



Getaway breakdowns more likely than returning

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Drivers more likely to suffer a breakdown that can't be fixed when heading out, rather than returning home, says the RAC as the Easter Break is underway.

Breaking down and finding your vehicle can't be fixed at the roadside is never good news, but research from the RAC shows the Law of Sod also has a significant part to play as more of these incidents tend to happen on the outward leg of a journey than the return.

A poll of more than 2,200 drivers found nearly half (46%) had suffered a breakdown where their vehicle could not be fixed at the side of the road, with a fifth (18%) of those saying they had been through this experience on more than one occasion.

Among the unlucky ones who had experienced this one or more times, 64% had been on their way out in contrast to 54% who were heading home. One in five have to try to make alternative travel plans themselves.

And, as if breaking down and finding your vehicle can't be fixed at the roadside isn't bad enough, having to make your own arrangements to complete your journey is enough to make most people feel as though they've just joined the cast of 'Planes, Trains and Automobiles'.

For two-thirds of people questioned by the RAC who had to make their own plans, the experience of trying to get everyone and everything from their broken-down vehicle to their final destination was classed as stressful (67%) - although possibly not quite to the same level as Steve Martin's character experienced when his flight was cancelled and he ended up struggling to get home, exasperated by having to travel with the irritating character played by John Candy.



Looking at everyone whose vehicle broke down and couldn't be fixed on the road, 90% relied on recovery services to rescue the vehicle and 77% of those were then taken home or to their desired destination in the recovery vehicle.

Of the remaining percentage, an unlucky 18% had to do their best to sort out their own interrupted travel plans while only one in 10 (10%) relied on their breakdown company's onward travel services.

Among those who tried to sort out their own arrangements to complete their journeys the ending wasn't always happy with 28% failing to make it to where they were going, while 64% did, but arrived late. Nearly half of those surveyed who had broken down but had to make their own plans, sadly missed important gatherings, such as parties, altogether (47%).

Strikingly, 41% of those with onward travel cover from their breakdown service provider were given a free hire car to get them on the move again in stark contrast to 60% of those fending for themselves who turned to family and friends for help.

In terms of where drivers had been heading in all the times they broke down and couldn't be fixed at the roadside, a fifth (20%) said they were driving to work and a similar proportion (20%) were on the way to visit family or friends. However, 11% said they had to endure the stress of an unfixable breakdown when they were driving to a UK holiday destination. While this is undoubtedly stressful it probably wasn't quite as bad as the 2% who were trying to go abroad on holiday. In addition, one in 10 (10%) found themselves in this predicament when they were going out on a day trip and 5% said their crisis occurred on the way to an important gathering or occasion.

RAC Breakdown spokesperson Simon Williams said, "Breaking down is always stressful, but finding your car can't be fixed at the roadside is particularly bad news.

"Our new research shows Sod's Law also appears to have a hand in this type of breakdown as they are more likely to happen on your way out from home than they are returning - pretty much a textbook definition of the law which says that things will go wrong exactly when you really want them to go right.

"While RAC members only encounter these irreparable breakdowns infrequently due to our patrols fixing four out of five breakdowns at the roadside, it's clearly important to have the right cover in place in case it happens to you.

"RAC Onward Travel cover is designed to take the stress out of this kind of situation by helping to get people to where they need to be by arranging alternative transport or accommodation. This really is a case of 'better safe than sorry'."



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