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Press release

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TÜV®

The TÜV-Report 2017: Fewer defects, greater safety!

Defects on the decline / Success for German manufacturers

Fewer defects in periodic technical inspections (PTI) than in the previous year and a good report for German car manufacturers are the major findings of AutoBild's 2017 TÜV-Report that has been presented in Berlin today. For the biggest German guidebook for used cars, VdTÜV e.V. (the Association of Technical Inspection Agencies) assessed almost 9 million of the statutory PTI.

The good news is that there are fewer vehicles with defects on the roads. The rate of passenger cars with significant defects has again fallen below the 20 percent mark. In total, 19.7 % of those vehicles tested failed the PTI and required further work before they were granted a safety test sticker; in the previous year, the figure stood at 22.6 %. The proportion of vehicles passing the test without any reservations increased to 66.7 % – up from the figure of 63.7 % in the 2016 TÜV- Report.

Nonetheless, the 2017 TÜV-Report also contains some downsides. The youngest age group already contains some models with extremely high rates of significant defects. In the case of vehicles which are two to three years old, this figure is as high as 11.5 %. The situation is correspondingly worse with older cars: The category of ten to eleven-year-old cars includes individual models of which up to 42 % fail the PTI. In total, the average rate of significant defects for vehicles which are more than ten years old is at 27.1 %. Given that the average vehicle age is 9.2 years, these results illustrate that technical safety on the roads is an important issue in society, particularly as more than a third of vehicles on the road are more than 10 years old.

The TÜV-Report covers the categories of chassis, lights, brakes and environment for each vehicle model, enabling the typical problem areas to be considered when purchasing a used car. For instance, defects within the braking systems or the motor management of individual models are not uncommon. Across all age ranges and manufacturers, the TÜV organisations consistently found lighting defects. "It is however pleasing that the amount of lighting defects has declined", explained Dr Klaus Brüggemann, Executive Member of the VdTÜV's Executive Board. "An increased use of LED technologies and greater care taken with the maintenance could lead to this positive trend continuing onward".

"65 years ago, the legislator made a decisive contribution to safety on our roads with the independent and neutral PTI", said Dr Brüggemann. "Car drivers benefit from this as they are encouraged to invest in keeping their vehicle in good technical condition." Furthermore, the results of the PTI provide manufacturers with specific information to assist in the continuous improvement of their fleets.

A vehicle's condition is influenced by many factors. The manufacturing quality and the design of the vehicle play just as much of a role as the manner in which it is used and maintained by its owner. The garages also play an important part: "Fewer defects are found during the PTI on cars which regularly undergo the recommended inspections at a good specialist garage," says Dr Brüggemann.

The results are particularly pleasing for the German manufacturers Mercedes, Porsche, Opel and Audi, who occupy the top 10 positions in the category of two- to three-year-old vehicles. The winners are the Mercedes GLK and the Porsche 911 Carrera, whose rate of significant defects is at 2.1 % for both models. The top 10 also includes a Japanese model, the Mazda 2, which also has the lowest amount of significant defects within the small car category. The Mercedes A-Class came out on top in the compact category, while the Mercedes C-Class had the lowest number of defects in the medium category. Mercedes also lead the way in the vans and SUV categories with its B-Class and the Mercedes GLK, respectively.

The TÜV-Report is Germany's best-selling used car guide with a circulation of over 300,000 copies, in co-operation with AutoBild. "Consumers will find one thing above all others in the AutoBild TÜV-Report: serious, independent information", explains Editor-in-chief Hartmut Müller-Gerbes. "The TÜV trade mark stands for neutrality and competence more than any other body". The TÜV-Report has been assessing the PTI using stringent statistical criteria since 1971, and is free from influences such as the prestige, price or origin of the vehicle. "We have an unbiased view of the safety and the longevity of the cars which come to the PTI", says Müller-Gerbes.

The AutoBild TÜV-Report is available from newsagents and at TÜV stations, from 4 November 2016 for € 4.50. It is published by VdTÜV, in association with TÜV Hessen, TÜV NORD, TÜV Rheinland, TÜV SÜD and TÜV Thüringen.