News – Garages call for MoT test moratorium

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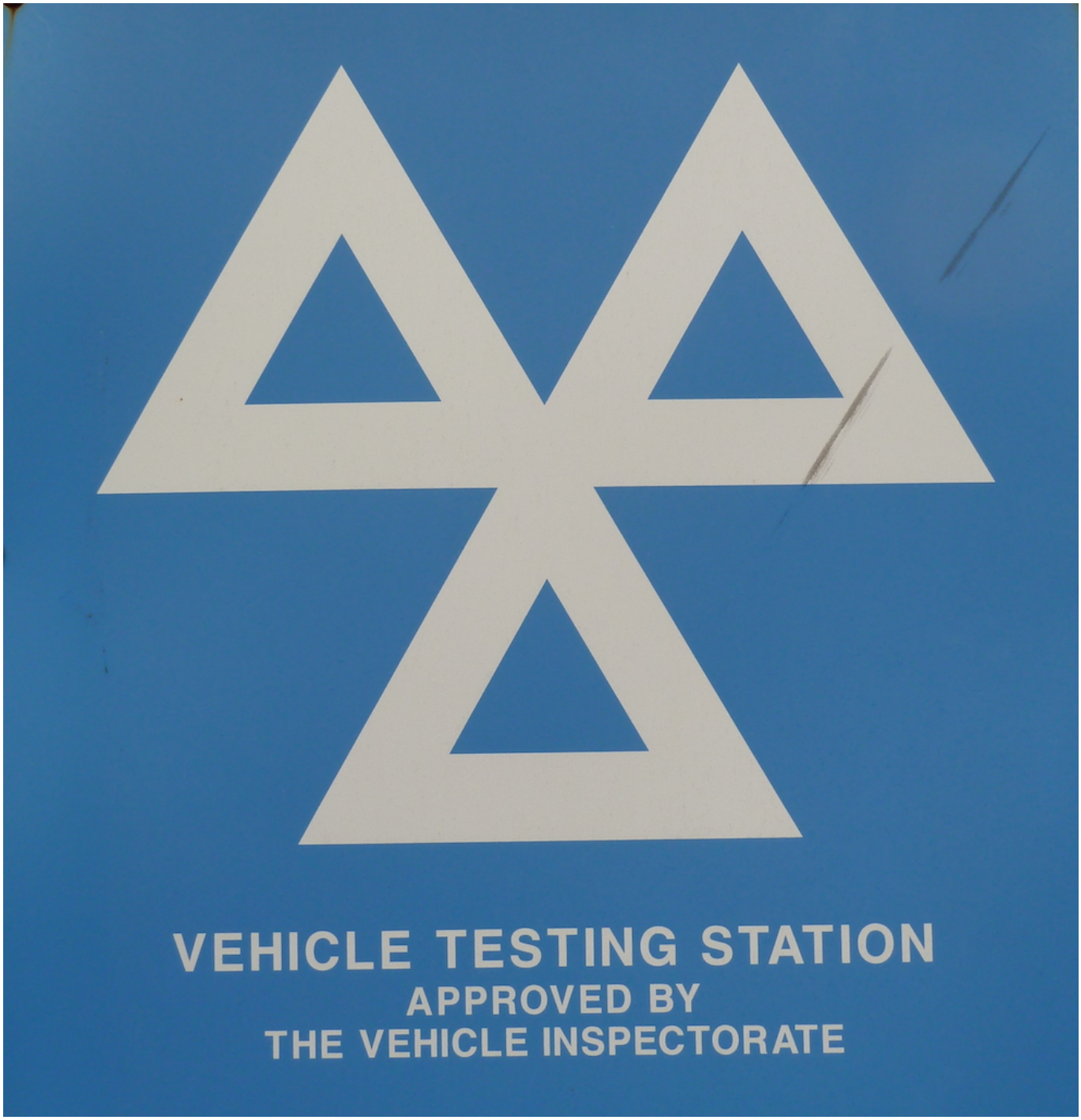

Robin Roberts (and wheelswithinwales) reports on growing calls for MoT tests to be postponed…

Kim adds: “Please see ‘Stop Press’ note (received this morning, 25th March 2020) to update

the information given in this feature…”

Garages are calling for an MoT test moratorium during the coronavirus pandemic.
It is crucial that franchised dealers’ workshops stay open to help the Government meet its goal of keeping freight transport on the roads operating, by ensuring that thousands of vans and smaller commercial vehicles will continue to able to be serviced and repaired, said Sue Robinson, Director of the National Franchised Dealers Association.

NFDA has written to Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP, Secretary of State for the Department for Transport, to outline franchised dealers’ priorities during the Covid-19 Coronavirus outbreak in relation to workshops opening and MOT testing.

NFDA understands that the vehicle technicians who are being asked to continue to work at franchised dealers’ premises will fall under the definition of key workers, in line with the Government guidance which states that key workers in the transport sector “includes those who will keep the air, water, road and rail passenger and freight transport modes operating during the COVID-19 response, including those working on transport systems through which supply chains pass.” Sue Robinson added, “Workshops are vital in ensuring that critical vehicles can continue to operate safely and efficiently during these extremely challenging times”.

MOT moratorium

Additionally, at a time when many vehicle owners are going to be ill, in quarantine or social distancing, NFDA does not think it is reasonable to require them to venture out to get their vehicles MOT- tested.

NFDA believes the temporary drop in income for those who carry out the test could be compensated by the many support schemes for businesses and workers that the Chancellor has already announced. Robinson added, “Due to the current circumstances, we also call on the Government to introduce an immediate three-month moratorium on MOT testing which would reduce social contact. NFDA would welcome the opportunity to further discuss the

suggested measures with the Department for Transport".

STOP PRESS

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The temporary MoT exemption is positive as it will allow vital services to continue and aftersales workshops to prioritise essential repair works on critical vehicles, said Sue Robinson, Director of the National Franchised Dealers Association.

On Sunday 22 March, NFDA wrote to the Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP asking for a three-month MoT moratorium. Today, the Government has communicated that vehicle owners will be granted MoT exemption "in battle against coronavirus".

The Government said all cars, light vans and motorcycles which usually would require an MOT test will be exempted from needing a test from 30 March 2020. The exemption will last six months.

"Vehicles must be kept in a roadworthy condition, and garages will remain open for essential repair work. Drivers can be prosecuted if driving unsafe vehicles", the Government added.

Practical driving tests and annual testing for lorries, buses and coaches have already been suspended for up to 3 months.

If motorists cannot get an MoT which is due, because they are in self-isolation, the Department for Transport is working with insurers and the police to ensure people are not "unfairly penalised".
Sue Robinson continued, "We welcome the Transport Secretary's comments that 'safety is key' and aftersales departments will remain open for essential repair work".