



Vehicle  
Certification  
Agency

# Vehicle Certification Agency Business Plan 2025 to 2026

For the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026



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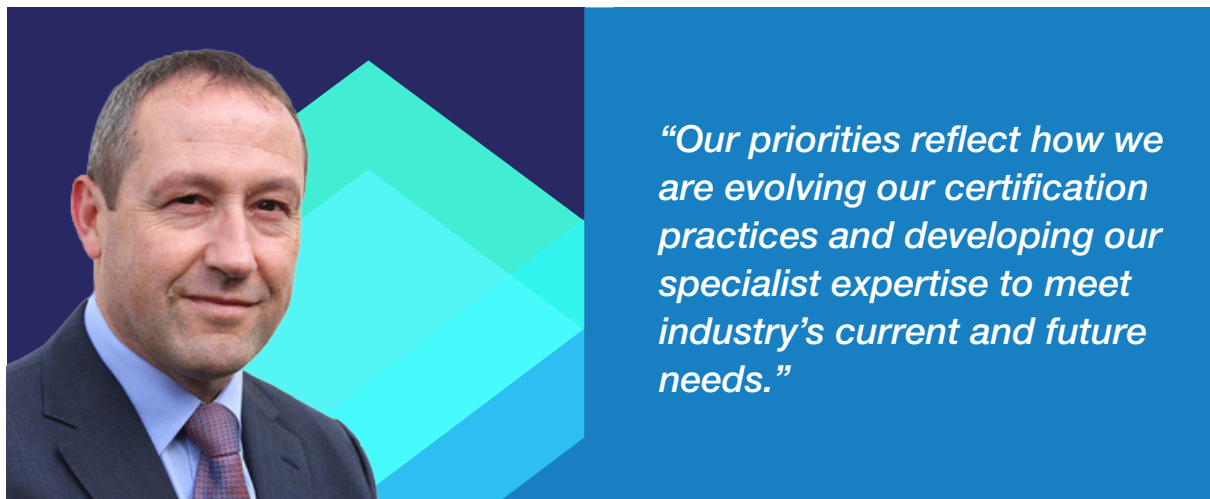
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# Contents

- 1 Non-Executive Chair's introduction**
- 2 Chief Executive's foreword**
- 4 Who we are and what we do**
- 8 Plans for 2025 to 2026**
- 18 Delivering the plan**



Ensuring **a safer,  
cleaner future**  
through excellence



## Introduction from Richard Judge

### **Non-executive Chair**

I'm pleased to introduce the 2025-26 Business Plan for the Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA). It sets our plans and targets for the year ahead and describes how we will measure our performance against them.

Our priorities reflect how we are evolving our certification practices and developing our specialist expertise to meet industry's current and future needs. They include:

- Supporting the transition of manufacturers onto the new GB scheme.
- Building the specialist capabilities, capacity and relationships needed to meet the opportunities and challenges of new technologies such as electrification, vehicle connectivity and autonomy.
- Advancing our transformation agenda. Significant enhancements to our services have already delivered many tangible and intangible benefits, with more to come as we modernise how our customers interface with us.

These priorities reflect the VCA's fundamental remit to support continued public confidence in the safety and environmental performance of vehicles on UK roads, and the pivotal role we are playing in the UK and internationally by evaluating and introducing innovative technologies in a safe, responsible way. In doing so, our activities contribute to Government's goals of economic growth, greener transport and innovation.

As a Board, we are also mindful of the VCA's need for agility and resilience in the rapidly changing world around us. Alongside oversight and guidance, we are using our Board to foster even more anticipatory and adaptive ways of working.

Together with my non-executive colleagues, I look forward to supporting Pia and her team to achieve this ambitious Plan for what will be another demanding year ahead.

**Richard Judge** | Non-executive Chair



*“As our organisation continues to evolve and develop, it is more important than ever that we work as efficiently as possible. Our ongoing transformation programme is at the heart of this initiative and will take further steps forward this year, both in terms of digital and process improvements.”*

## Introduction from Pia Wilkes

### Chief Executive Officer

Welcome to the Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA) Business Plan for 2025-26.

This financial year looks set to be another particularly busy one for us. We expect a significant increase in demand for certification as the automotive industry puts full GB type approval in place for those remaining vehicles affected before the February 2026 deadline. We are actively working to ensure that industry is ready for this significant milestone, encouraging manufacturers to apply as early as possible to smooth out the demand curve.

For our part, we have adapted our systems to support the increase in demand brought about by the implementation of this approval scheme. One of the ways we have addressed this is to digitise the approval application process, which introduces efficiencies, allowing industry to not only submit applications online, but see where they sit in our workflow. We will further develop this system during the financial year to build on those efficiencies and respond to feedback.

Another key priority for us this year is to build on our response to new or changing technologies. The Automated Vehicles Act 2024 established a new legal framework for enabling the use of automated vehicles on the roads and in other public places in Great Britain. We will play a critically important role in implementing this new framework. This is underpinned by our strategy that outlines how we are going to develop our capability and capacity by 2027 to support the implementation of the Act. This requires a continued holistic approach to people, skills, procedures, and equipment. In the coming year, we will complete all the preparation work that will allow the commencement of new learning and development pathways for a cohort of our specialist engineers, focused on some key new automotive technology areas. This demonstrates our commitment to be at the forefront of change, investing in skills and making a commitment to excellence in everything we deliver.

As our organisation continues to evolve and develop, it is more important than ever that we work as efficiently as possible. Our ongoing transformation programme is at the heart of this initiative and will take further steps forward this year, both in terms of digital and process improvements. This is an ambitious programme that will revolutionise the way we work, and very much enhance the service we provide.

In closing, I would like to welcome our new Non-Executive Chair, Richard Judge to our organisation. Richard brings a great deal of knowledge and experience to us, and I very much look forward to drawing on this over the coming years, as we work together to meet the opportunities and challenges, we face.

**Pia Wilkes CBE** | Chief Executive and Accounting Officer



# Who we are and what we do



# Who we are and what we do

## 1.1 Vehicle Certification Agency

The Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA) is an Executive Agency of the Department for Transport (DfT) and receives its corporate sponsorship through the International Vehicle Standards (IVS) division.

The VCA performs the following core activities:

## 1.2 Vehicle Type Approval

As the UK Type Approval Authority (TAA) for new on and off-road vehicles, systems, and components, we are responsible for approving that these have been designed and constructed to meet national and international standards for safety, security, and environmental protection. We take the policy lead from the DfT.

## 1.3 Conformity of Production (CoP)

This is an integral and essential part of the certification process, and an approval cannot be granted without suitable CoP arrangements being in place. CoP provides confidence to industry, government and consumers that vehicles or components covered by the regulations are manufactured in accordance with the approved specification and that measures are in place to ensure ongoing compliance.

The CoP process involves an initial evaluation of manufacturing quality processes to ensure that each product is built in accordance with the approved specification. Ongoing conformity is assessed throughout the manufacturing life of a product. This will involve manufacturing site visits and reviewing relevant records. Where evidence of non-compliance is discovered, this will be rigorously investigated, and the appropriate steps taken to ensure conformity is restored.



We recognise the importance of a robust regime which ensures that all new vehicles are safe, reliable and deliver the expected environmental performance. Where concerns of non-conformity are raised through non-CoP related activities such as “whistle blowing” we will take all reasonable actions to investigate the non-conformance and where necessary take action to bring the vehicle, system, or component back into conformity; and where appropriate work with other agencies to ensure a product remains in conformity. We are clear that only fully compliant vehicles or components should be offered for sale. Where non-conformance occurs, the manufacturer should rectify any issues at the earliest opportunity, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the type approval legislation. Where a manufacturer cannot or will not take the necessary steps to bring products back into conformity, the VCA may suspend the Conformity of Production status. This suspension would prevent vehicles being registered. Ultimately steps may be taken to withdraw an approval, in accordance with the relevant type approval legislation.

## 1.4 Market Surveillance

The Government is committed to enforcing vehicle safety and environmental standards. A Market Surveillance Unit exists within the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) to check that vehicles and components available on the UK market comply with the legislative requirements to which they were approved.

The VCA plays a significant role in providing expert engineering resource to support this work. This will continue in 2025-26, ensuring that the right skills are available to support constantly evolving standards and technology.

## 1.5 Certification of Dangerous Goods Packaging

The VCA also administers the operation of a scheme for the certification of packaging used for the carriage of dangerous goods in the UK. The dangerous goods team is responsible for the appointment of suitable test and inspection bodies to conduct inspections of tanks and pressure receptacles in accordance with the international agreement on the carriage of dangerous goods by road (“ADR”) and the UK carriage regulations. It also operates a telephone and email enquiry service on behalf of the DfT and undertakes several technical and advisory functions in connection the UN based dangerous goods transport regulations.



## 1.6 Civil Traffic Enforcement

The VCA undertakes several certification schemes for organisations carrying out civil traffic enforcement activities using camera-based systems. The largest of these is a statutory scheme undertaken on behalf of DfT covering local authorities enforcing bus lane, parking and specified moving contraventions in England. This, and the other certification schemes mentioned below, involves a compliance assessment of the applicant's system design against the relevant requirements. The aim of the assessment is to ensure that the system can provide images of sufficient quality and integrity to act as the primary evidence in settling any appeal. The other schemes that the VCA undertake are for the Welsh Government, Clean Air Zones in England, Low Emission Zones in Scotland and two free flow tolling schemes including the Dartford Crossing.

## 1.7 Data Provision

The VCA collects and publishes fuel consumption, CO<sub>2</sub>, noise and regulated pollutant data for new cars, underpinning the Vehicle Excise Duty and Company Car Tax schemes. Accessed through GOV.UK, the data tools continue to be popular with consumers, with hundreds of thousands of users over the last year alone. This supports Government's strategic drive to reduce exhaust emissions by providing consumers with the information they need to make informed choices.

## 1.8 Average Emissions Monitoring

We have been nominated by the Secretary of State for Transport to manage the collection and processing of average CO<sub>2</sub> emissions data for both Light Duty Vehicles (LDVs) and Heavy-Duty Vehicles (HDVs). This supports the drive to improve the efficiency of new vehicles, and the Government's ambitions in transport decarbonisation.



# Plans for 2025 to 2026



## Plans for 2025 to 2026

The table at 2.4 highlights the main performance measures that we have agreed with the Department for 2025-26. The following sections explain in more detail the specific actions we will take to deliver against those objectives.

## Changing our Agency

### 2.1 Continue to take forward the Government Digital Strategy

We are now well into the delivery of an ambitious transformation programme that will touch every part of our organisation. The programme is aimed at improving service delivery and helping us to realise the efficiencies associated with that, which includes the retirement of legacy systems. In this financial year, we will further enhance our digital portal, which support the applications for both provisional and full GB scheme approvals. This has enabled us to deal with an increase in workload without the associated increase in headcount. As well as digitising services, we are also looking at processes to ensure that they are as streamlined as they can be. The programme will result in significant improvements for customers and staff alike, building on service resilience and performance. Ultimately it will build a great platform for the future.

## Our services

We have a critical role to play in ensuring that vehicles and their systems and components meet internationally agreed standards, providing confidence to consumers and regulators alike.

### 2.2 Product Certification

Demand for our core certification activity remains high and is expected to increase still further over this year because of GB scheme applications. We are working hard to meet this demand. As outlined above, our product certification area has benefited from the introduction of a digital portal to support the administration aspects of this process. We will provide further improvements to the portal throughout this year, including responding to user feedback. Ultimately, this is helping us to manage workflow more efficiently.



## 2.2.1 Technical Services

Our Operations department (Technical Service) plays a key role in the approval process, providing the technical expertise to deliver expert testing to national and international standards. During this financial year, our priority is to maintain and grow our capacity to ensure that we have the right people in place at the right time.

Growth in demand for our Technical Services continues due to the growing global interest in Electric Vehicles, notably in the US, European and East Asian markets, where the VCA is well placed to support manufacturers in this area.

In addition, we will continue to grow our capability as the technology we deal with evolves and changes. This will ensure that we are not only ready when the time comes, but that we can also inform policy development to support key changes.

## 2.2.2 Statutory Operations

Our Statutory Operations department includes Type Approval Certification and Conformity of Production teams. Together these departments play a critical role in ensuring that the approvals issued by the VCA meet and maintain the expected quality standards and legislative requirements for GB, UK(NI) and UNECE schemes.

Statutory Operations has an ambitious plan to strive for excellence in service delivery to ensure approvals are delivered to the required quality and in a timeframe that meets the automotive industry's needs. Further operational delivery pathway schemes will be available to team members so that the agency can continue to invest in the skills of our people to deliver this excellence in service delivery.

## 2.2.3 Type Approval Certification

The demand for certification services in 2025 is forecasted to be high primarily due to the 'all types' date of the 1<sup>st</sup> February 2026 for M and N vehicle categories for GB Type Approval. The department is forecasting expected approval volumes and the associated resource to service the demand across all our regulatory workstreams.

We will implement a GB Type Approval communications strategy to encourage the automotive industry to apply for GB Type approval as far in advance of the legislative deadlines as possible to try and minimise the peak in demand for the service. The VCA will work with the automotive industry to communicate the upcoming legislative deadlines for the GB Type Approval scheme to facilitate delivery of the service. We will continue the successful use of written communication through trade bodies and a range of communication methods to share key messages in relation to the scheme.

The Certification department will ensure that we have the required skills and develop our team to ensure that value is added to the type approval process through the agency's compliance checks. This will continue to be developed through our established Compliance Officer roles who undertake compliance reviews of test data to ensure the legislative standards are achieved.

Given the global nature of the automotive industry, type approvals will be delivered in three key locations: our offices in the UK (Bristol and Midlands Centre) and our offices in Japan and USA.

## 2.2.4 Conformity of Production

We anticipate that demand for our conformity of production services will continue to be high during 2025/26. We will monitor the COP delivery through our KPI on issuing compliance statements. The agency has implemented a revised process for the decision maker checks that conforms to our ISO17021 accreditation. This is allowing the agency to streamline the processing of applications, and the early signs of the benefits are already being seen; this will be continued throughout 2025/26 financial year. We will ensure that the conformity of production service is delivered in the most efficient way by maximising the use of the overseas footprint of the agency. In addition, further recruitment is planned for the department, and we will deliver on our recruitment strategy throughout the year. This will include looking to the future and utilising apprenticeships and trainee engineering schemes to have an entry route into the VCA and improve resource planning, whilst creating exciting new opportunities across the UK.

## 2.2.5 Regulatory and Technology Group

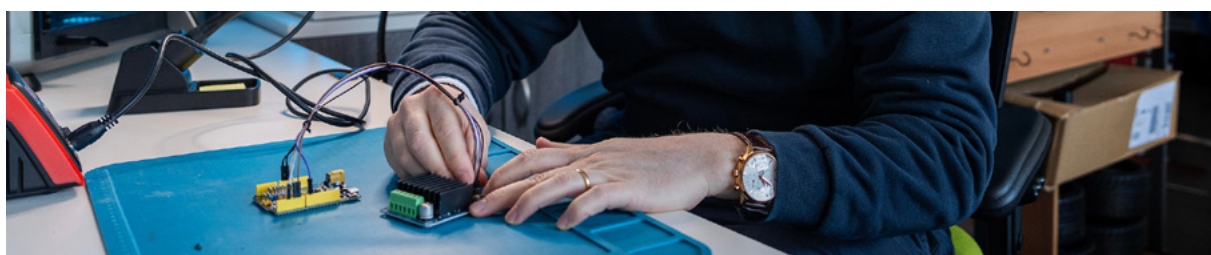
The Regulatory & Technology Group (RTG) leads on technical policy and regulatory affairs in support of the VCA's type approval activities. The group is comprised of sub-teams of technical specialists and regulatory experts each focusing on specific technical areas:

- Automated Vehicle Technologies Group (AVT)
- Propulsion Technologies Group (PTG)
- Safety Technologies Group (STG)
- Vehicle Frameworks & Regulation Group (VFR)

RTG also undertakes a number of operational activities such as the issuing of Vehicle Special Orders and End-of-Series Derogations for vehicles that cannot comply with type approval regulations, the designation of Technical Services for type approval activities, and the management and maintenance of the VCA's regulatory information systems.

During 2025/26 RTG will support the Department for Transport in development of new and improved vehicle regulations in both international and domestic legal frameworks.

In 2025 we will launch our new regulatory system that consolidates the legislation and provides access to information regarding how the VCA applies the legislation in certain instances. This new system will be utilised by the VCA, and the automotive industry will also be able to gain the benefit from this system via a subscription.



### 2.2.5.1. Propulsion Technologies

In addition to their policy and regulatory duties, our Propulsion Technologies Group (PTG) also support the DVSA in the delivery of annual market surveillance programmes contributing to ongoing reduction in emissions from road vehicles. This involves providing expert technical advice in relation to the development of new testing methodologies and supporting in the evaluation of vehicle behaviour and performance during tests. PTG also provide support to the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) in making technical assessments relating to applications to the plug-in vehicle grant schemes.

### 2.2.6 Connected and Automated Vehicles

The Automated Vehicles Act 2024 establishes the new legal framework for enabling the use of automated vehicles on the roads and in other public places in the Great Britain. The VCA will be playing an active role in this new framework. The Automated Vehicles Act puts safety at the heart of the roll-out of self-driving vehicle technology and positions the UK as world-leaders in this exciting £66 billion industry by 2040.

The Agency has been supporting the Centre for Connected and Autonomous Vehicles (CCAV) in the development policy through the governments cross department 'AV Act Implementation Programme', providing a wide range of technical input across the various policy workstreams.

In 2019, we established the Automated Vehicle Technologies Group (AVT), a dedicated, highly skilled group of engineers to lead in the development and delivery of Connected and Automated Vehicle (CAV) approval services at National and International levels. The work of this group has been around 5 strategic goals:

1. Deliver on AV Implementation Programme Activities and Projects.
2. Engage in International and National Policy Making.
3. Form Dedicated, Highly Skilled Engineering Groups.
4. Develop CAV Skills Globally within the VCA.
5. Ensure Technical Scrutiny in CAV Certifications Issued by the VCA.

In the 2025-26 financial year the work of AVT will further these strategic areas. This is underpinned by the agencies CAV capability paper which outlines how the agency is going to develop its capability and capacity by 2027 to support the implementation of the Automated Vehicles (AV) Act. This requires a continued holistic approach to people, skills, procedures, and equipment.

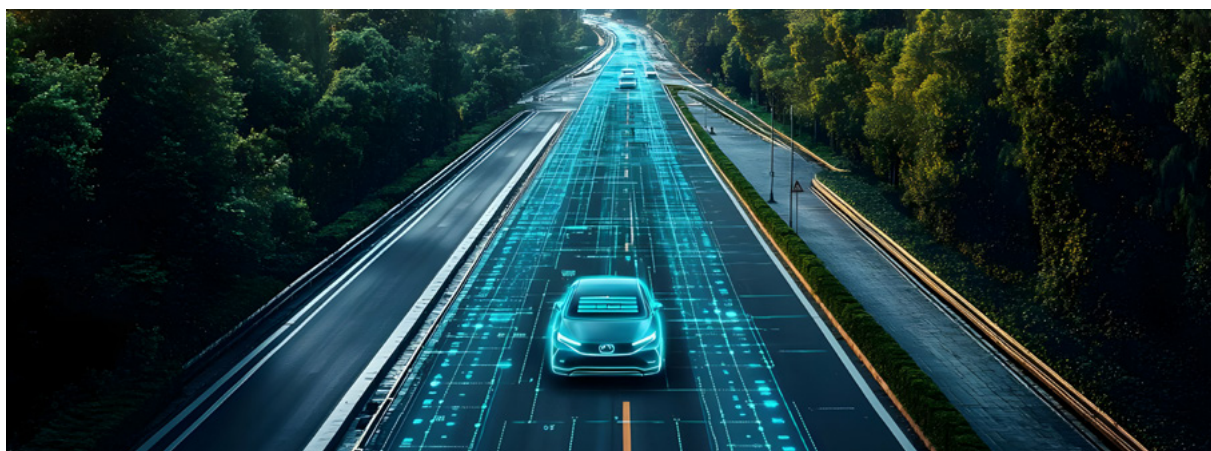
We will carry out targeted research and development under our Heavily Automated Vehicles (HAV) safety programme that furthers the understanding on the safety and security assurance of connected and automated vehicles, including on-track testing of complex scenarios and assessment methodologies based on the Operational Design Domain.

The development of engineer skills is a key part of our preparations for the certification of self-driving vehicles. To date our focus has mostly been on safety acceptance, including Functional Safety and Safety of Intended Functionality, Cyber Security and Software Updating. We will work to maintain our knowledge in these

areas, work to ensure it keeps pace with the latest developments and take further steps to bring training in-house. We will also work on furthering our knowledge into new areas and will continue to commission new training on topics that include machine learning, and modelling and simulation.

In addition, a further programme of work will be completed that will launch a new training framework in the agency. This will deliver on one of the recommendations from the agency's successful retention project. In 25/26 the agency will complete all the preparation work that will allow the commencement of a new learning and development pathway for a small cohort of engineers, focused on some key new automotive technology areas. This demonstrates the agencies continued investment in skills and commitment to excellence in the service it delivers.

The future certification of self-driving vehicles will be supported by a range of engineering teams that will make the VCA a world class approval authority and technical service. Analysis of current engineering roles, CAV certifications activities (both current and future), skills and their development was performed to identify the functions required according to the three technical elements required for CAV certifications: evaluation, review and surveillance. We will continue to progress the growth in engineering capability across these three technical parts of the Agency and support them by putting in place the people as part of the newly defined "CAV Group". There are also limitations to our capability to develop engineering capability so will target partnerships with external organisations, where deemed appropriate.



### 2.2.7 Quality

We recognise the importance of accredited management systems, as evidence of transparent operations. This is important to give our stakeholders trust and confidence in what we do.

The VCA have previously gained accreditation to ISO 17025 for our laboratory operations, ISO 17020 for our inspection activities and ISO17021 for our Conformity of Production activities. These valued accreditations will be maintained, and scope expanded to meet the changing legislative landscape as required. ISO17065 for Product Certification will continue to be developed during the financial year.

The agency will continue to deliver its internal quality audit plan for the 25/26 financial year.

## Finance and Efficiency

### 2.3 Finance

Demand for our services remains at a high level and are expected to increase this year. We have been working on our recruitment and retention arrangements to ensure that we can not only attract new talent to our organisation, but we can also develop and maintain this. We have started to see the benefits of changes in our approach, which will help us to ensure that we have the right people in place. In addition, our organisation is currently in a period of consolidation as we improve our infrastructure, transform our digital estate, build our skills base, and complete the implementation of the new GB Vehicle Type Approval Scheme. All these things have added to our cost base. During the 2025-26 financial year we will continue downward pressure on our financial deficit through a combination of additional income and efficiencies.

Our governance arrangements reflect best practice and give confidence we use our resources efficiently, embracing functional standards to support continuous improvement within the agency and to meet our strategic priorities.



## 2.4 2025 to 2026 Key Performance Measures

Category	VCA Measure	In 2025 to 2026
<b>1. Changing our agency</b>	<p>1.1 Actively progress the Government ICT and Digital strategies by using ICT to delivery of a wide-ranging programme of change, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="416 667 1098 1010">• Delivering the next tranche of the Agency business transformation programme, releasing further efficiencies to the organisation. This will include the retirement of legacy systems. During this year the programme will primarily focus on the replacement of our finance system. The next phase to be completed by the end of March 26.</li> <li data-bbox="416 1048 1078 1200">• Maintain alignment with the central Government Cybersecurity Strategy and Secure By Design principles, as well as maintaining our GovAssure accreditation</li> <li data-bbox="416 1238 1038 1352">• Deploy Windows 11 across our digital estate by October 2025, replacing the retiring Windows 10 software.</li> <li data-bbox="416 1391 1090 1585">• Continue to develop the Digital &amp; Data profession within the VCA and equip the team with the skills needed to deliver and support the new services as part of the transformation programme.</li> <li data-bbox="416 1624 1082 1850">• Align DS&amp;T ways of working with good practice, maximising the use of the IT Service Management (ITSM) tool with effective service performance reporting, problem management, change management and asset management.</li> </ul>	<p>31 March 2026</p> <p>31 March 2026</p> <p>31 October 2025</p> <p>31 March 2026</p> <p>31 March 2026</p>

Category	VCA Measure	In 2025 to 2026
<b>2. Our Services</b>	2.1 Type Approval Certification VCA Type Approval Certificates to be issued no later than 10 working days from technical clearance and/or certification decision unless a longer period has been agreed to meet manufacturer’s expectations. Certificate issue is predicated on appropriate Conformity of Production (CoP) arrangements being in place	31 March 2026 - 92%
	2.2 Compliance reviews for GB Type Approval Scheme applications to be completed within 10 working days of receipt of a valid work order and documentation	31 March 2026 - 92%
	2.3 Conformity of Production (CoP) All existing VCA type approval certificate holders are contacted at least 3 months prior to clearance expiry to review their ongoing Conformity of Production (in line with ISO 17021 accreditation as applicable)	31 March 2026 - 100%
	Certificates of Conformity to be issued no later than 10 working days following the completion of the audit, and the appropriate closure of all non-conformances raised.	31 March 2026 - 90%
	Conformity of Production Audit reports to be issued no later than 5 working days following the completion of the audit	31 March 2026 - 90%
	2.4 VCA customer satisfaction survey score to be 90% or higher.	31 March 2026 - 90%
	2.5 UN packaging approval certificates to be issued within 21 days of receipt of a valid application.	31 March 2026 - 92%
	2.6 The VCA will continue to maintain and expand where appropriate the scope of its ISO accreditation in line with operational requirements.	31 March 2026
	2.7 The VCA will make an application to UKAS for accreditation to ISO 17065 in the 2025/26 FY.	31 March 2026

Category	VCA Measure	In 2025 to 2026
<b>2. Our Services</b>	2.8 The VCA will continue to develop its Capability for Certification of Connected and Automated Vehicles by launching 100% of recruitment campaigns for the roles identified in the Agency's CAV capability paper in the 2025/2026 FY.	31 March 2026
<b>3. People</b>	3.1 Wellbeing Sick Absence - Ensure average number of working days lost to sickness absence does not exceed 6 days per FTE.	31 March 2026 - 6 days
	3.2 The VCA offers a free confidential employee assistance programme to all its employees as well as running regular wellbeing sessions, which are well attended. We will continue to build on the success of this, ensuring participation satisfaction levels are at least 80%. Where wellbeing sessions are held, this will be 100% available to our staff.	31 March 2026
	3.3 Diversity and Inclusion The VCA values the diversity of its staff and recognises the importance of having a diverse and inclusive workforce. We will monitor pay equity across the organisation and will continue to report on an annual basis on the distribution of Local Recognition Awards by grade, ethnicity, and gender, to enable us to identify any areas of concern and support fairness and equity in dispensation.	31 March 2026
	3.4 Apprenticeships The VCA values apprenticeships and the benefit it provides to individuals and the Agency. We will employ 11 apprentices during the 2025/2026 financial year and utilise 65% of allocated levy funding. We are currently on track to achieve both targets.	31 March 2026
<b>4. Environmental</b>	4. During the financial year, we will take further steps towards replacing our existing fleet vehicles with electric vehicles (EVs). By March 2026, 85% of our fleet will be EVs.	31 March 2026

# Delivering the plan



## Delivering the plan

### 3.1 Human Resources

During this year, we will build on our current people processes in alignment with the wider Government HR strategy and in support of the Civil Service core values.

As part of this we will maintain strong relationships with the Department and its agencies, sharing best practice and working collaboratively to provide a great place to work. This collaboration will be key to the way we shape the future HR landscape in terms of recruitment and onboarding and attracting the right skills into the agency to deliver for our stakeholders.

A priority will be initiating several training and development opportunities to empower our leaders, including the provision of line management training on key policies and procedures. We will also develop our teams, always improving and equipping our staff to provide the high-quality service expected of us. This comprises of relaunching the successful Operational Delivery Pathway and LEAP Leadership programme. We will draw on these initiatives but also unite them to provide a focused staff development agenda tailored to the agency's ever-changing needs.

We understand the great development opportunities that apprenticeships can offer our staff and the variety of ways that they could be used within the agency. We will renew our promotion of apprenticeship learning across the VCA via our dedicated apprenticeship intranet page.

We have worked to create and will continue to develop additional content for the intranet hub, and this gives us a great platform to provide our staff with much improved access to our HR news and guidance updates. We have developed comprehensive guidance on pensions, reasonable adjustments, reward and recognition and many others. The intranet provides a live communication stream for people news, initiatives, and success stories, allowing all our staff to be involved, no matter where they are.

We remain committed to our focus on health and wellbeing of our people. We have put in place various wellbeing initiatives including online wellbeing sessions, flu vaccinations, health checks and online sessions highlighting what support was available from our employee assistance provider. We also improved our wellbeing intranet page, creating an employee wellness hub which highlights information relating to who our mental health first aiders, tips on managing stress, support with financial wellbeing, staff networks, and improving health and wellbeing. health and wellbeing.

To maintain, and where necessary grow our workforce, we have worked to improve our recruitment processes. We now have a corporate induction program, ensuring new employees receive a well-structured induction program when joining the agency.

We will also endeavor to refine and improve our recruitment processes to meet the needs of candidates and hiring managers.

This year we will begin partnership working with external organisations, developing a work experience program which is tailored to young people and adults, drawing attention to the various career opportunities available with the agency. We will work with our Corporate Affairs team in developing our employee value proposition to further develop our ability to attract great people and build on our reputation as a great place to work. The HR internet page will remain updated with guidance so that employees can access training material more effectively.

## 3.2 Diversity

Creating an inclusive culture is the most sustainable way of helping people to feel safe, happy, and more productive in work, making the organisation a great place to be for all. We remain committed to being a diverse and inclusive organisation, celebrating our individual differences. This will involve focusing on collecting and monitoring our data. We want to ensure that every line manager has the skills, knowledge, and behaviors they need to build inclusive teams that allow everyone to thrive. We will work with DfT in moving towards a range of agency and department objectives that support the Civil Service Inclusion Strategy.

We will further develop partnerships with charities and stakeholders to understand how we can open career opportunities for a range of diverse groups. This year, we will gather socio-economic and diversity data for all our employees. This will enable us to address any areas of concern and work towards creating a workplace that is reflective of the society in which we live.

A menopause and neurodiversity support group has been established within the organisation which continues to grow successfully and inform further support within the agency. The HR team will proactively work with support groups to develop any necessary guidance, information and support.



### 3.3 Estates

The Estates team covers several key areas of the Agency. These include the management of Health & Safety, Facilities Management (FM), Sustainability, Vehicle Fleet and Physical Security.

As a priority we will meet all statutory compliance obligations that are required by law in our areas of responsibility and strive to meet exemplary standards of 'Best Practice' wherever possible. For our daily operations, we aim to ensure that the running of our estate provides a safe and pleasant working environment that supports operational delivery in both a sustainable and efficient way. We also aim to provide the best facilities possible for anyone using our sites to ensure that their occupational health, wellbeing, and mental health needs are catered for. We compliment this by providing further specific information through staff engagement, trained support and the provision of specialist equipment where required.

In support of the Estates function, we attend numerous relevant DfT forums where key issues are discussed and best practice shared. We also work in partnership with the other DfT agencies to manage a DfT estate-wide Total Facilities Management Contract (TFM) and have been key members in the development, procurement and integration of the 3rd generation of the contract. The key aims of this being to ensure a top-quality service is provided by the incumbent suppliers, that they in partnership with the VCA and other agencies, continuously develop and support key services and provide efficiency and environmental savings beyond any previous arrangements in place. They will, with the direction of our Estates team, deliver a safe, cost-effective and timely management service of our FM requirements.

Following the addition of a new long-term site for our Dangerous Goods team and a specific working space for our Automated Vehicle Technology (AVT) team in 2024 we will again turn our attention to the remaining areas of the VCA HQ site that require updating. This key aim being to provide staff and visitors with the facilities and working environment needed to support the modern hybrid workplace and inspire innovation and collaborative thinking.



The environmental sustainability of the VCA estate and operations is a key focus for the Agency. Great progress continues to be made in reducing the VCA's emissions and associated environmental impacts in this area, building on our achievements. With our ongoing pledge to meet the latest Greening Government Commitment (GGC) we continue to move towards our ultimate goal of achieving net Zero status. This drive to zero continues, despite the VCA's growth in recent years and can be demonstrated by a continuous fall in our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions year on year. Over the 2025/26 reporting year and beyond we will focus on not only meeting the targets imposed upon us but aiming to surpass them by:

- Using modern sustainable materials when carrying out building repairs and refurbishments
- Introducing improved management systems and controls where benefit can be achieved
- The procurement of more efficient technology across the agency
- Investigating the feasibility and potential benefit to the removal of Fossil Fuel reliance for heating at our Midlands site
- Researching and assessing potential green energy solutions from both known and innovative technologies for use on our sites

In addition to this we are on track to meet the Government Fleet Commitment to electrify all our fleet by late 2027 with 66% of our vehicle fleet now 100% electric and a clear plan as to how we achieve this.

As defined by the current Greening Government Commitment, we will also continue monitor our performance against the following parameters and aim to identify other areas where improvements could be made:

- Carbon reduction and Net Zero by 2050
- Minimising waste and promoting resource efficiency
- Provision of clean and plentiful water
- Sustainable procurement
- Nature recovery plans, Biodiversity, and green capital
- Adapting to Climate Change
- ICT and Digital Technology



### 3.4 Digital, Data and Technology

To support the VCA's strategic objectives, this year we will:

Continue to improve our user experience by:

- Building new digital services to support our core certification activities
- Delivering new collaboration and conference technology
- Continuing to build on our service management capability, extending the use of IT Service Management tools to cover problem, change and asset management
- Support our business transformation with an integrated digital platform through the inclusion of time recording, expenses, and billing as well as the replacement of financial systems
- Improving our digital portal based on customer feedback and extend the service to our other business areas including a new legislation library for our subscribers.

Increase the value of our data by:

- Advancing the skills and knowledge of our managers to make use of our new reporting capabilities and reporting platform

Protect our staff and digital technology from cyber threats by:

- Continuing to build on user awareness
- Ensuring all services are secure by design in line with central government standards
- Comply and accredit against the GovAssure standard

Develop our Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) skills across the VCA by:

- Changing our ways of working and fully utilize the new digital services being delivered
- Embedding a skills framework for staff in Digital Services & Technology
- Increasing the digital dexterity of our people allowing us to be more collaborative, think analytically, and make creative use of technology
- Continuing to develop or training for our new digital tools and services across the organization to increase our capability and confidence in using our new integrated platform

### 3.5 Other Cross-department/agency commitments include:

DfT / VCA Measure	In 2025 to 2026
Prompt payment - Payment of invoices within 5 working days.	80%
Freedom of Information – Provide a response within 20 working days.	90%
Parliamentary Questions – Provide a response by the due date.	100%
Ministerial Correspondence – Provide a response within agreed DfT timescales.	95%
Official Correspondence – Provide a response within 20 working days.	80%