



Department
for Transport

Alison Mutch OBE
Manchester South Coroner's Office
Coroner's Court
1 Mount Tabor Street
Stockport
SK1 3AG



From the Parliamentary
Under Secretary of State
Jesse Norman MP

Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Tel: 0300 330 3000
Email: jesse.norman@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Web site: www.gov.uk/dft

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Dear Ms Mutch

Thank you for your letter of 1 August regarding the Regulation 28 Report - Philip James Clayton.

I was sorry to hear of the tragic death of Philip James Clayton, and I send my sincere condolences to his family and friends.

There are no current plans to limit the engine capacity of vehicles for young drivers, but the Government takes road safety very seriously and is actively exploring other ways to reduce the number of young drivers killed and injured in our roads.

The Government operates within the framework set by the British Road Safety statement of 2015. It sets out the Department for Transport's vision, values and priorities in relation to British road safety. This has led to a significant programme of activity including increased penalties for drivers using hand held mobile phones, consulting on allowing learner drivers on motorways and improving motorcycle training.

The statement can be viewed online at:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/road-safety-statement-working-together-to-build-a-safer-road-system

As part of this action, we recently commissioned a £2 million research programme to explore the effectiveness of a range of measures designed to improve the safety of young and novice drivers, both before they take their test and after they have passed. The measures being researched are:

- The setting of voluntary limits agreed between the young driver and a parent or guardian designed to reduce exposure to risky driving situations during the first months of solo driving. This is based on the 'Checkpoints' programme from the USA, whereby parents and new drivers can discuss

potentially risky situations (e.g. driving at night or with peer-age passengers) and agree to adhere to limits that would gradually be relaxed as the driver gains more experience.

- An increase in the amount and type of on-road practice that learner drivers obtain before taking their practical driving test. This will engage learner drivers, approved driving instructors and parents/guardians to target the number of on road practice hours and the amount of time spent in specific situations. (e.g. time of day, road type, traffic density)
- Using telematics data (potentially through a black box or smartphone app) to 'coach' new drivers during their first 12 months of driving. The aim will be to influence novices to change their behaviour related to several risk factors, and in doing so reduce their risk of collision.
- Hazard perception training (potentially using a computer or virtual reality) to increase skills in drivers. The reason behind this is that hazard perception skills have been shown to have a clear link with collision.
- Increased driver education potentially delivered over the course of a day in a classroom setting. This would look to cover, using evidence-based behaviour change techniques, a range of risks that drivers will face after they begin solo driving.

The purposes of MOT and Individual Vehicle Approval (IVA) testing differ greatly, and the Department does not think it would be appropriate to mandate ongoing, regular IVA-standard testing for specific types of vehicles in the way suggested. This is because IVA looks at the vehicle for its projected life and ensures that it can meet specified safety, security and environmental standards before it is used on the road. IVA only applies to unregistered vehicles: IT IS a one off test that takes into account its design and construction, and takes no account of wear and tear (it's treated as a new vehicle).

If a vehicle is assessed correctly at approval, unless major alterations are carried out to the vehicle the approval will remain valid. Where a vehicle is radically altered after registration, the owner is under a legal obligation to inform DVLA – this would include changing the body shell, altering large sections of the body shell or different drive train, etc. There is also a requirement to inform DVLA of certain other changes including where alterations such as an engine replacement or fuel type change have taken place. There is also a requirement to inform insurance companies of any changes to vehicles. Failure to do so could mean that the insurance was invalid and insurers may not pay out claims. High powered vehicles are likely to attract a higher premium which may be beyond the reach of most young drivers.

The MOT test relates to the condition of the vehicle at the time of the test and should not be regarded as evidence of its condition at any other time, of the general mechanical condition of the vehicle, or that the vehicle fully complies with all aspects of the law. Finally, Neither MOT nor IVA tests should be regarded as a replacement for routine servicing or maintenance of vehicles in use, which are essential to ensure that vehicles remain safe on the road.

Yours ever,

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

JESSE NORMAN