

22 January 2021

Rachel Maclean MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Dear Minister

I write on the subject of motorcycle CBT certificates during the lockdown.

The Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) is requesting that the Department for Transport urgently reviews its decision to decline requests for expiring CBT certificates to be extended during the lockdown.

In a recent reply to a parliamentary question on this subject you stated:

“There are no current plans to extend the two-year validity period of a Compulsory Basic Training (CBT) certificate. It is important that learners have the skills to be competent and safe riders and have up to date road safety knowledge as they prepare to take their test. To extend the validity period would require regulatory change.

Minimising the risk to road safety has always been a priority in our response to COVID-19. Ensuring riders have the current relevant knowledge and hazard perception skills is a vital part of the training of riders, who are most at risk of being involved in an accident on the road.”

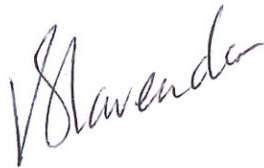
The answer appears to demonstrate a misunderstanding of the request. The request is not for a permanent and universal extension to the two-year period. Rather, it is a request for a limited extension for CBT's due to expire during the period of lockdown, given that renewal is not possible due to the decision to suspend all motorcycle training and testing.

The reason for the request is that preventing a renewal route for CBT holders is an unfair and discriminatory policy for riders who legitimately ride motorcycles and scooters without supervision. This is different from a provisional licence for learner drivers who do require supervision at all times. Thus the CBT holder can legitimately be using their motorcycle or scooter as an independent and legal road user. Many such riders are entirely reliant on their motorcycle or scooter as their only form of transport and will have been doing so for two years.

For many, including delivery riders and those who access schemes such as Wheels to Work, this is their only viable transport choice for making essential trips, working as a key worker in health or social care, or as a delivery rider delivering items ordered online by those obeying the government guidance to avoid non-essential travel.

We do not believe that the minor safety concern outlined is a legitimate reason for depriving CBT holders of their right to ride in accordance with the current guidelines. The extension of MOTs for all vehicles during the first lockdown would have had a greater safety implication but this was deemed to be outweighed by the benefit of allowing essential trips to continue without increasing the risk of virus transmission at garages. We believe that the same logic should be applied to the extension of CBTs to prevent unnecessarily prejudicing a single set of road users.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Lavender'.

Selina Lavender

Chair, The Motorcycle Action Group