

## Virginia DMV Streamlines Driver Testing

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Starting this July, the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles is making a major change: It's overhauling and centralizing its knowledge automated testing (KAT) system, which handles all driver's license testing in the state.

Currently the department is working with its infrastructure partner, Northrop Grumman, to configure all firewall settings so that two very specific solutions – AutoTest and RoadTest by MorphoTrust -- can work at all state customer service centers, said Dave Burhop, deputy commissioner and CIO of the Virginia DMV. "As soon as we get that done, we'll



be doing live tests across the state," he said, adding that implementation should run from July through October.

The solution for the department consists of servers, installation, code consultations from MorphoTrust, tablets for testing, and both the AutoTest and RoadTest software, Burhop said.

AutoTest is a secure, Web browser-based system that automates the "written" portion of a person's driver's license exam, and RoadTest is used for the behind-the-wheel skills testing component. It allows for testing on a tablet versus on paper, automates scoring, and includes handwriting recognition so examiners can capture notes and signatures.

### A Centralized, Versatile Solution

This particular solution cost \$3.7 million, paid for via DMV special funds. According to Burhop, it met the department's need to integrate all of the separate tests – normal operator, escort, motorcycle and commercial driver's license (CDL) -- previously incorporated into its homegrown KAT system. "All of our KAT testing we currently do is based on servers that are based around the state," he said. "So we wanted to centralized it and make it more efficient, working off of the centralized servers and having the customer service centers tie into the Web-based application."

Also of note is that public schools in Virginia can connect to the DMV's remote AutoTest application, allowing students in participating schools to take the "written" portion of their driver's license test from their driver's education classroom instead of having to visit the DMV.

"They just hop on their laptop, the teacher supervises the testing, and it runs just like it would here," Burhop said. "Of course they have to let us know who the students are so that our administrators here can set up all the people taking the test ahead of time."

Whether taking the test at school or at a DMV office, the software uses smart testing, which randomly selects questions from a large pool at the time of testing. The test is constructed on the fly, Burhop explained, “so that person next to me or behind me doesn’t have the same test as I do, which is a lot different from years past.”

The students who take and pass their tests at school can then make their appointment with the DMV to take the behind-the-wheel test – which examiners may soon conduct using RoadTest on tablet computers rather than traditional paper, Burhop said.

“In the interest of cost, we’ve only purchased the remote testing for our road testers around the state who do the CDL testing,” he said. “For normal operator licenses, we are not changing that based on cost -- but if we can get our hands on tablets to give to all of our road testers and it’s cost effective, we’ll definitely go that direction.” Once the system goes live, the Virginia DMV anticipates seeing enhanced customer service, and a reduction in testing fraud and abuse. “I think also from an administrative perspective, it’s not as cumbersome in managing since it’s one system with multiple tests,” Burhop said. “Another aspect is we do identity checking, so when somebody sits down to take the test, they enter their date of birth, and if their picture is on file in our database, we will display it.”

The department will offer testing in 15 different languages -- including American Sign Language (ASL). Should a test-taker need ASL, a popup screen appears, and each question is signed, Burhop said.

## **Potential Revenue?**

Despite the fact that this system is very clearly the DMV’s, other agencies also use it -- the Virginia Department of Agriculture, for instance, uses the system for pest testing, and the state’s Motor Vehicle Dealer Board uses it for specialized testing for sales personnel.

The Marine Corps Base at Quantico is looking to do its CDL testing using Virginia’s system as well, Burhop said, adding that the department is looking into generating revenue in this way. “But who knows what the future holds,” he said, “and that is only to offset any kind of operational administrative cost, of course.”

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