

13 December 2023

Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency members vote for strike action

PCS members working for the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) across England, Wales and Scotland have overwhelmingly voted to take industrial action.

More than 1900 members have voted for action by a margin of 90.5% on a turnout of 59.21% in response to an attempt by management to erode their terms and conditions. Strike dates will be announced in due course.

These PCS members, who carry out driving tests and approve people to be driving instructors, are in a dispute with management over plans to reduce the backlog of tests.

The so-called 'driver services recovery programme' – which seeks to recover backlogs to a national average of 7 weeks by 31 March 2024 – is being driven by the political ambitions of Mark Harper, Secretary of State for Transport.

The programme poses significant safety risks to test candidates and examiners, as well as an erosion of staff's terms and conditions. It completely fails to address the root causes of the backlog and requires staff to cover 150,000 tests above capacity.

Mark Serwotka, PCS general secretary, said:

“To recover a backlog of tests that was their own making, Mark Harper and management in the DVSA have demonstrated that they are willing not only to jeopardise our members' safety and attack their terms and conditions. They are also showing scant regard for safety standards for driving test candidates.

“But this huge ballot result for PCS members at the DVSA indicates that that they are prepared to take highly disruptive strike action across England, Wales and Scotland to protect the integrity of the driving test and their existing terms and conditions.

"Although they desperately want to see a reduction in waiting times, our members will not tolerate paying the price for political stunts and managerial failings that threaten to further undermine this vital public service."