

**PREMIUM TYRES COULD OFFER ‘BEST VALUE’ OVER TIME FOR FLEETS,
SAYS OPUS AUTOROUTE BOSS PETER ELDRIDGE**

(Stoke-on-Trent – January 12, 2016) – Fleet managers and vehicle procurement executives must put more thought into selecting premium tyres for their fleets, according to Peter Eldridge, Director of accident management support provider Opus AutoRoute.

“Cost concerns often drive tyre procurement decisions made in the fleet market, without consideration for the on-road performance and longevity of the selected tyres – and the importance of selecting the right fitments,” says Eldridge. “It’s bizarre; companies may spend more than £30,000 on a car, but the bit that connects them with the road, the tyres – the key aspect to consider for safety, fuel efficiency and mileage performance – can sometimes be overlooked.”

The clear differences between “low cost and best value” tyres should become a key consideration for fleet management executives, adds Eldridge, who made the comments after first-hand experience of swapping tyres on a newly purchased personal vehicle from a budget competitor to Michelin Latitude Sport 3 tyres – with “transformative” results.

Referring to swapping his personal SUV on to Michelin tyres, Eldridge says: “I bought a pre-owned Honda CR-V, which came on budget tyres. I was getting horrendous wheel judder at speed, but five wheel balances and one new set of drive shaft joints later, things were no better. That’s when it was suggested to me that the budget tyres were the likely cause, so I went out and bought four new Michelins.

“Having been in the fleet industry for over 40 years, I didn’t think I could be surprised any more – but my goodness, the car was completely transformed. The vibration has completely gone, it’s quieter, it handles better – especially in wet weather – and overall the car is a completely different driving experience. In future, I wouldn’t consider anything but premium tyres again, as the value they deliver is clear.”

Andy Fern, Michelin’s Head of Fleet, says: “There’s a common misconception that all tyres are the same, but that is simply not true. Choosing to invest in quality, premium-brand tyres such as Michelin can pay dividends over time for both private drivers and fleets in terms of tyre life, on-road responsiveness, safety and mileage performance.

“Also, the durability offered by premium tyres means fewer wheel interventions, cutting costs for fleet managers. It’s important for drivers and fleet managers to understand that there’s far more to tyres than just being ‘black round things’ your car rolls on.”

Fern adds: “Premium tyre manufacturers such as Michelin spend a significant amount of money on R&D and develop materials and technologies to the highest level. Coupled with numerous approvals from vehicle manufacturers, this leads to tyres that are better suited to the high demands of fleet managers and drivers alike. After all, many fleet drivers spend a substantial amount of time in their cars –



shouldn't they get the best in comfort, safety and performance every time they hit the ignition?"

Peter Eldridge started his career at Fiat Auto UK in 1963. Later, he landed roles within the franchised motor trade with major contract hire, leasing and accident management companies. This was then followed with a fleet management position for a large blue-chip fleet operation, and several other senior executive positions. Eldridge is also a board member of the Institute of Car Fleet Management.

From its offices in Worcestershire, the Opus Group provides a broad range of support services for the corporate, public and fleet sectors' vehicle accident and claim management requirements, embracing more than 50,000 vehicles.

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About Michelin (www.michelin.co.uk)

Michelin, the leading tyre company, is dedicated to sustainably improving the mobility of goods and people by manufacturing, distributing and marketing tyres for every type of vehicle. It also offers innovative business support services, digital mobility services and publishes travel guides, hotel and restaurant guides, maps and road atlases. Headquartered in Clermont-Ferrand, France, Michelin is present in 170 countries, has 112,300 employees and operates 68 production plants in 17 countries. The Group also has a Technology Centre, responsible for research and development, with operations in Europe, North America and Asia. (www.michelin.com)

For further press information please contact:

David Johnson, Michelin Press Office

Tel: + 44 (0) 1782 402341 Email: d.johnson@uk.michelin.com

James Keeler or Andy Hemphill, Garnett Keeler PR, Inver House, 37-39 Pound Street,
Carshalton, Surrey, SM5 3PG

Tel: +44 (0)20 8647 4467 Fax: +44 (0)20 8544 4711 E-mail: james.keeler@garnettkeeler.com /
andy.hemphill@garnettkeeler.com

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