



## Fact sheet on private driver testing

- Ontario took over driver testing in 1961 because of bribery and other abuses at that time. In 1963 then Minister of Transport, James Auld, called the move “one of the outstanding achievements of the department to date in its efforts to develop greater safety.” – *Reports of the Ontario Legislature – Public Accounts*.
- Alberta has privatized driver testing, and in that province private registry companies make about \$2 million a year selling drivers’ licence data to private investigators, lawyers, insurance agents and commercial parking lot operators. – *Edmonton Journal*
- Drivers’ licences include a lot of personal information. Beyond name, address, height, and age, they may include medical restrictions on driving. If you pay by credit card or use a credit card for cheque ID, your credit data is also available to the private operator.
- Private operators are not constrained by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act the way the government is. – *Edmonton Journal*
- Staff of private operators don’t swear an oath of secrecy as provincial government employees do. – *Ontario Public Service Act*
- Employees in a private registry in Alberta have been charged with making false drivers’ licences. – *Edmonton Journal*
- Bruce Matzolic of the Certified Driver Examiner Association of Alberta says unscrupulous examiners are getting around government guidelines. He worries that other provinces may refuse to recognize the Alberta licence. He is part owner of one of a company that tests drivers and he sees a return to abuses that forced Alberta to take over testing in 1988. Those abuses included paying high fees for an easy ride on the test. He says some people are taking candidates for a 10-minute spin instead of the 20 to 30 minutes needed to assess a driver. – *Calgary Herald*.
- Private operators in Alberta want more money for renewing licences because they say they aren’t making enough. They want a 50 per cent increase in the fees paid by applicants. – *Edmonton Journal*
- People in Edmonton are complaining about long lines and poor service at private offices. – *Edmonton Journal*
- Private testing for young drivers in Virginia is giving licences to young people who admit they probably shouldn’t have passed. – *Washington Post*.
- State supervision of private driver testing in Virginia is totally inadequate. Widely varied standards and lax enforcement fails to prevent bad drivers from getting licences. – *Washington Post*.