

SMTA Member Update 10 — 12 June 2020

To our SMTA members,

SUCCESS! (fingers very tightly crossed)

At last we have had a confirmation letter from the Cabinet Secretary that car showrooms will be included in the phase two release from lockdown, which we anticipate should be announced next Thursday the 18th of June. The very obvious requirement for the science to lead with this and the confirmation that the “R” number continues to fall or at best remains stable, the indications at the time of writing are that both these components are positive. To read the letter from the Cabinet Secretary see item below.



Today’s Daily Record will also carry this story out to the consumers who we all need to come back to our business and to read the story on line follow this link below.

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/lifestyle/motoring/a-positive-move-for-showrooms-22175041>

SUCCESS! (limited but it is a start)

I was contacted by one of our members earlier this week with the fantastic news that they had been advised by their local council that they had won their appeal against the withholding of the £25,000 grant and that the funds would be in their bank account within days! Great news and a glimmer of hope to all those garage owners and operators that we are in touch with on this grossly unfair ruling. The challenge to the Scottish Government continues and early next week I will be writing yet again to the Cabinet Secretary for Finance as well as the Cabinet Secretary for the Economy and the First Minister to highlight the injustice of this and ask them yet again to review this and share with us their logic (assuming there is some) to the conclusions they have reached which in turn has the been the foundation for the guidelines as issued.

We will also be creating a newsletter about this saga and it will be distributed to all members who are on our list, if you want to be added to the list please just email karen.thompson@smta.co.uk to be advised of all further updates and actions.



**CORONAVIRUS
UPDATES**

Car Showroom Reopening information

Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Economy Fair Work and Culture, Fiona Hyslop confirms some car showrooms in Scotland can open in Phase 2. Letter below:

Your Ref: Opening of Car Showrooms in Phase Two

08 June 2020

Dear Sandy,

Thank you for your recent correspondence including your letter of 2 June in which you relay your concerns and those expressed by SMTA members regarding plans for re-opening vehicle showrooms in Scotland. I hope that the information provided will offer clarity.

Firstly, please be assured I am very much aware of the significant impact that the pandemic is having on the automotive industry at this time. COVID-19 presents a significant risk to global and domestic economic activity, impacting across many sectors of the economy and we are working hard to support businesses across Scotland.

The Scottish Government has acted quickly to make funds available and has formed an Advisory Group on Economic Recovery to provide independent and expert advice on our response to the long-term impacts of coronavirus. The Group will engage directly with those affected by the crisis, and listen to those who are crucial for rebuilding a resilient economy, providing expert advice on Scotland's economic recovery once the immediate health emergency, has subsided. I would welcome your input.

For the moment, the primary objective of the Scottish Government remains to contain and suppress the virus in order to minimise the harm it can do. We continue to listen to the best scientific advice throughout this difficult time and will apply our best judgements to ensure we can continue to reduce the transmission of coronavirus and save lives. Our approach is tailored to Scotland's public health needs.

With respect to automotive retail, I can confirm that there are no regulations which prevent motor vehicles being distance sold and delivered in Scotland. It is only showrooms which must remain closed, as detailed in the Scottish Government guidelines. All retailers including dealerships may open for 'click & collect', providing collection does not involve entering the showroom. This has been the case throughout lockdown and many outlets have operated on that basis, including adaptation of parking areas to permit physical distancing across their whole site. Of course, any distance selling and delivery of motor vehicles must be undertaken while strictly adhering to physical distancing guidelines which can be found [here](#).

On 21 May, the First Minister set out the steps and phases by which the Scottish Government will aim to ease current lockdown measures. As detailed in the route map published, our actions will be gradual and incremental and will be matched with careful monitoring of the virus. In addition to the route map, the Scottish Government published retail sectoral guidance on 26 May. We have worked with employers and trade unions to ensure that this guidance is evidence-based, fair and ethical, clear and realistic.

This guidance states that retailers may open up to 800m² of their sales area, permitting some larger retail outlets such as car showrooms to re-open in Phase 2. Retail units larger than 800m² will be permitted to open in Phase 3. Each business will need to translate this guidance into the specific actions it needs to take depending on the nature of their business (i.e. the size and type of business, how it is organised, operated, managed and regulated). Our guidance has been designed to be applied to cover the spectrum of different retailers in Scotland and we have prepared an operational guide for retailers which includes a downloadable checklist with actions to consider.

As you can appreciate, this is a rapidly evolving situation and our guidance will be updated and reviewed every three weeks in line with the Scottish Government's lockdown review.

FIONA HYSLOP



CORONAVIRUS UPDATES

DVSA UPDATES

Test Equipment Calibrations—Vehicle Testing Stations are permitted to continue testing with equipment that has expired calibration – as long as that equipment is believed to be functioning correctly. However, most emission test equipment ceases to function when calibration has expired and in such situations Testing must cease. DVSA and the Garage Equipment Association are aware of this problem. DVSA will be considering whether or not regulations can be temporarily relaxed and the Garage Equipment Association will be working with its members to try to restore normal calibration services as soon as possible.

New VTS Applications awaiting DVSA Assessment-DVSA have now issued safe working instructions for Vehicle Examiners to carry out new site assessments in a manner that enables compliance with social distancing requirements. If you are experiencing difficulty getting a site assessment for a new VTS please let us know.

MOT Tester Annual Training & Assessment-DVSA's extension to the MOT Tester Annual Training & Assessment deadline for 2019/20 has now ended. Access codes for 2020/21 Training & Assessment are now available from the SMTA. [click here for our brand new flyer and details how to book](#)



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Exclusive member offer from Just Employment Law

We are conscious that a number of our smaller members will be in need of increased professional support on employment and personnel issues during these difficult times. With this in mind, and in conjunction with our partners, Just Employment Law, the SMTA is pleased to be able to offer all members with up to 10 employees, unlimited expert employment law advice and support from JEL on a retainer basis for a 6 month period – all for a fixed fee of £500 plus VAT (this can be paid in monthly instalments).

Each member who takes up this offer will be assigned their own solicitor from JEL's experienced team and the retainer will also include unlimited drafting on employment matters as well as the drafting of contracts and staff handbooks. The offer is open to any SMTA member with up to 10 employees and the promotion will run throughout the months of June and July. Members wishing to take advantage of this offer should contact JEL directly on 0141 331 5150 / enquiries@justemploymentlaw.co.uk quoting "SMTA6". Preferential rates are also open to SMTA members who have more than 10 employees and who are in need of support at this time and JEL can be contacted via the same contact details.

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