



TÜV-Report 2024

16 November 2023

## TÜV SÜD: Regular servicing makes all the difference

Munich/Berlin. Minimised clearances, active hoods, new materials, new drive technologies – surely modern cars have reached their pinnacle? Engineers have taken safety, emissions, comfort and customer demands to the limits of what is possible.

Under pressure from all these requirements, garages, workshops and inspection companies work hand in hand. As a consequence, vehicles on Germany's roads are safe. This statement has received new confirmation from the results of the new TÜV-Report, presented by TÜV-Verband on Thursday 16 November 2023 in Berlin. Despite the challenging requirements, the average percentage of significant faults (SF) has risen only slightly, by just 0.3 percentage points, to 20.5 per cent. So is it business as usual? Not quite, because the breakdown of faults by car brand has a surprise in store: Tesla has replaced Dacia at the bottom.



“Almost 75 per cent of the ten million-plus vehicles that underwent periodic technical inspections (PTIs) at TÜV companies received their sticker straight away”, says Jürgen Wolz, Head of Service Line Mobility and Official Activities Germany at TÜV SÜD Division Mobility. (In Germany, a sticker on the licence plate provides visible confirmation that the vehicle has passed its PTI). “Even vehicles with many years behind them and many kilometres on the clock are generally in good condition, and certainly safe.” A look at the various models and age categories reveals the overall winner for 2024 as the VW Golf Sportsvan, with just 2.0 per cent of SF after three years and 4.2 per cent after five years. At the age of six to seven years, the Mazda CX-3 emerged from the test pit with a mere 6.5 per cent SF rate. A nine-year-old Mercedes B-Class with an average of 90,000 kilometres on the clock notches up a SF rate of just 10.5 per cent. Incidentally, that's almost exactly the same percentage of faults identified on the Seat Alhambra at its very first PTI. The oldest cars still have plenty of life in them; when expertly maintained, an Audi TT can pass the PTI with flying colours up to

the age of 13. “The low fault rates in old cars show that car owners are keenly aware of the importance of car maintenance. Regular servicing has a key role in this positive result”, stresses Wolz.

### **Motorists reliably maintain their vehicles**

VW, Mazda, Mercedes and Audi are all brands with close-knit networks of service centres in common. In addition, these cars have electronic systems that notify the driver automatically of the need for servicing, and even flag up the next due appointment. As a general rule, servicing at a specialist garage includes inspection of the chassis, electrical systems, engine and transmission system as well as an oil change. The consequence is a modest fault rate detected at periodic technical inspections.

### **No oil change for e-vehicles**

Electric vehicle manufacturer Tesla produces cars in which oil changes are superfluous; for this and other reasons, it stopped defining service intervals in 2019, and accordingly does not have a close network of service centres. The e-vehicle pioneer relies on remote diagnosis and over-the-air updates. Super-futuristic? Not quite, according to the statistics from the TÜV SÜD experts. On its debut in the TÜV-Report – finally with enough vehicles undergoing PTIs to provide robust figures – the Model 3 proved a flop, with an average fault rate of 14.7 per cent that overtook even the perennial loser Dacia Logan (11.4 per cent) to land at the bottom of the list by a significant margin. But why? Is it that lack of oil change? No; the lights, brakes and axles can also cause problems – and are the foremost sources of faults in the Tesla Model 3, according to the TÜV experts. VW and Renault are proof that e-vehicles with the backing of a network of service centres also achieve better results than brands without such support: the e-Golf placed fourth in the three-year-old category compared to the Zoe, which landed in the midfield in 49<sup>th</sup> place.

TÜV SÜD expert Wolz points out, “The claim that e-vehicles need less servicing and maintenance is not entirely true; In fact, it mainly applies to the powertrain because there are no fluids or moving parts that need replacement. But we had not expected the Tesla Model 3 to deliver such a poor result. It confirms our belief that e-vehicles require regular servicing, too.”

### **Stagnating car market**

Drivers are currently facing great uncertainty as inflation, high interest rates and local prohibitions of diesel cars begin to bite. Many prefer to continue with their old car rather than buy new, as stagnating markets confirm. One consequence of this development is that the average age of vehicles on German roads has reached a new peak of 10 years. Older vehicles are thus becoming increasingly relevant for road safety. A look at fault rates for vehicles of more advanced years shows that the overall winner for

2024, the VW Golf Sportsvan, has an unbeaten record in its first five years of its life, with a SF rate of 4.2 per cent and an average of 49,000 kilometres on the clock. SUV lovers attracted by those models' higher driving position and better view will appreciate the VW T-Roc (4.2 per cent SF/51,000 kilometres), which will cause few problems at their local garage. The same applies to the VW T-Cross; after five years, it has a 4.6 per cent SF rate at total mileage of only 34,000 kilometres. After seven years, the Mazda CX-3 (6.5 per cent SF rate and 68,000 kilometres) takes the lead. The statistics from evaluation of all technical inspections between July 2022 and June 2023 show that drivers seeking a reasonably priced and reliable family car are well advised to consider the Mercedes B-Class. It has relatively low significant fault rates after nine years (10.5 per cent) at a somewhat lower average mileage of 90,000 kilometres. Looking for a small, manoeuvrable car for city use? The Honda Jazz reliably delivers good results, with SF rates of 8.4 per cent after seven years and 22.9 per cent after 13 years, by which time the compact Honda will have notched up an average of 117,000 kilometres. A seven-year-old Audi A6/A7 (11.5 SF/131,000 kilometres) is a good choice for drivers seeking a suitable car for business use. And if choosing products from the inventor of the auto is a priority, a nine-year-old Mercedes C-Class (15.5 SF/124,000 kilometres) will fit the bill. Even after 11 years, an Audi A4/A5 will cause relatively few problems (19.8 SF/168,000 kilometres). And drivers that never want to give the age of their car a second thought should keep their eyes open for a Volvo XC60. After 13 years, this model has notched up almost 200,000 kilometres and is particularly resistant to significant faults, scooping fifth place with an SF rate of just 22.5 per cent.

### **Tesla pushes Dacia out of the bottom slot**

At the other end of the table, perennial laggard Dacia Logan can finally move up from last place, replaced by the Tesla Model 3 (11.4 per cent SF and 14.7 per cent respectively). Third from the bottom with a 10.3 per cent SF rate is the Seat Alhambra – replacing the Citroen Berlingo, which has shown major improvement since the previous report from 11.2 per cent SF rate then to just 7.4 per cent now.

### **Opel Karl is the best “mini”**

Top of the class: the winner in the “Mini” category is the Opel Karl (3.6 per cent). The Peugeot 208 takes first place (4.0 per cent) in the small car category, while the VW e-Golf has overtaken the Mercedes A-Class (2.6 per cent). The C-Class once again heads the mid-range category (3.9 per cent). There are new developments among vans; here too, VW has beaten Mercedes into first place, with the Golf Sportsvan (the overall winner, with an SF rate of 2.4 per cent) overtaking the B-Class. In SUVs, the Audi Q2 leaves the GLC behind to come top in this category.

## Saxony continues to be the TÜV SÜD region with the lowest fault rate

TÜV SÜD also performs a regional analysis of its data for the German states of Bavaria, Baden-Wuerttemberg, Saxony and Hamburg. Results across all vehicle age classes show that Saxony has the lowest fault rate at 16 per cent, followed by Bavaria with 17.7 per cent and Baden-Wuerttemberg with 19.4 per cent. Hamburg has the highest fault rate, with 26.3 per cent of vehicles in TÜV HANSE's heartland called in for re-inspection due to significant faults.

The TÜV-Report is published annually by TÜV-Verband and is regarded as the leading independent reference for drivers and used-car dealers. The report incorporates periodic technical inspection results from all TÜV companies in Germany; in the 2024 issue, this involved over ten million periodic technical inspections conducted between July 2022 and June 2023. As the largest provider of PTIs, TÜV SÜD contributed over four and a half million results to the database.

**Info:** The 2024 TÜV-Report will be available at TÜV SÜD service centres and shops from Friday 17 November 2023, priced at EUR 5.90.

**Note:** The cover of the 2024 TÜV-Report can be downloaded from [www.tuvsud.com/en/press-and-media](http://www.tuvsud.com/en/press-and-media). Facts and figures from the 2024 TÜV-Report can be found at [www.tuvsud.com/tuev-report](http://www.tuvsud.com/tuev-report) (only available in German) and [www.tuev-verband.de/en](http://www.tuev-verband.de/en).

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### Media Relations:

Vincenzo Lucà TÜV SÜD AG Corporate Communications Westendstr. 199, 80686 Munich	Tel. +49 (0) 89 / 57 91 – 16 67 Fax +49 (0) 89 / 57 91 – 22 69 E-mail <a href="mailto:vincenzo.luca@tuvsud.com">vincenzo.luca@tuvsud.com</a> Internet <a href="http://www.tuvsud.com">www.tuvsud.com</a>
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