

DUMFRIES GROUP  
OF ADVANCED MOTORISTS

NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2002

## **From the Chairman**

Christmas is coming, the geese are getting fat...

But it's also the time of year when you have to be wary of your driving. I find these days that I drive to work in the dark and come back in the dark. The car also mists up, in the colder weather, which brings its own hazards.

Driving in the dark means that you have to make sure your lights are in tip top condition. Are all your lights working? Headlight, sidelight, brake light etc? Are the lenses clean? Have a look at the difference you can make, simply by cleaning your headlight lens. And at this time of the year, it won't take long for them to get mucky, either. My pet hate, though, is the numpty who drives around with fog lights on, even when there's no fog. Granted, the forward fog lights will give you a greater coverage of light in the dark, but if there's no fog, you risk dazzling oncoming drivers. Oh, and the police may well stop you, to explain some of the finer points of vehicle lighting.

Another aid to being able to see better, is to clean the inside of the windscreen. The windscreen won't mist up so easily, and once you have cleaned it, you'll be able to see out of it more easily. A definite contribution to road safety! As to the outside of the windscreen, make sure the windscreen washer bottle is topped up, and that the contents won't freeze easily. If the water in the washer bottle freezes, it can sometimes blow the fuse on the windscreen washer pump. And would you know which fuse it was? Do you have a spare? Maybe you also want to think about new windscreen wiper blades...

Early morning driving also brings its own little hazards. What is the road surface like? It looks damp, but could there be black ice there, too? Even on what looks like a dry surface there might be a little bit of surface damp, which means that instead of tracking round the corner nicely, you drift out into the oncoming lane. Now might also be a good time to check your tyres to see if you have enough tread to cope with the vagaries of winter...

OK, so I've just been teaching you all to suck eggs. But, sometimes, these things can get put off, and put off, until...

Somebody once said that by failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail. Check your car out, and drive according to the road conditions.

Finally may I wish A Merry Christmas and a Safe and Happy New Year to all in Dumfries Group of Advanced Motorists.

## **Secretary's report**

Congratulations to Paul Sharkey, Andrew Hastings and Roy Logie who have all recently passed their advanced driving test. Congratulations also to Andrew Bird who has passed his advanced motorcycle test.

The group should also say a big "well done and thank you" to Graham Watson for sitting and passing his Senior Observer test. This keeps the group solvent and he has already started training two new observers who will be the first "qualified" observers in the group since the new rules took effect from 1/1/02.

Gwen Bond and I recently represented the group at the Scottish Groups A.G.M. at Tulliallan. The SGA is in the process of changing and the new SGA chairman will be Robert Williams of the Lanark Group, the new secretary is also from Lanark with the new treasurer coming from Aberdeen.

The three way quiz of 14 October turned out to be only two way and Dumfries won the NEW trophy as the original failed to turn up. Congratulations to our team, Andy Hastings and Paul Sharkey. Graham Watson handed the trophy over to Andy, who will in turn pass it to Paul to hold for the second half of the year before the rematch next autumn.

The 10 pin bowling match was won by Carlisle, the scores being 212 v 190. Practice is called for before next year's rematch, if we are to regain the title, although rumour has it that Carlisle Group were assisted by the services of a league player! Seven willing bowlers journeyed from Dumfries and all thoroughly enjoyed the evening in good company.



Pictured here is Helen Cameron graciously handing over the 10 pin bowling cup to Carlisle Group.

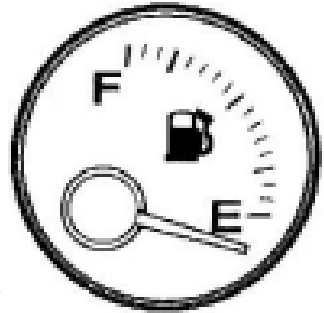
## **Did you know?**

95% of vehicles when checked have incorrectly adjusted head restraints.  
70% of people involved in motorway accidents complained of whiplash.  
Every day in England and Wales over 1000 people are breath tested.

## Driving down fuel costs

You don't need me to tell you that once again winter is here with all those additional hazards to be contended with on our travels. But with the ever rising cost of motoring, the pressure is often felt to reduce running costs through the use of less fuel.

You may have tried to improve your fuel efficiency possibly, like me, without a great deal of success. In the past I have taken part in 'economy runs' where with judicious use of the throttle, brakes and steering, serious improvements in fuel consumption could be made, but I just can't seem to do it now to the same effect. Concerned that I had lost my skills, and on doing a little research, I was somewhat relieved to find out that, with many modern cars dramatic improvements are difficult, if not impossible to make, because of the new techniques employed in frugal metering of fuel injection systems compared with the old carburetor technology.



Below are a few methods by which to reduce your fuel consumption, gleaned from a variety of sources such as the AA:

- Cut motorway speeds from 80/85 mph to the 70 mph speed limit! Not only illegal, but driving at 10/15 mph faster can consume around 7.7% more fuel for a small car and 5.5% for a medium car. That equates to £40 and £36 extra cost per 1000 miles respectively.
- Moderate your speed on other roads. Or instance if your speed was reduced from say 70 mph to 55 mph this would improve fuel consumption by nearly a quarter for a small car and 18 per cent for a medium car.
- Turn off your air conditioning/ climate control, it can increase fuel thirst by as much as 10% on non motorway roads. This apparently can cost you around £11 extra per 1000 miles covered on non motorway roads. Incidentally having your window open instead could increase your costs by £2.50 per 1000 miles.
- Pump up your tyres. Under inflated tyres drain fuel economy which again could cost you £2.50 per 1000 miles on ordinary roads.
- Avoid queues if you can. An idling engine in a small car can waste petrol at around the rate of 1.5 pence per minute and double that for a medium-sized car.

The principles are correct, even if the claimed savings are only averages, and may be a little high for some cars. What is seldom emphasised enough is that we should all remember that, whatever the cost, it is never worth compromising safe driving just to save a little fuel - you really never do know what is around the corner.

### **Explanation needed?**



A couple of interesting signs here spotted this year in Thailand. The one on the left was at the entry to a city and seems to encourage speeding whilst the other is unofficial but self explanatory.

### **The cost of roadworks**

Ever thought what it is like to work on the renewal of Britain's road network? Construction and maintenance crews often have to work in close proximity to live traffic, more frequently now, with increased pressures to keep roads open and minimise traffic disruption.



The methods of payment often employed, termed 'lane rental', give rise to daily 'penalties' for closing roads or just individual lanes, the level of charge varies considerably but the cost to a contractor for closing a couple of lanes to allow

resurfacing a motorway, for instance, could easily be in the region of £7000.00 per hour (that's £168,000 a day). This is a major incentive to get work down on time or early but this also means generally more work is done in live traffic situations than a few years ago.

Put this together with the significant increases in traffic using the very roads that are being maintained, then perhaps it is not inconceivable that problems will occur. In fact in 2000 there were some 800 road works related accidents on trunk roads and motorways resulting in around 22 consequential deaths. The toll on roadwork operatives was 8 in the period but has risen significantly since.



As advanced drivers you will not need telling that many drivers fail to slow up or maintain reasonable following gaps or pay any attention to those workers who are out in difficult conditions, very often wet, noisy and polluted. Drivers, as well as ignoring temporary speed limits, sometimes take out their frustrations on the workforce, intimidating workers by deliberately driving at them, for instance when they are out erecting signs. Sadly

this has at times resulted in injury or probably death. Perhaps those drivers who do fail to slow down should consider what it would be like if traffic was passing by their place of work (assembly line, shop counter, desk etc.) at 70 mph perhaps only a couple of metres away!

So next time you come across road works spare a thought for those guys who are out there in the thick of it trying to keep the traffic moving, maybe they don't want to be there any more than you do a but their continued safety depends to a large extent on vigilant drivers keeping within the speed limit.



## **End of an Era**

Despite the report in Advanced Driving (Summer 2002) to the contrary it now seems that the rise of the mobile phone is to cause the AA to phase out their road side boxes. There are still 21 wooden sentry type boxes, eight of which are listed buildings and these will remain standing. Some of the other phones, mainly on trunk roads, will be taken over by the Highways Agency, Welsh Assembly and Scottish Executive.



## **Defensive Driving, A Different Perspective-** Alan Jones reports

Some years ago, my employer at the time, ICI, realised that the greatest risk to many of its staff came from driving on company business. They found that the level of risk associated with driving far exceeded that of working on their production sites, where great emphasis is placed on working safely. It was estimated that for a driver who drove 25,000 miles a year on business there was a 1:8000 probability of a fatal accident. This realisation led to the introduction of a Defensive Driving policy.

This policy stipulated the safety features required of company cars and hire cars, how many miles could be driven in a day, how long between breaks and so on. Of interest to this article however, was the introduction of Defensive Driving training. This training was provided by IAM Fleet and it proved to be very popular, as it was the first refresher training most employees had had since passing their driving test. The IAM Fleet instructors were ex-police driving instructors, and as one might imagine, their training was based around the "system of car control".

Shortly after moving to Dumfries, some 5 years ago, the business I worked for was sold to DuPont. My experience has been that DuPont are even more safety conscious than ICI. DuPont had developed their own policy around Defensive Driving, in this case, by teaming up with another company, called Drive & Survive, to provide driver training. I have recently taken part in a 1-day training session with Drive & Survive and I thought it would be interesting to document the experience.

### Drive & Survive

The Drive & Survive training day begins with an hour of classroom training, e.g. identifying hazards, road safety questions and so on. The 2 candidates and their instructor then move to the car where a vehicle inspection is carried out. After this is complete, the drive begins. The drive usually lasts for about 4 hours with the 2 candidates taking turns to drive. In my case we drove around Carlisle and the surrounding area, so we covered motorway, cross-country and town situations.

So what method does Drive & Survive use: -

Drive & Survive does not use a system as we do in the IAM. Instead it encourages the practice of 3 principles of safe driving:

Keeping Space – Maintaining a cushion of safety around the vehicle at all times.  
If the unexpected occurs, is an escape route available?

Identifying Risks – Appreciating and behaving proactively towards a wide range of real and potential hazards and risks. Could you be taken by surprise?

Keeping Visible & Communicating – Seeing, being seen, and influencing the driving environment through communication. Could you take others by surprise?

The practical driving session consisted of the instructor pointing out situations and techniques where these 3 principles could be practiced. Some of the techniques/tips that were encouraged on the day, include:

- Use of speed and/or light touch on the brake lights to encourage the car behind to maintain a safe distance.
- Constantly looking for escape routes, even when stationary in traffic at lights.
- Ensuring, when stationary in traffic behind a large vehicle, that your vehicle can be seen by the other driver.
- Don't take your right of way for granted. One quarter of all accidents are due to the other driver failing to respect your right of way.
- Consider overtaking to improve visibility or your observational position as an alternative to making progress.
- When stationary in traffic keep the footbrake applied and the gear engaged, ready to move forward into an escape route if the vehicle behind suddenly presents a hazard.

So what was the experience like, and what did I learn: -

Overall, I found the day interesting but a little frustrating. I found the lack of a methodology, or system, unhelpful and I question just how much long-term benefit non-IAM drivers would gain from the experience. Some of the techniques, or tips are useful but they do not replace the essence of good driving practice, namely, a system that can be used systematically in every situation.

I thought the practice of seeking escape routes was helpful and it goes further than what we practice in the IAM. Here, we tend to be conscious of the need for escape routes while on motorways, and especially when planning to overtake, avoiding 3 abreast in the outside lane. Drive & Survive encourage this practice in a much wider set of circumstances and I can see the potential benefit.

One point I had difficulty with was their practice of keeping the car in gear with the foot brake applied while stationary in traffic, when the lights are on red. At this stage of the drive I had to tell the instructor that I was a member of the IAM and that our practice, as we come to a standstill would be to check mirrors to ensure there is no immediate hazard to the rear/sides, aim to come to a standstill maintaining a safe distance from the vehicle in front and as we are stationary, apply the handbrake and put the gear into neutral waiting for the

lights to change.

During the waiting process we would retain our hands on the steering wheel and maintain our observation, to the front, sides and rear and if necessary depress the footbrake to warn a driver approaching from the rear, that we are stationary.

The instructor accepted the explanation but said their practice was close to the practice used by drivers with an automatic gearbox, where, when stationary for short periods, the car would remain in Drive with the footbrake applied. By copying the system used on an automatic gearbox, the driver with a manual gearbox would have 2 advantages, namely, a) on recognising a hazard from the rear they would be able to move quickly into their escape route, and b) by keeping the footbrake applied and thus illuminating the brake light it eliminates the chance of the driver behind anticipating you moving off. This is the explanation given by the Drive & Survive instructor, not mine. On the day, we agreed to differ!

All in all, I enjoyed the day. I found it a good experience to have someone sitting alongside making comments on my driving. We should all welcome the opportunity to gain feedback, even if it comes from a non IAM source, at least it gives us a different perspective.

As part of my job involves the use of statistics I was particularly pleased to bring back some interesting driving related facts and figures. Let me finish this note by sharing just a few of these with you: -

- In 2000 there were 320,283 casualties of all types on Britain's roads.
- In 2000 there were 3409 fatalities (3443 in 2001) due to road accidents.
- 66% of company cars are the subject of an insurance claim each year.
- There is a motor vehicle related insurance claim made every 8 seconds of each working day in the UK.
- It is estimated that road accidents cost the UK £13 billion each year.
- The cost of one fatal accident has been put at £1 million.
- As many as 60% of motorway accidents are caused by sleeping or drowsiness.
- The worst months for accidents are October and November and the worst time is between 4-5pm on a Friday.
- Ideally, a car tyre should have no tread as the area in contact with the road increases the road friction. However, on a wet road with the vehicle travelling fast, each tyre might have to disperse up to 3 gallons of water each second. If the tread depth is too small, aquaplaning results. That 1.6mm minimum has a great deal of work to do to keep us in contact with the road!

## Your Group Needs You



With the last newsletter you should have received your renewal form but there a few people who have not, as yet, responded to the Treasurer. Renewing your membership will help us to continue our activities and help others, like you to improve their driving standards.

Please consider giving your continued support. If you were to come along to each monthly meeting then it works out at only 70 pence a night so even if you can't get to them all you won't be much out of pocket.

### Dip those lights

Ever suffered from eye strain when driving on a brightly lit motorway at night? Help maybe be at hand in the form of 'dynamic dimmable lighting'.

This system is controlled by traffic flow which reduces the brightness of the lanterns when traffic is light, this apparently results in a measurable reduction in eyestrain. If you want to try it out you will have to drive on the M65 between Burnley and Colne where a pilot installation is in action.

### Past days of Motoring - the Editor reports

Whenever I have cause to head north I try to remember to take with me a treasured possession - the 1951 "Motoring in Scotland" road guide. The book harks back to the age of 'modern motoring' and was first published in 1928.

This book is packed with information about driving in a different time and also contains many clues to the original routes throughout Scotland, including our own area. Reference to this book will sometimes help me to understand those remains of old roads and bridges which can often be seen alongside the modern highway or 'marching' across a hillside.

My copy records that it was in 1928 that "*reconstruction of the main road to the North, from Perth to Inverness, formerly only a loose gravel track beyond Blair Atholl was completed*". It also details that about five years later the West Highland route to Inverness was opened up by the new road from Tyndrum through Glencoe to the shores of Loch Leven at Carnach, "*a stretch of fully 30 miles over a completely new route and costing £510,000*".

It also talks about the newly completed route over the "Rest and Be Thankful" and the former straggling drove track adopted by the original road builders, the final stage of which was a sharp and steep hairpin bend, a famous obstacle and a severe test for the ordinary car up until about 1930.

The book contains numerous warnings for the motorist *“who are not accustomed to difficult and torturous routes”* and advises of some roads that should be avoided. For example one that *“even the most experienced drivers require to negotiate with utmost caution is that westwards from Fort William to Mallaig... from Glenfinnan the motorist is faced by a highly dangerous section with sharp ‘knuckle’ ascents and acute bends, fringed with rocky edges at every turn”*.

For me, one of the appealing elements of the book is the use of phrases that sum up the age, a few examples of which are: *“certain to see some car in early difficulties”* - *“a 155 mile run over hilly roads, excessive for one day”* - *“we can now average well over 30 mph, if we are in haste”* - *“May 1st 1937 was a red letter day because of a reduced scale of toll charges for use of the Connel railway bridge -four seater cars were formerly charged 10/- for the privilege, now 4/-”* - *“follow the direction of travel advised by the RAC to reduce the need to pass other cars on dangerous roads”* - *“turn south by the AA Scout’s box”*.

When I was a child I travelled extensively on Scottish roads with my parents and remember the excitement of using the ferries, many of which have now disappeared. This book lists most of the mainland ferries together with their costs and hours of operation. For instance in 1951 it records the Kylesku Ferry was free of charge but only ran between mid-May and mid-October. It also records the Erskine ferry was 9d while there was an 8/- charge for the Strome Ferry adding that the *“Ferry may be avoided by putting car on train at Strathcarron station, or Kyle of Lochalsh”*.

There is a separate section on CONTRAST IN CLIMBING TASKS and Scotland’s worst hills such as ‘Cockbridge to Tomintoul’, ‘Kenmore to Amulree’, ‘Otter Ferry’, ‘Mam Ratachan’ and ‘Fettercairn’; all of which, of course, have now been significantly improved although some still make the headlines when the



weather is bad.

Pictured here is an old view of the A82 on which the book comments *“regarded by many motorists as best-engineered in Scotland”* Note the lack of traffic, white lines and maybe even surfacing!

## **OBSERVER'S CORNER**

*The intention of this section is not to give you blanket instructions on a subject, but assistance to consider what is the best course of action. It is up to the driver to assess each individual scenario.*

### **Is it acceptable to cross white lines?**



A difficult situation to be considered and explained when observing is the question of the acceptability of crossing centre white lines especially to straighten a bend or to get a better view.

Let us first consider the Highway Code which sets out the rules in paragraphs 106 - 111. This clearly distinguishes the differences between the various types of white line, and immediately confirms that crossing any solid line, where it is the line nearest to you, must not be considered (except under certain circumstances - see rule 108).

That much is obvious, of course, but consider the wording of rules 106 and 107 which sets out the situations when lines can be crossed. You will note, in particular, that rule 106 confirms that crossing is allowable for the action of overtaking or turning off but also includes the sentence "Do not cross it (the line) unless you can see the road is clear well ahead and wish to overtake or turn off." Similarly rule 107 confirms that you may cross the lines to overtake. The premise of these two rules is that you will normally stay on your side of the line except for overtaking or turning off.

Rule 109 refers to diagonal lines bordered by a broken white line and confirms that you should only enter these areas if *it is necessary and you can see it is safe*. It does not go on to explain what is meant by necessary.

Having assessed the requirements of the Highway Code this would seem to preclude the crossing of lines either to get a better view or to straighten a bend.

It is possible that there could be a circumstance where crossing a line is the best course of action to get (or maintain) an adequate view ahead but remember you always have the option of slowing down to deal with a hazard. If such a situation did arise it would have to be completely safe that is:

1. You must be sure that there is nothing on the piece of road you are going to move across.
2. You must be sure that nothing will appear on the section of opposing carriageway you are moving onto (i.e. not just anticipate nothing will come).
3. No following vehicle or any other road user could misinterpret your actions.
4. Your action is for improved vision only and required for this vision, not purely for the sake of cutting a corner.

It is quite plain that such circumstances will be very few and far between.

Finally have a look at page 53 your copy of the Summer 2002 Advanced Driving magazine, there in the second paragraph of the third column you will see the following: "In a nutshell, if a rider needs to use the opposing side of the road to obtain satisfactory observation, then his or her speed is too high for the prevailing conditions." If it applies to a motorcycle rider then why not to a car driver?

## **Overtaking - to flash or not?**

A headlamp flash can be a useful tool when used correctly but equally other drivers can sometimes display adverse reactions. So just how do you use it to maximum effect?

The first thing to look at is in what circumstances could you consider using a headlamp flash? Highway Code rule 90 tells us to "Only flash your headlights to let other road users know that you are there.....". Use of a headlamp flash also constitutes part of the Information (give) phase of the System of Car Control, so could be given if another road user would benefit but importantly also provided that it could not be misinterpreted by a road user for whom it was not intended.



Perhaps the most likely scenario where a headlamp could prove useful is where you are following a vehicle you wish to overtake and you think the driver in front has not seen you.

How is a headlamp flash given? Simple, you may say, just pull back the stalk, but the duration of the flash is very important. Too long and it is often seen as an act of aggression, too short on the other hand and it may be interpreted as an invitation to another road user to take precedence.

A single flash of two seconds or so should be long enough to have the right effect, although beware, because your flash could still be misinterpreted so always wait until you are sure the recipient of your signal knows you are there before you take any further action.

To sum up, consider flashing your head lamps before overtaking, but only do so if you think the other driver doesn't know you are there. If you flash consider the length of flash, you want to give the other driver time to react but not to appear aggressive. Finally if there is no reaction, hold back, don't overtake unless it is 100% safe.

## **New Legislation**

Several new pieces of motoring legislation are due to take effect in the new year which may affect you.

From January you won't be able to buy a new number plate for your vehicle, caravan or trailer unless you provide documents to prove your identity and entitlement to use, or ownership of, the vehicle.



From February you won't be able to tax your car unless you have a V5 (logbook) or a V11 (invitation to re licence) document. This could present difficulties to those newly acquiring a used car with no documents (like the 1 million or so motorists who bought cars last year without seeing the registration documents).

There are also new rules for vehicles which have been repaired following write-off or scrapping due to accident.

These new rules are designed to combat car crime.

## **Jam for tea?**

We have all been driving along a road when suddenly the traffic slows or comes to a halt, you crawl along maybe for 10 minutes (if you are lucky) expecting to see an accident which caused the problem only to find nothing in sight when the cars in front move off. All too often of course they slow down and stop again after a few hundred yards.

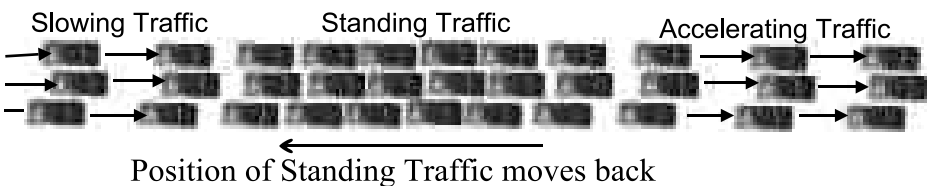
You wonder what has happened to cause the traffic jam? A look in the mirror will show a sea of cars standing in the traffic jam but why? Surely if everyone speeded up at the same time the jam would disappear? And anyway what caused the problem in the first place?



There are many things which can trigger off these types of jam, they are not always caused by an accident but often they are caused by vehicles merging at junctions, road works or simply by lack of observation especially in heavy traffic situations. Vehicles changing lanes, slowing to answer the telephone, breakdowns, near misses, sudden braking can all create a chain reaction with the inevitable results.

What results is a traffic wave, (also known as a ripple or concertina effect) where traffic slows to a crawl or stops for no apparent reason then moves on again. This phenomena has a life of its own and is almost organic in behaviour. The way it propagates is quite simple, the car in front stops so you have to, as does the car behind you. The car in front moves but you can't yet, you have remain stationary until there is a safe gap for you to move into, the same applies to each car behind you. Of course there are more vehicles approaching from behind and stopping as the cars at the front are moving away. Obviously in heavy traffic the effect is more pronounced.

If you viewed the jam from above you would see that the stoppage constantly moves back from the direction of travel as the front of the jam dissolves and more cars 'coagulate' into the rear of the jam. Hence the jam acts like a wave moving through the traffic but in the opposite direction to that in which the vehicles are heading. By the time you start moving it could be that the source of the incident that set it all off may be hundreds of yards or even several miles in front of you!



What can be done to reduce the effects? In reality there is little that can be done although the Authorities can employ variable speed limits (e.g. as M25) to try to remove the ripple effect over several miles. If everyone drove with maximum observation and never made a mistake then most of the effects would be reduced but just like all organic things sometimes they are unpredictable and just happen for no identifiable cause.

## **Mobile Phones**

After several queries lately the vexed question of mobile phones in vehicles is revisited below.



Comparing accident statistics with the results of the TRL research published earlier this year about phones and driving behaviour, is not easy. The results you may recall confirmed that impairment is greater through mobile phone use than by being over the legal alcohol limit. There are no specific figures for accidents related to mobile phones but in the year 2000 around 520 people lost their lives as a result of accidents involving drunk drivers.

The results of the research demonstrated that drivers' reaction times were, on average, 50% slower when talking on a hand held phone compared with normal driving conditions.

Unsurprisingly using hand held phones had the greatest impact, hands free phones did not have such a pronounced effect. However drivers when using either a hands-free or hand-held mobile phone significantly were found to miss more road warning signs than when drunk, were less able to maintain a constant speed and found it more difficult to keep a safe distance from the car in front.

The IAM's viewpoint is similar to that of the Department for Transport who between them advise:

Never use a hand-held phone while driving.

It is best not to use a hands-free phone while driving. Never make an outgoing call even if this just involves activating one button. Although you may think that a hands-free phone will enable you to control the vehicle, your mind will not be fully on your driving. It is not like talking to a passenger who is aware of the traffic conditions and can see what is happening while you are driving. Avoid taking calls; but if you must, say you are driving and end the conversation quickly. Otherwise you will put yourself and other road users at risk.



Interestingly the Government also gives the following advice to Employers:

Do not ask your staff to carry out two demanding tasks at the same time. It can be an offence for employers to require employees to use mobile phones while driving - you are asking them to drive while not in proper control of the vehicle.

If it is essential for your staff to be contacted while they are driving, tell them to use voicemail or call diversion and to stop regularly to check messages and return calls.

With the pace of modern day life and work following these guidelines is difficult. There is often great pressure to keep moving and make or take that call but remember no journey is so urgent that it justifies risking an accident. You might have got away with it last time but you may not the next.

### Expected Conclusion

According to a report produced for Dept of Transport (1999) on how drivers respond to speed cameras, there are four driver types:



**Conformers** who normally comply with speed limits.

**Deterred**, those who have reduced their speed to avoid detection.

**Manipulators** who slow on the approach to cameras then accelerate.

**Defiers**, who carry on as before driving well over the speed limit.

Of these three types it was the Manipulators who tended to be the youngest, have the highest accident rate and the second highest offending and speeding scores (the Defiers of course were the highest).

The Defiers were the most likely to discount the risk of detection, be the least likely to think the police would take action against them if photographed, and also the most likely to expect leniency if caught.

The Conformers were the oldest and most experienced drivers with the lowest speeding and offending records, and also were the least likely to have had an accident in the previous three years.

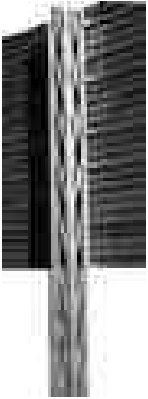


The Deterred fell somewhere between the Conformers and the Manipulators/Defiers in speed surveys (with no cameras present) and in their attitude to cameras but in other respects were more like Conformers.

## Speeding success

Major roadworks were carried out recently on the busy M11 motorway with the imposition of a 40 mph speed limit. The limit was vigorously policed through the use of 18 speed cameras, the result being not one accident recorded.

## Signs of the times



A new type of road sign post has been approved for use and a few examples are beginning to appear on UK roads.

Introduced from Norway the posts are made of maintenance free marine grade aluminium. The striking thing about these signs is that unlike traditional ones, on the motorway for instance, they are not surrounded by crash barriers. That is because the posts are frangible and designed to absorb the energy of a vehicle impact by bending



before breaking off at ground level. The vehicle, instead of coming to a halt with the post embedded into its front, continues over the post foundation with the sign and post landing behind it. The resultant damage to the vehicle and injury to any occupant is significantly reduced.



These two sketches show you what happens to the post on impact and why the injury and damage is reduced. Compare above with the sketch of an impact with a traditional post.

Before you ask why the flying sign doesn't itself become a danger, supposedly it lands where it was originally standing i.e. on the foundation. In optimum conditions it also lands immediately behind the vehicle involved which is a location where normally traffic doesn't go and so relatively low risk.

***This newsletter was published by the Dumfries Group of Advanced Motorists; more details of our activities can be found on our web site at:***

[www.iam.org.uk/groups/dumfries](http://www.iam.org.uk/groups/dumfries)

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