



ECWVTA



TYPE APPROVAL
Is your business ready?

ECWVTA (European Community Whole Vehicle Type Approval) is currently being phased in to all vehicle categories.

Is your business ready?

For more information on ECWVTA see the VCA website or contact ecwvta@vca.gov.uk

Explorer GROUP *Lead the Way*

VCA recently completed ECWVTA work with Explorer Group on their entire fleet of Motorhomes. Type Approval Engineer, Nic Fasci, explains...

They're likened to Marmite; you either love them or hate them. But love them or not, they're here to stay and this particular brand of Marmite contributes approximately £2 billion to the UK economy each year – I am of course referring to Motorhomes and Caravans.

Under the Recast Framework Directive, currently being rolled out in Europe, Motorhomes and Caravans become a part of ECWVTA legislation. One company keen to stay on top of this and to maximise sales is Explorer Group Ltd, based in Consett, County Durham.

In the last edition of Update News David Whitehead, Homologation Manager at Explorer Group, explained his aspirations for completing the type approval programme on the company's successful range of Motorhomes. David set himself a target of November 2008 to achieve this. Explorer Group's desire to prepare early for type approval is something that was carefully orchestrated and accomplished with the help of VCA.

Explorer Group's achievements show that manufacturers are beginning to acknowledge new market requirements.



Nic Fasci

Time Line

I began working with David at the end of October 2007 with a view to completing the Whole Vehicle programme before the International Caravan and Motorhome Show at the NEC in October 2008. During 12 months, we worked through the entire type approval process, from basic concepts to document preparation and finally to the Whole Vehicle Documentation which encapsulates the procedure



In December 2007, Explorer Group presented us with a number of their vehicles at the VCA Midlands Centre where pre-approval assessments were made. Any areas that required redesign to meet relevant legislation were noted down. Explorer Group, to their great credit, reacted swiftly to each change allowing tooling to be modified and brought into the company quality schemes



At the end of July 2008, I travelled up to Explorer Group's manufacturing facility to inspect the final iteration of vehicles and to make sure the company's efforts had been worth it. Time was then spent creating the Whole Vehicle Document which meets new Directive requirements. This document will not be used until 2009 when it is ready for issue.



On 1st October 2008, VCA were in a position to issue Explorer Group with their very first ECWVTA certificate for both the Avantgarde and Elddis Motorhome models.



Rob Quine spoke at the event: "This approval gives all our customers added confidence in our product and proves Explorer Group's desire to be one of the best Motorhome manufacturers in Europe".

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Following the lead taken by Explorer Group, other manufacturers are contacting VCA to enquire about the type approval process and benefits of achieving full ECWVTA. Explorer Group has given itself a competitive advantage by acting early, and its future looks bright.

Oh, and for the record I love Marmite...

On 13 October 2008 the final piece of the jigsaw puzzle was put into place at the International Caravan and Motorhome Show. In front of the media, VCA presented Explorer Group with their final Type Approval certificate, giving them the chance to show-off their range of fully type-approved vehicles to the world, ready for 2009.

I presented the certificate to both David and Rob Quine, Managing Director, who proudly displayed their achievement for the duration of the show. The company's hard work obviously paid off as they managed to sell over 50 Motorhomes and close to 300 Caravans during the six day event, with a total value of around £5 million. Who said we're in a credit crunch?