

WHAT TO DO AFTER A DVSA PROHIBITION NOTICE.

A step-by-step survival guide for UK HGV operators, built from real DVSA and Traffic Commissioner experience.

A prohibition notice lands fast and feels worse than it usually is. This guide walks you through exactly what happens next, what to do in the first 48 hours, and how to stop a single notice turning into something bigger.

1. What a Prohibition Notice Actually Means

DVSA issue a prohibition notice (form PG9 or PG9A) when a vehicle inspector finds a defect serious enough that the vehicle shouldn't be on the road. It's an enforcement action against the vehicle, but it reflects directly on your maintenance system as an operator.

There are two types, and the difference matters:

■ **Immediate prohibition** — the vehicle is taken off the road on the spot. It cannot move (except to the nearest safe place) until the defect is fixed and cleared.

■ **Delayed prohibition** — less severe. You're given a short window (often 10 days) to get the defect fixed before it takes effect.

Either way, it's recorded against your operator licence and factored into your OCRS score — see section 4.

2. The First 48 Hours

What to do, in order:

1. **Get the vehicle safe.** Don't move it beyond what the notice allows. Moving a vehicle under an immediate prohibition beyond permitted movement is a separate offence.
2. **Read the notice carefully.** Note the defect category, the clearance requirements, and whether it's immediate or delayed.
3. **Get the defect assessed by a competent technician** — ideally the same day. You need a clear diagnosis before you can clear the prohibition.
4. **Keep every piece of paperwork.** The inspection sheet, the repair invoice, the clearance certificate — all of it. This becomes your evidence trail.

5. Ask why it happened. Was it missed on the last PMI? A driver walkaround failure that wasn't reported? A genuine sudden failure? The answer shapes what you do next.

6. Get the vehicle cleared through an authorised testing facility (ATF) or by a DVSA examiner, depending on the notice.

3. Getting the Prohibition Removed

Once the defect is fixed, the prohibition needs to be formally removed before the vehicle returns to normal service. This usually means presenting the vehicle at an ATF or to a DVSA examiner for inspection. Removal isn't automatic just because you've done the repair — you need the paperwork to prove it.

4. How It Affects Your OCRS Score

The Operator Compliance Risk Score (OCRS) is how DVSA decides who to target for roadside checks and further scrutiny. A prohibition — especially an immediate one — pushes your score in the wrong direction and stays on record. Multiple prohibitions in a short period is one of the clearest signals DVSA use to flag an operator for a Desk-Based Assessment or a call-up to a Traffic Commissioner hearing.

One prohibition, properly handled and evidenced, is usually survivable and rarely escalates on its own. A pattern of them, or one handled badly, is what gets an operator noticed.

5. Warning Signs It's Becoming Bigger Than One Notice

- You've had more than one prohibition in the last 12 months.
- DVSA have written asking for your maintenance records (this is often the start of a Desk-Based Assessment).
- The defect relates to something that should have been caught at a routine PMI or driver walkaround.
- You can't produce a clean, dated maintenance history for the vehicle involved.

Any of these mean it's worth getting your full compliance position reviewed before DVSA do it for you. A written, evidenced response at this stage carries real weight if it later goes to a Traffic Commissioner.

QUICK REFERENCE

Response Checklist

- Notice read and understood — immediate or delayed?
- Vehicle kept safe and not moved beyond what's permitted
- Defect assessed by a competent technician
- Root cause identified — one-off failure or a system gap?
- Repair completed and invoiced
- Prohibition formally cleared at an ATF or by a DVSA examiner
- All paperwork filed together — notice, diagnosis, repair, clearance
- Maintenance schedule reviewed to check this wasn't a missed inspection

FROM CHECKLIST TO SYSTEM

This checklist works. A platform that does it for you works better.

A prohibition is usually the moment operators realise paper and spreadsheets aren't enough. The AJTC Compliance platform is built to catch the gap before DVSA do.

- Every vehicle's PMI cycle tracked automatically, with reminders before anything is due
- Driver defect reports logged and tracked through to close-out, evidenced end to end
- A full digital audit trail ready to show DVSA at any time, not assembled under pressure

AJTC Ltd also provides external Transport Manager cover, monthly compliance audits, and DVSA correspondence handled directly. It isn't just software — it's someone doing this with you, with your own branded dashboard behind it.

Most operators start with a free 30-minute consultation, have their vehicles and drivers loaded into the platform within the first week, and never go back to tracking this on paper or in a spreadsheet again.

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