



Behind the Wheel

"The Newsletter for Drivers in Wales"

Spring 2015

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Group 'Safie' March Launch of UK Campaign To Support Global Road Safety Week

The UK campaign to support UN Global Road Safety Week (GRSW) 2015 was officially launched on



11th March at the RoSPA Road Safety Conference in Birmingham, where delegates posed for a 'safie' to show their support for the #SaveKidsLives campaign.

The focus for Global Road Safety Week (4-10 May 2015) is child road safety. Using the slogan [#SaveKidsLives](#), the UN Road Safety Collaboration campaign is seeking to highlight the plight of children on the world's roads and generate action to better ensure their safety.

Here in the UK, a comprehensive programme of activities and resources are being prepared by an alliance of road safety organisations headed by Road Safety GB.

Honor Byford, chair of the UK GRSW National Organising Committee, and chair of Road Safety GB, told delegates at the RoSPA Conference that GRSW is a milestone event on the global road safety calendar which gives added impetus to the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety (2011-2020) and its goal of saving five million lives. Find out more at www.roadsafetygb.org.uk

Tougher Penalties for Drivers

Two new offences of causing death by driving while disqualified and causing serious injury by driving while disqualified have come into force this month.

The current maximum sentence faced by a driver who causes death while driving when disqualified is two years imprisonment, and there is no specific offence of causing serious injury by driving while disqualified. From 13 April 2015 disqualified drivers will face up to 10 years in prison if they cause death and up to four years imprisonment if they cause serious injuries.

Drivers Warned About Penalties For Failing To Stop For Lollipop Patrols

Officers are reminding motorists who fail to stop for the lollipop that they face hefty penalties following a reported rise in incidents by a Bridgend school over the last few months.



Police said incidents outside Cwmfelin Primary School, Bridgend, had increased over recent months. There had also been verbal abuse at those carrying out the controls.

South Wales Police PSCO Julie Banks said: "Many drivers may not be aware of what the four positions of the lollipop stick actually mean. The position that the lollipop stick is held at is an indication of the intention of the patrol officer".

"The message is clear. Stop means Stop. There is no point taking risks for the sake of a few seconds."



Ministers' Cars to Be Swapped For Electric Vehicles In Green Drive



Government ministers will have their first taste of greener driving soon, with the first of a new fleet of electric vehicles to replace older fuel-guzzling ministerial cars.

The replacement is part of [a £5m investment in the government's fleet of vehicles](#) that will result in electric cars and vans being used more widely across the public sector.

However, the initial roll-out will be small with just 140 low emissions vehicles, 64 of which will be 100% electric. Only four ministerial cars will be being replaced in the first round.

Baroness Kramer, transport minister, said the roll-out was "an important step" that would save money on fuel and help to improve air quality and tackle climate change, with lower greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants. Many of the vehicles, including the ministerial cars, will be Nissan Leaf models, which are 100% electric and built in the UK.

Danny Alexander, chief secretary to the Treasury, who recently launched a government prize worth £10m for the development of a new electric battery, said: "This is the right thing to do for both the environment and the taxpayer."

The initial £5m investment is part of a broader £500m package of measures to promote ultra low-emission vehicles.

Kramer said the government's aim was to demonstrate the usefulness of an electric vehicle fleet. The government announcement comes as a new report suggested that a mass switch to electric cars could cut the UK's oil imports 40% by 2030.

Take-up of electric vehicles has been slow, in part because of a lack of charging infrastructure, and because of the limited range of the vehicles. But the latter has improved and charging points are now being built by councils and in public places such as supermarket car-parks.

However, the cars are still more expensive to buy than petrol and diesel-driven vehicles, and lower oil prices mean there is less relative advantage in fuel costs at present.

Huge New Competition To Help Make Motorcyclists Safer In Wales

A funding pot of £510,000 is available for the development of innovative technologies that will help to cut motorcycle casualties in Wales.

Funded by the Welsh Government and Innovate UK, and jointly run by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) Wales, the Innovation in Reducing Motorcyclist Casualties in Wales project is a new national competition.

It aims to identify projects that can help the Welsh Government to reduce the number of motorcyclists killed or seriously injured on the country's roads, in particular accidents occurring at junctions. Organisations are invited to compete for a share of the £510,000 in funding for prototype development and demonstration of innovative technologies.



The challenge will be to develop an effective intervention or technological feature that provides demonstrable improvements in the safety of motorcyclists, either by reducing the likelihood of a collision occurring, or by lessening the impact of a collision. The project provides an exciting opportunity to play a part in helping the Welsh Government to reduce the number of motorcyclists killed or seriously injured on Welsh roads.

The competition has proved very popular and the judging process has now started.

Revamp of ORSA Website

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) has launched its revamped Occupational Road Safety Alliance (ORSA) website with updated features and information for people who drive for work.

The ORSA website - <http://www.orsa.org.uk> - has been given a facelift with a fresh new look and design with funding from the Department for Transport (DfT).



The new site provides practical support in the form of information, advice and direct links to a wide range of free resources, advice, case studies and research evidence to help employers understand and manage the risks faced, and created, by their staff when driving as part of their work.

It is also compatible with mobile devices and will meet the latest web standards, providing an improved user experience.

Kevin Clinton, head of road safety at RoSPA, said: "We are delighted to be launching the new-look ORSA website. It has been completely re-designed and updated to provide advice, information, guidance and resources to help keep individuals who drive for work safe on the road.

"About a third of deaths on the road involve someone driving for work, which is why it is so important to highlight and promote occupational road safety. We hope our new-look website will encourage organisations to effectively manage the risks faced by their employees while driving for work."

The ORSA website was first launched in 2004 to facilitate and promote the work of the alliance. ORSA, formed in 2002, brings together employers, trade unions, local authorities, police forces, safety organisations and professional and trade associations.

It aims to raise awareness of work related road safety and to encourage businesses to manage at-work road risk more effectively.



80th Anniversary Of The Driving Test

This year marks 80 years since the driving test was first introduced in the UK.

Voluntary driving tests were brought in on 16 March 1935 by the Road Traffic Act, 1934, to avoid a rush of candidates when the test became compulsory on 1st June 1935. Mr J Beene was the first person to pass his driving test, at a cost of 7/ 6d (37.5p).

Driving tests were then suspended on 2 September 1939 for the duration of World War Two. During the war, examiners were redeployed to traffic duties and supervision of fuel rationing. Testing resumed on 1 November 1946.

Since 1935 more than 46 million tests have been taken.



Legal And Illegal Drugs

Did you know? As well as ILLEGAL drugs, it's illegal in England and Wales to drive with LEGAL drugs in your body if it impairs your driving.

It's an offence to drive if you have over the specified limits of certain drugs in your blood and you haven't been prescribed them.

Talk to your doctor about whether you should drive if you've been prescribed any of the following drugs:

Clonazepam
Diazepam
Flunitrazepam
Lorazepam
Methadone
Morphine or opiate and opioid-based drugs
Oxazepam
Temazepam

Penalties for drug driving

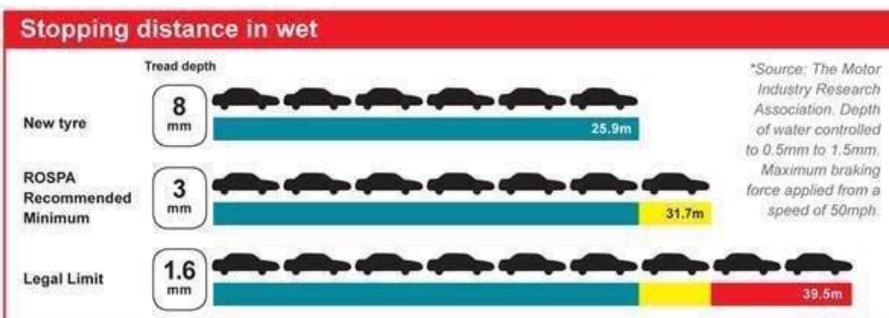
If you're convicted of drug driving you'll get:

- a minimum 1 year driving ban
- an unlimited fine
- up to 6 months in prison
- a criminal record



Your driving licence will also show you've been convicted for drug driving. This will last for 11 years.

Research Shows Worn Tyres Can Significantly Increase Stopping Distances In The Wet



Independent research performed by the Motor Industry Research Association (MIRA) has provided convincing new evidence that worn tyres significantly increase the chances of having an accident on wet roads by increasing the stopping distance.

The test results showed that significant increases in stopping distance began to appear when the tyre was worn down to

3mm. Although the legal minimum UK tread depth is only 1.6mm, this new research showed that tyres with a 3mm tread had a 25% better performance than those at 1.6mm in wet conditions.

Any Finally...

If you're intending to tow a caravan this summer, just make sure you choose a suitable car...



The Camping and Caravanning Club recommend making the following checks:

1. What is the car's kerbweight?
2. What is the caravan's Maximum Technically Permissible Laden Mass (MTPLM)?
3. Is the MTPLM less than 85 per cent of the kerbweight?
(If no – go to question 4. If yes – go to question 5)
4. Is the MTPLM less than the kerbweight? Those who are used to towing may be confident to tow a heavier combination such as this.
(If so, go to question 5)
5. Is the MTPLM less than the towing limit of the car?
6. Is the car's towball limit suitable for the noseweight of the caravan?
7. Does my driving licence permit me to drive a combination such as this?

Contact the Compiler

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