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Road safety schemes prevent 372 collisions per year

A Welsh Assembly Government Grant scheme which helps local authorities pay for more road safety projects is now saving an average of ninety people per year from death or serious injury.



A consultants' report to the Assembly Government records that the annual Local Road Safety Grant is helping to pay for road safety works including engineering projects which avert an average 372 serious collisions a year on Welsh roads – which in turn equates to a financial saving to society of more than £32 million a year.

The Minister for Enterprise Innovation and Networks Andrew Davies commenting on the findings said: "The scheme is proving an effective means of saving lives on Welsh roads and I'm heartened by the results it has achieved. We now need to build on this report and share its findings with Local Authorities across Wales to promote best practice and maximise the potential benefits of future investment."

The Local Road Safety Grant was introduced in 2000 in response to concerns over lack of funding for road safety measures, including engineering schemes such as traffic calming, pedestrian crossings and anti-skid surfacing.

The evaluation report prepared for the Assembly Government by consultants Halcrow Group Ltd. analysed latest submissions from local authorities - and evaluated the impact of larger engineering schemes across Wales funded by the Grant scheme between 2000 and 2005. A total of £43 million has been paid to local authorities under the programme for projects that also includes road safety education for children, training measures and general publicity.

The report looked in detail at the results of 390 of the largest engineering schemes – generally costing more than £15,000 - carried out since 2000 at a total cost of £16.1 million. Aggregated together, the schemes demonstrated an annual average reduction in personal injury collisions at the location of the schemes of 58 per cent. The report found that the schemes which achieved the highest reduction in serious collisions were 20-mph limit zones, mini-roundabouts, road visibility improvements and new traffic lights.

During the last financial year, local authorities undertook 240 road safety education, training and publicity activities funded from the grant, around 107 of these aimed at pre-school and primary school age groups.

The Halcrow report has been distributed to local authorities in Wales to promote good practice, and to congratulate them on their effective use of the Grant.



Lyn Morris, Assistant Road Safety Officer in Carmarthenshire County Council's technical services department, has been made chair of the Association of Industrial Road Safety Officers. She said: "It is my national professional association. This is a really prestigious position so I'm very honoured."

"As I am AIRSO's first ever Chair in Wales in the 42 years of its existence, I have decided my mission for my year in post will be to raise the profile of AIRSO in Wales and forge some strong partnerships with various road safety organisations in Wales.

"We held AIRSO's first road safety seminar in Wales last November in Carmarthenshire and are planning a further road safety seminar, a general meeting and a road safety conference in various locations in Wales for this year."

Lyn joined the council's road safety unit in August 2005 when she moved to Carmarthenshire from Essex.

AIRSO was formed in 1965 to provide support for individuals working in the area of road safety; particularly within industry and as a means by which the views among professional colleagues could be exchanged. Membership of AIRSO has since developed and is open to any person whose work is in any way connected with the promotion of road safety. Members represent a wide cross-section of commercial transport, fleet management, driver training, independent and local government road safety organisations, the armed services, the emergency services and enforcement agencies.

For further information log onto: www.airso.org.uk

All Wales Mobile Phone Enforcement Campaign

Gwent Police Assistant Chief Constable Bill Horne launched the All Wales Mobile Phone Enforcement Campaign, at Magor services on Tuesday March 13, 2007 on behalf of the four Welsh Forces.

For two specific weeks all Forces diligently prosecuted drivers using a hand held mobile phone whilst driving. With effect from February 27, 2007 using a mobile phone whilst driving became an endorsable offence and carries a fine of £60 and 3 penalty points.



Making and receiving calls and SMS texting whilst driving is still apparent on Welsh roads. Police treat the problem seriously and will target abusers 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

People wanting to avoid picking up three points for using a hand-held mobile phone while driving should not be deceived into thinking hands-free kits are completely safe to use at the wheel. Even though there is no specific offence relating to hands-free phones, police can check telephone records in careless driving and dangerous driving cases and use them as evidence to show someone has been distracted. It can lead to tougher sentencing because using a mobile phone while driving is likely to be viewed as an "aggravating circumstance" by the courts.

RoSPA's free guidance documents include assistance with mobile phone policies. [click here](#)

Cyclists make a comeback



Cyclists will be allowed back onto Cardiff's busiest shopping street in a bid to get more people out of their cars. The two-year pilot scheme in Queen Street will mean people will be able to cycle there between 4pm and 10am.

A Cardiff council spokesman said the pilot would allow more effective enforcement to be carried out outside the proposed hours, and minimise disruption to visitors in the city centre.



Ministers have decided, following consultation, to introduce a package of measures to improve the way the Driving Standards Agency (DSA) conducts its business so that it can deliver a better service and improve the quality of the assessments it offers.

The changes will also help to improve road safety and ensure that the costs of the services DSA provides will be recovered in a fair and efficient manner. Except where otherwise stated, the changes will take effect from 2 April 2007.

[Read the report in full here](#)

Fitness to drive

Dr Tim Carter, Chief Medical Adviser at the Department for Transport has written *Fitness to Drive: A Guide for Health Professionals - an essential resource for all health professionals to help them give valid advice on fitness to drive.*



Although the book is written primarily for health professionals it is also aimed at providing valuable information to others concerned with health and fitness to drive, including road safety advisors, insurers, fleet managers and driving instructors. Drivers with health problems who want to understand the relevance of their condition to driving and how it may be assessed could also find this book useful.

Fitness to Drive: A Guide for Health Professionals has been endorsed by the British Medical Association and its Board of Professional Activities and Board of Science, and is available for £17.95. Website: www.rsmppress.co.uk

Ladyman unveils driver testing and training revamp



A fundamental overhaul of driver training and testing was confirmed by Road Safety Minister Dr Stephen Ladyman at the RoSPA Road Safety Congress in February. For the first time, new parameters for educating young people about safe driving skills were set out, with a consultation expected later in the year.

The publication of the Three Year Review of Road Safety Strategy recommends a new approach to educating young people about road safety and teaching them to drive, which will include the introduction of a new competency and knowledge framework, a modern training syllabus and new assessment criteria.

Dr Ladyman said: "Driving instructors currently do a very good job, but the systems they are required to operate within no longer reflect the demands of our modern world. Educating young drivers is a serious issue. We know that, of the fatal accidents where blame could be assigned, young drivers were nearly 12 times more likely to be at fault than older drivers.

"Although the Driving Standards Agency (DSA) has made many important changes over the past few years, we must change perceptions about driving and road safety. The only way to achieve this is to educate young people in a different way about the dangers of driving badly, and so positively influence their long-term behaviour and habits. And that means introducing a more rigorous system of instruction and testing.

"Our Three Year Review sets out the parameters of what we want to achieve and I am pleased the DSA is making good progress on providing the detail of how we will go about this."

[Second Review of the Government's Road Safety Strategy](#)



ROADTest - the RoSPA Occupational Advanced Driving Test, a unique driving and BTEC accredited qualification jointly developed and delivered by both RoSPA and DriveTech (UK) Limited, is the first advanced driving test designed purely for business drivers.



Company car and van drivers have accident rates 35 to 50 per cent higher than private drivers. The test is designed to reduce the number of crashes involving people on the road for work purposes as advanced drivers have been shown to be about 25 per cent less likely to crash.

Click on the link to download the leaflet: [ROADTest](#)

New road safety body launched

The work of the AA Motoring Trust has been taken over by a new body, the IAM Motoring Trust.



The trust will be the research and advocacy arm of the Institute of Advanced Motorists and has funding in place for the next five years. It has announced a programme of policy research aimed at protecting and promoting the interests of all road users, and said it will contribute "vigorously" to the national transport policy debate.

Further information can be found at: www.iamtrust.org.uk

Criminal records check for driving instructors



Criminal record checks on driving instructors have begun in order to increase the safety of vulnerable learner drivers.

Driving Standards Agency's Chief Executive Rosemary Thew said the introduction of criminal checks reinforced the rule that instructors should be 'fit and proper' people to spend time alone with teenagers.

"Most driving instruction takes place on a one-to-one basis in a car. Often the driver is still a teenager. We feel it is appropriate that instructors undergo criminal history checks in the same way as other professionals who work with young people. This will give the public an assurance on safety, and further professionalize the driving instructor industry," she said.

From 12 March anyone applying to become an instructor will need a criminal record disclosure. Those already on the DSA's Approved Driving Instructor Register will also be checked over the next two years.

Further information is also available on the DSA Criminal Record Check Information line on 0115 901 2801.

Child road safety strategy 2007

This newly published strategy considers those areas that are a priority for further action, including where less progress towards the target have been made. The main part of this strategy covers the areas for which DfT is responsible. It also summarises the position in Scotland and Wales.



The strategy looks at measures to improve child road safety under six different themes. These are education, training and lifelong learning; publicity; highway engineering, environment and planning; vehicle engineering and secondary safety; legislation and enforcement; and school journeys. Overarching issues that affect them all and that need to be taken into account when taking forward the actions, include regeneration and partnership working.

[Child Road Safety Strategy 2007](#)

Causing death by dangerous driving offences



The [Sentencing Advisory Panel](#) is consulting on sentencing for a range of death by dangerous driving offences. The consultation will be used to inform the Panel's advice to the Sentencing Guidelines Council.

This particularly relevant as the Road Safety Act 2006 creates two completely new offences - causing death by careless or inconsiderate driving (maximum penalty 5 years' imprisonment) and causing death by driving: unlicensed, disqualified or uninsured driver (maximum penalty 2 years' imprisonment). The deadline for submissions is 19 April.

 [Consultation paper on causing death by driving offences](#)

TyreSafe



TyreSafe

TyreSafe is the new name for the Tyre Industry Council, a not for profit non commercial organisation with the responsibility of raising awareness of the dangers of defective and worn tyres.

The organisation and its activities has been credited with reducing the number of defective tyres in the UK over the past 16 years from 20% to 12% today. Their website can be found at www.tyresafe.org.uk

The First United Nations Global Road Safety Week

The theme for the Week will be "young road users" - as young people constitute a major group at risk of death, injury and disability on the road. While the focus is on young road users, it is hoped that



**ROAD SAFETY
IS NO ACCIDENT**

the actions resulting from the Week will benefit road users of all ages. During the course of the Week which will be held from **23-29 April 2007**, it is envisaged that a large number of local, national and international events will be hosted all over the world. Many partners will participate in these events including governments, United Nations agencies, nongovernmental organisations and the private sector.

The main objectives of this First United Nations Global Road Safety Week 2007 are to:

- Raise awareness about the societal impact of road traffic injuries, highlighting the risks for young road users.
- Promote action around key factors, which have a major impact on preventing road traffic injuries: helmets, seat-belts, drink driving, speeding and infrastructure.

The slogan for the Week, "Road Safety is No Accident", highlights the fact that road safety happens not by accident, but through the deliberate efforts on the part of many individuals and many sectors of society.

[Click here for more information](#)

Contact the Editor

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