operator to access the data stored in the vehicle unit and subsequently download it into a memory unit in order that you can carry out checks on drivers' hours and rostering, etc as required by legislation, and to maintain records described in the undertakings of your Operator Licence issued by a Traffic Commissioner.

For the system to work, the data needs to be 'locked



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in' to your Company Card before you start operating the vehicle and then 'locked out' when your use has finished. It is not possible to 'lock in' data retrospectively and that data would remain open for all to view.

Company Cards are applied for in the same way as driver cards and the costs are the same.

Key areas for consideration are:

- How many Company Cards do you need? An individual company can have up to 2,232 cards.
- Do you want all your Company Cards to have the same number? When an application for multiple Company Cards is made these will all be issued with identical card numbers to allow interaction of data. However, if you are a large operator and require your regional offices to be kept separate or you franchise locations, you may require them to have different numbers. If this is the case separate applications should be made and each will have a different card identity number. If additional cards are required with the same numbers ensure the card number is filled in on the application.

## Downloading Data

Operators will need to ensure they download their own data from the digital tachograph on a regular basis. The Department for Transport (DfT) has not yet specified how frequently data should be downloaded from the digital tachograph, however, it is planning to consult on this issue shortly.

## Renting or leasing a vehicle with a digital tachograph

Whilst some rental or leasing companies may assist the driver in ensuring they are familiar with the digital tachograph being provided there is no legal obligation on the rental or leasing company to ensure that you or your drivers can use a digital tachograph. For example, it is unlikely that the rental or leasing company will check that the driver who comes to pick up the vehicle has a Driver Card, or is familiar with the digital tachograph being provided.

## Leasing a digital tachograph enabled truck

Leasing companies may be able to assist with ensuring a particular make of digital tachograph is fitted if required.

Digital tachographs have to be activated and fully

calibrated with the vehicle prior to their first use and every two years thereafter. Depending on the nature of your contract with the leasing company they may do this or this may be your responsibility.

## Rental Company

As mentioned above, the legal obligations of using a digital tachograph rests on the transport operator and the driver. Your rental company may assist with the following:

- Informing you of the make and model of the digital tachograph in advance and the type of print rolls required
- Providing basic operating instructions for use of the digital tachograph prior to the rental
- Offering the sale of print rolls with the digital tachograph
- Reminders about the importance of lock in and lock out when using a Company Card

## Broken Tachograph

If a digital tachograph stops working it will need to be returned to an approved workshop as soon as possible to be repaired. It is possible that the digital tachograph will be un-repairable and the data stored on it will not be accessible. In this scenario the workshop will issue an undownloadability certificate. The certificate will need to be retained by the rental company and the customer whose data cannot be downloaded.

The following websites may be useful:

VOSA – [www.vosa.gov.uk](http://www.vosa.gov.uk)

DVLA – [www.dvla.gov.uk](http://www.dvla.gov.uk)

Transport Office – [www.transportoffice.gov.uk](http://www.transportoffice.gov.uk)

BVRLA – [www.bvrla.co.uk](http://www.bvrla.co.uk)

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