TyreSafe

SAFE TYRES SAVE LIVES

POSITION PAPER

tyresafe.org

Prompting drivers to act on MOT advisories

Goal 3

POSITION AS AT	VERSION	NEXT REVIEW
November 2026	1.0	After DVSA 2026–27 MOT data is published

Our position

When an MOT finds a tyre or brake close to its limit, the driver is given an advisory. The car passes, and the next official prompt is the next MOT, a year later. TyreSafe will continue to work with the DVSA MOT Testing Service to introduce, and then widen the use of, reminders for owners to act on unresolved tyre and brake advisories during the year, and calls on the motor industry to help drivers sign up. We do not mind which service DVSA uses. What matters is that the warning reaches the driver again while there is still time to act.

The problem

- **Advisories are common.** One car and van MOT in four (25.2%) records a tyre advisory, most often tread close to the legal limit or cracking. (TyreSafe analysis of DVSA data, February 2025)
- **Advisories predict danger.** Cars with a tyre advisory were nearly twice as likely to have a dangerous tyre defect at their next MOT (7.4% against 3.8%). Cars with a brake advisory were more than twice as likely to fail on brakes (11.3% against 4.5%).
- **The scale is large.** More than 750,000 vehicles that failed their MOT on tyres in 2023–24 had been given a tyre advisory at their previous test. (DVSA)
- **Tyres and brakes are where the danger is.** Together they make up nine in ten dangerous defects found at the MOT, and over half (52%) of dangerous tyre or brake defects had a tyre or brake advisory the year before.
- **Fatal tyre defects are mostly a maintenance failure.** In fatal collisions on motorways and major A-roads between 2014 and 2022, 71% of tyre defects were due to a lack of maintenance: 75% for cars and 61% for other vehicles. (TRL, 2023)
- **Nothing is improving.** Where the previous year's test can be traced, the share of tyre failures that had an advisory the year before was 37.3% in 2024 and 36.5% in 2025 (widening the window to cover about eight in ten failures gives the same 36.5%). One tyre failure in seven in 2025 came from a car advised two years running; those cars were about 2.5 times as likely to have a dangerous tyre defect as cars never advised.
- **Many drivers treat a pass as a clean bill of health.** In National Highways research, 87% of drivers assumed an MOT pass means a vehicle is safe, and 23% of licence holders said they had ignored or delayed acting on a tyre advisory.

The data cannot show what each driver did between tests; some will have replaced tyres or brakes and later worn them out again. But across millions of tests, the pattern is clear: an advisory is a reliable early warning, and too often it is not followed up.

What we are asking for, and from whom

- **The DVSA MOT Testing Service:** work with TyreSafe to introduce, and then widen the use of, reminders for owners to act on unresolved tyre and brake advisories between tests. That could be the MOT reminder service, which drivers already sign up to, the MOT history check service, or another service that suits DVSA better. Start with a pilot, and evaluate it.
- **MOT centres and the motor industry:** explain advisories clearly when handing a vehicle back, and encourage drivers to sign up for reminders at the test.
- **The Department for Transport:** recognise advisory follow-up as a Road Safety Strategy measure, and track its effect through the MOT-based indicator in TyreSafe's Goal 6 position paper.

Why we believe it would work

- **The Government already uses this approach.** The Road Safety Strategy highlights Operation Tutelage, which writes to the keepers of apparently uninsured vehicles: 78% of over 700,000 recipients became compliant after receiving a letter between 2020 and 2023. Its successor, Tutelage+, already cross-checks DVSA MOT data. (Road Safety Strategy, p. 41)
- **Reminders already work for MOTs.** 24.7% of drivers not signed up to DVSA's MOT reminder service were late for their MOT, against 16.5% of those signed up. (DVSA, May 2024 to April 2025)
- **The information already exists.** DVSA records every advisory against the vehicle at the test. No new data collection is needed.
- **It targets the right drivers at the right time.** A reminder goes only to people whose vehicle has a known warning sign, when acting is cheap and before the defect becomes dangerous.

How confident we are

HIGH That tyre and brake advisories identify vehicles at much higher risk of a dangerous defect.

HIGH That DVSA holds the data needed, and that digital reminders can be delivered at low cost.

MODERATE On how much reminders will change behaviour. Tutelage shows letters can work, but buying insurance is a legal duty and acting on an advisory is not. That is why we propose a pilot with evaluation before national roll-out.

Limitations and how to handle them

- **Reach.** Opt-in services only reach drivers who sign up. MOT centres prompting sign-up at the test is the simplest way to widen reach.
- **Tone.** Reminders should be factual and helpful ("your MOT noted that…; have it checked"), not alarming. Some drivers will already have acted.
- **Consistency.** Advisories vary between testers. Large numbers smooth this out, and DVSA's existing quality controls apply.

- **Data and privacy.** How contact details are used is for DVSA to decide within its existing rules. We are not asking for any new data sharing.

What we are not asking for

- No change to the MOT test, and no change in the status of advisories: they stay advice, not a fail.
- No new offence, and no cost to motorists.
- No preferred service: DVSA is best placed to choose.
- No commercial messaging: reminders should not point drivers to any garage, retailer or brand. That is why we ask for brakes as well as tyres.

How this fits with our other goals

Goal 6 asks Government to measure how many tyre and brake failures had an advisory at the previous test. That indicator would show whether advisory reminders are working, and THINK! campaigns (Goal 2) would carry the same message to the public.

Review and changes

TyreSafe reviews this position every year when new DVSA MOT data is published, and sooner if new evidence emerges, including results from any pilot. If the evidence changes, so will our position, and we will record what changed and why.

Version	Date	Change
1.0	November 2026	First published

Sources

- Department for Transport, Road Safety Strategy (7 January 2026), Chapter 4 (Operation Tutelage and Tutelage+), p. 41
- DVSA, MOT testing data 2023–24 and 2025–26
- TyreSafe analysis of DVSA anonymised MOT data: car tests in February 2023, 2024 and 2025, linked by vehicle
- DVSA, MOT reminder service: late MOTs among drivers signed up and not signed up
- National Highways driver research on MOT advisories
- TRL, analysis of tyre defects in fatal collisions on motorways and major A-roads, 2014–2022 (October 2023)
- TyreSafe written evidence to the Transport Committee's Road Safety Strategy inquiry: RSS0014 (May 2026) and supplementary evidence RSS0152 (November 2026)