



Audit Service Sierra Leone

PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT ON THE EXAMINATION AND MONITORING OF VEHICLES BY SLRTA

September 2012

FOREWORD

As the Supreme Audit Institution (SAI) of Sierra Leone, the Audit Service Sierra Leone (ASSL) is set on expanding the scope of external audit. In addition to our traditional role in Regularity Audit we have established Performance Auditing¹ as one of the services provided by the ASSL. To achieve this, we have put in significant efforts into upgrading the professional skills in the organisation and modernising the audit methodology.

In submitting this Performance Audit Report for tabling, I refer to the constitution of Sierra Leone in which Section 119 (2) states "The public accounts of Sierra Leone and of all public offices including the courts, the accounts of the central and local government administrations, of the Universities and public institutions of like nature, any statutory corporation, company or the body or organization established by an Act of Parliament or statutory instrument or otherwise set up partly or wholly out of Public Funds, shall be audited and reported on by or on behalf of the Auditor General, and for that purpose the Auditor-General, or any person authorised or appointed in that behalf by the Auditor-General shall have access to all books, records, returns and other documents relating or relevant to those accounts".

I further refer to the Government Budgeting and Accountability Act of 2005, Section 63 (1) Sub section (1e), which states "In his examination of the Final accounts the Auditor-General shall ascertain that in his opinion, financial business has been carried out with due regard to economy in relation to results achieved", and;

Sub section 66 (4) further states that "Nothing in this section shall prevent the Auditor-General from submitting a special report for tabling in Parliament on matters that should not await disclosure in the annual report".

In line with my mandate as described above, we have undertaken this Performance Audit on the Examination and Monitoring of Vehicles by the Sierra Leone Road Transport Authority (SLRTA), highlighting the conditions of vehicles and the key role SLRTA plays in securing the road worthiness of vehicles.

**Lara Taylor-Pearce FCCA (Mrs.)
Auditor General of Sierra**

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASSL	Audit Service Sierra Leone
MIS	Management Information System
NRA	National Revenue Authority
RTA	Road Traffic Act 2007
SLP	Sierra Leone Police
SLRTA	Sierra Leone Road Transport Authority
TW	Traffic Warden

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Performance Audit has assessed the system of examination and monitoring of Vehicles by the Sierra Leone Road Transport Authority (SLRTA).

The persistent increase in the number of traffic accidents has raised public concerns as reflected in the media. Only during the last three years the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) recorded an increase in traffic accidents by more than 40% and the number of people killed as a result, increased by almost 30%.

In order to have a national coverage and arrive at a reasonable assessment of how well SLRTA delivers its services, sample studies were carried out in Freetown, Kenema, Bo, Makeni and Lungi.

We visited SLRTA's Examination centres to obtain relevant data and information on the operations of SLRTA in relation to Examination and Monitoring of Vehicles.

The audit focused on the extent to which vehicles were licensed by the SLRTA; whether they were examined in accordance with the vehicle examination checklist, and; whether adequate monitoring of vehicles was carried out by SLRTA.

SLRTA has not been able to carry out its duties in line with RTA and its contribution to road safety has therefore been limited. SLRTA does not examine and monitor vehicles in accordance with the Road Traffic Act of 2007; hence, the continued poor condition of vehicles on the road. Road accidents and road deaths continue to rise.

We recommend that the following steps are taken in order to improve SLRTA's performance:

- ◆ SLP should improve its reporting on accidents to include their causes, types of vehicles involved and whether those vehicles carried a valid licence. Relevant data should be compiled and transmitted to SLRTA for their analysis.
- ◆ SLRTA should ensure that all commercial vehicles are examined every six months in accordance with RTA and that other vehicles are brought in for renewal of licences every year.

- ◆ The Transport Department of SLRTA should ensure that all necessary equipment for testing in line with the vehicle examination checklist, are provided at the examination centres.

- ◆ SLRTA should ensure that information fed into the system is easily accessible and disseminated in a timely and complete manner to help reduce fine evasion.

- ◆ SLRTA should carry out an assessment of its staffing needs for vehicle examination and road monitoring. Ranks and grades as well as skills required for different centres should be prescribed.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose and Scope

Poverty reduction requires an adequate means of moving people and goods. A developed transportation network is therefore critical to growth and development.

Road transportation accounts for the majority of freight and passenger movements in Sierra Leone. Most of the fleet consists of second hand vehicles, mostly not road worthy therefore leading to frequent breakdown and as a result unable to meet with the current transportation demands .

The free flow of traffic is further hampered by the limited capacity and low quality of the road network. These issues are being addressed by the government in its Agenda for Change.

The persistent increase in the number of traffic accidents has raised public concerns as reflected in the media. Since 2008, the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) recorded an increase in traffic accidents by more than 40% and the number of people killed increased by almost 30%. See table 1 below for details.

Table 1. Traffic Accidents

	2008	2009	2010	2011
Reported accidents	2,062	2,204	2,602	2,920
Persons fatally injured	192	216	235	247

Traffic accidents are normally blamed on equipment failure, poor road design, poor road maintenance and/or bad driver behaviour. The SLP has attributed the increase mainly to reckless driving, overloading, over speeding, defective vehicles, etc.

Traffic accidents lead to death and disability as well as huge financial costs to both the society and the individuals involved.

The Sierra Leone Road Transport Authority (SLRTA) was established by an Act of Parliament in 1996, for the regulation and development of the road transport industry. Its objectives are to regulate, co-ordinate and promote efficiency within the road transport

sector. Its responsibilities include the registration, examination and licensing of vehicles, licensing of drivers, and prescription of routes for passengers and goods transportation.

SLRTA plays a key role for transport development in general and traffic safety in particular. The focus of this audit has been on SLRTA's role in preventing accidents caused by defective vehicles. The objective of the audit was to assess whether SLRTA's examination, licensing and monitoring of vehicles were done in accordance with the Act as amended in 2003 and with the Road Traffic Act (RTA) of 2007.

1.2 Audit Methodology and Implementation

In order to have a national coverage and arrive at a reasonable assessment of how well SLRTA delivers its services, sample studies were carried out in Freetown, Kenema, Bo, Makeni and Lungi.

We visited SLRTA's Examination centres to obtain relevant data and information on the operations of SLRTA in relation to Examination and Monitoring of Vehicles. This gave the audit team the opportunity to seek further clarifications on issues observed during the course of the review of documents submitted by SLRTA's stations staff.

The team conducted interviews, reviewed documents and made physical observations and verifications at vehicle examination centres, in order to confirm whether they had the required equipment and if vehicle examination was conducted according to established procedures.

Various stakeholders in the road transport sector were interviewed to ascertain their respective roles and responsibilities as well as to obtain information on issues relating to the procedures applied in the examination, licensing and monitoring of vehicles.

A draft version of this report has been presented to SLRTA for their comments. SLRTA's response from the 13th of May 2012 has been considered when finalising the report.

2 EXAMINATION AND MONITORING OF VEHICLES

2.1 Regulatory Framework

The 1996 Road Transport Authority Act established SLRTA. The 2003 Amendment of the Act made provision for the establishment of a corps of Traffic Wardens and RTA made clear the procedures for the registration, examination, licensing and monitoring of vehicles.

The functions of SLRTA are “to design, develop and administer rules and regulations regarding:

- ◆ The registration and licensing of vehicles whether for private or commercial use;
- ◆ The testing of the fitness of vehicles for their intended use and the fitness of persons to be drivers of vehicles;
- ◆ The licensing of drivers of vehicles;
- ◆ The inspection and supervision of vehicle repair and maintenance services, and;
- ◆ The routing and monitoring of passenger and goods transportation.”

2.1.1 SLRTA’s Vision

To deliver unto the people of this country goods and services that make road transportation modern, safe and more efficient through a better regulation, co-ordination and promotion of effective practices by all stakeholders in the road transport sector.

2.1.2 SLRTA’s Mission

The Sierra Leone Road Transport Authority (SLRTA) was set up to regulate and coordinate development in the transport industry, including the registration and licensing of vehicles, the licensing of drivers, the prescription of routes for passengers and goods transportation and for other matters connected thereto.

2.2 The Registration, Examination and Licensing processes

2.2.1 Registration of vehicles

When a vehicle is cleared from the ports or any entry point in the country, the following documents are given to the owner, namely: shipping document;

National Revenue Authority (NRA) general customs receipt and vehicle licence slip. These documents are submitted to the registration officer together with the SLRTA Vehicle Registration Form which is obtained from the SLRTA front desk.

A fee, specified for the category of vehicle to register, is charged for the registration service and a receipt is issued by SLRTA. After payment, a form showing the registration number allocated to the vehicle will be taken to an officer in the vehicle fitness section, for preparation of the necessary documents for the printing of vehicle number plates.

The registration officer will then prepare the Vehicle Owner's card which is presented to the vehicle examiner who will examine and certify or reject the vehicle. If the vehicle is certified, it will be given a fitness certificate signed by the Vehicle examiner of the testing station. This certificate, together with the owner's card and an insurance policy, is then presented to the front desk officer for preparation and issuance of the licence.

2.2.2 Examination of Vehicles

The Department of Transport in the SLRTA is responsible for the examination of vehicles for road worthiness prior to licensing, inspection of vehicles involved in road traffic accidents, and the examination of vehicles for valuation purpose.

“The examination shall be conducted every six months in respect of commercial vehicles and once every year in respect of private vehicles [.....]”²

A detailed description of the process of examining vehicles for road worthiness has been attached as Appendix 2

It is difficult to determine the exact number of vehicles in Sierra Leone. Registration made by SLRTA adds up to approximately 160,000. This figure includes vehicles that have been scrapped or for other reasons taken off the road without notification given to SLRTA. About 30% of the

vehicles are categorised as commercial motorcycles or taxis and another 15-20% are minibuses, lorries, etc.

Since minibuses and lorries are commercial, we estimated that commercial vehicles account for at least 40% of the total stock of vehicles.

Vehicles that meet the prescribed standards of fitness according to the examination checklist shall be issued a certificate of fitness signed by the Vehicle Examiner.

SLRTA may designate the examination of vehicles to private vehicle examination centres. Such examination centres must maintain the following equipment for the purpose of their functions;

- a) an approved roller brake-testing machine;
- b) a head lamp tester
- c) exhaust emission testers for petrol or diesel engines or both;
- d) a jacking beam of a size and weight limit appropriate to the station's authorisation;
- e) either an approved vehicle lift fitted with captive turning plates, or an inspection pit of appropriate size, also fitted with captive turning plates;
- f) a small lever or bar to apply load to the suspension system
- g) a small official tapping and scrapping "hammer";
- h) an approved tyre depth gauge;
- i) an approved portable declinometer for use, if the roller brake machine fails".

SLRTA shall report to the Minister of Transport and Aviation any private vehicle examination centre that is inadequately equipped or possess inadequately maintained equipment or both. The Minister may after investigation order to close or fine the vehicle examination centre. Presently, there is no private vehicle examination centre.

Every vehicle examination centre shall have and maintain an examined vehicle register containing details of all vehicles examined such as the results of the examination, dates of examination and fitness certificate number issued etc.

Each testing station must have as many testers as may be required for the purposes of its functions, each of whom shall be a motor mechanic with qualification not below the motor vehicle technicians Certificate of the City and Guilds of London Institute with a minimum of five year workshop experience, two of which must be at supervisory level.

A vehicle examiner, who knowingly certifies a defective vehicle as fit or road worthy or back-dates a certificate of fitness, commits an offence that could lead to up to two years in prison. A vehicle owner, driver or any person who is in possession of a false certificate of fitness also commits an offence that could lead up to two years in prison.

2.2.3 The Licensing Process

After examination of the vehicle a licence application form should be filled in and signed. This application together with the owner's card, the central payment receipt, the income tax receipt (in case of commercial vehicles), the signed fitness certificate and an insurance policy is then presented to the licence officer for the vehicle's licence to be prepared.

This process starts at the front desk in the licensing hall where a licence officer will specify the amount to be paid for the vehicle depending on the category of vehicle. The following services will be paid for: fitness; licence; authorization and income tax in case of commercial vehicles.

Following this, the vehicle owner's card and payment receipt, including payment of all outstanding fines, are taken to the vehicle examiner who will examine the vehicle and prepare a fitness certificate in the event the vehicle is found to be road worthy.

The vehicle owner's card, fitness certificate and the insurance policy are finally submitted to the licence officer in the licensing department who prepares the licence.

2.2.4 Road Monitoring of Vehicles

The monitoring of vehicles on the road for road safety is the responsibility of the Safety/Enforcement Department. Traffic Wardens (TW) in this department are deployed at strategic points in the city, towns and highways with the purpose of supplementing the effort of the police in regulating and coordinating the traffic, and report and issue traffic violation fines in respect of traffic offences.

Traffic wardens work with the Management Information System (MIS) of SLRTA. Their daily and weekly reports are fed into MIS in order to be easily accessible. Registration and licensing information is also entered into MIS to be used by TWs to track unregistered vehicles and vehicles with expired licences. The information is stored in a central data base that all examination centres should be able to access.

To enhance free flow of traffic and to reduce hazardous vehicles on the road, SLRTA has procured additional vehicle clamps, towing and recovery vehicles to decongest the cities and recover accident vehicles along the highways. **Clamps are used to immobilise or apprehend defective vehicles and vehicles involved in illegal parking or other traffic offences. Towing vehicles are used to take clamped vehicles off the road.**

As per regulation, the fine(s) must be paid within 72 hours. If not, SLRTA should refer the matter to the police who shall institute criminal proceedings against the offender.

SLP in monitoring road accidents, prepare Road Traffic Accidents and Motor Traffic Reports outlining the cases of accidents reported and persons injured.

2.3 Organisational Structure

SLRTA is one of six parastatals supervised by the Ministry of Transport and Aviation. It is headed by an Executive Director and comprises six Departments: Licensing, Admin/Human Resources, Finance, Safety/Enforcement, Transport, and Internal Audit.

The Transport Department is responsible for the examination of vehicles prior to registration and renewal of licenses, for inspection of vehicles involved in road traffic accidents and for the examination of vehicles for valuation purposes. This department also supervises the registration of private garages and the issuance of temporary garage registration number plates to dealer-garages and repair-garages.

The Safety/Enforcement department is responsible for monitoring vehicles on the road. The traffic wardens complement SLP with regards to traffic duties. They should also render the road free from unnecessary obstruction to facilitate a free flow of traffic and educate the public on road safety. When necessary, they should divert traffic from the scene and report cases of accidents to the police. See Appendix 3 for Organogram.

SLRTA has examination centres in some major towns. The centres are responsible for examination, licensing and road monitoring of vehicles headed by Vehicle Examiners who represent SLRTA in the area and are responsible for the successful implementation of all operations and administrative activities. See table 2 below

Table 2. SLRTA Examination centres

District	Examination Centre
Bo	Bo
Bonthe	
Moyamba	
Pujehun	
Kenema	Kenema
Kailahun	Kono
Kono	
Bombali	Makeni
Koinadugu	
Tonkolili	
Kambia	Lungi
Port Loko	
Western Area	Headquarters Kissy Pademba Road

2.3.1 Staffing

Below is a table of the number of staff in the various departments of SLRTA that are involved in the examination, licensing and monitoring of vehicles.

Table 3. No of Technical staff

Category	Department	Staff
Vehicle Examiner	Transport	9
Tester	Transport	0
Traffic Warden	Safety/Enforcement	188
Licence Officer	Licensing	12
Registration Officer	Licensing	2

Source: SLRTA staff list

2.3.2 Funding

The source of funding of SLRTA is from own revenue generated through registration, licensing and examination of vehicles. Eighty five percent (85%) of the revenue generated is paid to the Sierra Leone Roads Authority (SLRA) for transfer to the Road Fund for the construction and maintenance of roads. The remaining fifteen percent (15%) is retained to cover the operational costs of SLRTA. See table 4 below.

Table 4. Revenue paid to the Road Fund or retained by SLRTA (2008-2010)

2008		
Revenue	Transfer to Road Fund	Retained by SLRTA
4,320,110,000	3,685,900,000	634,210,000

2009		
Revenue	Transfer to Road Fund	Retained by SLRTA
5,187,735,000	4,310,143,000	877,592,000

2010		
Revenue	Transfer to Road Fund	Retained by SLRTA
5,995,770,000	5,096,404,000	899,366,000

2011		
Revenue	Transfer to Road Fund	Retained by SLRTA
5,396,462,000	4,586,992,700	809,469,300

Source: SLRTA Finance Department

Table 5 shows actual expenditure for the Transport and Safety/Enforcement departments of SLRTA for 2008 to 2010.

Table 5. Actual Expenditure for Examination and Monitoring (Le)

Financial Year	Department	
	Transport (examination)	Safety/ Enforcement (monitoring)
2008	1,063,829,573	2,152,011,752
2009	1,207,947,999	3,690,952,219
2010	1,375,461,149	3,235,664,092

Source: SLRTA Finance Department

2.4 Recent Development

2.4.1 Modern Vehicle Testing Centre

SLRTA has rehabilitated the vehicle testing centre at its headquarters at Kissy road and intends to put it into use in 2012. A modern office structure equipped to provide service for vehicle examination has recently been erected in Makeni

3 FINDINGS

3.1 Licences are not renewed every year

All private vehicles with the exception of commercial vehicle should have their licences renewed every year, and all commercial vehicles every six months. This indicates that around 200,000 licences should be renewed every year if 90% of the 160,000 registered vehicles are still on the road and 40% of those vehicles are commercial

With only 50,000 vehicles licensed for both commercial and private in 2011, and even fewer during previous years, it is obvious that SLRTA is far from meeting its obligation to conduct examination "every six months in respect of commercial vehicles and once every year in respect of private vehicles".

Table 6 shows the total number of vehicles licensed

Table 6. Vehicles Licensed: 2008 to 2011

Category	2008	2009	2010	2011
A(M) Motorcycle Private	6,205	6,193	4,769	3,691
A(MT) Motorcycle commercial	3,269	2,210	5,994	10,269
A(P) Private cars	11,370	11,411	12,187	11,563
A(T) taxi	5,158	4,902	4,358	3,759
B jeeps	8,848	10,374	12,340	12,127
C Mini Buses	5,922	7,262	6,287	5,397
D Buses	275	384	318	364
E Lorries/Trucks (6 tyres)	1,645	1,654	1,747	1,837
F Lorries/Trucks (above 6 tyres)	348	365	413	673

G Trailers/Tractors	286	251	394	763
GRAND TOTAL	43,326	45,006	48,807	50,443

The auditors noted that commercial vehicles were consistently examined once a year instead of once every six months. Documents reviewed also revealed that commercial vehicles were given a license and a certificate of fitness for a whole year, in contravention of the act.

3.2 Vehicles not examined in accordance with checklist

3.2.1 Some fitness certificates issued without examination

"A vehicle examination shall be conducted by a tester in accordance with the procedures laid down in the inspection manual or vehicle examination check list provided by the Authority..."³.

During the review of some vehicle fitness reports from 1st January, 2008 to 30th June, 2011, the auditors noted that the examination of vehicles was not done in line with the standards set in the inspection manual or vehicle examination check list.

During our visits to the Kenema station, review of document revealed that vehicle examiners issued certificates of fitness and licenses to vehicles without completion of checklist and signature on them.



Mini bus (poda poda) at Elk Street

The examination of the vehicles as observed was not done in line with the required standards: There is a risk that vehicles licensed from January, 2008 to December, 2011 were not examined in full compliance with the vehicle examination checklist. The vehicle shown above indicates that if proper examinations had been done, such vehicle should have been taken off the road.



Vehicle examination centre – Kissy

We also noted that often a straight line showing that the vehicle passed all the tests was drawn across the entire vehicle examination checklist. This was done instead of indicating a detailed check of each item on the checklist.

We observed that detailed inspections for each testable item in the vehicle examination check list were not carried out.

3.2.2 Poor facilities and lack of equipment at examination centres

Every private vehicle examination centre should have and maintain to the satisfaction of SLRTA the necessary equipment as described in chapter two, for use in carrying out vehicle examinations.

Interviews conducted and physical observations at SLRTA's examination centres disclosed that there were no testing officers to assist the vehicle examiners in carrying out vehicle examinations. According to RTA each testing station should have as many testers as may be required.

All vehicle examiners interviewed during our audit explained that they could not examine vehicles in accordance with the vehicle examination checklist because of the lack of equipment. Physical observations at the stations visited revealed that none of the testing stations was adequately equipped or in possession of adequately maintained equipment as seen in table 7 below.

Table 7. Vehicle Examination Equipment per Station

Equipment	SLRTA HQ	Freetown Kissy	Bo	Kenema	Makeni	Lungi
Brake-testing Machine	0	0	0	0	0	0
Head Lamp Tester	0	0	0	0	0	0
Exhaust Emission Tester	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jacking Beam	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vehicle Lift/ Inspection Pit	5	1	1	0	0	0
Small Leaver/ Bar	0	0	0	0	0	0
Official Tapping and Scrapping Hammer	1	0	0	0	0	0
Tyre Depth Gauge	1	0	0	0	0	0
Portable Declinometer	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: interviews and physical observations by audit team



Vehicle examination centre - Bo

3.2.3 Check list procedures not followed

"A vehicle examination shall be conducted by a tester in accordance with the procedures laid down in the inspection manual or vehicle examination check list provided by the Authority..."⁴.

Even though it was evident that none of the vehicle examination centres visited had the required special equipment, most of the items on the vehicle examination checklist could still have been tested manually. However we could not find any evidence that such tests were carried out. There was also no indication of "reserved judgement" in cases where a test could not possibly have been carried out. Below are some examples of tests that would not require special equipment.

The braking system under which there are five testable items; front wheels, rear wheels, brake efficiency, parking brake efficiency and parking brake condition, can be tested without equipment by applying and holding the brake pedal or the parking brake when the vehicle is in motion.

The power steering unit can be tested by turning the steering wheel when the engine is switched on. If it is hard to turn, the power steering unit is defective.

The alignment of the steering can be tested by observing the position of the steering wheel and the direction the vehicle is moving.



Mini bus (Poda Poda) at Elk Street

From physical observation, one can see that the side mirror and the body of the above vehicle is defective and in poor condition.

The clutch performance can be tested by applying the clutch pedal when driving the vehicle. The clutch pedal must come up to its normal position when released.

Under the electrical system, the starter and switch can be tested when there is no specialised testing equipment.

It is easy to see if the glass is transparent, sticky, tinted or cracked and if the mirrors are in a good condition.

Head lights, park lights, reverse lamps and hazard lights can be tested through physical observation for breakages or cracks and by turning them on to see their brightness and penetration. The horn can be tested by listening to the hooting of the vehicle.

Wheels and hubs can be tested by physical observation to see if they are rusty, well fixed and complete.

Tyres can be tested by physical observation for tread wear, cord exposure, bumps, bulges and knots, size and wall cracks.

3.3 Inadequate Monitoring of Vehicles

3.3.1 No synchronisation of the database

For the past three years the data base of SLRTA has not been effectively synchronised and different examination centres were unable to access the same information at the same time. This has seriously affected the road monitoring of vehicles. Defaulters on the road evade paying fines since TW cannot easily access information about vehicles on the road.

Attempts to solve this problem through contracting a new service provider have proved unsuccessful.

3.3.2 Few Traffic Wardens and Lack of monitoring equipment

RTA Amendment Act, 2003 Sec.26A. (1) states that 'For the purposes of its functions under sections 9, 10 and 26, the Authority shall have a corps of traffic wardens, consisting of such ranks or grades as the Authority may prescribe". Thus SLRTA should have an adequate number of TWs deployed throughout the country for effective monitoring of vehicles.

Interviews with TW supervisors in the operational areas and a review of the deployment of TWs revealed that according to SLRTA, the staff strength of TWs was not sufficient for effective road monitoring. See table 8 for the total number of TWs and their deployment.

Table 8 Traffic wardens in Sierra Leone, June 2010

Province	Number of TW
Southern	23
Bo	10
Moyamba/Mokangi axis	10
Gendema	3
Northern	51
Makeni	9
Port Loko	5
Lungi	5
Kambia	7
Lunsar/Masiaka	5
Kabala	6
Magburaka	9
Kamakwie	5
Eastern	28
Kenema	11
Kailahun	7
Kono	10
Western Area	86
Waterloo	8
Freetown	78

TOTAL	188
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Interviews with the Director of the Safety/Enforcement Department, revealed that there was no standard stating how many TWs should be in Sierra Leone for effective road monitoring and hence SLRTA has not prescribed how many TWs are needed.

Interviews with TW Supervisors and a review of monthly reports revealed that, SLRTA was short of monitoring equipment, especially bigger clamps and towing-vehicles to aid TWs in executing their duties. We noted that this is a serious constraint when bigger vehicles or defective cars parked along the road, cannot be clamped and/or towed away.

3.3.3 Non payment of fines issued by traffic wardens

“Where an offender fails to pay the fine and the prescribed administrative charge within seventy-two hours, the traffic warden shall refer the matter to the police who shall institute criminal proceedings against the offender”⁵

According to SLRTA there were a total of 128,556 unpaid fines with a total value of Le4,843,583,747 as of 30th June, 2011.

According to the SLP National Traffic Coordinator TWs had never referred any matter regarding unpaid fines to the police. As such none of the 128,556 unpaid fines mentioned above, had been reported to the police. Data accessed from the SLRTA provincial office in Kenema, revealed that out of a total of Le 62,380,000 for fines issued in Kenema and Kailahun from May to October, 2011, only just over half or Le 33,265,000 had been paid by November, 2011.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 SLRTA’s poor performance puts road safety at risk

SLRTA has not been able to carry out its duties in line with the RTA and its contribution to road safety has therefore been limited. Road accidents and road deaths continue to rise. From statistical analysis on road accident obtained from the SLP's, we were unable to ascertain whether it was private, government or commercial vehicles that were most frequently involved in accidents. There were also no data available on the causes of accidents, hence it was not possible to determine the proportion of accidents that can be attributed to defective vehicles, or to other factors such as reckless driving or poor roads condition. What is certain, however, is that defective vehicles increase the risk that accidents will occur, and the risk of injury when there is an accident. They may also cause high traffic congestion when they break down along the roads.

4.2 Limited testing capacity and inefficient monitoring

Although commercial vehicles should have their licences renewed every six months, they are only licensed once a year. This failure to enforce the law is a result of the limited capacity of SLRTA's examination centres and the inefficient monitoring of vehicles on the roads by the TW.

Failure by SLRTA to provide specialised vehicle examination equipment at the various vehicle examination centres, has contributed to the inability of the centres to conduct correct examination in accordance with check list.

The insufficient number of TW and testers employed by SLRTA has contributed to poor monitoring and testing of vehicles. According to the Director of Safety and Enforcement, about 300 TWs would be needed, for SLRTA to carry out effective monitoring. At the moment there are only 188 in post

The investments in improved infrastructure that have been made in Makeni and at SLRTA's headquarters in Freetown should significantly increase SLRTA's capacity to carry out vehicle examinations.

Even though some of the items on the vehicle examination checklist cannot be tested without specialised vehicle examination equipment, most of the items on the list can be

tested without equipment, yet vehicles are not properly tested to ascertain whether they meet the criteria for road worthiness.

4.3 Lack of testing equipment

The lack of exhaust emission testers for petrol or diesel engines at the examination centres visited poses a serious threat to the health of people and to the environment. Although there are no data on the amount of carbon emission and the number of people suffering from it, the resulting air pollution could lead to death and cases of respiratory illness and asthma.

Exhaust smoke-emission under the engine system cannot be tested without an exhaust emission tester, equipment which SLRTA does not have. The under carriage condition of the vehicles cannot be examined without a vehicle lift or inspection pit which is lacking at several of the vehicle examination centres.

If the standards set for private testing stations were applied to SLRTA's stations, those stations would need to be reported to the minister and possibly ordered to cease operations until remedial measures are taken.

4.4 MIS does not provide the necessary information

Best practice, dictates that the management information system of any organisation should provide management with timely and accurate information for decision making, control and coordination of its operations.

SLRTA's MIS does not provide the examination centres with complete and timely information. The Safety/Enforcement Department is therefore not able to carry out effective road monitoring which results in the loss of revenue of unpaid fines. The possible implications will be:

- ◆ Defective vehicles that are prohibited from using the road might not be spotted by TWs;
- ◆ Defective vehicles that are levied with fines may move to other locations undetected;

- ◆ Vehicles may move to other locations for licence renewal in order to avoid the payment of fines levied on them, and
- ◆ The lack of vehicle monitoring equipment will hinder the free flow of traffic and increase the number of unsafe vehicles on the road.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Improve the reporting on traffic accidents

SLP should improve its reporting on accidents to include their causes, types of vehicles involved and whether those vehicles carried a valid licence. Relevant data should be compiled and transmitted to SLRTA for their analysis.

5.2 Commercial Vehicles should be examined according to set time frames

SLRTA should ensure that all commercial vehicles are examined every six months in accordance with the RTA .

5.3 Test vehicles in line with the vehicle examination check list

The Transport Department of SLRTA should ensure that all necessary equipment for testing in line with the vehicle examination checklist, are provided at the examination centres. SLRTA should also ensure that the vehicle examiners strictly adhere to the examination checklist. A detailed inspection of each testable item should be made. The examiners should be made aware of the serious legal implications of certifying defective vehicles.

5.4 Upgrade the Management Information System

SLRTA should ensure that information fed into the system is easily accessible and disseminated in a timely and complete manner to help reduce fine evasion. Traffic wardens should be equipped with hand held devices making it possible to access information relating to the registration of vehicles, date of licensing, make or type of vehicle and fines if any to enable them to do effective road monitoring.

5.5 Assess the need for staff

The SLRTA should carry an assessment of its staffing needs for vehicle examination as well as road monitoring. Ranks, grades as well as skills allocation to different centres should be described and the training needs of existing staff considered.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. Roles and Responsibilities

Director of Transport/Technical Department

- ◆ Monitoring and certification of private garages authorized to conduct vehicle examination;
- ◆ Inspection, monitoring and certification of vehicle repair and maintenance services;
- ◆ Ensuring that the percentage of fee due to SLRTA (from the activities of private examination Garages) are expeditiously remitted to the Authority's coffers;
- ◆ Confirming the results of fitness tests conducted by private garages for onward communication to the Licensing Department;
- ◆ Change of engine and fraudulent practices pertaining thereof;
- ◆ Allocation of vehicle registration numbers;
- ◆ Examination of vehicles that are involved in Road Traffic Accidents;
- ◆ Design and implementation of standards in respect of imported used vehicles, spare parts and automotive fuels imported into the country;
- ◆ Monitoring of the production of vehicle number plates by the private sector contractors and keeping of statistics arising thereof;
- ◆ Promotion of road safety measures; and
- ◆ Keeping track of crucial statistics of operations in the Transport Department.

Manager Transport/ Technical Department

- ◆ Monitoring and certification of Private Garages authorized to conduct vehicle examination;
- ◆ Inspection, monitoring and certification of vehicle repair and maintenance services;
- ◆ Confirming the results of fitness tests conducted by private garages for onward communication to the Licensing Department; and

- ◆ Supervision of Vehicle Examiners for the examination of vehicles that are involved in road accidents.

Vehicle Examiner

- ◆ Overall supervision of the vehicle examination centre;
- ◆ Examination and certification of vehicles for road worthiness;
- ◆ Examination of vehicles involved in road accidents;
- ◆ Examination of vehicles, which are the subject of Police investigation;
- ◆ Preparation of statistical returns for submission to head office;
- ◆ Administration and control of the office staff; and
- ◆ Representing the Executive Director in all matters relating to the Authority in their areas of operation.

Tester

- ◆ Assists in the examination and certification of vehicles for road worthiness;
- ◆ Assists in the examination of vehicles involved in road accidents;
- ◆ Assists in the examination of vehicles, which are the subject of Police investigation;
- ◆ Assists in the examination of vehicles for valuation; and
- ◆ Assists in the preparation of statistical returns for submission to head office.

Director of Safety/Enforcement

- ◆ Under the supervision of the Executive Director, as the Chief Executive Officer of the SLRTA but subject to the overall directions of the Board, the Chief Traffic Warden is responsible to perform the lead roles in management, supervision and coordination of the Traffic Warden Corps;
- ◆ Liaises with management with respect to the programming implementation and operational performance of the warden corps;
- ◆ Assists in the identification and organization of training programmes for the wardens;

- ◆ Initiates and maintains dialogue with the road-user. Stakeholders, organizes and participates in workshop/seminars and assists in the dissemination of activities related to the implementation of the Traffic Warden System; and
- ◆ Provides monitoring and advisory services to the management and Board of the SLRTA, with respect to the traffic Warden System.

Chief Traffic Warden

Under the supervision of the Director of Safety/Enforcement his or her responsibilities will include:

- ◆ Supervision and close coordination of traffic warden activities
- ◆ Postings and facilitating logistic backup for the wardens
- ◆ Assist the Director of safety and enforcement in initiating and maintaining dialogue with road user stakeholders; organise workshops /seminars and other activities related to the implementation of the traffic warden system
- ◆ Assist the Director of safety in preparing quarterly reports required for the implementation of programmes, participate in project evaluation and other designated workshops
- ◆ Assist in identifying and organising training programmes for traffic wardens
- ◆ Any other duty that may be assigned by the Director of Roads safety and enforcement

Deputy Chief Traffic Warden

- ◆ Acts as focal point of discipline in the corps with active support and guidance from the chief Traffic warden and ensure that the code of conduct is strictly adhered to
- ◆ Will assist in supervising and coordinating training programmes
- ◆ Coordinate and actively participate in workshop/seminars organised by the unit
- ◆ Assist in the design of evaluation and monitoring criteria and facilitate evaluation reports on the performance of all wardens and support staff

Senior Traffic Warden/Traffic Warden Supervisor

- ◆ Maintains and enforces road safety standards;

- ◆ Assists in coordinating and participating in workshops/seminars organised by the unit;
- ◆ Assist in enforcing discipline within the corps with active support and guidance from the Deputy Chief Traffic Warden; and
- ◆ Prepares daily returns to the Deputy Chief Traffic Warden for onward transmission to the Chief Traffic Warden.

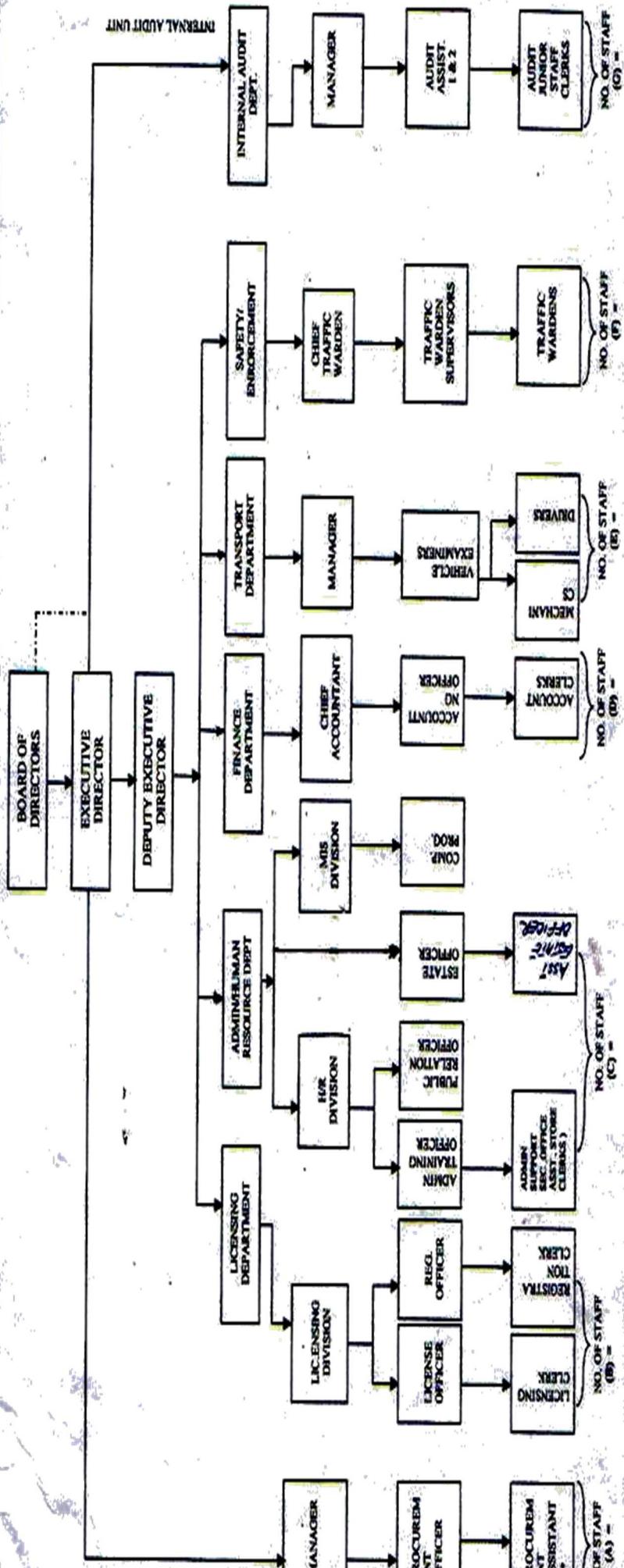
Traffic Warden

- ◆ Supplements the effort of the police in regulating and controlling traffic; and
- ◆ Reports and issues traffic violation fines in respect of minor traffic offences.

Police

- ◆ Issuance of Vehicle Examination Request Forms to vehicles involved in road accidents, for examination by the Vehicle Examiners; and
- ◆ According to RTA 2007 Sec. 60 (1-3) a Police Officer is mandated to examine a commercial vehicle, and such power includes power to test it and drive it for the purpose of testing it.

PROPOSED ORGANIZATION CHART FOR THE SIERRA LEONE ROAD TRANSPORT AUTHORITY (SLRTA)



TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF = (A) + (B) + (C) + (D) + (E) + (F) + (G) =

NO. OF STAFF (G) =

NO. OF STAFF (F) =

NO. OF STAFF (E) =

NO. OF STAFF (D) =

NO. OF STAFF (C) =

NO. OF STAFF (B) =

NO. OF STAFF (A) =



ROAD TRANSPORT AUTHORITY
KISSY ROAD
FREETOWN

Fax: 224675
Tel: 229992

K 24

RTA 1/23 Vol III
The Auditor General
Audit Service (SL)
Lotto Building
Tower Hill
Freetown

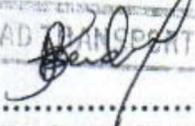
15th May 2012

Dear Madam

**RESPONSE TO POINTS RAISED FROM THE
PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT**

We forward herewith management's response to the performance audit report for your consideration and necessary action.

Yours faithfully


ROAD TRANSPORT AUTHORITY
.....
Dr Sarah Bendu
Executive Director