



Working together to eliminate road death and serious injuries

**Bringing you important news for business drivers      AUGUST 2009**

### **CLOSE CALL**



A recent poll of 14,500 AA members has revealed that tailgating is the driving habit most irritating to other road users. Although so-called 'close following' is officially cited as a contributory cause in 16 % of motorway collisions, the behaviour is more difficult to identify on minor roads but is thought to be a serious factor in crashes in these circumstances too.

AA President Edmund King commented: "Survey respondents were spot on to highlight their irritation with tailgaters. Official data confirms that, leaving pure human error aside, tailgaters fall just behind 'loss of control' as the major cause of crashes."

As any of our customers who have attended a DriveTech practical training course will know, a thinking, responsible driver will always maintain a cushion of space around his or her vehicle, no matter what the circumstances.

### **BACK TO SCHOOL?**



According to car importer Kia Motors UK, most experienced drivers would fail their UK driving test if they ever had to go through one again....unless of course they had recently been on a DriveTech course!

50% of volunteers put through their paces again failed a mock test carried out by an examiner from a well known national driving school brand. Interestingly the top five failure points were:

- undue hesitation at junctions
- speeding (particularly in urban areas)
- incorrect positioning on the road

- driving too close to the vehicle in front
- incorrect signalling at junctions

## CAMERA FANS



It appears that 17-24 olds have a more positive attitude to safety cameras than more experienced, mature road users. The Institute of Advanced Motorists has collated opinions over a ten year period and there is clearly a pattern emerging.

“Young people don’t tend to drive as frequently or as far as the average driver, and they have also grown up in a surveillance society, which could explain why they show less objection to safety cameras” said Neil Greig, Director of Research and Policy at the IAM. He continues, “Older people are more likely to resent being monitored in this way.”

The research also revealed that approval ratings for safety cameras had dropped from 92% in 1999 to 75% in 2009, according to the IAM because “the firm belief that safety cameras are primarily for raising revenue.”

## THE EYES HAVE IT



An award-winning crash anticipation system, which has been recently approved by both GM and Volvo, could be a useful aid for high risk business drivers.

The Mobileye Advanced Warning System predicts a crash by constantly analysing computer vision footage of the road ahead. In 80% of crashes it is inattention during the three crucial seconds prior to impact that count and the system can analyse a scenario, predict an incident and simultaneously intervene during this period to avert disaster.

For further information see [www.eyedrivesystems.com](http://www.eyedrivesystems.com)

## RELIANCE ON RUBBER



Tyres are a vital piece of safety kit. On the average car, the four tyre contact patches, each little bigger than the sole of your shoe, are the only things in contact with the road and therefore giving you the vital grip you need to stay safe in all weather conditions.

Sadly, many employees, particularly if they’re driving a vehicle owned by someone else, believe these dirty black round things aren’t their problem but of course, as the driver, they are. Inflation pressures and tread depth should be checked regularly (the correct pressures will either be on the driver door shut or in the vehicle handbook), as should the condition of the tyre outer sidewalls.

If drivers are lax with the checks and are caught with defective tyres the law is unforgiving - the fine for **each** defective tyre is £1000, so it's not worth the risk under any circumstances.

A useful source of information on the maintenance of tyres is the Tyresafe website, which has just added three new sections specifically designed for fleet managers of cars, vans and trucks. See [www.tyresafe.org](http://www.tyresafe.org) for further information.

## CONFERENCE CALL



The respected trade body the Institute of Road Transport Engineers is holding a one day conference to discuss the latest thinking and developments in commercial vehicle fuel economy and anyone with an interest in managing the fuel economy of vans, trucks, buses and coaches are being encouraged to attend.

It takes place on September 22 at the Heritage Motor Centre at Gaydon in Warwickshire and costs £95 + vat per delegate (IRTE members £75 + vat). Further information can be obtained from Nicolas Edwards on 020 7630 1111 or [nicholas.edwards@soe.org.uk](mailto:nicholas.edwards@soe.org.uk)

## RUN INS WITH THE LAW



There have been a number of transport-related incidents recently resulting in substantial fines for companies responsible for vehicle fleets. We realise most of our readers are aware of their duties in law but there may be just a few who still think that health and safety compliance can be pushed down the agenda in these financially-challenging times, so hopefully these tales will help to focus the mind:

John Stacey and Sons were fined £60,000 plus £29,061 costs at Basingstoke Magistrates Court after being prosecuted for breaches of the 1974 Health & Safety at Work Act and 1999 Management of Health and Safety at Work Act. The company did not have sufficiently robust policies and procedures in place to prevent an employee being run over and crushed by a shovel loader driven by one of his workmates.

Concorde Logistics have been fined a total of £133,000 for two breaches of the 1974 Health & Safety at Work Act following the death of a member of the public as a result of being run over in a yard at Milton Keynes whilst waiting to collect a parcel.

A Polish truck driver, employed by Blandford-based haulage company Translact, killed a couple in a Hampshire road crash and was subsequently jailed for four years for causing death by dangerous driving. The directors of the company employing him were then indicted under the Corporate Manslaughter Act and only narrowly missed a punitive fine as a result of a technicality concerning the linkage of evidence. However the three directors are now awaiting sentence

following charges successfully brought under several breaches of the 1974 Health & Safety at Work Act.

## **YOUR VIEWS SOUGHT**



The government has launched a review of daily driving and duty limits for light commercial vans under 3.5 tonnes, which includes NHS and publicly-owned medical vehicles, vehicles used by local authority services for the elderly and disabled, milk delivery vehicles, utilities and road maintenance vehicles, breakdown trucks and charity work vehicles.

You can express your views on how the regulations should be modified by going to [www.dft.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.dft.gov.uk/consultations) but you will need to do it before the consultation closes on October 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Issued by the DriveTech Communications Department.**  
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