



National implementation scenario of ICT-DRV quality indicators for: FRANCE

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WP 5 □ del: 13 □ last update: May 2015

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Indicator 1: A supporting and regulating legal and organisational framework

Legal regulations as well as the organisation of work provide the necessary framework for the implementation and, if applicable, recognition of CBT and SBT. This applies especially to the legal framework provided in the context of EC directive 2003/59 and, if necessary, further legal regulations having influence on the implementation of such training alongside regular work as a professional driver. Besides legal aspects also the work organisation provides the learner with the necessary time and framework to participate in CBT/SBT and with the necessary support to transfer newly gained abilities into practical work.

In France, SBT CBT applications are a growingly popular mode of training. Though CBT is not mentioned *per se* in the Directive, its nationally transposed provisions allow for the use of top of the range simulators and does not explicitly prohibit the use of CBT, merely insisting on the necessity of being able to verify the identity of the learner.

Professional drivers are offered CBT training in the context of CPC training but only when associated to SBT, as the presence of a trainer is required. Outside a CPC context, no specific legal framework governs the use of CBT and SBT and no legal provisions apply, providing curricular requirements are met.

As regards the organization of work, in a driver CPC context, the rules deriving from Directive 2003/59/ EC on driver training requirements, Directive 2002/15/EC for the calculation of working time and from Reg. 561/2006/EC as regards driving and resting time rules the applicable legislation does not provide a clear view of how training in general, SBT and CBT in particular, is to be timewise embedded within the overall work organization.

The interpretation of the Directive could extend its legal provisions to accepting that CBT be conducted within a driver CPC context. The concern for the identification of the learner undergoing the training could be easily resolved through an “ID and password” generation system that would guarantee to a satisfactory extent the identification of the person learning with the computerized equipment.

The issue of having a trainer present could be solved by having random monitoring, through webcam snapshots, of the learner’s effective presence when his/her account has been activated, or by implementing a software featuring a timing system which authorizes learners to pursue their training activities by opening new files only when a certain duration of login access has elapsed.

The issue of allowing the use of lower end simulators could also be implemented nationally after a European revision of the Directive, on the reasoning that the learning outcomes approach should make it possible to resort to the appropriate level of sophistication depending on the learning objectives at hand

Indicator 2: **Comprehensive information and counselling**

There are information and counselling measures put in place in order to:

- *inform end-users and decision-makers objectively about CBT and SBT,*
- *enable learners, employers and competent-bodies to decide if a CBT/SBT offer meets their requirements,*
- *enable learners and employers to decide if a the training format CBT/SBT is suitable for an individual learner and/or for a certain learning need,*
- *select and adapt courses to individual training needs of a learner and/or a company and*
- *provide learners and contact persons in their company with the necessary guidance and facilitation before, during and after the course attendance/ implementation.*

When it comes to the working population, i.e. those that are actually employed as professional drivers, information, orientation and counselling will depend on the size and on the defined internal policy each individual company has promoted. Though in France, companies find the use of CBT as much more flexible and very economically efficient since it allows for training to be carried out outside working times, few have actually set up proper counselling and information contact points within the company that are able to tailor to each worker's individual career needs or vocational interests.

Outside the working population, unemployed workers through "Pôle Emploi", the French national public employment agency, do widely have access however to counselling aimed at increasing their chances of returning to the labor market.

A positive scenario would be that the promotion of both SBT and CBT application, through the development of well thought out communication material, could be funded through a pool system that would include participation of both public and private entities and, more importantly, that would be freely distributed to both job seekers and current workers in all transport companies.

Indicator 3: **Specifically trained trainers and tutors**

Trainers/ tutors facilitating technology-based training are – besides regular training for trainers and in professional topics – trained in a number of additional abilities that are based on the characteristics of the technology they are working with in its learning context. This includes among others specialised training:

- *for simulator trainers in the characteristics of learning with the simulator/ simulation, individual and group coaching and debriefing, the design and selection of scenarios and the operation and application of the simulator, its various features and additional tools and*
- *for e-learning tutors in the characteristics of distance learning, e-tutoring, learner motivation and instruction, e-communication and coaching as well as interviewing and feedback techniques.*

The French situation shows that CBT trainers and tutors, though they usually have undergone classical pedagogical training and more technology-oriented training focusing on the technical aspects of the devices allowing CBT and SBT, could highly and should highly benefit from trainers'

training that would focus on didactics, on how the subject matter can be taught differently and more efficiently when resorting to technologically-supported training formats

Trainers or tutors may not yet realize how important didactical training could enhance SBT and CBT in terms of the success of the underlying transmission of learning outcomes, but a scenario envisaging that a consultation followed by the development of a set of guidelines or even educational standards explaining how trainers can more efficiently achieve SBT and CBT learning goals could help improve the overall quality of the training offer as well as CBT and SBT's attractiveness.

Indicator 4: **Application of the learning outcomes approach**

The learning outcomes approach with its implications on the quality of training is applied on SBT and CBT. SBT and CBT courses are described in terms of learning outcomes (knowledge, skills and competences) associated with a course, learning environments are adequate to achieve those learning outcomes and, if applicable, assessment takes all kinds of learning outcomes into account and applies appropriate assessment measures.

Furthermore the application of the learning outcomes approach allows the recognition of prior/ non- and informal learning and the recognition of learning outcomes acquired within those CBT/SBT courses in the framework of other (formal) learning outcomes based vocational education and training courses/ certificates.

In France, even though the descriptors are not exactly the same, the learning outcomes approach has been applied for decades, long before the EQF promoted such an approach at the EU level. So this is a quality indicator that does not call for further measures, except perhaps for the adoption of the exact same indicators as those used by the EQF whenever building qualification standards.

The same remark can be made about recognition of prior learning for which by law (law n°2002-73 of 17 January 2002) a whole process and jury-based procedure aimed at recognizing prior learning through the measuring of acquired competences against existing qualifications has been put in place.

Indicator 5: **Provision of an added value to the learning process**

The application of computer- and simulator-based training has a clear added value for the learning process and/or the achievement of the aspired learning outcomes. Technology-based courses are therefore exclusively offered for the achievement of learning outcomes that can clearly benefit from the application of such learning approaches and/or that can be equally be achieved through classical as well as through technology-based training approaches.

In France, though the economical and organizational flexibility of both SBT and CBT is widely acknowledged by most stakeholders (training providers, transport companies, trainers and learners), the notion that SBT/CBT actually provides specific added value to the learning process that cannot be obtained through the more classical classroom-based training offers is not yet advocated by most stakeholders.

A scenario leading to a wider acceptance of SBT/CBT's usefulness to the learning process itself would involve firstly conducting a study pinpointing the exact nature of the learning outcomes achieved through these formats and even measuring the increased sharpness, the increased celerity with which outcomes are achieved, the economic efficiency of these formats etc. At a later stage,

educational standards resorting to CBT and/or to SBT should be drawn so as to reflect the differences between classical classroom training and SBT/CBT.

Indicator 6: **Sound and thorough instructional and technological interface design**

The design of CBT and SBT is based on instructional design considerations taking into account the aspired learning outcomes and the needs and characteristics of the learner. This leads to the development of learning environments providing best conditions to stimulate and facilitate learning. Pedagogy drives the choice of instructional technology, not the other way around.

With regards to SBT other than the choice of having the training blended with CBT in some instances there is hardly any evidence of any substantial taking into consideration of instructional design matters.

With regard to CBT however, a greater attention is given to instructional design issues in the context of CBT provided by transport-specialized vocational training providers, as the latter have been increasingly assigning pedagogical staff to the development of new training offers with an emphasis on instructional design considerations involving e-learning.

A promising scenario would be to produce a benchmark of specific CBT/SBT good practices or even guidelines to which all SBT/CBT providers could refer whenever designing curricula.

Indicator 7: **Continuous evaluation and further development of CBT/SBT courses**

CBT/SBT courses are continuous subject for review, change, improvement and further development in order to adapt to changing needs and requirements and to the state-of-the-art of educational technology. Learning is the leading factor within all evaluation and development efforts.

Our research activities were unable to uncover documented evidence of continuous evaluation of both CBT and SBT courses. However, for those qualifications that are outside the driver CPC context and are listed on the French RNCP (the French Register for Vocational Certifications), and that include CBT and/or SBT features they are subject to the same evaluation process all vocational qualifications are.

In this regard, a scenario capitalizing on the singularity of SBT and CBT would have key stakeholders such as competent public bodies (certifying authorities), training providers and companies come up with a set of specific criteria for reviewing qualification offers in which CBT/SBT features are included. Thus a specialized evaluation process for SBT/CBT would boost trust in the quality of the underlying qualifications.

Indicator 8: **Research, sharing and networking on the realisation of SBT and CBT**

The implementation of SBT and CBT requires a continuous dialogue and close cooperation between education providers, developers of CBT and simulators as well as researchers, therefore, continuous sharing, networking and joined research activities are taking place in order to further work on the improvement of SBT and CBT.

SBT and CBT offers are currently promoted through training providers' individual marketing strategies that often use the opportunities given by contemporary communication facilities such as

public events (fairs, workshops, social media etc.) but seem to be rarely embedded in a more holistic approach involving extensive cooperation and research.

The scenario described above where guidelines and/or good practices for SBT/CBT are set to be developed could be usefully enriched with a solution consisting in pooling together shared experiences from the transport industry but also from other industries and joining forces so as to pilot new research or solutions that might turn out to even further enhance the added value of SBT and CBT. Moreover such a structure would need to acquire some level of frequency and even eventually become a real network of stakeholders pooling together large chunks of R&D resources. Such a scenario would mean that all commonly discovered or developed new solutions could immediately benefit the whole VET landscape at a most probably lower cost.