

## **Mobile Phones and Driving**

The IAM welcomed the banning of hand held mobile phones. Scientific research clearly demonstrates that a driver cannot safely control a car and make or take phone calls at the same time. Deaths and injury caused when a driver is distracted by a mobile phone are completely avoidable and a senseless waste of life.

The number of casualties in crashes where a driver was using a mobile phone is difficult to establish. But, research in simulators has shown drivers who use hands-free phones are up to four times more likely to be involved in a crash. Texting or smartphone use whilst driving reduces reaction times by up to 35%. Using a phone causes physical, visual, mental and auditory distractions, leading to significantly slower reaction times. Recent IAM research shows it can be more distracting than driving with alcohol or cannabis in your system. Conversations on hands-free mobile phones also distract and that is why our advice is to switch off before you drive off.

### **IAM Recommendations**

- As technology constantly changes continued education campaigns are required to reinforce and clarify the current laws
- Insurance companies should increase the premiums of those caught using a hand held phone or who have other phone related convictions
- The IAM would like to see mobile phone, car makers and technology companies developing new products that reduce or remove completely the potential for phone use when a vehicle is in motion
- The IAM has no objection to increasing the fines and points tally for mobile phone use but the key is sustained high profile police enforcement of the current laws
- As part of their safety management policy companies should be encouraged to take a 'zero tolerance' approach to phone use when driving on business
- Those companies who actively force drivers to use mobiles when in motion should be prosecuted under corporate manslaughter or health and safety laws
- Social media and app providers should allocate part of their profits to road safety campaigns and issue frequent warnings about the dangers of using their products whilst driving

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