



Background information

The Trust My Garage (TMG) Code of Practice is sponsored by the Independent Garages Association (IGA) and administered by Retail Motor Industry Standards & Certification (RMISC). First established in 1976, it has been revised over the years to reflect new legislation and the implementation of best practice identified from feedback from both members and customers.

On becoming members, the respective businesses make a commitment to the consumer regarding the provision of service, warranty, and repair of Vehicles. Membership of the Code is open only to Independent Garage Association members.

RMISC was established by the RMIF as a subsidiary company to provide certification services and is a completely independent entity. Because of this independence, RMISC has been appointed by IGA to administer the code.

Audit Process

A desk-top audit was carried out by a Trading Standards Practitioner from the Chartered Trading Standards Institute on 19th March 2024.

The audit focused on the following areas:-

- Member application process, including checks carried out on prospective members

- Member auditing-content and process, including general compliance with the code, staff training and dealing with consumer complaints

- Sanctions for non-compliant members

- Marketing and advertising by member businesses - terms & conditions and pre-contractual information, including cancellation rights, deposits, delivery times and guarantees and warranties

- Customer service provisions, including support for vulnerable consumers

- Consumer complaints process, including ADR

TMG maintain their evaluations of members online presence. A monthly random sample of five members are chosen and their marketing of the Code is reviewed.

The five member's websites and/or Facebook/Twitter pages are checked for the following:-

- ADR text and details
- CTSI logo
- TMG logo
- Any consumer facing advice

Following the review, if it is felt that the member could benefit from some advice then an email is sent with the TMG Marketing Toolkit attached and includes links to the TMG website where the member can find tips on improving their online presence. The data acquired via this review is used to formulate policy and provide relevant advice to all members as appropriate.

The latest spreadsheet, which was last updated in March 2024, was supplied for the audit.

Best Practice:

As consumers increasingly rely on online reviews of businesses, it is essential that Codes monitor the online presence of their members.

Terms and Conditions and other Pre-Contractual Information

Model terms and conditions are available on the Members Only section of the TMG website. Terms and conditions are assessed at audit and if deemed not suitable it is suggested that members use the model document.

Customer Service Provisions

In previous years the most common non-compliance related to the lack of a complaints log. Following the last audit TMG produced a document that the auditors use to supply to members to use as a complaints log. Compliance is now increased to 95.88%.

Consumer Complaints Process

All complaints raised under the code go directly to the National Conciliation Service (NCS), a CTSI Approved ADR provider.

In the last year, 99 complaints have been handled for TMG by NCS. Of the 99 complaints, 4 were found in favour of the consumer, 15 closed as a compromise and the rest were found in favour of the garage.

Previously TMG struggled to get the information that they would like from NCS. TMG now feel like they have more control with NCS and have a named contact who speaks directly with their ADR provider.

Customer Satisfaction and Feedback

TMG provide stickers to be attached to invoices and posters to display in public areas encouraging customers to leave reviews on the TMG website. The online review form contains 5 yes/no questions and one multiple choice question. The aggregate of the answers creates a star rating for the garage on the TMG website.

Since the last audit 621 reviews have been left.

When customers enter feedback, the information is collated and stored automatically in the system. The TMG admin staff can then produce statistics allowing Management Information to be produced.

To reduce the risk of non-legitimate feedback being added to the system all feedback is reviewed. Anything which appears to be suspect is flagged and an investigation carried out with the member. If they are deemed to be a genuine customer, the feedback remains, otherwise it is removed.

For the 12 months to 29/02/2024:

In response to the question -

“How Important is it to you that the garage is a Trust My Garage member”

73% of respondents answered Important, Very Important or “I will only use a Trust My Garage Member” - this is the same as last year’s figure.

“Are you satisfied that the garage only carried out necessary or quoted work”

98% responded YES - this is an increase from last year’s figure.

“Are you likely to use this garage again”

98% responded YES, an increase of almost 3% from last year.

Conclusions

TMG continues to carry out its functions as a Code sponsor. They have put a lot of resource into the collection and analysis of customer feedback and this demonstrates that consumers are content with the service received from TMG Members.

Note: Upon a review of the Code, some of the legislation is out of date.