

Working To Save Lives


 The logo of the Road Safety Authority (RSA) is a red square with the letters 'RSA' in white.

25 October 2019

Deputy Sean Fleming,
Chairman,
Public Accounts Committee,
Dail Eireann,
Dublin 2.

Dear Deputy Fleming,

I refer to the Road Safety Authority (RSA) submission concerning correspondence sent to the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) by the Irish Road Haulage Association (IRHA) and your response of same.

Since receiving your response, the RSA has been endeavouring to meet with the IRHA and has made contact with the Association on a number of occasions in this regard. The RSA will continue its efforts to set up a meeting in respect of the issues of concern to the IRHA, taking into account our statutory mandate and the legal parameters for the sharing of information. I can assure you that the RSA seeks to have professional, respectful and cordial relations with the IRHA. It should also be noted that the Garda Síochána is also seeking to host a meeting with the IRHA, a meeting to which the RSA is invited in respect of road transport enforcement matters relevant to the IRHA.

The Authority is concerned with the remarks made by the President of the IRHA on a number of media outlets about the tragic deaths of 39 immigrants in the UK. The remarks have been to the effect that there is a lack of policing by the RSA in relation to foreign registered vehicles working in the State and that this in some way could contribute to a similar type tragedy occurring in this jurisdiction. In the case of the container involved with the incident, its routing remains to be clarified but initial reports suggest that it never travelled within the State. Therefore, it could not have been subject to potential inspection by agencies within the State. Irrespective of whether or not the container involved was transported within the State, the RSA has no remit whatsoever in terms of immigration matters and any suggestion that RSA enforcement might in some way have a bearing on preventing such tragic events is without foundation.

Dealing with the general point about enforcement against non-State operators, the RSA does enforce relevant rules against non-State vehicles and drivers. Such vehicles are as likely to be inspected as any other vehicle. The RSA enforcement resources are used to best effect in conjunction with the Garda Síochána. It is simply impossible for the RSA to track the operations of every non-State vehicle working here. To that end, our long-standing request to the IRHA to furnish specific information to the RSA concerning alleged non-compliance by non-State operators which would assist the RSA and the Garda Síochána in conducting additional targeted enforcement and investigations, remains open. The IRHA has furnished only one recent incident of alleged cabotage which has been followed up the RSA in conjunction with the Garda Síochána.

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As regards RSA roadside enforcement activity, information concerning roadside inspections follows:

Table 1: Tachograph and Licensing Roadside Inspections								
Year	No. of tachograph and licensing inspections	No. of operators checked	No. of drivers checked	No. of prosecutions against Irish operators	No. of prosecutions against Irish drivers	No. of tachograph and licensing inspections on foreign vehicles	No. of prosecutions against out of state operators	No. of prosecutions against out of state drivers
2016	3,532	1,733	2,627	110	65	206	35	9
2017	2,590	1,451	1,849	95	80	133	10	1
2018	2,631	1,609	2,218	115	75	219	17	3
2019 (1 st Jan – 30 th June)	1,330	1,019	1,329	69	48	163	13 ¹	3
Total	10,083	5,812	8,023	389	268	721	75	16

With regard to roadworthiness inspections, RSA Vehicle Inspectors act in an advisory capacity to the Garda Síochána providing expert evidence when required. Details of roadworthiness inspections of commercial vehicles follow.

Table 2: RSA Roadworthiness Roadside Inspections						
Year	Total number of vehicles / operators inspected		Number of out of state vehicles / operators inspected		Number of out of state vehicles / operators inspected as a % of total	
	Vehicles	Operators	Vehicles	Operators	Vehicles	Operators
2016	17,502	11,613	1,203	709	6.9%	6.1%
2017	16,419	11,058	1,268	753	7.7%	6.8%
2018	11,119	7,695	932	543	8.4%	7.1%
2019 (1 st Jan – 30 th June)	5,901	4,167	588	362	10.0%	8.7%
TOTAL	50,941	34,533	3,991	2,367	8.3%	7.2%

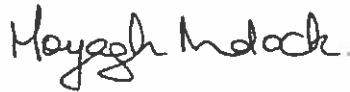
¹ Two new cabotage cases initiated since 1st Jan 2019.

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The data above shows that the proportion of roadworthiness inspections in respect of non-State operators and drivers is increasing year on year from 2016. All tachograph and licensing checks of non-State operators by the RSA at the roadside include a cabotage check and, as previously advised, this will continue in the future.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Moyagh Murdock".

Moyagh Murdock
CEO