NEARLY HALF OF THE NATION'S DRIVERS PUT SAFETY AT RISK BY DELAYING GARAGE VISITS

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The new Motor Ombudsman launched today with a warning that nearly half of the nation's drivers (43%) put their safety at risk along with the safety of other road users by avoiding taking their car to a garage despite suspecting a fault. New research of 1,000 UK drivers has found that the major barriers to seeking professional garage advice are "not being able to explain what's wrong with their car" (35%) and "feeling intimidated by the garage" (32%). Also, 38% of motorists have skipped having their car serviced, with the biggest concern a fear of overcharging (36%).

Furthermore, 57% of drivers who have experienced an unresolved dispute with their garage did not know where to turn to for help resolving the issue. This is where The Motor Ombudsman steps in - the first ombudsman specifically for the automotive sector built on a track record of successfully resolving more than 99% of disputes for nearly a decade under the Motor Codes name[1].

It is responsible for providing an impartial service between consumers and its 7,500 accredited businesses to resolve motoring-related disagreements outside of the courtroom. This helps to reduce stress, and the time and money involved in bringing disputes to an end. Vehicle owners can now feel confident that when handing their car over for repairs at any of The Motor Ombudsman-accredited garages, they will be able to enjoy a high standard of service and deal with professional experts in the unlikely event of a dispute.

Jodie Kidd, the spokesperson for the launch of The Motor Ombudsman, says: *"I definitely understand that not knowing too much about cars can put people off taking their car to the garage - no one wants to draw attention to their ignorance! Another big worry is the cost associated with the work that needs to be done, meaning we're skipping services. Having a reliable guide to help find a reputable garage with credible professionals fills us with confidence and allows us to address any potential issues. In the rare event of a dispute, The Motor Ombudsman can provide a free of charge un-biased service ensuring peace of mind and a stress free experience."*

Bill Fennell, Chief Ombudsman and Managing Director of The Motor Ombudsman, adds: "*Our ultimate aim is to give consumers peace of mind, ease relations between garages and motorists and find the fairest solution for both parties should a dispute arise. All our accredited garages comply with our comprehensive Trading Standards-approved Codes of Practice and our service is completely free for the public."*

ENDS

The Motor Ombudsman media contact:

Simon Wittenberg
PR Manager
The Motor Ombudsman
Telephone: +44(0)20 7344 1609
E-mail: swittenberg@tmo-uk.org

About The Motor Ombudsman

The Motor Ombudsman, which was formally known as Motor Codes, is the automotive dispute resolution body. Fully-impartial, it is the first ombudsman to be focused solely on the automotive sector, and self-regulates the UK's motor industry through its comprehensive Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI)-approved Codes of Practice. Over 7,500 businesses, including vehicle manufacturers, warranty product providers, franchised dealers and independent garages, are accredited to one or more of the Codes, which drive even higher standards of work and service, and give consumers added protection, peace of mind and trust during the vehicle purchase and ownership experience.

For more information on The Motor Ombudsman, visit www.TheMotorOmbudsman.org

To watch a video about The Motor Ombudsman, visit http://bit.ly/2eTBgpK

About Research Without Borders data

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from Research Without Borders (RWB). Total sample size was 1,000 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 14th - 16th October 2016. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+).

Highlights of research results

Have you ever had a dispute with the garage?

Yes: 34%
No: 66%

Did you know who to turn to in the event of the unresolved dispute to bring it to an end?

Yes: 43%
No: 57%

Have you ever been put off taking your car to the garage when you suspected there may be a fault with it?

Yes: 43%
No: 57%

You said you had previously been put off taking your car to the garage when you suspected there may be a fault with it - why were you put off taking your car to the garage?

I could not explain what was wrong with the car: 35%
I was intimidated by the garage: 32%
I was embarrassed that I couldn't understand what the fault was: 24%
I wanted to avoid a potential dispute: 23%
Other: 16%

Have you ever skipped a recommended full or intermediate service interval?

Yes: 38%
No: 62%

As you stated that you have previously skipped a recommended full or intermediate service, why was this?

Concerned that I would be ripped off: 36%
I forgot: 21%
Other: 21%
I am not familiar with servicing schedules and their importance: 15%
It's difficult to find any genuine garage reviews to make an informed choice: 15%
I didn't know where/ how to find a garage which I was confident with: 10%
I prefer to do the servicing myself: 8%

Has your own lack of knowledge about your vehicle ever lead to a misunderstanding with a garage causing a dispute?

Yes: 14%
No: 86%

[1]Facts about Motor Codes (2008 – 2016)

- Motor Codes was established eight years ago in response to the growing need for a self-regulatory body for the automotive sector.
- The Motor Industry New Car Code of Practice was the first Code to be introduced by Motor Codes, and was consistently adopted by 38 vehicle manufacturers, covering 99% of all new cars sold in the UK.
- Three further Chartered-Trading Standards Institute (CTSI)-approved Motor Industry Codes of Practice followed, for service and repair, warranty products, and vehicle sales, giving consumers protection during the buying and car ownership experience. This saw Code membership grow from around 4,500 UK automotive businesses to over 7,500, the largest number for any Codes in the sector.
- Motor Codes became renowned for enforcing the most comprehensive Codes of Practice in the

motor industry.

- Motor Codes handled in excess of 100,000 enquiries. From the cases which were raised from these enquiries, more than 99% were solved through adjudication, avoiding consumers and businesses paying costly legal fees.

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