



Group 3081



Registered Charity No: 1053330



"The Responsible Motorist"

Newsletter

Affiliated to:



Registered Charity No. 249002

Winter 2003 - 2004



INTRODUCTION

This is the official publication of the
Wolverhampton Advanced Motorists (W.A.M.)
Registered Charity Number 1053330

We are affiliated to the
Institute of Advanced Motorists (I.A.M.)
Registered Charity Number 249002

If you require more information
about our Group or the Institute please contact:

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I.A.M. Web Site: www.iam.org.uk



DISCLAIMER

PLEASE NOTE: The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Group, or that of the IAM-London, but are those of the contributor(s).

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Events & Meetings



***PLEASE NOTE:**

- THAT UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED ALL DATES ARE 'WEDNESDAY'
- MONTHLY MEETING DATES ARE BEING CHANGED – SO READ **VERY CAREFULLY!**
- OUR VENUE FOR OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS IS – 'THE FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE' IN WOLVERHAMPTON - SEE THE MAP AND DIRECTIONS ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE (No.5 of 25)
- WHILE YOU ARE READING THIS PAGE IT IS AN IDEAL MOMENT TO PUT THESE DATES AND DAY INTO YOUR DIARY – NEWSLETTER COPIES 'RELOCATE' THEMSELVES AFTER A TIME!

14th January 2004

7pm – “Associates Session” – for new Associates
8pm – “A Magistrates Time”
Talk by Magistrate George Clarke

19th January 2004 – Monday

8pm – “Observers Session”

**** Please note that all Observers will be contacted directly as to the venue****

11th February 2004

8pm – “Road Safety in India”
Talk by Group Vice President – Joe Brookes

10th March 2004

8pm – “IAM Examiners Evening”
- Your chance to grill your Examiners!
Question and Answer time with your Area IAM Examiners

27th March 2004 - Saturday

“Skidpan Tuition”
- by the Staffordshire Police
Only 12 spaces are available – please contact your Group Secretary for further detail and to book a place.

14th April 2004

8pm – “Air Ambulance”
Talk by the Air Ambulance – Midlands Activity

12th May 2004

8 pm – ‘ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING’
 ALL MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES ARE REQUESTED TO ATTEND THIS MEETING.
Your commitment to Road Safety and your Group is needed.

9th June 2004

8pm – “The Ambulance Service of Today”
Talk by Trevor Ford of the Ambulance Service

“Being there - gains other insights and the latest news!”



We are here!

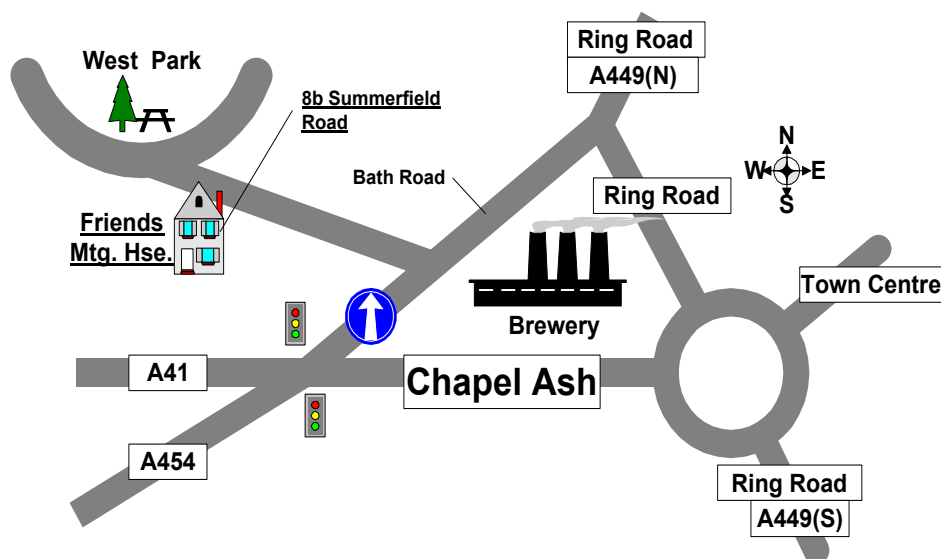
Venue for our Group Monthly Meetings

Is at:

- The Friends Meeting House
8b Summerfield Road
Wolverhampton WV1 4PR

As you get to the gate - follow down the drive towards the back of this property and its car park. The Meeting House is at the very back – a single story building with glass entrance doors.

We are sure that you will find this new venue much more central to our catchment area. Hopefully it will also encourage a higher attendance.



- This map shows that Bath Road is a 'one way road' – albeit briefly - when approached from Chapel Ash.
- You cannot turn right into Bath Road - when coming out of town down (A41) Chapel Ash.
- Taking the Ring Road from Chapel Ash Roundabout - you will need to turn first left into Bath Road then second right to Summerfield Road.
- For other approaches please consult your 'A-Z'.

Contact List - Committee & Trustees

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(see – Chief Observer)

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(see – Secretary)

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TEST ADMINISTRATOR

(See - Associate Controller)

EVENTS CO-ORDINATOR

(see - Secretary)

PUBLICITY OFFICER

G. Mistry

ADDITIONAL TRUSTEES

George Clarke

Memo to Associates

- ❑ **All Associates should be aware that once they are allocated an observer** - it is their responsibility to keep in touch with that observer.
- ❑ **Even if you are unable to make an appointment for a run out in any particular week** - it is up to the associate to telephone the observer and say so. Our observers work on a voluntary basis and have lives of their own to fit around their observing. It is only courteous to let them know when you are unavailable for an observed run.
- ❑ **If associates do not keep in touch with their observer** - it will be assumed that they are no longer active and the observer will be assigned to someone else on the waiting list. Observers are a scarce resource and we have to utilise their availability to the best advantage for all concerned.
- ❑ **When you finally get to the point where you pass the test** – let us know via your observer. If we don't know about your success, we can't celebrate it with you. We are sure that you appreciate the effort and time that your observer has given to you and that you will thank that person personally and possibly through a letter to your newsletter. **Please be considerate** - for the benefit of all concerned.

Geoff Davis – Chief Observer & Associate Controller

Chairman's Comment

Season Greetings!

I should let you know that our vice president Judith and her husband John Rowley are our cities Mayor and Mayoress. On behalf our group I am sure we wish them a successful year in office.

In a year of change you will notice soon a new format to the IAM leaflets taking in not only the new rounded and button type logo but in front cover designs as well so keep your eye out for them.

M6 Toll Road

Talking of new things during recent weeks the M6 toll road has been opened to vehicles. For the first 1 million vehicles will get a discount of £1 off what will become the usual toll. The hope is that it reduces some of the every day congestion on the M6. I should warn you that you need to be aware that the junction layouts have changed on the M6 to accommodate this new road. I have been told that the signage of the new junctions exists particularly for the M42 south bound on the M6 north is not the best for early planning. Also by default the outside lanes both north and south bound will take you on to the toll road.

The web site www.m6toll.co.uk gives more information and there are a number of standard questions and answers including.

Q. What happens if you haven't the ability to pay the toll?

A. They will issue a notice to pay.

I hope it may be a good time to ask if anyone has not made a New Years resolution they may like to offer a small regular amount of their time over the coming year to help our Group. If so please get in touch either with myself or any other Committee member.

Finally, can I wish you all best wishes for you, your family and friends and hope that you have a great 2004.

Regards

Paul

From the Editor

May I take this opportunity to wish you and your families a very Happy and Prosperous New Year. Personally I think this last year has really flown by! Yes I know what you're thinking how can I be so old and be so good looking and humble too!! Since the last issue we have had a great victory in the antipodes (Australia, good folks).

The requirement for current Group and IAM Membership.

Please keep a close eye on your membership status and their renewal dates. Can you ensure that you complete the Group form that is always part of your newsletter and return it in a timely fashion together with the relevant monies to Sue Palmer. Also the IAM form posted to you direct from London.

- Do be aware that current memberships are a mandatory requirement for all observers.
- As with your annual renewal with IAM London you certify a clean licence or state any endorsements for review prior to any renewal.
- Chasing people costs group money, so please be a 'responsible motorist' in this aspect also!
- **A group membership cut off date of 5th August has been actioned for those who have not renewed.** If this is applicable to you will no longer be a group member, associate member, observer, etc. as appropriate to your status.

Your Group Committee needs you!

We continue to ask for your time and personal commitment to your group. We are still in need of new blood on the committee so that the running can be evenly distributed to give members old and new a better group - one that has a future! As you will see we have gained three new committee members – but – one or two more would not go amiss.

- **Events Organiser** – this position is now vacant once more. This is a busy but rewarding position. The person who fills this place will have the full support of the committee together with their help and knowledge of past events and talks to draw upon. At no time will you be thrown in at the deep end.
- **Committee Members** – there are places for those of any type of membership. You will still contribute to meetings and the group. Your ideas and personal skills may be just what we need.

Your Group Newsletter:

What is still missing from it? In a nutshell contributions from other than committee members. This continues to be the norm rather than the exception. Even thank you letters from members passing their test are rare. We do need your input to reflect a Group Newsletter. Go on select first gear and write half a page or better still a whole one – it isn't that hard once you engage the clutch and the wheels start to turn!

Your articles, letters, comments, etc. - are always welcome.

These can be sent to me by post either written or on a diskette. Ideally e.mail is best as an attached file. Items sent on diskette or by e.mail should preferably be in Word.doc format, which saves me having to create your detail again. Should they not be part of the following issue please be assured that they will be put on file and used.

*****CONTRIBUTORS - PLEASE NOTE: the closing date for any input into your next Issue is – Saturday April 17th 2004.***

Events and Talks:

- Ideas for future Group Events & Talks – would be gratefully received from you at any time. They will need to have some detail to go with them so that they can be looked into and actioned.
- Those mentioned on the Events page & those elsewhere – could you give time to support these? Enter them into your diaries! Note the day and date as Tuesday will soon replace Wednesdays!!!

Tony Robson (robson@jantony.freeseve.co.uk – see Committee Contacts page also)

From your Chief Observer

Be Aware

A few days ago, I was driving from Gailey on the A449 towards Ivetsey Bank on the A5. As I recall, it was about 2.30pm on a dull afternoon in November, the road conditions were dry.

I was travelling at about 50 – 55 mph in a 60 area. The only vehicles ahead were well in the distance and were rapidly disappearing into the gloom. No one was following – I knew that because I was making regular mirror checks.

On one of the mirror checks, I noticed a dark green car, approaching fast, without any lights. The driver pulled to the right-hand side of the road and began to overtake.

I looked very briefly to my right – the driver was in the process of overtaking without, it seemed taking into account other vehicles might be approaching at a similar speed to theirs. Admittedly, the road was quite, traffic was exceptionally light, but when I looked forward moments later, a dark car was approaching from a partially hidden dip at some speed, also without lights, at a time of day when the prevailing conditions may have suggested lights should have been used.

I was very concerned – the car overtaking me appeared to be oblivious to the approaching vehicle, and didn't appear to reconsider the manoeuvre, even though there was time for them to pull in behind me for a short time - they simply continued through. When the car was directly to my right, and the approaching car was getting closer, I felt that I needed to help the difficult situation, urgently, by braking firmly. I rapidly reduced speed in a short space of time. The overtaking car then pulled over to their left earlier and the approaching car passed by seconds later. The dangerous situation was alleviated.

Strangely enough, even though two cars were approaching each other in the same lane, at frightening speed, the approaching car didn't flash their headlights to give warning of danger, and the overtaking car didn't respond when I flashed my headlights, but disappeared briskly into the gloom ahead. Perhaps they hadn't seen each other, so therefore hadn't recognised the imminent danger.

I suppose, by being aware, a nasty situation was avoided. This is simply an observation of what happened on the A5 on a day in November – it could happen anywhere.

By reading these few words, you may think that this 'couldn't happen to me', but the situation I have described, really did happen. It happened in a matter of moments – the car overtaking me, and the approaching vehicle had a closing speed somewhere in the region of about 140 mph – on the same lane.

Be vigilant – take care - drive safely!

Geoff Davis

Chief Observer (Cars)



Welcome - and Congratulations !



New Members

Welcome to: -

Car Associate:

Jason Ayles	Bilston	Spencer Smith	Wolverhampton
Kurt Dreslin	Bilston	Kerry Beech	Wolverhampton
James Bellingham	Wolverhampton	Edwin Brigden	Codsall
Chris Packer	Dudley	Paul Spelman	Wolverhampton

Motorcycle Associate

Peter Lowndes	Wednesbury
---------------	------------

- on joining the Group.

Advanced Test Passes

Congratulations to: -

Car:

Philip Tedstill
Michael Brooks
Karen Sims
John Bateson
Joseph Duffy
Anne Palmer

Observer:

David Cooper
Roy Richards
James Whalen
Nigel Packer
-
Rod Matthews

Car:

David Eccles
Michael Kedzierski
Kerry Beech
Alexander Duffy
Steve Hale

Observer:

Bill Goodreds
Ian Fox
Andy Collins
-
Richard Lloyd Jones

REMEMBER - one good way to **maintain** your proven skills is to become an Observer yourself. By passing your expertise in this way onto others you can enjoy their success also! This is a further contribution to road safety from you and your assigned associates.

Friends of the Group

Members may not be aware but there are the following categories of Group membership:

- Group Full Member
- Group Associate Member
- Group Honorary Member, and
- Group Friend

The 'Group Friend' category is defined within the group rules as a member of the public that can be accepted as 'a group friend' in the absence of special reasons rendering an applicant unacceptable. This category of membership is not intended for those who have been Group Full Members, for those who have been and are no longer IAM Members, or for those who have been Group Associate Members unless they have taken and failed the IAM Advanced Test and may only be awarded by the individual decision of the Group Committee.

****ATTENTION: - TO ALL FULL / ASSOCIATE MEMBERS****

Grievances

We volunteer to work for the improvement of road safety through better driver and rider skills. We wish to inform all in the Group, that if anyone feels that they have a grievance, then please make contact with the committee as soon as possible, so that information and experiences can be made clear and settled in a timely manner.



Group Regalia



MA 1 Jacket (Black)	£26.50
Sweatshirt (Black, Red, White)	£13.50
Polo shirt (Black, Red, White)	£10.00

All of the above are inclusive of being embroidered with either the car or motorcycle logo.

ORDER FORMS ARE AVAILABLE THROUGH GARTH JONES.

Tax Disc Holders (Car)	£1.00
Reflective IAM logos (Red or Green self adhesive)	£1.00 pair
Motorcycle fairing stickers (Group logo)	£1.00 pair
Helmet ('DO NOT REMOVE' etc.)	£1.00 pair

AVAILABLE FROM - G. JONES

Wolverhampton Advanced Motorists



(Group 3081)
(Registered Charity No. 1053330)

Group Secretary:
Mr. G. Jones
P.O. Box 3264
Wolverhampton
West Midlands WV8 2YL
Tel: 0870.240.8220

INFORMATION

Thank you for your interest in the Institute and we hope that this information will answer many of your questions and help develop interest of Advanced Motoring through us.

As an Associate member, we undertake to guide you to the required standard to pass the Institutes Advanced Driving Test. The Associate enrolment fee of £85.00 is for Car, Motorcycle, Mini-bus and Commercial drivers. This includes: -

- An up-to-date "Highway Code",
- An I.A.M. book - "How To Pass Your Advanced ... Test",
- An Observer,
- A Pre-Test, and
- The Test fee.

An Observer will be appointed to you, to aid your learning of Advanced Motoring. This guidance usually takes about an hour a week by mutual agreement. When your Observer considers you to be sufficiently trained, a pre-test Drive with the Chief Observer or a Senior Observer will take place and advice given about the drive / ride and your application for the Advanced Test.

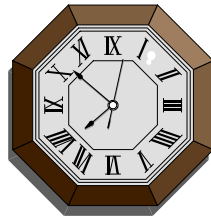
An appointment for the Test is made via the Group and the I.A.M. London, with a local Examiner who is a Police Advanced Driver. The test takes one and a half hours and covers about thirty-five miles. All types of road are involved and it includes parking and slow manoeuvres. All of this will have been perfected with guidance from your Observer.

The first years membership of the IAM (£15) will be either refunded or held by the I.A.M. pending a further test if you prefer, should you be unsuccessful.

During your 12 months Associate Membership of the Group, you will receive a quarterly Group Newsletter, informing you of activities arranged for all in the local Group. These include Talks, Lectures, Group facilities and visits to various venues that you may feel will be of assistance to improving the standard of your driving. All of the Group meetings are free and you and your interested friends will be made welcome.

Group Membership Fees

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP: (upon joining – car or motorcycle)	£85
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ This includes the cost of your Advanced Test and 1st years IAM Membership (the latter refunded for test not being passed).▪ Also copies of the I.A.M. publication 'Passing your Advanced Driving Test' / 'Passing your Advanced Motorcycling Test' – plus – 'The Highway Code'.▪ Guidance up to the time that a Senior Observer recommends you for the Institute Advanced Test. (You will then only receive a check drive / ride prior to this Test).▪ New members are required to complete the form opposite when applying for membership.	
ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL:	£12
FULL MEMBERSHIP: (Effective 1 st April, 2004)	£12
FAMILY/JOINT MEMBERSHIP:	
▪ (2 <u>FULL</u> members at the same address - (Effective 1 st April, 2004))	£18



'Membership Renewal' Time – 1st April, 2004

NOTE:

- If you are a **FULL MEMBER** - and you have not yet renewed your Group Membership for the current year, please do so as soon as possible. The fee due is £12 (£18 for Family / Joint Full Members).
- If you are an **ASSOCIATE MEMBER** - renewing for the current year the fee due is £12.
- **ALL MEMBERS** – please note applicable fees and effective dates listed above.
- **COMPLETION OF THE FORM OPPOSITE** – should accompany all membership application / renewals.
- **A GROUP MEMBERSHIP CUT OFF DATE OF 5TH AUGUST - will be actioned for those who have not renewed.** This will happen each year for those not renewing in a timely fashion.

Please forward your Cheque (payable to – 'W.A.M.' and with your Group Membership number on the back) and your completed form to:

- Sue Palmer
7 Walhouse Drive
Penkridge
Staffs ST19 5SP

**** IMPORTANT – ALL 'FULL' MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE:**

- Your London Membership is in addition to that for your Group.
- If you are an **OBSERVER** you have to be a fully paid up member of both.

Wolverhampton Advanced Motorists



Group 3081 (Registered Charity No. 1053330)

I wish to apply for *Full / Associate Membership of the Group in the following category of Vehicle(s):

*Car / Commercial / Motor Cycle / Mini-Bus *Manual / Automatic

Other Modifications (incl. for any disabilities).....

Surname:*(Mr.,Mrs.,Miss,Ms.,etc.).....Forename(s):

Preferred Name: Address:

.....Post Code:

Tel. No: E.Mail Address:

Date of Birth: Occupation:

When are you available for guidance? *Daytime / Evenings / Weekends.

ASSOCIATE ENROLMENT FEE: - for Car / Motorcycle / Commercial / Mini-Bus:..... £85
(This includes: - 'The Highway Code' and [I.A.M. publication]'How to Pass your Advanced Test')

FULL MEMBERSHIP FEE: - £12.00 Group Membership No. IAM / Ref. No.

I enclose a *Cheque / Postal Order / Cash for £ Cheque / Postal Order No. (made payable to "Wolverhampton Advanced Motorists" or "W.A.M.")

Please note -The function of the Observer - is limited to making comment or giving advice so as to help the associate improve their standard of driving. As the driver or rider of the vehicle - you are deemed to be in control of it at all times during an observed run. Associates are also expected - to attend the occasional associate evenings.

- Has any Court in the last three years ordered a conviction to be endorsed on your license? *Yes / No
- Are you registered disabled? *Yes / No

(If yes to either please give brief details below or separately, including dates, vehicle modifications etc.)

I confirm that the vehicle(s) that I shall be driving during observed runs shall be suitably insured, taxed and it will have a current MOT certificate (if applicable). I will remain fully responsible for the safe driving of the vehicle(s). As a 'Full Member' (if applicable) I also confirm that I am a current valid member of the IAM (London) and quote my membership number above.

Signed: Date:

Cars/Commercial/Mini-Bus/Motorcycle:

Please forward Moneys and this completed form to: Sue Palmer, 7, Walhouse Drive, Penkridge, ST19 5SP

How did you hear about the IAM?

*Delete as applicable



Change of Address details, etc.

Membership category: (Tick as applicable)

- Car Motorcycle
 Mini-bus Commercial

Name: **D.O.B.:**

New Address

.....

Post Code **Telephone**

E.Mail Address:

Membership Nos.: (Group).....(IAM / Ref.Nos)

Signature

Please show as:- Associate / Member / Observer

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN TO:

Sue Palmer
7 Walhouse Drive
Penkridge
Staffs ST19 5SP

OBSERVED RUNS / RIDES AND PRE-TESTS

All Full and Associate Members – Please note – a valid Group Membership card must be produced upon request. Should your card not be produced or be invalid for any reason, that particular activity cannot take place.

DO REMEMBER –

When you have taken a ‘pre-test’ drive

– and have been recommended to apply for the advanced test, please send your completed test application form to me as soon as possible. This recommendation will come from you having demonstrated the standard that we expect of you to pass – however – it will still depend on your driving on the actual day of your IAM test with an IAM Examiner.

Once one or two details have been recorded from your form it will be sent to IAM London without further delay. Within the following 2-3 weeks your appointed Test Examiner will contact you to arrange a date and time for your actual advanced driving test.

If for any reason you are unable to send the form please contact your observer or myself without delay.

After taking your test

– please let your Observer and Chief Observer know as soon as possible. This allows us to say well done - and - also to free your observer for any waiting associate.

Observers

– tell your Chief Observer when your associate passes – he would much rather be told twice than not at all!

Geoff Davis – Chief Observer

Letters

[Editor: Sorry, no letters this time, folks.]

IAM News Releases / Fact Sheets

THE ADVANCED DRIVING TEST

What the Examiner expects

The Test takes about 90 minutes, over all types of roads and using your own car. The four essential qualities are **Concentration, Observation, Anticipation** and **Planning**. The Examiner is the holder of a Police Advanced Driving Certificate. A full understanding of what is expected can be found in the IAM publication "Pass Your Advanced Driving Test" or "Pass Your Advanced Motorcycling Test" as appropriate. A number of important points are mentioned here:

THE PRINCIPLES OF ADVANCED DRIVING

- Do you concentrate properly and avoid distractions?
- Can you read the road and anticipate potential hazards in good time?
- Are hazards dealt with in a planned and systematic way?
- Do you use your mirrors before changing your speed or position and do you always give a signal to other road users if they will benefit or appreciate one?
- Can you drive with reasonable restraint, but not indecision?
- Is your judgement of speed and distance accurate?
- Do you drive with courtesy and consideration for other road users, including pedestrians?
- Are you always in the right place on the road, travelling at the right speed with the right gear engaged and able to stop safely in the distance you can see to be clear?

HANDLING SKILLS

- Are steering actions safe, smooth and accurate, and do you pass the wheel through your hands?
- Are gears smoothly and correctly selected?
- Do you make full use of automatic transmission, if your car is fitted with it?
- Is your braking smooth and progressive?
- Do you use "acceleration sense"?

ADVANCED DRIVING SKILLS ON THE ROAD

- Do you keep up a reasonable pace and maintain good progress if conditions permit?
- Do you anticipate and react correctly to the situations developing ahead?
- Are the correct road position chosen and signals given in good time for the next manoeuvre?
- Are all signals, signs and road markings observed, obeyed and approached correctly?
- Are overtaking manoeuvres carried out smoothly, decisively and safely?
- Do you drive with proper restraint and proper sensitivity of control when the roads are slippery or visibility is reduced?
- Are manoeuvres such as parking, reversing, carried out smoothly and competently with effective all-round observations?

Advanced Drivers are expected to control the risks, despite the incorrect actions of others. Every journey can have its unexpected moments.

However, even successful candidates have made minor mistakes, which did not prevent them from passing the Advanced Driving Test.

News Release Number 22/03

Issued: 27 October 2003

HANDS FREE NOT SCOT-FREE SAYS IAM

Motorists will be committing a specific offence if they use a hand-held mobile phone while driving from this December. But those who opt for a hands-free kit instead should not think they will get off scot-free, warns the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM).

Writing in the winter edition of *Advanced Driving*, the IAM magazine, IAM Chief Executive Christopher Bullock said: "This winter should see the beginning of the end for the 'phoney driver' - that anti-social individual who thinks it is possible to control a vehicle properly while talking into a hand-held mobile phone. This has got to be good news: from 1 December, there will be new fines for using hand-held mobile phones at the wheel, backed up with three penalty points to provide a much needed deterrent. But for all those mobile phones violators out there - and their numbers don't seem to be decreasing - hands-free will not mean getting off scot-free. In the event of a crash the police won't be particularly impressed if by way of mitigation it is claimed that the telephone being used was wired into the car's system."

Also in this issue of *Advanced Driving*:

"Ultra safe" Land Rovers to get the IAM treatment

A special programme has been developed by IAM Fleet, the UK's leading driver training company, to train Solihull-based in-house assessors of all employees on the Land Rover range production line. Hand-picked IAM trainers have undertaken product and factory familiarisation and this modified special course is already creating interest from other manufacturers.

The training programme covers Range Rovers, Discoveries, Defenders and Freelanders and represents Land Rover's ongoing commitment to provide effective work place safety systems for employees, so reducing their risk exposure.

The move is believed to be the first time factory technicians have applied advanced driving techniques in this way.

New call to make P-plates mandatory

Compulsory P-plates for newly qualified drivers would help them gain crucial on-road experience and at the same time reduce the chances of a crash.

That's the claim from IAM Chief Examiner Bryan Lunn who has addressed the issues surrounding high-risk newly qualified drivers.

"P-plates indicate that the vehicle's driver is new and gaining experience. As such he or she deserves additional consideration and understanding from other road users, as well as a bit more time and space," said Mr Lunn.

"They are not mandatory in this country and have never really been popular for two reasons - firstly, most young drivers are very image conscious and many of them are reluctant to display P-plates, which are seen as un-cool. Secondly there is no incentive from insurers or anyone else to encourage them to do so.

"After passing the test, new drivers have good basic skills but what they lack is experience. Compulsory P-plates would help new drivers gain that crucial experience much more safely than they do now. Making P-plates mandatory would be a major step to improve road safety," he said.

'Advanced Driving' - is the official magazine of the IAM. Since 1956, the IAM has helped more than 300,000 drivers and riders to prepare for and take the now famous IAM Advanced Driving Test. The IAM has more than 111,000 members, all advanced drivers, and more than 200 local groups across the UK, helping aspiring motorists and motorcyclists to prepare for the advanced test.

"4 X 4" MUMS ASKED TO TAKE EXTRA CARE ON SCHOOL RUN

(Issued: 1 September 2003)

As schools across the UK prepare to go back after the summer break, the IAM has issued a special plea to all parents, particularly those using large 4x4 vehicles for the school run.

One in five children injured on the road is hurt during the hours of the school run, which typically sees rush hour traffic swelling by nearly 20 per cent.

Although over a million children a day are driven to school in private cars, only a tiny fraction of the parents at the wheel have ever done anything to improve their driving skills. Instead they rely on their general driving experience.

"With larger vehicles there comes a larger responsibility - and that applies especially to the roads around schools. While any car is potentially lethal if driven badly, it has to be said the handling characteristics and the weight and size of these 4x4s together pose a potential additional road safety risk when there are child pedestrians around," said Bryan Lunn, IAM Chief Examiner. Mr Lunn said 4x4 drivers should bear in mind:

* Where narrow roads and parking prevent two vehicles passing, it is far better to give way rather than mount the pavement in order to "squeeze" past. Driving on the pavement is illegal, damages the pavement and you could injure a pedestrian.

* If "bull bars" are fitted on the vehicle, consider removing them. They are increasingly unfashionable and pose a needless additional risk for pedestrians, especially children.

* Those who choose 4x4s in order to make their own children safer inside should give equal consideration to the child pedestrians outside. Around schools, speeds lower than the posted limit are increasingly appropriate.

"IAM Fleet (at <http://www.iamfleet.com>) has a partners hip with 4x4 specialists HLR, offering a unique on and off road driving course just for these vehicles," said Mr Lunn. Also the IAM has a free fact sheet (at http://www.iam.org.uk/Pressroom/Fact_Sheets/pdf/fac13001.pdf) for any parent or teacher who wants to find out how to encourage more responsible driving around schools. Any driver or rider who wishes to find out how to improve their safety on the road can contact the IAM on 020 8996 9600.

[Issued by the IAM Press Office. For further details contact Vince Yearley on 020 8996 9625.]

Department of Transport

Mobile Phones and Driving: Frequently Asked Questions

In a new regulation that came into force on 1 December 2003, it is a specific offence to use a hand-held phone, or similar device, when driving. The penalty is a £30 fixed penalty or up to £1,000 on conviction in court (£2,500 for drivers of goods vehicles, buses or coaches). Drivers still risk prosecution (for failure to have proper control) if they use hands-free phones when driving.

Q1. What does the regulation say about hand-held phones?

The use of a hand-held phone or similar hand-held device while driving is now prohibited. A hand-held device is something that "is or must be held at some point during the course of making or receiving a call or performing any other interactive communication function".

A device is "similar" to a mobile phone if it performs an interactive communication function by transmitting and receiving data. Examples of interactive communication functions are sending and receiving spoken or written messages, sending or receiving still or moving images and providing access to the internet.

2-way radios are subject to special treatment under the regulations. See **Q14** below regarding 2-way radios for further information.

Q2. Is hands-free phone equipment allowed?

Provided that a phone can be operated without holding it, then hands-free equipment is not prohibited by the new regulation.

And pushing buttons on a phone while it is in a cradle or on the steering wheel or handlebars of a motorbike for example is not covered by the new offence, provided you don't hold the phone.

However, hands-free phones are also distracting and you still risk prosecution for failing to have proper control of a vehicle under Regulation 104 of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 if you use a hands-free phone when driving. If there is an incident, the use of any phone or similar device might justify charges of careless or dangerous driving.

Q3. What about texting/internet access/video phones?

The use of a mobile phone or similar device for any of these activities while driving is also prohibited if the phone (or other device) has to be held in order to operate it.

Q4. Are drivers still able to use navigation equipment, personal digital assistants (PDAs) or other computer equipment that sends or receives data (which would include GPS transmissions)?

Yes - providing that it is not a hand-held device. Use of devices other than mobile phones are only prohibited if the device performs an interactive communication function by sending and receiving data. If the device does not perform this type of function, you can use the device without breaching the regulations.

But remember the warning in the Highway Code (Rule 128) that using in-vehicle systems can be distracting. You must exercise proper control of your vehicle at all times.

Q5. Why are you not banning the use of hands-free mobile phones while driving?

Using any type of phone while driving is distracting.

Drivers should remember that the police can still use existing legislation (for failure to have proper control) if a driver is distracted by a call on a hands-free phone. If there is an incident and the driver is using any phone (hand-held or hands-free) or similar device, then there is a risk of prosecution for careless or dangerous driving.

Q6. Will mobile phones have to be switched off in vehicles?

No. Passengers may want to use them. And drivers can use them when they are safely parked.

Q7. What if the phone rings when I'm driving?

Let it ring and return the call when safely parked. Better to switch to voicemail before starting.

Q8. Who do the new regulations apply to?

The new regulations apply to the drivers of all motor vehicles on the road, including cars, motorcycles, goods vehicles, buses, coaches and taxis.

They also apply to anyone supervising a learner driver, while the learner driver is driving. Anyone supervising a learner driver needs to be concentrating on what the driver is doing and should not be using a mobile phone.

Q9. Do the new mobile phone regulations apply to cyclists?

No. However, the police have powers to deal with careless or dangerous cycling.

Q10. Can I use a hand-held mobile phone when stopped in a traffic jam?

The prohibition applies when driving. Driving includes times when stopped at traffic lights or during other hold-ups that may occur during a typical journey when a vehicle can be expected to move off after a short while.

In exceptional traffic jams, such as a lengthy stoppage on a motorway, it would be clear that someone wasn't driving if the engine was off.

Q11. Are there any exemptions?

Yes. There is an exemption for calls to 999 (or 112) in genuine emergencies where it is unsafe or impractical to stop. There is also an exemption for the use of 2-way radios (see **Q14** below).

Q12. Am I be able to cradle a phone between my ear and shoulder?

No. The offence applies if a phone has to be "held" while making or receiving a call. Therefore you should not hold a phone between your ear and shoulder - or anywhere else - when driving.

Q13. Are employers guilty of an offence if their employees use a hand-held phone while driving?

The new regulations apply to "anyone who causes or permits any other person" to use a hand-held mobile phone while driving.

The Department considers that employers would not be liable just because they supplied a telephone or because they phoned an employee who was driving. However, employers would probably be liable if they required their employees to use a hand-held phone while driving and might also be liable if they failed to forbid employees to use such phones on company business.

Q14. Are 2-way radios be included in the new offence?

The use of 2-way radio equipment when driving is not included in the new offence but remember there is still a risk of distraction and prosecution under other powers.

Q15. If you prohibit using mobile phones, then surely you'll have to stop people talking or tuning the radio? What powers do the police have?

We have no such intentions. There are many potential distractions while driving and it remains the driver's responsibility to drive safely at all times. Research shows that it is more distracting to talk on a mobile phone than to have a conversation with a passenger who can see what is happening.

Q16. Is the offence endorsable?

No. The offence is subject to a £30 fixed penalty or maximum fine of £1000 for conviction in court (maximum of £2,500 for drivers of goods vehicles or buses/coaches).

However, we do plan to increase the penalty for the new offence by making it subject to 3 penalty points and a £60 fixed penalty. Primary legislation will be needed for this when a suitable opportunity arises to amend Schedule 2 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988. We do not have a timetable for that yet.

Remember, in some circumstances, for example if there has been an accident, a prosecution for careless or dangerous driving may be justified if a phone was in use at the time of the crash. The penalties on conviction for such offences include heavy fines, endorsement, disqualification and, in serious cases, imprisonment.

Q17. Where can I go for more information?

You should seek independent legal advice if you are in doubt as to whether any particular action is prohibited by the regulations.

You may find the attached flowchart helpful. You may also like to see the letter we issued on 24 June 2003 on the results of consultation on our initial proposals for an offence of using a hand-held mobile phone while driving at:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_rdsafety/documents/page/dft_rdsafety_508356.pdf

The legislation is available at <http://www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/si/si2003/20032695.htm> Look for Statutory Instrument No 2695 - The Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment)(No 4) Regulations 2003.

Articles

Sayings from the 1500's

The next time you are washing your hands and complain because the water temperature isn't just how you like it, think about how things used to be. Here are some facts about the 1500's:

Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May and still smelled pretty good by June. However, they were *starting* to smell, so brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odour. Hence the custom today of carrying a bouquet when getting married.

Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water, then all the other sons and men, then the women and finally the children - last of all, the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it. Hence the saying, "Don't throw the baby out with the bath water."

Houses had thatched roofs-thick straw-piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the dogs, cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof. Hence the saying "It's raining cats and dogs."

There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posed real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could really mess up your nice clean bed. Hence, a bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top afforded some protection. This is how canopy beds came into existence.

Floors were generally just dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt. Hence the saying "dirt poor."

The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh (straw) on the floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on, they kept adding more thresh until when you opened the door it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed in the entranceway. Hence the saying a "threshold."

In the old days, they cooked in the kitchen with a big kettle that always hung over the fire. Every day they lit the fire and added things to the pot. They ate mostly vegetables and did not get much meat. They would eat the stew for dinner, leaving leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight and then start over the next day. Sometimes the stew had food in it that had been there for quite a while. Hence the rhyme, "Pease porridge hot, peas porridge cold, pease porridge in the pot nine days old." Sometimes they could obtain pork, which made them feel quite special. When visitors came over, they would hang up their bacon to show off. It was a sign of wealth that a man "could bring home the bacon". They would cut off a little to share with guests and would all sit around and "chew the fat."

Those with money had plates made of pewter. Food with high acid content caused some of the lead to leach onto the food, causing lead poisoning and death. This happened most often with tomatoes, so for the next 400 years or so, *tomatoes* were considered poisonous.

Bread was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom of the loaf, the family got the middle, and guests got the top, or "upper crust."

Lead cups were used to drink ale or whisky. The combination would sometimes knock them out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait and see if they would wake up. Hence the custom of holding a "wake."

England is old and small and the local folks started running out of places to bury people. So they would dig up coffins and would take the bones to a "bone-house" and reuse the grave. When reopening these coffins, 1 out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside and they realised they had been burying people alive. So they thought they would tie a string on the wrist of the corpse, lead it through the coffin and up through the ground and tie it to a bell. Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night (the "graveyard shift") to listen for the bell; thus, someone could be "saved by the bell" or was considered a "dead ringer."

**And that's the truth... Now, whoever said that history was boring !!!
Educate someone...Share these facts with a friend...**

Why Does Japan Drive On The Left?

It is considered certain that at least among Samurai warriors, left-side passage had been observed.

Left-side passage not only allowed right-handed Samurai to draw their swords more easily in case of emergency but also prevented two mutually approaching samurai from getting into a duel when the sheaths of their swords hit each other, which happened quite often in days of yore. Samurai ruled the Japanese society during Edo period (1603-1867). And left-side passage suited their peacetime lifestyle. So left-side passage could be considerably prevalent in Japan back then. But this does not necessarily follow that non-Samurai people--farmers, craftsmen, and merchants -- strictly kept left-hand traffic. These people did not carry swords in the first place. Furthermore, it had been a traditional custom in Japan to put up nameplates on the right posts of the gates when you see houses from the outside. It had also been a traditional custom here to show names of the bridges in Chinese characters (therefore more politely) on the right posts of the bridges when one faced the bridge while those in Japanese syllabics on the left posts. Two Europeans (Engelbert Kaempfer and Carl Peter Thunberg) wrote that people were keeping to the left. But it is possible that non-Samurai people were keeping to the right only when they came up against top brasses like Samurai or foreigners. People in Japan could be moving every which way with the exception of Samurai warriors.

In early 18th century, Engelbert Kaempfer (1651-1716), a German naturalist, wrote in his book called "Edo travel account" that left-side passage was stipulated on Japanese highways (Edo is an old name of Tokyo). He stayed in Japan from 1690 to 1692. He wrote "according to the Japanese custom, people who travel to the capital (including himself) have to keep to the left while people who travel from the capital have to keep to the right. This custom took root and became a rule."

In late 18th century, Carl Peter Thunberg (1743-1822), a Swedish botanist, wrote in his book called "Edo travel accompaniment" that left-side passage was observed by all travellers on Japanese highways and added that a clear-cut traffic rule like this had to be set up in Europe as well. He stayed in Japan from 1775 to 1776.

The most decisive factor in the Japanese history that brought about our present left-side driving came in 1868, when our isolationist feudalism was replaced by Western-style democracy (though it was nominal democracy back then). We realised our backwardness and started absorbing Western civilization like fury. The railway system was one of the most prominent intake from the West at that time. Three countries approached the then Japanese government in terms of the introduction of the railway system: USA, France and UK. At first France and USA prevailed but in the end UK swayed away Japanese government decision by offering a state-run railway plan which best agreed with Japanese officials' idea. In 1872 the first Japanese railway ran with English technical aid. It was, of course, left side driving (at stations, I mean, the main line was single-track). The photos or paintings prove this from those days. A massive network of railways had been built ever since, all of which were left side running. If American or French railway had been built, instead of English, we might have found right-side traffic in today's Japan.

But the left-hand traffic discussed above is still limited to railways. The biggest avenue that effectively promoted left-side traffic on the Japanese road system is considered to be horse railways, and its successor: electric tramcars. As you may have known, horse railways are stagecoaches that ran on railways on streets. They first ran in Japan in 1882 with double-track railway. Since they were a railway after a fashion, they were

left-side passage in Japan. They developed in a big way as street transportation, especially in major cities. In 1903 horse railways were starting to be replaced by electric tramcars. But since they used the same railways as the horse railways, left-side driving continued. And they are considered to encourage other transportation to keep to the left down the road.

In the 19th century the Japanese laws and orders on the passage of roads seemed still confused. Stage Coach Order issued by the Tokyo Metropolitan Police in 1881 said mutually approaching horses and vehicles had to avoid each other by shifting to the left. But an order issued by the same Tokyo police in 1885 stated that general horses and vehicles had to avoid to the left but when they met army troops they had to avoid to the right. Japanese armies were keeping right on roads, as their ideas did, until 1924. Osaka government, which is the second largest city in Japan, issued an order in 1872 that horses and vehicles had to keep to the right of roads. It was not until early 20th century that left-side passage effectively took root among ordinary Japanese people. In 1900 Tokyoites arguably saw the first automobile run in Japan. An order issued in 1902 by the Tokyo police said for the first time that pedestrians had to keep to the left side of roads. 1907 saw the first Japanese killed by an automobile accident. A newspaper article dated January 1st of 1906 reads "we have recently seen the development of such transportation as trains, cars and bicycles. But it does not necessary accompany a corresponding street condition and we have seen increased traffic accidents. In light of the swollen danger on roads, Tokyo Metropolitan Police are going to enforce that same old left-side traffic on pedestrians in addition to tighter regulation on trains." In a book called 'Origin of Meiji (a Japanese era referring to 1868 to 1912) things,' it was 1924 when left-side driving was clearly written in a law.

A good idea - LPG ??

What is it all about? Well a number of years ago a then local filling station had a new sort of fuel pump installed and that started my curiosity.

You need to have your vehicle converted if that is the right word, you technically have it made dual or bi-fuel to be accurate. You will start on conventional fuel and as soon as your water temperature from your engine is getting warm (about 35° C). It switches over to gas and will then run on Gas unless you run out, it will automatically switch back to conventional fuel. (Even in winter within less than 2 miles from home, even less in summer).

Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) or Auto gas as it is known is for the moment a cheaper alternative fuel for vehicles well if you intend to keep it for at least 15,000 miles. That is the amount of miles your vehicle will need to do for the conversion to pay for itself.

I had to buy new a new vehicle that I knew that I am going to need to keep it so I decided that I should give it a try. This time family circumstances dictated that I needed a real full size MPV and being that type of size would return only high 20s in terms of mpg. In comparison to the high 30s I was use to for my old car so, I had a need to save some money or get more fuel economy some how for my new vehicle.

For me LPG is the way of achieving this. LPG has some down sides as well as many benefits and for me the benefits well out weigh any of the short comings.

There are three big shortcomings, one that you have to give up / generate some space for the LPG tank(s) and that can be as easy or not as giving up some boot space. However in my case I had it fitted in the place for the spare tyre and now have it in my boot space behind one the rear seats.

The second is that LPG as a fuel has 20% less volume for volume does not contain the same amount of energy as does petrol or diesel.

Finally it is not available in every fuel station but you do get it at other places such as builders merchants e.g. locally Carvers in Wolverhampton.

It costs depending on your vehicle, the type of system and where you have it done some where between £1000 and £2000 just make sure you have it done at a LPGA member garage (the trade body who vets installers and gives insurance backing / guarantees for work they carry out).

Mine cost £1500 including VAT for a multi point system (the latest type).

The good points are LPG costs less than 40p per litre compared to well over 70p for petrol / diesel. A reasonably local place to me charges about 30p so about half the usual price.

- Its good for the Environment, as it is greener than conventional fuels as it burns cleaner less pollutants are given off, it also gives smoother running in comparison to conventional fuels hence should produce less engine wear.
- It is quieter than diesel if you have a car when it switches over to gas.
- It may increase the residual value of your vehicle once it is converted.

The other minor down sides are some insurance companies only the odd one or two (the ill informed ones) see it as an engine modification and will not quote you. This is why it is important to have the conversion done at a LPGA registered garage so check with your current insurer before you do. You should have the system serviced periodically to have new filters fitted and it checked over.

The final question you may have to ask is it safe. Well the gas tank is multiples stronger than your conventional petrol tank and the system is fail safe (failure to safety) when correctly installed.

So for me it will pay for itself within a year as I do over 15,000 miles and then it get almost half price fuel with just the occasional tank of conventional fuel.

Videos

Group Videos are available and free on loan for ALL Associates, Members and Observers to use. They are good as reminders or as an introduction to Advanced driving or riding for the family, friends or colleagues, and help to advertise the Group.

System of Car Control	12 mins	You Only Live Once	13 mins
Old Highway Code	60 mins	Driveability	32 mins
Positive Driving	30 mins	Drive Without Fear	14 mins
Chris Johnson Fund	40 mins	3 Simple Life Savers	14 mins
Safe Motorway Driving	36 mins	Skid Pan	80 mins
Roadcraft	90 mins	New Highway Code	60 mins
Horse Sense for Motorists	11 mins	Top Rider	25 mins
Aggressive & Bad Driving	15 mins	I Just Didn't See You	20 mins
Sharing the Road with Emergency Vehicles	16 mins		

- Available from Garth Jones at Group meetings, please reserve your copy prior to the night.
- These Videos should returned, if at all possible, by the following Group Meeting to Garth or another attending Committee member in his absence please.



If you want to find out what to do: -

- When a skid happens,
- How to control a skid,
- In rear wheel and front wheel drive cars,
- Learn and practice cadence braking and more
- **Contact - Garth Jones** - to see about a session.