

✉ by email ✉

The Right Honourable Chris Grayling MP  
Department for Transport  
Great Minster House  
33 Horseferry Road  
London SW1P 4DR

160 Falcon Road  
London SW11 2LN  
www.pcs.org.uk  
t: +44 (0)20 7801 2614  
e: mark@pcs.org.uk

**Mark Serwotka**  
General Secretary

30 November 2017

Dear Minister

### **DVSA Dispute**

I am writing to ask for your intervention to resolve the long running dispute between our union and the DVSA.

As you will be aware PCS members are currently engaged in action short of strike and will take strike action on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> December.

Our members have not rushed to take this action. The dispute in DVSA began in 2015 and remains unresolved. Nor do our members want to lose two day's pay when they are already low paid and have been subject to over a decade of pay cuts and below inflation awards. They have not taken the decision to strike lightly.

At the time of writing both DVSA and DfT have refused to negotiate with PCS due to the planned strike action. This is an odd position to adopt if they wish to avoid strike action given that negotiations are the route to resolving the issues between us. This is particularly so given that DVSA and DfT have had over two years to resolve the dispute during which time there has been no threat of industrial action.

I am therefore now requesting your intervention to ensure that DfT and DVSA Officials engage in open negotiations with us.

In order to give negotiations the best chance of success, we have also asked for a statement from DVSA making clear that the current travel time proposals will be withdrawn. This has been characterised by your officials as 'an unacceptable precondition' for talks.

Instead, they propose we continue the process that has failed since 2015 and continue to negotiate around proposals that have been overwhelmingly rejected three times by our members in a ballot and also in a comprehensive survey of members that we carried out in March 2017.

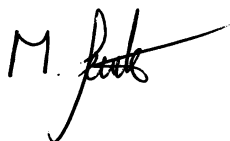
The proposals are so unacceptable that they have also been emphatically rejected by members of the Prospect union despite the recommendation of their union and the employer to accept them. It is clear that the proposals are unacceptable to the workforce and that no agreement is possible on those terms.

It is also a matter of concern that our representatives are raising issues of victimisation; as well as intimidation of our members by DVSA managers. MP's and the Shadow Minister for Transport have raised these issues with you. PCS also wrote to the Permanent Secretary of DfT about these concerns in June of this year. We seek to address these issues as part of a negotiated settlement.

I am therefore asking you to ensure that urgent talks are convened so that we can try to reach an agreement on the introduction of the new driving test. I hope you would agree that is wholly unacceptable that a major change to working practises in DVSA has been imposed without an agreement between the agency and the union on this important change to driving standards, specifically on safety.

In the event that you share our desire to find an end to this dispute, and agree that we should now move beyond the current travel time proposals and convene urgent talks about the new test, PCS would be prepared to consider the suspension of industrial action.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Serwotka', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

MARK SERWOTKA  
General Secretary