
INDUSTRY UPDATE

Tyre Complaint Handling: Code of Practice

Issued: 1 September 2026

Purpose of this update: This document sets out the BTMA's code of practice for handling consumer tyre complaints, for reference and circulation by fellow industry bodies.

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to set out a framework for handling consumer complaints when the quality of the tyre itself is in question. Operators should consider this framework when designing schemes for handling consumer complaints.

The Process

Consumer complaints that the tyre dealer is confident are due to accidental or service-related damage should be dealt with at source. However, should there be reasonable doubt as to the cause of the complaint the tyre(s) may be submitted to the appropriate tyre manufacturer for a technical examination.

Tyre complaints are dealt with individually taking into account the condition of the tyre and the information supplied on the "Standard Application Form" or online for some manufacturers. Any allowance offered is a gesture of goodwill and does not constitute any admission of liability or fault with the product.

Standard Application Forms (SAF) can be downloaded from the BTMA website www.btmauk.com. The download also contains guidance on completing the form. Operators must ensure that applicants use the latest version of the form. Failure to do so may result in refusal of the application.

The value of an allowance is based upon the residual life of the tyre (i.e. the unworn portion of the usable tread pattern depth) and the prevailing replacement cost to the dealer at the time of examination.

Should the manufacturer grant an allowance, the dealer should apply the same proportion to the retail price to determine the consumer rebate.

The Procedure

The consumer should return a tyre under complaint to the dealer from whom it was originally purchased. The vendor is legally obliged to deal with the complaint. The following procedure should be followed.

- Examine the tyre; the problem may be due to road hazards or poor tyre care. If so, this can be pointed out to the user at the time, avoiding the need to return the tyre. If there is reasonable doubt, then the tyre may be submitted to the manufacturer for examination.
- Assist the customer to complete and sign the Standard Application Form (SAF). Failure to record all the information requested in the SAF will delay the collection of the tyres, as it may be necessary to return the SAF to the dealer so that the required information can be added. Since the SAF contains personal information relating to the applicant, scheme operators must ensure compliance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

NB: some tyre manufacturers request submission of complaints through an online system which takes the place of the SAF. In these cases please follow the appropriate tyre manufacturer's guidelines in complaint submission.

- Contact the relevant tyre manufacturer notifying them a complaint tyre is requiring attention. The manufacturer will advise a reference number that should be written by the dealer on the SAF.
- Where applicable, fax / email the completed and signed SAF to the appropriate tyre manufacturer. This will generate a Collection Note, provided the SAF is correctly completed. (Note: some manufacturers may require being informed by telephone in addition to receiving an electronic copy of the SAF.)
- From receipt of the copy of the SAF or the online submission, the tyre manufacturer will, where a collection is required, endeavour to pick the tyre(s) up within seven working days.
- Retain a copy of the SAF and record details of the complaint in a register for reference purposes. The dealer must ensure that retained information is managed in compliance with the GDPR.
- Place the original SAF in an envelope and attach it to the relevant tyre. If there is more than one tyre involved in a single complaint, and if practical, tape them together.
- If appropriate and to assist the tyre inspector, mark the tyre at the location where the problem may lie, e.g. sidewall bulge.
- Ideally hold the tyre(s) in a designated area should collection be required.
- The collecting driver is only authorised to accept tyres where paperwork is raised by the manufacturer and the details and quantities correspond to the information on the manufacturer's Collection Note.
- Both the driver and the dealer should sign the collection note and the tyre dealer is advised to keep a copy in case of any queries.

The manufacturer will endeavour to complete the examination and issue warranty advice within three weeks of receipt of the tyre. However, the manufacturer cannot be held responsible for delays incurred by the retailer in returning the tyre. There may be exceptional circumstances associated with certain types of complaints where the investigation may take longer than three weeks. If a tyre dealer has not received any response within four weeks after collection, the manufacturer should be contacted.

Tyres submitted for examination will normally be disposed of if the complaint is rejected. The consumer may request in writing within 28 days of the notice of rejection the return of the tyre to the dealer (if it is not already there) at the consumer's expense.

Example of Allowance Calculation

If the tyre is 50% worn it is deemed the residual value will be 50% of the replacement cost.

Dealer's buying price	£100
Value of manufacturer's credit	$£100 \times 50\% = £50$
Dealer's sell-out price	£130
Value of dealer's credit to consumer	$£130 \times 50\% = £65$

For further information, please contact the British Tyre Manufacturers' Association at www.btmuk.com.