



SMOG CHECK ADVISORY

Official Publication of the California Department of Consumer Affairs/Bureau of Automotive Repair

December 1997

What Will Happen As BAR-97 Start-Up Begins? Expect the Unexpected!

With just days left to prepare for the start-up of BAR-97, there may be some anxiety about what to do when the unexpected happens.

The best advice we can give to those shops that will turn on the switch to BAR-97 on December 1 is to pay very close attention to your electronic transmission messages," said Leon Vann, Jr., BAR's Smog Check Operations and Engineering Chief of Staff. "As things develop, we'll let everybody know immediately what's happening statewide with ET blasts."

That means it will be critical for technicians to print out each message to keep everyone in the shop informed, and to be careful to avoid erasing or bypassing important messages.

As the new BAR-97 program launches and then moves into the "shake out" stage that all new programs go through, Vann described several possible glitches that may occur and some steps to follow to fix them, such as:

- **GLITCH:** You're locked out even though you purchased your equipment on or before the October 15 deadline.
- **ACTION:** Under these circumstances, you should not be locked out, but if you are, call your local field office for help.
- **GLITCH:** You purchased your equipment after October 15 but had it installed before December 1. You're locked out and you don't believe you should be.
- **ACTION:** Equipment purchased after October 15, must be fully certified before it can be initialized and made operational. Check the BAR Web Page to see if your unit is fully certified, or with your local BAR field office to verify the certification status. If your unit is fully certified, call your local field office to have a field representative unlock it for you.
- **GLITCH:** You've done everything right...you purchased before Oct. 15, and you're ready to go. You activate the equipment but everything suddenly goes blank and you're unable to



Abbas Paymard, owner of Pay Less Smog Center in Westlake Village, Ventura County installed a custom-made, 44'x12-1/2', retractable awning over his four test lanes to protect his dynamometer from rain and wind.

- perform Smog Check inspections.
- **ACTION:** Sounds like equipment failure. Call your manufacturer for repair service and check your warranty, which will tell you how long the manufacturer has to respond to your service call.
- **GLITCH:** You're doing some start-up tests on the BAR-97 systems prior to initialization and the BAR-97 suddenly begins acting strangely.
- **ACTION:** Call the manufacturer for service before having the system initialized. Once your new BAR-97 system is initialized, your BAR-90 system can no longer perform official Smog Check inspections.
- **GLITCH:** During the period between December 1, 1997 and February 28, 1998, you run a BAR-97 on a customer's vehicle. During the test you have a sudden hunch that the vehicle may fail as a Gross Polluter (GP). When the test is completed, the Vehicle Identification Report (VIR) confirms that the vehicle is a GP. When you try to retest the vehicle in two-speed idle mode, the analyzer informs you that the vehicle must be certified at a Test-Only station.
- **ACTION:** Unfortunately, the vehicle is now a confirmed Gross Polluter and, by law, must be referred to a Test-Only station for final certifica-

tion. The GP identification cannot be erased because you performed the wrong type of test or performed the test incorrectly. This example illustrates the importance of using the "training mode" to become skilled at performing the ASM test. If you are unsure how to perform the ASM test, you should practice using the "training mode", not the official test mode.

- **GLITCH:** Your customer needs a Smog Check, but you decided the new program didn't fit into your plans and no longer provide this service. How can you keep this customer and continue to provide good customer service?
- **ACTION:** Don't be negative with your customer. Be supportive and give him or her the toll-free number (800-952-5210) to call for shops that do perform Smog Checks. Your customer will appreciate your integrity and helpfulness.

As announced in the October edition of the *Smog Check Advisory*, the Consumer Information Center has been gearing up for the launch of BAR-97 by adding staff and extending its hours from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Friday. In addition, the Center will begin Saturday shifts and extend its daily hours to 9 p.m., if needed, to meet the demand.

And, just to recap the two-step initialization process (announced in the November edition of the *Smog Check Advisory*):

1. Until the BAR-97 software and the Emissions Inspection System (EIS) are fully certified, your EIS units will

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KEY ACTION DATE

BAR-97 Emission Inspection System (EIS)

1998

March 1

BAR-97 EIS in Enhanced Areas goes on-line; only BAR-97 tests accepted in Enhanced Areas.

Expect the Unexpected!

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be using specially designed interim software that will operate the EIS as a BAR-90ET. These interim units will be initialized by telephone by BAR staff.

2. When the BAR-97 software upgrade and the EIS units are fully certified, including the dynamometer and digital storage oscilloscope, and the technician has completed the required 8-hour transition training, manufacturers will install the upgraded software and notify BAR representatives, who will begin making inspections at individual stations to initialize the fully-certified and completed BAR-97 EIS units.

In preparing for the new BAR-97 program, Vann also believes a strong marketing effort on the part of those shops remaining in the Smog Check program would be a smart move.

There are going to be a lot of motorists out there looking for a Smog Check," he said. "It would be a good idea to let them know where you're located and what you have to offer." ...



New Referee Services Contract Awarded

The Department of Consumer Affairs/Bureau of Automotive Repair (DCA/BAR) recently awarded a three-year contract to the California Community College Foundation (CCCF) to provide Referee Services and enroll, train, and employ new auto repair trainees into the automotive industry.

Valued at nearly \$300,000 per month, the contract calls for the CCCF to use its network of Community College automotive repair training facilities to perform Referee Services using experienced Referee Technicians who were previously employed by the present Referee Services contractor, Parsons Engineering Science, Inc.

Keller said BAR will provide technical oversight of the new program while the CCCF will begin testing on Dec. 1, 1997 and be fully operational by January 1, 1998. The toll-free number for Referee Services remains the same at (800) 622-7733.

"This contract is an impressive example of a creative way to cut costs, provide consumer convenience, make full use of existing smog equipment and locations, attract new recruits to the auto repair industry, and stimulate local economies by increasing job opportunities," said BAR Chief Marty Keller. ...

New ASM Cutpoints Phase-In Planned

As part of the BAR-97 program, cutpoints (the points at which vehicles fail a Smog Check) for the new Acceleration Simulation Mode (ASM) test will be phased-in as technicians and consumers adjust to the new program, according to BAR Chief Marty Keller.

Technicians must have enough experience to test and repair vehicles that fail the ASM test," Keller explained. "As they gain that experience, we'll make incremental adjustments to the cutpoints."

During the phase-in period, the cutpoints will start with the most lenient standard and may be adjusted as the March 1, 1998 start-up nears. At the same time, technicians will have the opportunity to explain and educate their customers about the new test.

The ASM test is very effective at identifying high-emitting vehicles, and BAR will evaluate the new cutpoints during the phase-in period. The stringency of the cutpoints will be increased to meet the emissions reductions that California agreed to in its State Implementation Plan (SIP). The SIP, which outlines how the state will meet the emission reduction goals required by the federal Clean Air Act, has been approved by the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

This cutpoint phase-in will also avoid overwhelming the Smog Check test and repair system, and give everyone time to make the required adjustments," Keller said. ...

WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR OLD BAR-90

In a dilemma about what to do with your old BAR-90 now that your new BAR-97 is on the doorstep? Veteran Community College automotive instructor, Bob Barkhouse, has a deal for you.

"Donating your BAR-90 testers will put the old machines to work for you. Not only do you get a tax write-off, you also win by allowing the machine to train future technicians," he said. "Your old machine is still a viable machine to teach four gases theory and basic diagnostic skills."

Barkhouse pointed out that public schools, especially high schools, are in such a financial crunch that they are unable to buy equipment needed to teach current technology, and most automotive

programs can use more than one tester.

For those who wish to donate, the process is simple. If the machines are working, merely call your local high school, Regional Occupational Center, or Community College to arrange delivery. Once the arrangements have been completed, call the Automotive Repair Coalition (ARC) at 714-598-5510 and ask for a donation form. After you finish filling out the form, keep the original and send a copy back to ARC. You set the declared value.

"Check with your Certified Public Accountant (CPA) or tax person and you will find the donation a win-win situation," Barkhouse added. ...

Look For BAR-97 Status On The Web

Since the last edition of the *Smog Check Advisory*, BAR engineers have developed a point system to help track the progress of the BAR-97 EIS equipment certification process by manufacturer and category of testing. Because certification status is now changing daily, you are urged to check the Web Page at www.smogcheck.ca.gov or www.smogcheck.ca.org to stay up to the minute on this important issue. ...

GSGRs ADVISED TO USE A SAMPLE CONSUMER DISCLAIMER FORM

Technicians in Gold Shield stations are advised to provide consumers who have gross-polluting vehicles sign a disclaimer as well as the invoice when they decline the opportunity to make the full repairs recommended.

Unless the invoice indicating the consumer declined to make the full repairs is signed by the technician and the consumer, the invoice will remain in the "ping-pong" performance evaluation category. Stations may wish to clip, copy and use the following sample disclaimer form:

CONSUMER DISCLAIMER

I have been advised by _____ that all of the repairs listed below are necessary to guarantee my vehicle passes its Smog Check test. I am aware that I have the right to obtain other estimates, and I decline these repairs at this time.

Signed _____
consumer's name

<i>Repair</i>	<i>Reason</i>	<i>Price</i>
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State's Small Business Loan Guarantee Program Can Help When Others Don't

Smog Check station owners and auto repair dealers, especially those trying to purchase BAR-97 systems, may be among those small businesses that have difficulty qualifying for loans, but the State's Small Business Loan Guarantee Program may be able to help.

Administered by the Office of Small Business under the California Trade and Commerce Agency, the program guarantees lenders the security necessary to approve a loan or line of credit for businesses it might normally reject. The guarantees are issued on behalf of the state by non-profit Small Business Financial Development Corporations located throughout California.

Small business applicants are eligible if they cannot qualify for a commercial loan, and collateral is required with each transaction, tailored to meet the borrower's financial situation. Proceeds must be used in California for any standard business purpose, such as expansion into new facilities, the purchase of new equipment, or development of a new product.

The amount guaranteed is subject to negotiation between the corporation and the lender, but cannot exceed 90 percent of the loan amount. Normally, about 75 percent of the loan amount is guaranteed, with the guaranteed portion not exceeding \$350,000. However, small loans up to \$25,000 can be fully guaranteed.

Follow Manufacturers' Guidelines for Effective Diagnosis and Repairs

BAR investigators are taking disciplinary action against technicians who do not repair vehicles properly because they fail to follow manufacturers' guidelines for effective diagnosis and repair.

If technicians and shop owners make complete diagnosis part of their business practices they will be in compliance with the law and will have a leg up on repairing vehicles that fail their Smog Checks," said Mike Vanderlaan, BAR's Manager of Smog Check Field Operations.

Many shops include diagnostic time and costs on their repair invoices and explain the costs to their customers much like a doctor would.

Vanderlaan added that with the implementation of loaded-mode testing in the Enhanced Areas of the state, the diagnosis of emissions-related failures will become the most important service any licensed station provides. A diagnostic flow chart is included in the 8-hour transition training class required for all technicians who will be working with the new BAR-97 Emissions Inspection Systems.

"Technicians and shop owners who fail to heed this advice and conduct improper diagnosis and repair as required under existing laws and regulations, and repeated in the BAR's Smog Check Manual, can expect disciplinary action," he said. •••

Interest rates are negotiated between the borrower and the lender, and the maximum term is seven years. The Financial Development Corporations can charge a guarantee fee of up to 2 percent of the amount guaranteed, plus a documentation fee of \$250.

For a list of Small Business Financial Development Corporations, which can be contacted directly, or through your bank, visit BAR's Web Page at www.smogcheck.ca.gov or www.smogcheck.org, or call the Trade and Commerce Agency, Office of Small Business in Sacramento at (916) 322-5790. •••



is published by the

California Department of Consumer Affairs' Bureau of Automotive Repair 400 R Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

Bulk Rate U.S. Postage PAID Sacramento, CA Permit No. 2083

BAR FIELD OFFICE PHONE NUMBERS

- Bakersfield (805) 833-6304
Riverside (909) 782-4250
Canoga Park ... (818) 596-4400
Sacramento (916) 255-4200
Culver City (310) 410-0024
San Jose (408) 277-1860
Fresno (209) 445-5015
South El Monte (818) 575-6934
Fullerton (714) 680-7851
Hayward (510) 785-1961
Oceanside (760) 439-0942

- DCA Cashiering (916) 322-7002
DCA Licensing (916) 322-4010
ET Help Desk . (916) 255-4476
MCI (800) 731-SMOG
(Then press 5 for technical support)
Test-Only/Referee
Scheduling Center (800) 622-7733

DCA Hotline (800) 952-5210

Little Scoops...

- Attention all technicians in Enhanced Areas! All loaded-mode tests will include the visual inspections and a functional check of the ignition timing, as well as the gas cap and malfunction indicator light (MIL). Follow the prompts on your BAR-97 as its software was revised after the BAR-97 Transition Class student workbook was printed.
A Reminder. Checking your ET blasts is critical during the start-up and phase-in of the BAR-97 program. If you're not receiving your ET information, be sure to do a data file refresh on your analyzer every morning to make sure you are getting the latest news.
Stations located in Enhanced Areas that only perform Smog Check inspections on heavy-duty vehicles (above 8500 GVWR) can purchase the analyzer component of the BAR-97 EIS to

- comply with current requirements. While the dynamometer is not required at this time, one may be required at a later date.
Motorists in the 93308 zip code of Kern County have been added to the list of individuals who were notified in the mid-November registration renewal period that they are now required to go to a Test-Only Station for their vehicle's next Smog Check. As announced earlier, Sacramento and Los Angeles are also on that list.
100 Gold Shield Guarantee Repair stations were recently notified that they have been selected to participate in BAR's pilot program during which they will be allowed to repair and certify Gross Polluters. Check the BAR Web Page at www.smogcheck.ca.gov or

- www.smogcheck.org for a list of the 100 pilot program stations.
Speaking of Gold Shield Guarantee Repair (GSGR) stations, 350 of the current 1,616 GSGR stations have violated the program's requirements and are expected to be notified shortly that they will be undergoing the process of decertification.
For those technicians who put off the 8-hour Transition Training Class, check your local Community Colleges. Many are offering the class on Saturdays and Sundays to meet the demand. A list of colleges can be obtained off the BAR Web Page.
BAR and the Air Resources Board are jointly developing a database of after market parts that will be passed on to the Parts Locator staff, and placed on the BAR Web Page for consumers, as well as technicians to use.