



Further clarification on six-month MOT extension

There has been considerable disquiet regarding the Government's decision to apply a six-month extension to MOT test expiry date.

Whilst it may be understandable that the information given out by the Government is not always as clear as it could be, given how quick things are changing with the current emergency, it is worth looking at what is known about this process.

The headline statement published on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) was:

"...Your car, van or motorcycle's MOT expiry date will be extended by 6 months if it's due on or after 30 March 2020 - but you must keep your vehicle safe to drive."

The public would understandably think that the headline meant that every vehicle has automatically been given a six-month extension on their MOT, but this is not necessarily the case.

This exemption will only be applied approximately 7 days ahead of the expiry date of the certificate. DVSA will then work to extend dates on a weekly basis for those vehicles that are due a test.

What it means, is that for instance, a vehicle due its MOT on 1 June 2020 will not have its expiry date changed at the moment. This vehicle will still have a 1 June 2020 expiry date until such time that DVSA extend it, which is likely to be only a week before the expiry date.

We have been informed that this will allow them to be flexible and potentially change extension periods, or stop the extensions at any time when it is deemed no longer necessary.

The IGA has already raised concerns to Government, that whilst we support measures to control the spread of the coronavirus, this particular change will have a huge impact on independent garages.

It was our view that six months was too long as a starting point given that HGV tests were only extended by 3 months, and in Northern Ireland where tests on cars are conducted by Driver & Vehicle Agency, they again have chosen to suspend test for three months. We suggested six weeks as a starting point.

Our rationale for this is the fact that vehicles, regardless of their test status, still need to be roadworthy and the statistics show that as the current failure rate (February 2020) is still 31%, many vehicles are not maintained as they should. In fact, almost one in every 3 vehicles do not meet even the minimum roadworthiness standard. This equates to nearly 10 million vehicles at the current time.

Any increase in the number of vehicles that are unroadworthy, even given potential reduced usage, is concerning and so we have asked the Government to take this in consideration.

Garages and MOT stations are considered an essential service, and as such are allowed under current rules to operate and test as before, whilst obviously minimising any risk for customers and staff.

DVSA recognise the vital service that MOT stations are playing in these difficult circumstances, and have now allowed test stations to continue testing if any equipment is out of calibration and an engineer cannot visit to calibrate. Obviously, the equipment must still be functioning correctly and be safe to use. Overdue calibration should then be conducted as soon as engineers are available.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Coles', written in a cursive style.

Stephen Coles
Head of MOT Technical Operations