

July 5, 2006

Modernized electronic driver knowledge test will reduce fraud and increase safety on Alberta's roads

Edmonton... The Alberta government has introduced electronic driver knowledge tests to replace written tests for new drivers and people applying for other licence classes.

The electronic tests, now available at 203 registry agent offices across the province, will allow people to complete the tests more quickly and at the same time will reduce the opportunity for cheating and fraud.

"The Driver Knowledge Test System effectively uses technology to randomly select test questions from a large pool," said Ty Lund, Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation. "This eliminates the potential for cheating and, as a result, increases safety on our roads."

The new electronic testing system will generate tests of 20 randomly chosen questions from a selection of approximately 100 possible questions, ensuring every driver takes a different test. In addition, test results are automatically entered into a central system, which prevents anyone from going to another registry office to rewrite the test before the 24-hour wait period.

"The convenience, service level and security of driver knowledge testing just went up a notch," said George VanderBurg, Minister of Government Services. "Historically, registry agents have done an excellent job in providing driver knowledge tests. I'm confident they will continue to build on that record, while maintaining vigilance against cheating or attempts to obtain a licence fraudulently."

The cost of taking the test remains at \$18 or less, which is payable every time a test is taken. A parent or guardian must accompany a minor who takes the knowledge test as part of buying a test permit.

Government covered the full \$650,000 cost of implementing the new system, including cabling and workstations at each registry.

People are encouraged to study and practice online before taking the test. The basic, professional and motorcycle driver handbooks are available at registry agent offices or online at www.infratrans.gov.ab.ca under Drivers and Vehicles - Drivers Handbooks. Please contact your local registry agent's office to inquire about the best time to take a test.

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Media enquiries may be directed to:

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To call toll-free within Alberta dial 310-0000.

Background

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Electronic Knowledge Test - Questions and Answers

1. Are all registry agents now set up for automated driver knowledge tests?

Currently, 203 registry agents across the province provide automated driver knowledge testing. (Five agents are not automated.) There are 224 registry agents in Alberta but the 16 Alberta Motor Association offices do not administer driver knowledge tests because of their involvement in driver education.

2. Is automated driver knowledge testing available in other provinces or jurisdictions?

Automated driver testing is available in a variety of jurisdictions throughout North America and we've been able to learn from their experience with the system. We are particularly proud of the availability of our system in rural areas.

3. How will the automated system prevent fraud or cheating?

One of the greatest features of the system is that the questions and answers are randomized. In other words, everyone takes a different test, which helps prevent cheating.

4. How much did this project cost?

The cost to implement the system throughout the province, including cabling and workstations, was about \$650,000.

5. Do people have to make an appointment or can they just walk in?

Most registries offer a walk-in service. People interested in taking a driver knowledge test should check with their local registry for office hours and find out the best time to come in.

6. Is the cost of the knowledge test going up?

No, the under \$18 cost remains the same.

7. How long will the test take?

If you study prior to taking the test, it should take about 20 minutes.

8. How do I study for the test?

The best way to get ready for the test is to study the basic, professional, and motorcycle driver handbooks, available at Registry Agents. Check the yellow pages for a location near you, or click on the following link <http://www.infratrans.gov.ab.ca/> (Drivers and Vehicles - Driver Handbooks). New drivers should also do the Class 7 learner's practice test that is available online under the driver handbooks.

9. How many questions are on the test?

There are 20 randomly selected questions on each test.

10. How many questions do I have to answer to pass?

You have to correctly answer 17 of the 20 questions to pass.

11. When can I rewrite the test if I fail?

You must wait for 24 hours before rewriting the test. You have to pay a fee of just under \$18 per test.

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