



**INSTITUTE OF THE  
MOTOR INDUSTRY**

**IMI RESEARCH**  
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# EV TECHSAFE TECHNICIAN FORECASTS



# Empowering the UK's Automotive Workforce for an Electric Tomorrow

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## Dampening of EV qualification take up continues

In the midst of the recent surge in headlines surrounding electric vehicles, including the Prime Minister's announcement of the shift in the 2030 ICE ban, the Conservative Party's 'Plan for Drivers,' and a myriad of opinion pieces both advocating and challenging EV adoption, it is paramount that we do not lose sight of a crucial aspect: the imperative need to cultivate expertise within our automotive sector. This briefing paper underscores the significance of skilling our workforce to navigate the evolving landscape of electric vehicles in the UK.

In the second quarter of 2023, official data from education regulators revealed that 2,900 technicians achieved EV certification, bringing the total number of qualified EV technicians in the UK to an impressive 45,300. This represents a commendable 20% of all technicians in the country.

However, beneath this promising surface, there are ominous signs of a concerning trend. The rate of EV qualifications appears to be slowing, with a 36% decline in certifications when comparing Q2 2023 to Q2 2022. The six-month comparison reveals a 26% drop in certifications. Unofficial data, provided by the Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI), suggests that this trend is persisting into Q3 2023, with a 7% decrease compared to the same period in the previous year.

Several factors may be contributing to this slowdown. First and foremost, the current economic pressures have raised concerns that training budgets may be among the first to face cuts. Additionally, the sector is grappling with high vacancy rates, which have shifted the industry's focus towards recruitment, diverting attention and resources away from training efforts. Moreover, current technicians are often being deployed to cover existing vacancies, rather than receiving additional training. Lastly, the initial surge in training uptake was concentrated in dealerships, training providers, and roadside assistance services, reflecting the initial demand for EV-skilled technicians. This demand has been slower to materialise in the independent sector, where many new EVs remain within the confines of their three-year servicing agreements with dealerships.

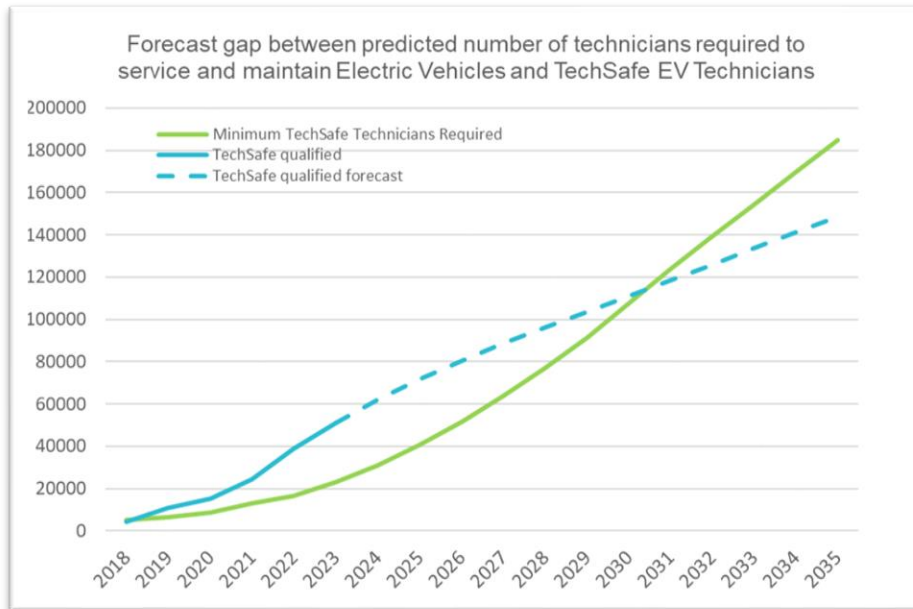
The recent decision to push back the ban on the sale of new internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles from 2030 to 2035 will undoubtedly affect EV adoption. Manufacturers must still meet the ever-increasing UK Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) targets. This is causing concern for 2024, as demand is unlikely to match the ambitious 22% target for all vehicle sales. The potential consequence is that manufacturers may reduce production or imports of ICE vehicles to avoid substantial fines, thereby affecting the entire new car market.

However, the most pressing concern lies in the mixed messages being sent to employers and individuals within the automotive sector. This ambiguity could stifle the commitment to training, which is crucial for road safety and economic stability. Fleet buyers, who account for 50% of new EV sales, are likely to sustain demand for EV-trained technicians due to corporate Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) targets. However, if the automotive workforce cannot see immediate returns on EV training investments due to consumer hesitation, the existing skills gap will widen, leading to longer repair wait times and potential economic and social mobility setbacks.

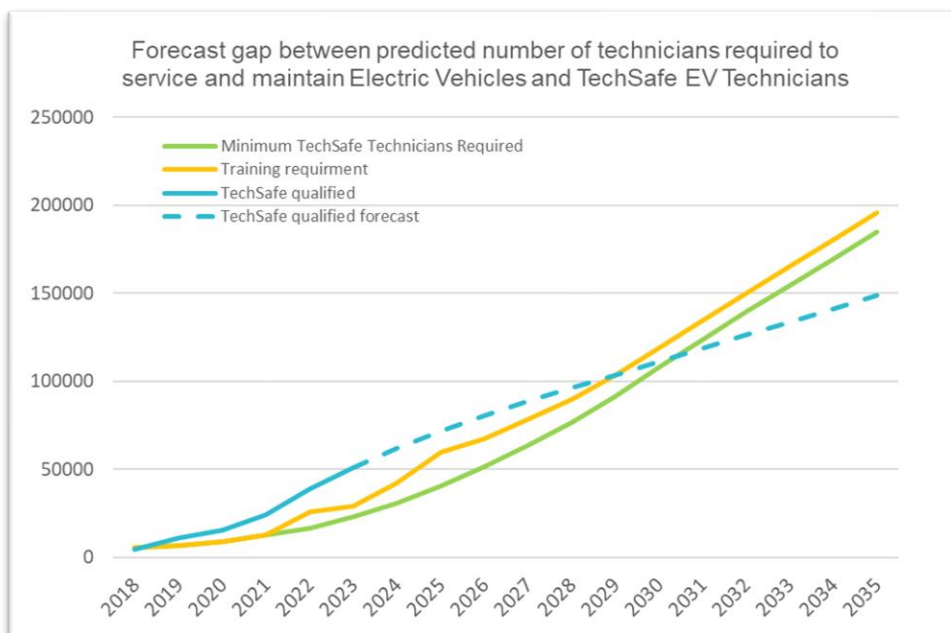
Recent data from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) highlights that the increase in Battery Electric Vehicle (BEV) registrations is primarily driven by fleet purchases, which surged by 50.6%. Conversely, private BEV registrations declined by -14.3%, indicating the hesitancy of private buyers towards EVs.

As the sector digests the governments move of the ICE vehicle ban date, there are no new forecasts on the predicted numbers of BEVs within the UK car parc. However indications from across the sector are that the dampening effect will be minimal and so our current forecasts have not been altered. The IMI predicts that by 2030 the sector will need 107,000 EV trained technicians, increasing to 126,000 by 2032 and current estimates (to be taken with caution) are that this will increase to 185,000 by 2035.

Considering the current dampening in the take up of EV qualifications and the current challenges posed by vacancies and economic pressures, our forecast for the take-up of EV qualifications eligible for TechSafe has been adjusted. Projections indicate a potential shortfall of qualified technicians by 2030, which could reach 13,000 by 2032 if the current trends persist.



Furthermore, a new training requirement line has been added to the model, considering factors such as training for newcomers to the sector, attrition rates, the vacancy rate, and retraining needs after a three-year Continuing Professional Development (CPD) cycle. Unfortunately, this additional requirement exacerbates the skills gap, with 8,000 EV technicians needed by 2030, and this number escalating to 24,000 by 2032.



## Conclusion:

In conclusion, as we navigate the rapidly evolving landscape of electric vehicles amid the flurry of recent headlines and policy shifts, it is imperative that we prioritize the development of expertise within the UK's automotive sector. While the current count of 45,300 certified EV technicians is commendable, a troubling trend of declining certifications raises concerns about our readiness for the electric future. Factors such as economic pressures, high vacancy rates, and mixed messaging in the industry are contributing to this slowdown.

The postponement of the ban on ICE vehicles to 2035 will undoubtedly have some impact on EV adoption, but fleet buyers, driven by corporate ESG targets, are likely to sustain demand, which could widen the potential skills gap, leading to longer repair wait times and potential economic setbacks.

To address this looming skills gap, we must prioritize training, attract newcomers to the sector, and ensure a sustainable pipeline of qualified technicians. Failure to do so could hinder the growth of the EV industry and have broader implications for road safety and the UK economy. It is our collective responsibility to champion EV training and secure a brighter, electrified future for the automotive sector in the United Kingdom.

## Data sources:

- Technician forecasts: IMI calculation interpreting EMSIE SOC data (2022)
- Number of AFCs - Autotrader total car parc projections – new release December 2022
- TechSafe figures: All 4 nation qualification regulatory board published data (Ofqual, SQA, CCEA, Qualifications Wales) 2018 – 2023Q2.
- GiPA age of car parc forecasts



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