



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

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1 March 2021

Dear Mr Logan,

Public Accounts Committee – Inquiry into Driver Vehicle Agency 2019-20

I would like to thank you for attending and providing evidence at the Public Accounts Committee meeting on 18 February 2021 in relation to our ongoing inquiry into the Driver Vehicle Agency 2019-20.

At the meeting of 25 February, the Committee agreed that I should write to you regarding the difficulties that some members of the public are experiencing in attempting to book MOT appointments. Motorists are being issued reminder letters but unable to get appointments within the required timeframe. In view of this, the Committee would like to know, if consideration has been given to granting further extensions to motorists, in circumstances where DVA is unable to accommodate the MOT testing before the current TECs expire. The Committee believe this would demonstrate good will in supporting the general public during these difficult times and make allowances for those MOT centres which are working at reduced capacity. The Committee also noted that there was a potential issue of accessibility for members of the public that did not have access to IT facilities to book appointments.

With regard to the recent evidence session, the Committee has a few additional questions they would like addressed.

- Were periodic risk assessments carried out on each of the 55 lifts in the test centres and how often did this happen?
- Did the computer system not record the number of lifts as MOTs were being carried out? If not why was this information not considered essential?
- It is our understanding that the advice given to the department was to 'sweat' the assets, i.e. the 55 Lifts, to the absolute life end – how does this adhere to the H&S responsibilities and duty of care to the DVA's staff?
- Further information and clarity is sought on why the department took no legal action regarding the contractors and their failings.
- Why did the DVA not apply basic business principles of having a replacement plan for essential capital assets which reflected the different usage levels of the lifts across the test centres? When did TUS make the department aware of their H&S concerns regarding the 55 lifts and what action was taken as a result of this?
- Did DVA staff/TUS raise any matters regarding H&S concerns prior to the cracks being found in the lifts during the inspections? If so when was this and what action was taken as a result?

I would be grateful if you could respond by 12 March 2021 by using the email address above

Yours sincerely,



William Humphrey MBE MLA
Chairperson
Public Accounts Committee