

# **PACTS TYRE SAFETY BRIEFING**

**08.15 – 10am | Wednesday 5 November**

**Terrace Pavilion**

**Richard Burden MP Speech**

**Thank you to PACTS for inviting me** to respond to this important discussion this morning - and for all the invaluable information and advice you provide to MPs and Peers on Houses on road, rail and aviation safety issues throughout the year.

**Thanks also to the Chair, Jim Fitzpatrick MP.** It is always a pleasure to join the former Road Safety Minister at these events.

And finally, **thanks to all the speakers and panellists for your contributions.**

From the perspective of the manufacturer to the collision investigator, we have heard just how important tyre safety is this morning.

## **Safety Imperative**

- We have seen how tyres are the **most significant vehicle defect for Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) collisions** – 36%.
- We know what the consequences are:
  - Nearly 1000 people (981) killed or seriously injured in last 5 years
  - And an addition to those personal tragedies – cost of £435 million to UK economy in that time.
  - Causing delays, disruption and congestion on our roads (particularly SRN) too.
  - And environmental concerns from inadequate tyre pressure too – greater fuel consumption and emissions.

- So we have a **shared goal** to improve tyre safety.
- And **recent trends make this even more urgent**:
  - Really concerning to see that since the recession vehicle and tyre condition have declined.
  - Motorists increasingly wearing their tyres below the legal limit, or opting to buy part worn tyres - which I understand are being sold illegally in large numbers.
  - More than 2.2 million vehicles failed MOT because of tyre issues in 2013.

## Solutions

- We have heard about some of the work to tackle tyre safety this morning:
  - From the TIF's collaborative working with government, enforcement agencies and industry to harmonise the complex web of regulations on used tyres.
  - To the Highways Agency's focus on commercial vehicle tyre defects – which are a real problem on our strategic road network.
  - To TyreSafe's education and awareness raising activities.
- I'd like to talk specifically about that final point.
- We have heard how we need better data, and better consumer information on tyre safety. We know that the **level of public awareness and understanding about tyre defects, and the importance of safe tyres, is low.**
- We need a more robust understanding of issue – currently no clear data linking accidents with tyre age.
- And we need to educate and persuade people to change their behaviour in this area.

## Government Response

- **But perhaps we also need a bit more awareness in Government too:**
  - I could give a rather long list of how safety seems to be a bit of an afterthought under this Government – from minicab deregulation and young drivers.
  - **We saw it again in the recent consultation on tyre labelling enforcement:**
    - 2011 EU requirements for labelling have potential to provide consumers with clear and comparable information on tyres (wet grip, rolling resistance and external noise).
    - If properly enforced, the regulation will enable motorists to understand more about not only the fuel efficiency and environmental impact, but the safety of tyres.
    - Took the Government 3 years to propose and enforcement mechanism - and disregarded the safety gains to be made through enforcement of labelling.
    - Interested to hear your views on this.

## Labour's Approach

- Improving road safety is central to the Labour Transport Team's agenda.
- We are **disappointed with the poor progress** made under this Government, particularly after they scrapped targets for deaths and serious injuries after entering office.
- We want to **restore safety as a priority again.**
- And we are **committed to working in partnership** with the tyre industry, agencies, emergency services and police to scale up awareness and understanding.
- That's what needed to drive down tyre-related collisions further. And I **look forward to working with you in the future** to make that happen.

