

No. 530/2019

9 September 2019

Our Ref: V4/19

To: All Branches

Dear Colleagues,

Banning Tyres Aged 10 Years and Older – CWU Response to the Department for Transport’s Consultation - Motion 17 (2018)

In recent years the safety of older tyres on heavy goods vehicles, buses and coaches has become a matter of increasing concern.

In September 2012, a catastrophic failure of a 19-year-old tyre, fitted to the steered axle of a large coach, led to the loss of three lives. The accident investigator concluded that the tyre failure was as a direct result of its age.

In June 2017, the family of Michael Molloy from Liverpool, one of those killed, launched what became a widely supported campaign, the “Tyred” Campaign and campaigned unceasingly for a ban on the use of older tyres on buses and coaches. Public support has been overwhelming.

In September 2017, a truck travelling on the M5 suffered a tyre blow-out, crossed the central reservation and collided with oncoming traffic. Five lives were lost in that accident. The Coroner concluded at the inquest, held in February 2019, that the crash was a result of the tyre failure, noting that the tyre was 18 years old and had suffered structural deterioration due to its age.

In both collisions, the age of the tyres fitted to the steered axles was considered to have contributed to their failure.

Since 2013, the Department for Transport and the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency has published roadworthiness guidance to advise against the use of tyres aged more than 10 years on buses, coaches and heavy good vehicles except on a rear axle as part of a twin wheel arrangement. However there was no legal requirement to comply.

In 2018, the Government commissioned research with an aim to establish the effect age has on the integrity of road vehicle tyres. As part of this research, the UK’s TRL Ltd worked with a leading laboratory in the United States to carry out testing and analysis. Collectively, this research evidence concluded that age does affect tyre performance and safety.

In February 2019, the Government, via the DfT published proposals to deal with this threat to road safety, announcing an intention to consult on the proposals to legislate against the use of

tyres aged 10 years or older on heavy goods vehicles, buses, coaches and minibuses and would additionally consider extending the same requirements to taxis and private hire vehicles.

In June this year, the Public Consultation was launched with the Government stating that they believed the changes being consulted on would save lives with the consultation submissions closing date being on 1 September.

Attached is the response of the CWU to the Department for Transport's consultation on banning tyres aged 10 years and older. In line with CWU Conference Policy established with the carriage of Motion 17 (2018) we have supported the "Tyred" Campaign and as such welcomed and strongly supported the Government's proposals in general as well as suggesting that the proposals could have gone further. We have additionally called for tough enforcement and penalties for offenders, along with sufficient resources in respect of Police officers and DfT Inspectors.

The vehicles included in the proposals are heavy goods vehicles, heavy trailers, buses, coaches and minibuses. The DfT is also seeking evidence on whether to introduce a similar maximum age for tyres fitted to taxis and private hire vehicles which we support.

Attachments:

- CWU Response to the Department for Transport's Consultation on Banning Tyres Aged 10 Years and Older.
- Motion 17(2018).
- Images - The Shredded 19-year-old-tyre which blew out in the coach crash which killed Michael Molloy plus Michael with Mother Frances who led the "Tyred" Campaign.

The CWU congratulates Frances Molloy and her family and close supporters in bringing the 'Tyred' campaign to this stage.

Yours sincerely



Dave Joyce
National Health, Safety & Environment Officer

