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RAC equips patrols with state-of-the-art battery diagnostic kits

The RAC has begun equipping all of its 1,500 patrols with state-of-the-art battery testers which will enable them to carry out full roadside diagnostic checks on the health of a vehicle's battery, starting and charging systems, and provide customers with detailed reports of the findings.

Breakdowns involving batteries are the number one cause of RAC call-outs with patrols attending more than 445,000 members in 2015. But the nature of these breakdowns is becoming increasingly complex due to advances in battery technology.

Batteries have developed rapidly in recent years with the advent of Enhanced Flooded Batteries (EFB) and Absorbent Glass Matt (AGM) technology, both of which are used in 'stop-start' vehicles. And, with up to 70% of new vehicles produced in Europe featuring 'stop-start' technology, there is a growing requirement to diagnose issues with these batteries in breakdown situations, particularly the EFB ones as they are becoming the manufacturers' preferred 'more affordable' option for mass production.

In addition to repeatedly starting the vehicle every time it comes to a stop on a journey, today's batteries must stand up to more demand on their resources than ever before. Batteries are expected to provide power for a wide range of systems – including power windows, heated seats, power steering, climate control, heated steering wheels, DVDs and MP3 players. As a result the demands on a modern vehicle battery are very different today than they were 40 years ago.

The RAC roadside battery diagnostic tester can also carry out 'conductance profiling' to determine a battery's endurance by assessing its reserve capacity and its ability to support a vehicle's starting and auxiliary power requirements. If the battery is unable to support these requirements the tester highlights this by showing a low 'Reserve Capacity' warning.

RAC technical director Phil Ryan said: "The RAC Midtronics battery diagnostic tester brings a new level of quality, accuracy and consistency to breakdown battery testing from one device. One particular benefit is a significant improvement in the testing accuracy of discharged batteries, allowing our patrols to give members a definitive opinion on their batteries' health or that of the vehicle's starting and charging system.

"Sometimes the battery can be the victim and not the cause as there can be occasions where an inferior testing device shows that a battery needs replacing when in fact it is actually a symptom of a wider problem in the vehicle's starting and charging system. This would often lead to a new battery being damaged or flattened in a short space of time which can be very frustrating for all concerned. Fortunately, this is one challenge that RAC patrols will no longer have to face going forwards."

After testing a vehicle's battery, starting and charging system the RAC member can ask the patrol for the detailed report to be emailed, providing them with a permanent record of the results.

Notes to Editors

About the RAC

With more than eight million members, the RAC is one of the UK's most progressive motoring organisations, providing services for both private and business motorists. Whether it's roadside assistance, insurance, buying a used car, vehicle inspections and checks, legal services or up-to-the-minute traffic and travel information – the RAC offers a solution for all motoring needs. The RAC is committed to making motoring easier, safer, more affordable and more enjoyable for drivers and road users.

The RAC is the motorist's champion and campaigns to support the interests of its members and UK motorists at a national level, including advancing levels of road safety, supporting the needs of young drivers and voicing concerns about the increasing cost of motoring. The RAC's annual [Report on Motoring](#) – first published in 1989 – provides a clear insight into the concerns and issues facing today's motorists.

For the very latest news on UK fuel prices, check [RAC Fuel Watch](#) or follow [#racfuelwatch on Twitter](#). This is a comprehensive guide to the latest UK unleaded petrol and diesel prices – both at the wholesale level and at the pump. RAC Fuel Watch analyses how prices changed through the previous month and compares the most recent prices with those from three, six and 12 months before.

Key facts:

- RAC patrols fix four out of five vehicles at the roadside and on average within 30 minutes
- RAC vans carry more than 500 parts and tools to get members' vehicles going again
- 92% of members would recommend RAC Rescue to their friends and family

Contacts



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