

# Evaluation of preparation for the IAM Advanced Driving Test

Summary Report: Phase 1

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Report prepared for the IAM by

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## 1 Introduction

We know that driver or rider error causes the vast majority of road accidents, carelessness and negligence on the road costs lives. The IAM (Institute of Advanced Motorists) aims to reduce avoidable accidents by improving the awareness and skills of road users.

Based on police driver training, the IAM course teaches safe car control. While aiming to reduce accidents and casualties, the advanced test is not exclusively about safety, it also encourages the driver to feel confident on the road, to make good progress, and to get greater enjoyment from the experience.

Over 400,000 people have taken the advanced test and we currently have over 100,000 active IAM members. Although we receive regular feedback from our members and groups, we wanted to know more about what motivates people to take the advanced test and how it affects people's driving habits. Do advanced drivers consider themselves safer? Does the IAM have a long-term impact?

Building on a previous study by Brunel University<sup>1</sup>, we commissioned Jean Hopkin Research Services and Independent Social Research to carry out an 'Evaluation of Preparation for the IAM Advanced Driving Test'. It shows that drivers who prepare for the advanced driving test notice increased skills, awareness and control. All demographic groups noticed positive changes in their driving habits. The study also shows that the advanced test has long lasting positive effects on attitudes to safe driving. We will use the findings in this report to promote the benefits of advanced driving and to continue improving how the IAM's delivers the advanced test.

This report summarises the findings from Jean Hopkin's main report, which is available on request.

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<sup>1</sup> Walker, G, Stanton N, Kazi T and Young M (2006). Evaluating the Effectiveness of IAM Driver Coaching – Executive Summary. Brunel University and Institute of Advanced Motorists, London.

## 1.1 Objectives

This is a report of research into the impact on car drivers of preparing for the IAM advanced test. The objectives were to:

- Examine the impact of the test preparation on driver safety and attitudes to safe driving;
- Identify impacts that could be used by the IAM to promote wider participation.
- Identify any differences between groups of drivers in terms of impact;
- Explore the extent to which impacts are long-lasting.

## 1.2 Background

The study complements previous work by Brunel University which assessed the impacts of IAM advanced driving preparation on a small group of drivers<sup>2</sup>. (Walker et al. 2006). The study found that IAM coaching significantly improved drivers' attitudes, skills and knowledge; nine key areas of driver behaviour were found to have improved in a systematic way. In contrast, a comparable group of drivers who received no coaching were found to perform erratically.

As a further step towards evaluating the effectiveness of the IAM advanced driver test preparation, this project was commissioned to examine the effects on attitudes, self-reported behaviour and perceived impacts on driving among a large sample of drivers who had been through the process of preparing for the IAM advanced driving test.

## 1.3 IAM advanced driving

Recommended preparation for the IAM advanced driving test is through a series of 'observed drives' (often over several months) accompanied by an expert IAM observer from a local IAM group ( a 'group observer'). Drivers also study the IAM manual which contains detailed advice on the topics examined in the advanced test. The test itself involves an independent assessment of driving by a police-trained advanced driver, in which the examiner looks for *"a safe, systematic, smooth, economic and progressive drive with a balance of restraint and courtesy shown throughout"*.

## 1.4 The research

The research involved an on-line survey with around 2,500 IAM members who had been driving for at least six months since passing the advanced test for car drivers. A small number of qualitative follow-up discussions with survey respondents provided further insights into the findings.<sup>3 4</sup>

Questions in the on-line survey were made up almost exclusively of pre-coded (closed) questions about:

- Driver behaviour and attitudes and perceived changes in these

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<sup>2</sup> Participants took part in observed drives and were then asked to complete a questionnaire about driving attitudes and behaviour.

<sup>3</sup> The on-line survey was sent in the autumn of 2011 to an issued sample of 16,892. The follow-up discussions involved 19 of these respondents, including men, women, older and younger drivers and those driving a high mileage. The majority of qualitative research respondents had done the test preparation within the past 5 years; only one was active in IAM as an observer.

<sup>4</sup> A second (future) phase is expected to collect comparative data from a sample of drivers who have not undertaken the preparation.

- Perceived longevity of (positive) impacts
- Driver 'compliance' with IAM teaching and methods.

The questionnaire content was informed by discussions with the IAM and various IAM publications (e.g. the manual), preparatory in-depth interviews and a large-scale pilot survey among IAM members. The main sections of the questionnaire included:

- Reasons for preparing for the IAM advanced driver test and involvement with the IAM
- Perceived driving style and changes in driving as a result of preparing for the IAM test
- Attitudes to safety - focusing on reported beliefs about the role of drivers vs. 'external' factors in the causes of accidents
- Reported driving behaviour – focusing on core areas in the IAM test preparation
- Reported changes in driving resulting from preparing for the IAM test (qualitative information based on open question)
- Views on whether preparing for the IAM test had a lasting effect on aspects of driving
- Views on the impact and use of IPSGA<sup>5</sup>
- General feedback on IAM advanced driving
- Driving experience, usual driving patterns and involvement in accidents
- Experience of different types of training for qualified drivers<sup>6</sup>

The qualitative sessions with respondents concentrated on three main topic areas:

- How they found out about the test preparation, and signing up
- Impact of the preparation
- Views on the content and delivery.

Respondents also had views to offer about increasing take up and the IAM 'brand'; these are reported elsewhere.

## **1.5 Structure of the report**

This report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 outlines respondent characteristics and the reasons people gave for signing up for the IAM test preparation;
- Section 4 describes the main perceived impacts of preparing for the test;
- Section 5 examines the extent to which impacts were perceived to be long lasting;
- Section 5 analyses the longevity of impacts by measuring the extent of deterioration in impacts between drivers who had passed the IAM test recently and those who had passed some years previously;
- Section 6 provides an overall summary and conclusions.

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<sup>5</sup> Information, Position, Speed, Gears, Accelerate: the acronym for the IAM 'system' of advanced driving.

<sup>6</sup> The questionnaire also included classificatory questions on age, gender, employment status, area and region of residence and some questions designed to test whether answers were influenced by 'social desirability bias'.

Statistical tables showing the key results are contained in Section 7.

## **2 The respondents and their reasons for taking the IAM test**

### **2.1 Respondent profile**

The profile of the 2,500 IAM members who responded to the online survey is as follows:

- Predominantly male.
- Approximately half were over the age of 50 and few were under 30.
- Almost two-thirds were working and one-third were retired.
- All regions of England and all countries in the UK were represented, as well as rural and urban areas.
- The majority of respondents had been driving since their late teens or early twenties.
- Most respondents had passed the IAM test within the past 15 years (9% had passed more than 15 years previously).
- A large proportion (70%) usually drove a car and no other motor vehicles, but almost a quarter also drove a van and 6% drove a bus or HGV.
- The average mileage driven by respondents in the previous 12 months was 15,000; 12,400 by car; this is about twice the national average (5,900 miles recorded by car or van by all drivers in Great Britain in 2010<sup>7</sup>).
- A substantial minority of respondents were involved with the IAM in some way: 12% were group observers, 6% were committee members and almost 20% attend group meetings.
- 18% reported that they had been involved in an accident as a driver in the past three years; most of these were reported as minor bumps and scrapes. Taking account of the higher than average mileage driven by the respondents, IAM drivers in this survey were less likely than average to report being involved in an accident (14% of drivers in the National Travel Survey reported being in an accident as a car occupant – not necessarily a driver – in the past three years).
- In addition to the IAM, just over half had participated in post-licence driver training; skid training, driving other vehicles and driving for work were the most common, but some had taken other advanced training and some had trained as a driving instructor.

### **2.2 Reasons for signing up for the IAM test**

Respondents were asked which of a list of reasons<sup>8</sup> for preparing for the IAM test applied to them (see Table 1).

- The most commonly cited reasons were to improve my general standard of driving (80%), and to become a safer driver (73%).
- About half of respondents cited achievement/challenge, eradicating bad habits, reducing accident risk and refreshing driving skills as reasons.
- About a third of people selected reasons concerned with reassurance, demonstrating high standards and enjoying driving more.

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<sup>7</sup> National Travel Survey

<sup>8</sup> Identified during the preparatory in-depth interviews with IAM members.

- About a quarter selected becoming more confident and obtaining cheaper insurance.
- Between 10% and 20% selected fuel efficiency, influencing others and job-related reasons.

There were few differences between men and women in relation to the most commonly reported reasons, but:

- Women were more likely than men to say they had wanted to become more confident (42% of women and 22% of men) and to improve fuel efficiency (21% of women and 15% of men).
- Men were more likely than women to mention being able to demonstrate a high standard of driving to others (38% of men and 32% of women), obtaining cheaper insurance (24% of men and 19% of women) and undertaking the preparation because of their job (12% of men, 8% of women).

Some of the reasons given for preparing for the test varied depending how old drivers were when they took the test:

- Perhaps unsurprisingly, younger respondents were more likely to give reasons associated with issues facing young drivers particularly, for example: to obtain cheaper insurance, demonstrate a high standard of driving or reduce the risk of being involved in an accident.
- Those who were older when they passed the test were more likely to give reasons linked with experience, age, and the passage of time: eradicating bad habits, refreshing skills and reassurance of competence or fitness to drive.

The qualitative research endorsed the key survey findings and there were some additional notable differences between the men and women who took part:

- The men were more likely than the women to be keen drivers, driving for pleasure, and to have held long-term ambitions to do the preparation ‘for its own sake’:

*I can't remember when I didn't know about IAM, my father was very keen on road safety.*

*I was weaned on petrol, always taking cars apart, driving as a hobby. Yes it was that community.*

*It was always one of those things, you thought 'I must get round to doing that'.*

- Women respondents in the qualitative survey were more likely never to have heard of the IAM until someone told them about it just before they signed up, and they were more likely to have signed up for practical reasons associated with key events such as near accidents, or having grandchildren or because their low driving confidence was causing problems.<sup>9</sup>

### **3 Perceived impacts of preparing for the IAM test**

Perceived impacts of preparing for the IAM test were elicited through three types of survey question administered on-line:

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<sup>9</sup> Although male respondents also talked about risk reduction and driving safely with children, being a better driver for its own sake was often the highest priority.

- An open question in which respondents *unprompted and in their own words*, described how they felt preparing for the IAM advanced driving test had changed them as a driver;
- Two closed questions, that asked respondents first to rate their driving style in terms of a number of given dimensions (e.g. ‘safe’, ‘careful’, decisive’) and then to say for each dimension how, if at all, they changed as a result of the IAM preparation;
- A question asking about the extent to which, if at all, respondents felt that the IAM had increased their enjoyment of driving.

### 3.1 Unprompted responses: scale and types of impact

Almost all respondents answered this question, providing descriptions of over 6,300 different 'effects' of preparing for the IAM test.

#### Scale of impacts

Some people felt that preparing for the test had been transformative; that their driving and their *experience* of driving had been completely changed:

*Before preparing for the advanced driving test I used to dread every journey .... I thought that the enjoyment of driving was a thing of the past until the IAM came to the rescue... I now look forward to my car journeys ... due to the IAM. [Male in his 50s, passed IAM test in 2004]*

At the other extreme were respondents who felt that the preparation had added very little to their driving; for example some experienced drivers who undergone the preparation for reasons connected with their job. Nonetheless, many in this category said the preparation was enjoyable – even ‘fun’ – or said they found it reassuring, because it confirmed that they were already driving well, to a high standard:

*I don't want my responses about it not having much effect on me to seem like the process is not useful - it is useful and I think the course is good. It didn't have a great deal of effect on my because I had already had some advanced training so kind of knew it all already. If I was an 'average driver' beforehand, it would have made more difference to my driving and therefore my answers would be more favourable. [Man in his 20s, IAM test 2009]*

#### Main types of impact

The impacts reported by respondents were grouped into eight main categories as follows:

Effect	Respondents %
Improved general approach	67
Safer	43
Improved driving experience	24
Improved vehicle handling	16
General improved skills	17
Better use of road space, signs and markings	14
Skills refreshment and validation	14
Negative/No impact	5

#### Improved general approach

This category – improved general approach – made up 42% of all effects described by survey respondents and covered the following kinds of effect:



<b>Improved general approach effects</b>	<b>Respondents</b>
	<b>%</b>
Better observation/ awareness/ concentration/ attentiveness	40
More appropriate speed/ judgement and control of speed/ progress/ smoothness	23
Consideration of/ awareness of other road users	21
Better anticipation and planning of manoeuvres	11
Using system/systematic approach (possibly citing IPSGA)	11
Better journey planning	1

The most common effects under this heading related to ‘Better observation/ awareness/ concentration/ attentiveness’, for example:

*Increased my focus ... Raised my vision and demonstrated quite significant defects in my "natural" level of observation and focus. [Man in his 40s, IAM test 2001]*

*The input made me think a lot more about what I was doing and I became aware that I was driving each time I got in the car. [Man in his 60s, IAM test 2007]*

Section 3.2 will show that more than three-quarters of drivers thought their driving had become more attentive<sup>10</sup> and Section 4.1 will show that 90% of drivers agreed that there had been a lasting effect on ‘greater awareness of other road users’ while 78% agreed that ‘more tolerant and aware of the behaviour of other road users’ was a lasting effect.

Unprompted answers also often indicated that respondents felt the IAM preparation had addressed a tendency to drive on “autopilot”:

*It made me think in more detail about the whole concept of driving, rather than just doing things automatically. It also made me think more about driving defensively, for example, looking round a junction rather than just relying on traffic lights. [Man in his 50s, IAM test 1997]*

Section 4.1 will show that 85% agreed that there had been a lasting effect in terms of ‘more conscious, less automatic driving’. Many referred to being more forward looking – physically and psychologically.

Also important under the heading of ‘improved general approach’ was speed and attitudes to speed. Some respondents simply said that the IAM preparation meant they now drove appropriately slower than they used to. Some still drive fast, but with greater awareness:

*I am now more careful when entering built-up areas, keeping to speed limits, going slower than the speed limit in the vicinity of schools when children are around. [Man in his 60s, IAM test 2008]*

*I am still a fast driver and I'll admit, like many others, I drive above the speed limit, especially on motorways, but only when the conditions are such that it is safe to do so. [Man in his 50s, IAM test 2005]*

Section 3.2 will show that a quarter of drivers felt that since the IAM preparation they now drove less fast than before, and 16% felt that they drove faster.

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<sup>10</sup> In response to questions about specific aspects of driving style.

Others referred to becoming more aware of speed limits and some commented on adjusting their speed to take account of the road and driving conditions, for example slowing before bends.

Many said they felt they now made better 'progress' on the road; another question found that 88% of drivers agreed that they had experienced a lasting effect on smoother driving or better progress (see Section 4.1). One respondent described this effect as:

*Progress, and confidence to drive faster and more efficiently within limits. [Male in his 60s, passed IAM test in 2002]*

Unprompted responses relating to 'Consideration of/ awareness of other road users' often mentioned being more considerate, having more empathy, and being more tolerant and aware of other road users and better able to anticipate their behaviour:

*Improved attitude to ... all other road users, including pedestrians - much more patient. [Man in his 60s, IAM test 2008]*

*...Adjusting your own driving to suit (other road users), being able to predict what they are going to do, before they even know. [Man in his 40s IAM test 2005]*

Section 3.2 will show that half of drivers felt that since the IAM preparation their driving was more considerate and half said it was more tolerant. Some answers reflected a sense of being more positive and helpful towards others and some an increased defensive awareness of other road users as potential hazards.

'Better anticipation and planning of manoeuvres' covered answers that suggested respondents felt they were more aware and in control of their own actions:

*Preparing for manoeuvres ahead, i.e. junctions, roundabouts, etc. made me more aware of how to drive my car safely. [Woman in her 70s, IAM test 1998]*

Many also simply referred succinctly to better "planning" when driving:

*...Plan my whole driving strategy from the horizon back to me, rather than the other way round as I used to. [Woman in her 60s, IAM test 1996]*

Section 4.1 will show that 90% agreed that they had experienced a lasting effect on planning and anticipation.

'Using system/ systematic approach (including IPSGA)' includes the comments of respondents who simply said that they took a more systematic approach, or used IPSGA. Others referred to "IAM techniques", or – for instance - to their employment of running commentary techniques while driving. All conveyed consciousness of having acquired a set of driving tools or concepts that remained useful to them:

*It gave a structure to my driving [Man in his 60s, IAM test 1978]*

*Most of my driving is done without passengers and I still talk myself through my journey [Woman in her 70s, IAM test 2005]*

A few respondents' remarks were coded under 'Better journey planning'. These usually related to carrying out recommended checks ("cockpit checks") on the car and to general planning such as thinking through the route and rest stops etc.

## Safe

20% (1275) of all effects mentioned unprompted by respondents fell into the 'safe' category, distributed as follows:

Safety effects	Respondents
	%
Better hazard perception/ anticipation of hazards and risks	25
Generally more careful/more cautious/more responsible/ safer/ fewer risks	17
Sensitivity to/ respond to road conditions	9

Section 3.2 will show that in response to questions about specific aspects of driving style, four-fifths of drivers thought their driving had become safer since preparing for the IAM test.

There was a lot of consistency about the way in which unprompted comments about hazard perception and anticipation of risk were made:

*It has allowed me to observe and anticipate hazards much better and plan to deal with them with greater safety margin much earlier. [Man in his 30s, IAM test 2003]*

*Renewed awareness of need to read road traffic and peripheral areas for potential hazards. Training centred on observation and anticipation of problems. [Man in his 50s, test 2006]*

*The test and the running commentary help to anticipate problems before they arise. [Man in his 70s, IAM test 2007]*

A substantial number of comments referred to respondents' beliefs that they were now generally safer drivers:

*I thought about safety and safety became a major consideration. [Man in his 60s, IAM test 2006]*

*It taught me not to take chances [Man in his 60s, IAM test 2006]*

*It made me much more responsible and I learnt a lot of survival techniques (defensive driving). [Woman in her 60s, IAM test 2000]*

Section 3.2 will show that when prompted about types of change in driving style, four-fifths of drivers felt that their driving had become safer since preparing for the test.

Many others referred to "defensive driving", having safer "habits" or a safer or more responsible "attitude". Many linked being safer with being more "considerate", sometimes referring to passengers and/or other road users. Greater patience and tolerance were also sometimes linked with safety. Section 3.2 will show that when prompted about possible changes in driving style, half said that their driving had become more considerate since the IAM preparation, half felt it was more tolerant and half more patient.

Finally, a number of comments pertaining to safety were coded under 'Sensitivity to/ respond to road conditions'. Respondents referred to being aware of "road conditions" or "driving conditions" or sometimes just "the road" and to more consciously adjusting their driving to prevailing conditions than might have been the case before.

## Improved driving experience

11% of all effects mentioned in unprompted responses to the question about the impacts of the IAM test preparation fell into the category of 'improved driving experience'. Specific effects included becoming a more confident driver and being more relaxed/enjoying driving more:

Improved driving experience effects	Respondents
	%
More confident driver	18
More relaxed/enjoy driving more	9

Comments often provided quite a personal insight into the changes brought about by the test preparation:

*My main reason for taking the IAM test my husband was too nervous to sit beside me after I had passed to drive, so, passing the IAM gave me the confidence needed to argue my right to drive. [Woman in her 70s, IAM test 1997]*

*I had become very anxious as a driver after two no-fault accidents, and decided to ...take the advanced test. My confidence increased and I realised there are ways to deal with different driving situations. [Woman in her 70s, IAM test 1997]*

*It helped restore my confidence following a medical break of a couple of years. [Woman in her 60s, IAM test 2003]*

*Before preparing for the advanced driving test I used to dread each journey due to what I considered to be inconsiderate driving by other road users. When I passed my first driving test I used to enjoy my driving and I thought that the enjoyment was a thing of the past until the IAM came to the rescue. During the preparation for the advanced driving test I found that by better observation whilst driving I was able to anticipate the behaviour of other drivers and therefore reduce my own stress levels, I learned better car control and positioning also I gained more confidence. I now look forward to my car journeys more than ever due to the IAM. [Man in his 50s, IAM test 2004]*

*I find driving is now a more satisfying experience, and I can complete a long drive feeling far less fatigued. [Man in his 50s, IAM test 1999]*

Some already confident drivers said they enjoyed driving more after the preparation because they had new skills to exercise:

*It's increased my driving pleasure even more as I'm now observing, appraising and challenging myself to constantly improve my driving efficiency. [Man in his 70s, IAM test 2010]*

Section 4.1 will show that 78% of drivers agreed that they had experienced a lasting effect on their confidence, while Section 3.3 will show that two-thirds agreed that increased enjoyment from driving was a lasting effect for them.

## Improved vehicle handling

8% of all effects from the IAM preparation mentioned unprompted by respondents concerned improved vehicle handling, as follows:

<b>Vehicle handling effects</b>	<b>Respondents</b>
	<b>%</b>
Better use of gears	7
Better cornering	5
Take into account/ consider vehicle characteristics/ limitations	4
More/better use of mirrors	3
Improved handling of steering wheel	1
Better parking/ reverse parking	<1

A relatively small proportion of effects mentioned spontaneously at the open question about the impact of the IAM test preparation concerned vehicle handling. This could reflect the fact that other impacts were of greater importance to respondents, rather than that there were few impacts of this kind. In fact, another survey question that asked specifically about vehicle handling skills found that four-fifths of drivers thought that preparing for the IAM test had led to a lasting effect on their car handling skills (see Section 4.1).

Under ‘Better use of gears’ respondents referred to choice of gear for specific situations and conditions, timing of gear changes, technique for changing gear, and also “block changing”. ‘Better cornering’ skills included road positioning for cornering, and speed, gear and use of mirror linked to cornering manoeuvres. Some referred to the “limit point”:

*Changed the way I went through corners on country roads (limit points, move away from apex to see around bend). [Man in his 20s, IAM test 2004]*

Some respondents highlighted greater awareness of their vehicle, its characteristics and limitations. They said they had more “empathy with the car”, more “car sympathy” and a better understanding of “how to use (the) car to its best advantage”. Others noted learning or being reminded to use their mirrors more, a handful mentioned parking and a few referred to “push/pull” use of the steering wheel or handling the steering wheel in general.

*My steering was a mess; now I am in control of it. It took six weeks before The System of Car Control penny dropped for me! Only when I separated out braking from gearing from steering did I start to use The System across the board. [Woman in her 60s, IAM test 2008, Group Observer]*

### **General improved skills**

Just over 6% of all effects described by respondents were about improved skills:

<b>Effect on general improved skills</b>	<b>Respondents</b>
	<b>%</b>
Generally more skilful driver/ better driving skills	15
Better on motorways/ country roads/ city centres etc	2

Unprompted comments coded under this broad heading were often quite brief and general. Respondents said they had become “better” or “improved” drivers, had sharpened their skills and become more “proficient” or “knowledgeable”. Several referred to having been given useful “tips/strategies” without specifying further. Sometimes this was referred to as road sense or road craft.

Some respondents said they felt they were good drivers to begin with, but that the IAM had enhanced their skills. For some it was important to feel pride in being among the better drivers on the road:

*It convinced me to drive correctly instead of driving "commonly"...Being a Member of IAM ensures I will not follow the trend and maintain the highest standards. [Woman in her 60s, IAM test 2008, Group Observer]*

Some said they had acquired deeper understanding of driving through the IAM preparation than they had learned though the basic driving test:

*...It taught me to drive, whereas the DSA test taught me to pass the test. [Man in his 30s, IAM test 1994]*

And some said they had learned how to drive better in different kinds of roads: motorways and country roads in particular:

*I do lots of Motorway driving and found it extremely useful planning overtaking manoeuvres, entering and leaving the motorways system in a safe but positive manner [Man in his 50s, IAM test 2006]*

*To drive faster on country roads, to be able to read the bends and the information as to other vehicles on them. Motorway driving. Being aware of lorries in particular which might lane change by looking at what is in front of them. Entering a motorway confidently and at right speed. [Woman in her 60s, IAM test 2000]*

### **Better use of road space, signs and markings**

6% of all effects cited by respondents were about better use of road space, signs and markings, as follows:

<b>Effect on better use of road space, signs and markings</b>	<b>Respondents</b>
	<b>%</b>
Improvements in road position/ use of road space	10
More/ better use and understanding of road signs and markings	5

Although only 10% of respondents mentioned it spontaneously, Section 5.1 will show that most people (85%) agreed that the preparation had had a lasting effect on 'improved use of road space'. Comments about improved road positioning and use of road space were often brief, for example many just said this was improved. Some specified better positioning in relation to other traffic, either stopped or moving. Positioning for approaching or negotiating bends, junctions or roundabouts was also sometimes mentioned, and positioning in relation to "hazards". Some said they now positioned their vehicle for better observation. One person referred to positioning for "assertiveness in town".

A few people said they now made better use of road signs and markings, observing them more and/or understanding their meaning better:

*Noticing little things far ahead, such as small signposts, memory posts, etc.. [ Woman in her 60s, IAM test 2006]*

*Made me realise the importance of being properly aware of road conditions, markings, different road surfaces and always reading the latest edition of the Highway Code. [Man in his 70s, IAM test 2009]*

### **Skills refreshment and validation**

One group of respondents said the *only* or *main* effect of the IAM test preparation was to confirm that their driving skills were good (which they felt was valuable). Some – including a number of older drivers - felt they had been able to update their skills, as well as current recommended driving techniques, regulations and signs. Many people said that they had “eliminated bad habits”:

*Changed and corrected the minor faults inherent in years of driving between the original driving test and the Advanced test. Providing the confirmation that your own driving is of an adequate standard to continue driving having reached a particular age. [Man in his 70s, IAM test 1993]*

*Corrected bad habits. Changed the way I approach hazards. Altered my steering, gear changes, coming to a stop, attention to speed. [Woman in her 60s, IAM test 2005]*

### **Negative/ No impact**

Just 2% of all unprompted impacts mentioned were either negative or neutral, as follows:

<b>Negative or no impact effect</b>	<b>Respondents</b>
	%
Made no difference	4
Negative	1

These results are consistent with results described in Section 4.1 showing that that just 1% of respondents drivers did not feel that preparing for the IAM test had had a permanent positive effect on them as a driver.

Many respondents who said that the IAM training had made no difference to them also said this was because they had already received advanced training from the military, police, RoSPA, to become an Approved Driving Instructor (ADI) or other sources and had taken the IAM test for accreditation only. But there were other respondents as well, who had not taken any other form of advanced training, who also said the training did not enhance their skills and knowledge because these were already driving to a very high standard (though they were often pleased to have this confirmed). Many in the “made no difference” contingent said they found the process and test pleasurable, nevertheless.

The clearly negative comments about the IAM preparation were few in number. The selection of comments below are fairly typical:

*The instruction was of extremely poor quality and I recognised that following what was being taught was doing my driving untold damage. I therefore ceased instruction after the 4th trip and entered the test without further instruction and using my established driving techniques. [Man in his 50s, IAM test 2006]*

*It made me more hesitant because I found my observer was often trying to 'catch me out' with last minute turns, etc. As an ADI, I also found some of the advice contradicted current DSA procedures. [Woman in her 50s, IAM test 2007]*

*Less (yes, LESS) fuel efficient driving, with emphasis on firm braking approaching a junction, before gear changing, rather than earlier deceleration, and similar "sporty" type approaches to driving, with an over emphasis on "making progress" at the expense of fuel economy. [Man in his 50s, IAM test 2009]*

*My preparation for the test was erratic as I was given different coaches who all interpreted the 'system' in their own way. It made me very confused. [Woman in her 60s, IAM test 2010]*

### **3.2 Impacts on perceived driving style**

Respondents were asked "What sort of driver do you think you are?" in pre-coded questions covering various aspects of their driving style<sup>11</sup>. They were then asked how – if at all – each aspect had changed since preparing for the IAM test.

As Table 2 shows, very few people reported deterioration in any aspect of their driving style.

- The most commonly reported (positive) changes were that people said they were safer drivers (81%), more attentive (79%), more careful (67%), more confident (65%), more responsible (64%) and more decisive (60%).
- A quarter of drivers thought that their driving style had become less fast.

Comparing these reported effects on driving style with the reasons given by respondents for undertaking the IAM preparation (described earlier in Section 2.2), suggests some close reasonable matches. For example, 73% wanted to become a safer driver and 81% thought their driving had become safer; 80% wanted to improve the general standard of their driving and 79% thought they were more attentive, 67% more careful and 64% more responsible.

Some respondents also benefited from the preparation in other ways than those they had hoped for. For example a bigger percentage of people reported an improvement in confidence (65%) whereas only 26% had expressly mentioned confidence as a reason for preparing for the IAM test.

### **3.3 Impacts on enjoyment of driving**

Increased enjoyment from driving was also reported by a higher percentage of respondents (91%) than had given this as a reason for preparing for the IAM test (30%).

### **3.4 Variations between different groups of drivers**

The results of the on-line survey suggest some important differences between different groups of drivers in terms of what they felt they gained from preparing for the IAM test.

#### **Men and women**

Answers to the question on changes in driving style suggest that the IAM preparation may 'smooth out' stereotypical differences between men and women drivers (see Table 3).

- Men were more likely than women to say their driving had become more responsible, placid, patient, considerate, and tolerant, and that they drove less fast.
- Women were more likely than men to say their driving had become more decisive and confident.

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<sup>11</sup> The questions were devised in other research (Guppy, Wilson and Perry, 1990) and have been used in several surveys concerned with safe driving.



Answers to the unprompted question on impacts from the IAM preparation showed few differences between men and women, but:

- Women were significantly more likely than men spontaneously to mention improved levels of confidence when driving (33% of women compared with 14% of men).
- They were also more likely to mention better use of gears and improved sensitivity to road conditions.

Similar proportions of men and women reported increased enjoyment of driving after preparing for the IAM test.

### **Age**

Reported changes in driving style indicate some differences between age groups (Table 4):

- Drivers under 40 were more likely than those over 40 to report that they had become more attentive.
- Perceptions of driving more decisively decreased with age.
- Perceptions of being less tolerant and less patient decreased with age.
- Younger people (under 40) and older people (over 60) were more likely than others to say they were more confident and safer.

In unprompted answers about the impact of IAM preparation:

- Drivers under 30 were less likely than older drivers to say that the test had helped them eliminate bad habits or refresh their skills.
- Drivers under 30 were more likely to say they now took account of their vehicle's limitations and features when driving.
- Older drivers were more likely to mention driving more considerately or with improved awareness of other road users and being a more confident driver.

People over 60 were more likely than younger drivers to report that they had "definitely" gained increased enjoyment from driving, while drivers under 30 were more likely than older drivers to say that their enjoyment had "probably" increased (see Table 5).

### **Mileage in last 12 months**

There were a few small differences in perceived changes in driving style since the IAM test, between those who had driven high and low mileage in the previous 12 months. High mileage men were more likely to say that after the preparation they had become:

- More attentive (81% compared with 76%);
- More confident (66% compared with 59%);
- Safer (84% compared with 77%).

High mileage women were more likely to say that their driving had become:

- More placid (41%).

In unprompted answers about the impact of preparing for the IAM test, lower mileage drivers were more likely than those driving high mileage to say that the IAM preparation had enabled them to:

- Refresh their driving skills or eliminate bad habits;
- Make more appropriate use of speed;
- Become more confident.

### **3.5 Qualitative findings on impacts**

In the qualitative research, what respondents had to say strongly echoed the findings of the online survey. Most participants felt they were a much better driver after having undergone the test preparation; that they drove now at a 'different level' from before and that they had been transformed as drivers.

They noticed these improvements in everyday driving outcomes such as smoother journeys and making better progress and more confident, positive and enjoyable drives. They also thought the changes in their driving were noticeable (and noticed by) family and friends.

Respondents said they had developed broad skills such as observation, anticipation and concentration, that they had been taught to be systematic and methodical and that they had acquired specific techniques and knowledge that they had not had previously. Significantly, most people stressed the fact that they were more 'conscious' drivers than they had been and that their 'eyes had been opened' in such a way as to make this a permanent change.

Respondents said they now had a heightened awareness of other drivers, that they were more conscious of how low standards of driving generally are, and that they now feel that the basic driving test is 'just the start'.

These universal positive impacts were reported by all respondents to the qualitative research including self-confessed driving enthusiasts (mainly men but also some women), professional and high mileage drivers, pragmatists just keen to drive from A to B and even people who said they were "not that keen on driving".

The positive impacts were reflected in respondents' views about IAM advanced driving: they are proud of their IAM badge, value the IAM and are passionate about increasing the take-up of advanced driving.

As with the online survey results, negative comments about the test preparation were relatively few and there were no big negative 'themes'; instead, respondents offered patchy complaints, for example about individual observers, inconsistency between observers, the limited times in the week when observed drives could be arranged and about specific things that had not been taught, or taught. For example one woman said her observer started to teach her 'feather braking' just before she was due to take her test and that this had been an unnecessary complication.

## **4 Longevity of perceived impacts**

### **4.1 Lasting impacts reported**

To assess whether the effects of the IAM test preparation were perceived by respondents to have had a lasting impact, they were asked: "Do you think preparation for the advanced driving test has had an impact on your driving in the following ways?" Drivers could select either "a lasting effect", "an effect for a while" or "no, not really" as responses on a range of different aspects of driving.

(The aspects of driving offered to respondents had been reported as lasting effects during the pilot phase of the survey).

Claims for a lasting impact were high for all the aspects of driving included in the question; at least 60% of respondents in all cases (see Table 6). A particularly high percentage of respondents (around 80% and more) reported a lasting effect in terms of:

- Greater sensitivity to potential hazards,
- Greater awareness of other road users
- Improved general outlook
- Improved planning and anticipation
- Smoother driving/ better progress, improved use of road space
- More conscious less 'automatic' driving
- Better car handling skills.

Around three-quarters reported a lasting effect on:

- Improved confidence in my driving
- More tolerant and aware of the behaviour of other road users.

The impacts with the lowest proportion reporting a lasting effect (between 60 and 66%) were:

- Helped me to avoid specific incident/ collision
- I have passed on what I have learned to others
- More fuel efficient driving.

The impact which was most often reported as "an effect for a while" (a fifth of cases) was:

- I have passed on what I have learned to others.

Other impacts which were perceived to be "an effect for a while" by around a tenth of drivers were:

- More fuel efficient driving
- More tolerant and aware of the behaviour of other road users
- More conscious less 'automatic' driving.

Drivers were also asked: "Overall, would you say that preparing for the IAM test has had a permanent positive effect on you as a driver". Ninety-nine percent said "Yes" (89% "yes, definitely"; 10% "yes, probably").

Further evidence on the longevity of impacts was obtained by comparing responses between people who had passed the IAM test recently, those who had passed some years ago and those who were long-established IAM advanced drivers. The results show that there were no important differences in:

- Reporting of permanent positive effects (see Table 7)
- Unprompted responses to the question about the impact of the IAM.

In addition there was little deterioration with time since passing the IAM test in:

- Self-reported current driving style
- Reported changes in driving style since preparing for the test
- Reported lasting impacts on: car handling skills, improved general driving outlook or philosophy and 'I have passed on what I have learned to others'.

## **4.2 Differences in longevity of perceived impacts between groups of drivers**

### **Men and women**

Women were more likely to report lasting effects on some aspects of their driving than men. Specific lasting effects more commonly reported by women included: improved car handling skills, smoother driving or better progress, more fuel efficient driving, improved confidence and greater awareness of other road users (see Table 8).

### **Age**

People under 30 were less likely to report definite, permanent positive effects on their driving than people over 30 (see Table 9), and more likely to report 'probable' permanent effects. It is not clear whether this is because younger drivers did not feel they had yet had enough experience to know whether effects were permanent, or whether they felt that they were not confident that they would be able to maintain the standard of driving they had been taught.

See also Table 10 showing:

- Younger drivers were less likely than older drivers to report lasting effects on any of the factors covered in the questions.
- Lasting effects that *increased* with age were: more conscious, less automatic driving, more fuel efficient driving, more tolerant and aware of the behaviour of other road users, greater awareness of other road users, increased general driving outlook or philosophy and improved planning and anticipation;
- Drivers in their 50s were less likely to report a lasting effect on improved confidence than younger or older drivers.

### **Age at the time of passing the IAM test**

Lasting effects on enjoyment of driving were more likely to be 'definitely' reported by drivers who had passed the IAM test over the age of 50 than those who passed when they were younger. (Table 11).

According to Table 12, lasting positive effects:

- On general driving outlook, tolerance and awareness of the behaviour of other road users were more likely to be reported by those who passed the test when they were older, and increased with age;
- In terms of more conscious, less 'automatic' driving were also more likely to be reported by drivers who passed when they were over 50 than others;
- On car handling skills and confidence were more likely to be reported by those who passed the IAM test when they were under 30 or over 60.

### **Mileage in the last 12 months**

- Men who had driven high mileage in the past 12 months were less likely to report a 'definite' permanent positive effect on their driving than those with low or medium mileage (86% compared with 91% respectively);
- Lower mileage men were more likely than higher mileage men to report lasting effects on better car handling skills, improved confidence, greater sensitivity to or awareness of potential hazards, more conscious less automatic driving, and improved general outlook or philosophy (Table 13).
- There were no differences in reporting of lasting effects on driving between women with high and low mileage.

### **4.3 Qualitative findings on longevity of impacts**

As described earlier (section 4.2), people who took part in the qualitative research were confident that many of the changes in their driving that they attributed to the test preparation had 'stuck'. They thought this was because:

- They had been changed in deep and fundamental ways;
- That the process of observed drives taken over a relatively long period with a lot of practice in between had helped to drive lessons home;
- That they had been given tools that were useful for life.

## **5 Inferred longevity of impacts**

Measures of driving behaviour, attitudes to safe driving and accident involvement were also compared between those who had passed the IAM test recently and those who had passed it some years ago<sup>12</sup>. The inference was that impacts which did not vary significantly with time since passing the test were also those which do not deteriorate over time.

### **5.1 Attitudes to safe driving**

Attitudes to safe driving were assessed using the concept of 'locus of control' which identifies the extent to which favourable events are attributed to an individual's own actions (an 'internal' locus of control); or to luck, other motorists, weather etc (an 'external' locus of control).

This concept was evaluated in a previous study of the effectiveness of the scheme<sup>13</sup> (Brunel study - see Section 1.2) where it was selected because "it fits well with the strategic level of car control, and the interaction between the driving environment and the individual driver", these being important principles behind the IAM approach.

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<sup>12</sup> Drivers who had completed advanced driver training with other organisations after passing the IAM test (6% of respondents) were excluded from this analysis, so that the impact of other training did not influence the comparisons.

<sup>13</sup> Walker et al (2006)

From other research<sup>14</sup> 'better' attitudes to safe driving were considered to be associated with low driving externality and high driving internality scores. The Brunel study itself found that IAM coaching improved drivers' scores on the externality scale but found no significant changes in internality scores.

A version of the same attitude scale used in the Brunel study was employed for the purposes of this research. Following piloting, the scale was modified by reducing the number of items/statements, 'updating' the language and using only 4 (instead of 6) response options: 'disagree strongly', 'disagree', 'agree' or 'agree strongly'. The statements were as follows:

Driving Externality:

- Accidents happen mainly because of unpredictable events
- People who drive a lot with no accidents are merely lucky; it's not because they are more careful
- There will always be accidents no matter how much drivers try to avoid them
- It's very hard to avoid accidents involving pedestrians who come out between parked cars
- Most accidents happen because of bad roads, lack of appropriate signs and so on

Driving Internality:

- Accidents happen because of drivers who don't make the effort to drive carefully enough
- Accidents are only the result of mistakes made by the driver
- Accidents happen because drivers do not make enough effort to detect all possible sources of danger when driving
- Accident-free driving is a result of the driver's ability to pay attention to what's happening on the roads and pavements
- It's possible to avoid accidents even in the most difficult conditions such as narrow roads, darkness, rain and so on

An 'internality' score and an 'externality' score was calculated for each respondent based on the answers they gave; ranging between -10 and +10, with the 'best' possible score being +10 for internality and -10 for externality.

- The median *externality* score (the point on the scale where half of the respondents scored more and half scored less) was -3 overall and was the same for drivers irrespective of when they had passed the IAM test (less than 5 years, 5 – 9, 10 – 14 and 15 or more years previously).
- The median *internality* score was 5 overall and also did not vary significantly between these groups.

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<sup>14</sup> Montag and Comrey (1987)

These results imply that attitudes to safe driving, as measured by these indicators of internal and external locus of control, had not deteriorated with time since passing the IAM test.

## 5.2 Perceived driving style

Respondents rated their current driving style on 12 attributes devised in other research<sup>15</sup>: attentiveness, carefulness, responsibility, safe driving, placidity, patience, consideration, tolerance, decisiveness, experience, confidence and whether their driving is slow or fast.

These 12 items can be grouped to form three combined scales covering different aspects of driving style and some studies have found that self-reported scores on these scales can be linked with levels of accident involvement. The groups of items comprising the three combined scales were:

- Attentive ... inattentive, careful ... careless, responsible ... irresponsible and safe ... risky
- Placid ... irritable, patient ... impatient, considerate ... selfish and tolerant ... intolerant
- Decisive ... indecisive, experienced ... inexperienced, confident ... nervous and fast ... slow.

The results from this study showed that drivers rated their driving very highly, and neither the median scores nor the distribution of scores on each of these perceived driving style scales differed significantly between those who had passed the IAM test less than 5 years previously, 5 – 9, 10 – 14 and 15 or more years previously (Table 14).

Thus drivers' own ratings of their current driving style did not deteriorate with time since passing the IAM test.

## 5.3 IAM driving behaviour

### Compliance with IAM test criteria

Measures of reported driver behaviour were developed in this study to reflect the types of behaviour which are assessed in the IAM test and reflected in the overall test objectives:

- System
- Smoothness
- Eco driving
- Progress
- Restraint
- Courtesy.

Respondents were asked about how they drove in specific situations and their answers were compared with the IAM recommended driving response/behaviour for each scenario.

Responses to each question were converted into a score discriminating between those reporting the IAM behaviour in full, in part, and those reporting behaviour not encouraged by the IAM. The scores on the individual questions were then combined, grouping them into three aspects of driver behaviour which correspond to three main areas covered in preparing for the IAM test, and standardised so that on each scale the range of possible scores was the same (between 0 and 50):

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<sup>15</sup> Guppy et al (1999)

- Planning and awareness
- Advanced car control
- Advanced driving methods.

The individual scores on the three scales provide an overall impression on how reported behaviour on these aspects of the IAM test compares with the “ideal” IAM behaviour.

The results showed that the median scores on each scale were relatively high but did not differ significantly between those who had passed the IAM test less than 5 years previously, 5 – 9, 10 – 14 and 15 or more years previously (Table 15).

These results indicate that overall, reported compliance with the IAM driving methods, as measured with the questions in this survey, does not appear to deteriorate with time since passing the IAM test, although a statistically significant association was found between the answers given and time since passing the IAM test for three of the thirty four items.

### **Specific questions on IPSGA**

In another line of questioning about IAM driving behaviour, respondents were asked whether they agree or disagree with a series of statements about IPSGA developed following preparatory in-depth interviews with IAM members<sup>16</sup>. The statements were:

- I can't remember exactly what IPSGA stands for
- I use it all the time as a subconscious part of my driving
- I use it most of the time but not as well or consistently as I could
- I use it in conjunction with other IAM techniques and tips
- I use it, but not as well as I used to
- I do my best, but occasionally I forget to use it
- It's useful, but thinking of it as a sequence can be confusing
- It helps me to save fuel
- It helps me to drive safely
- It should be taught to all learner drivers

The proportion who agreed or disagreed with the statement “I can't remember exactly what IPSGA stands for” was associated with time since passing the test.

- Respondents -who passed within the past five years were significantly more likely to *disagree* with this statement – implying that those who passed more recently were more likely to remember than others.
- The proportion who *agreed* with this statement increased with time since passing the test: 18% of those who had passed within the past 5 years agreed that they could not remember exactly, 32% of those who had passed 5 – 9 years ago, and 38% of those who had passed 15 or more years previously.

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<sup>16</sup> For the benefit of those who had taken the IAM test some years previously, the question explained that IPSGA is also known as ‘The Planned System of Driving’ or ‘The System of Car Control’.



Answers to the other statements about the use of IPSGA given by the 1,344 drivers (54%) who implied that they could remember exactly what IPSGA stands for were then analysed further. It was found that members who had passed the IAM test *more* than 5 years previously showed somewhat more consistent and routine use of IPSGA than those who had passed the IAM test more recently.

## **5.4 Involvement in accidents**

Drivers were asked: “In the last 3 years (since September/ October 2008), have you been involved in any type of road accident as a driver on a public road, no matter how minor and even if no other party was involved. Those who answered “yes” were then asked to record how many accidents.

The average number of accidents reported by each driver was 0.21; this did not vary significantly with the number of years since passing the IAM test, although there were minor differences:

- 0.23 accidents reported per driver who had passed less than 5 years ago
- 0.21 accidents reported per driver who had passed 5 – 9 years ago
- 0.19 accidents reported per driver who had passed 10 years ago or more.

This result suggests that driving standards do not deteriorate after passing the test to the extent that drivers are involved in more accidents than they were immediately after passing the test.

## **6 Summary and conclusions on impacts**

### **6.1 Preparing for the test**

Drivers had signed up to prepare for the IAM test primarily to improve the general standard of their driving, to become a safer driver, for the achievement or challenge involved, to eradicate bad habits, refresh their skills and reduce the risk of being involved in an accident. A range of other reasons were important for a substantial minority including demonstrating a high standard of driving, gaining confidence, reducing the cost of insurance, and driving more fuel efficiently.

### **6.2 Impacts of preparing for the test**

Responses to questions about the impacts of preparing for the test were overwhelmingly positive. Most drivers (89%) agreed “definitely” with the statement: “Overall, would you say that preparing for the IAM test has had a permanent positive effect on you as a driver”; 10% said “Probably” and just 1% said “No”.

Some people’s comments about the impact of preparing for the test indicated that it was transformative. There were a small number who felt the preparation had added little to their driving – for example if it had been a requirement of their job – but even so many of them found it enjoyable, or reassuring to confirm their standard of driving. Very few made negative comments or thought that there had been no impact on their driving.

Most people thought their general approach to driving had been improved, and many also thought their driving had become safer. A better driving experience, improved vehicle handling, improved skills and better use of road space signs and markings were also mentioned. The open-ended questions provide specific examples of how people described these improvements in their own words, and the impacts on their enjoyment of driving, and showed that drivers perceive

improvements which are central to the IAM approach - using terms such as observation, awareness, concentration, appropriate speed, progress, and a systematic approach.

Looking specifically at perceived driving style, almost all of the drivers thought there had been positive improvements following the IAM test: safer drivers (81%), more attentive (79%), more careful, confident, responsible and decisive.

Particularly high proportions of drivers reported lasting impacts (around 80% and more) in terms of greater sensitivity to potential hazards, greater awareness of other road users, improved general outlook, improved planning and anticipation, smoother driving/ better progress, improved use of road space, more conscious less 'automatic' driving and better car handling skills. Again these reflect core elements of the IAM approach to advanced driving.

However, passing on learning to others appears to be something that some drivers make a habit of for a while, and then grow out of. Fuel efficient driving, more conscious, less automatic driving and more tolerant driving were also reported as possibly more likely to 'wear off' with time.

Comparing the reasons people gave for signing up to IAM advanced driving with what they said they got from it suggests that many felt their goals had been realised, even allowing for potential bias in the answers with respondents making sure their answers are internally consistent.

Drivers also appear to have gained benefits in addition to those they had specifically hoped for. For example, more people thought their driving confidence had improved, that they now enjoyed driving more, and that they had experienced a lasting effect in terms of fuel efficient driving, than had mentioned these as reasons for signing up.

### **6.3 Longevity of impacts**

In general, the impacts of preparing for the IAM test, as measured by the questions in this survey, did not appear to deteriorate with time. Perceived impacts overall, on self-reported driving style, and on perceived changes in driving style did not vary with the time elapsed since passing the IAM test.

In addition, there was no deterioration with the time elapsed since passing the test in terms of: attitudes to safe driving, perceived current driving style, overall measures of 'compliance' with IAM test criteria and the rate of involvement in road accidents during the previous three years. Just three of the 34 individual measures of driving behaviour matching the IAM test criteria showed a deterioration with the time elapsed since passing the test.

Thus as well as respondents reporting that they perceive the impacts on their driving to be long lasting, these measures of safe attitudes, perceived current driving style, reported accident involvement and reported driving behaviour also indicate that preparing for the IAM test has long-lasting impacts on driving standards.

### **6.4 Differences between men and women**

Findings suggest that men and women have rather different goals when signing up for the IAM test, and that they also perceive different benefits.

Women were more likely than men to sign up for the test to improve their confidence and for fuel efficient driving, while men were more likely to want to demonstrate a high standard of driving and obtain cheaper insurance. In describing the impacts, women were more likely than men to spontaneously mention improved confidence and also better use of gears and improved sensitivity to road conditions than men.

Women were more likely to report lasting effects on their driving style than men. The perceived impacts on driving style indicate that the IAM preparation may smooth out some of the stereotypical differences between men and women drivers. Men were more likely than women to say their driving had become more responsible, placid, patient, considerate, and tolerant, and that they drove less fast. Women were more likely than men to say their driving had become more decisive and confident.

## **6.5 Differences between age groups**

Reasons given by younger and older drivers for signing up for the IAM test also differed somewhat, reflecting the concerns and issues of importance to these groups. For example, younger drivers were more likely to want to reduce the risk of accidents, obtain cheaper insurance and demonstrate a high standard of driving, while older drivers were more likely want to refresh their skills, eradicate bad habits and be reassured about their competence.

Describing the impacts in their own words, drivers under 30 were less likely than older drivers to say that preparing for the test had helped them to eliminate bad habits or refresh their skills and more likely to mention being able to take account of their vehicle's features and limitations. Older drivers describing the impacts were more likely to mention improvements in confidence, awareness of other road users and being more considerate.

Younger drivers were more likely than older drivers to say that they had become more attentive, decisive but also less tolerant and less patient since preparing for the test. Over 60s were more likely than younger drivers to say they definitely enjoyed driving more since the IAM experience. Lasting effects which became more common with increasing age were more conscious, less automatic driving, more tolerant and aware of the behaviour of other road users, greater awareness of other road users, increased general driving outlook or philosophy and improved planning and anticipation.

People under 30 were less likely to report definite, permanent positive effects on their driving than people over 30. Younger drivers were more likely than others to report "probable" permanent effects (rather than "definite" effects).

## **6.6 Mileage**

Men whose annual mileage was low were more likely to report that they had become more attentive, confident and safer than those who drove a high mileage. Eliminating bad habits and refreshing skills were also more likely to be reported as impacts by men with a low annual mileage. Men whose annual mileage was high were less likely to report lasting effects on several aspects of their driving than men with low mileage.

However impacts reported by women did not vary between those driving high and low mileage.

## **6.7 Conclusions**

The results of the survey and the follow-up interviews demonstrate that the IAM advanced driver test preparation not only meets the goals people have in mind when preparing for the test, but also benefits them in other ways. The preparation is clearly perceived to have substantial impacts on the drivers who go through the process, some of whom describe transformative experiences; even those who do not report substantial impacts on their driving often find it to be an enjoyable and useful experience.

In addition to these overall impacts, the survey results have shown, with a reasonable degree of consistency from different types of measure (both self-reported and inferred from comparisons between drivers), that the IAM preparation has long lasting impacts on attitudes to safe driving, perceived current driving style, reported involvement in road accidents and reported compliance with IAM driving behaviour.

The overall scale of the impacts reported, their longevity, and the way in which they were described by individual IAM members provide valuable material for promoting the wider participation of drivers in IAM advanced training.

The difference in impacts reported between men and women, drivers in different age groups and those driving high and low mileage indicate that IAM preparation addresses a range of issues faced by groups of drivers in varying circumstances. However the results also indicate varying needs among different groups of drivers. Reaching out to more of the types of drivers who currently represent a minority of members (such as women and younger people), both through broader marketing and by recognising their needs in the delivery of the IAM approach would most likely contribute to raising standards of driving generally, and would be welcomed by many of the current IAM members who are keen for others to share the benefits which they have themselves gained from the IAM experience.

## 7 Tables

**Table 1 Most commonly reported reasons for preparing for the IAM test**

Reasons for preparing for the IAM test*	% of people
To improve my general standard of driving	80
To become a safer driver	73
For the achievement/ challenge	58
To eradicate any bad habits	52
To reduce the risk of being involved in an accident	49
To refresh my driving skills	49
To reassure myself that I am still a competent driver	39
To demonstrate to others that my driving is of a high standard	37
To gain greater enjoyment from driving	30
To become a more confident driver	26
To obtain cheaper insurance	23
To drive more fuel efficiently	17
To influence other people's driving	14
For my job	11

\*Reasons reported by more than 10%

**Table 2 Perceived changes in driving style compared with before IAM preparation**

Driving style		More ...	Same as I was before	Less ...
Safe	%	81	18	1
Attentive	%	79	20	1
Careful	%	67	32	1
Responsible	%	64	35	1
Confident	%	65	33	1
Decisive	%	60	39	1
Fast	%	16	57	27
Patient	%	51	47	2
Considerate	%	51	47	1
Tolerant	%	51	46	3
Placid	%	39	58	3

Number of respondents: 2,455

**Table 3 Perceived changes in driving style: men and women**

Driving style	Men			Women		
	More ...	Same as I was before	Less ...	More ...	Same as I was before	Less ...
Safe	% 81	18	1	81	19	<0.5
Attentive	% 78	21	1	81	18	1
Careful	% 67	32	1	66	34	0
Responsible	% <b>65</b>	34	1	60	40	<0.5
Confident	% 63	36	1	<b>77</b>	22	1
Decisive	% 57	41	1	<b>69</b>	30	1
Fast	% 16	56	<b>28</b>	18	59	23
Patient	% <b>53</b>	45	2	45	54	1
Considerate	% <b>53</b>	46	1	46	54	<0.5
Tolerant	% <b>53</b>	43	3	43	56	1
Placid	% <b>41</b>	56	3	33	65	2

Number of men 1,975, women 480  
Significant differences denoted by %s in bold type

**Table 4 Perceived changes in driving style: age**

Driving style	Age									
	17 - 29		30 - 39		40 - 49		50 - 59		60 +	
	More ...*	Less ...	More ...*	Less ...	More ...*	Less ...	More ...*	Less ...	More ...*	Less ...
Safe	% 86	2	89	1	81	1	76	1	82	1
Attentive	% 81	0	85	1	78	2	77	1	79	1
Careful	% 71	1	74	<0.5	68	2	63	1	67	<0.5
Responsible	% 74	1	69	<0.5	64	1	63	1	63	<0.5
Confident	% 75	2	76	1	63	1	60	1	67	1
Decisive	% 75	2	70	<0.5	66	1	57	1	56	1
Fast	% 27	2	20	3	18	32	16	29	14	24
Patient	% 47	4	50	5	47	3	52	2	53	1
Considerate	% 53	1	52	2	48	1	51	1	53	1
Tolerant	% 49	7	49	7	49	4	49	3	54	2
Placid	% 38	4	43	6	39	4	40	3	38	2
Number:	95		214		398		655		1082	

\* Drivers who said "about the same" have been omitted from the table (for clarity)

**Table 5 Do you feel that preparing for the IAM advanced driving test has increased the enjoyment you get from driving?: age**

Increased enjoyment	Age					
	17 - 29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50 - 59	60 - 69	70+
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yes, definitely	59	64	63	66	71	71
Yes, probably	33	28	24	23	22	21
No	8	8	13	11	7	8
Number of respondents	95	214	398	655	744	338

**Table 6 Do you think preparation for the advanced driving test has had an impact on your driving in the following ways?**

Impact		Yes, a lasting effect	Yes, for a while	No, not really
Greater sensitivity to/ awareness of potential hazards & difficult driving conditions	%	91	2	7
Greater awareness of other road users	%	90	2	8
Improved general driving outlook/ philosophy	%	90	4	6
Improved planning/ anticipation	%	90	4	6
Smoother driving/ better progress	%	88	4	8
Improved use of road space	%	85	5	10
More conscious, less 'automatic' driving	%	85	8	7
Better car handling skills	%	80	4	15
Improved confidence in my driving	%	78	5	18
More tolerant and aware of the behaviour of other road users	%	78	9	12
Helped me to avoid specific incident/ collision	%	66	5	29
I have passed on what I have learned to others	%	62	21	17
More fuel efficient driving	%	60	10	29
Greater sensitivity to/ awareness of potential hazards & difficult driving conditions	%	91	2	7
Greater awareness of other road users	%	90	2	8

Number of respondents: 2,455

**Table 7 Overall, would you say that preparing for the IAM test has had a permanent positive effect on you as a driver?: years since passed IAM test**

Preparing for the IAM test has had a permanent positive effect	Number of years since passed IAM test				Total %
	0 - 4 %	5 - 9 %	10 - 14 %	15 + %	
Yes, definitely	88	88	91	92	<b>89</b>
Yes, probably	10	11	8	7	<b>10</b>
No	1	2	1	1	<b>1</b>
Number of respondents	<b>743</b>	<b>806</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>2,455</b>

**Table 8 Do you think preparation for the advanced driving test has had an impact on your driving in the following ways?: significant differences between men and women**

Impact on driving	Men			Women		
	Yes, a lasting effect	Yes, for a while	No, not really	Yes, a lasting effect	Yes, for a while	No, not really
Better car handling skills	% 79	4	17	85	6	8
Smoother driving/ better progress	% 88	3	9	90	5	5
More fuel efficient driving	% 59	10	31	66	13	21
Improved confidence	% 76	5	20	86	5	10
Improved use of road space	% 86	4	10	84	8	8
Greater awareness of other road users	% 89	2	8	93	2	5
Improved planning or anticipation	% 90	4	7	91	6	4
I have passed on what I learned to others	% 63	20	17	55	25	20

**Number of men 1,975, women 480**

**Table 9 Overall, would you say that preparing for the IAM test has had a permanent positive effect on you as a driver?, & Do you feel that preparing for the IAM test has increased the enjoyment you get from driving?: age**

Effect	Response	Age					Total %
		17 – 29 %	30 – 39 %	40 – 49 %	50 – 59 %	60 + %	
Permanent positive effect	Yes, definitely	83	88	88	87	92	<b>89</b>
	Yes, probably	16	12	10	10	8	<b>10</b>
	No	1	<0.5	2	2	1	<b>1</b>
Increased enjoyment	Yes, definitely	59	64	63	66	71	<b>67</b>
	Yes, probably	33	28	24	23	22	<b>23</b>
	No	8	8	13	11	7	<b>9</b>
Number of respondents		<b>95</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>655</b>	<b>1082</b>	<b>2,444</b>



**Table 10 Do you think preparation for the advanced driving test has had an impact on your driving in the following ways?: age**

Impact	Response	Age group						Total %
		17 – 29 %	30 – 39 %	40 – 49 %	50 – 59 %	60 – 69 %	70+ %	
Better car handling skills	Yes, a lasting effect	82	83	78	78	83	81	<b>80</b>
	Yes, for a while	8	7	6	4	3	3	<b>4</b>
	No	9	10	16	19	14	17	<b>16</b>
Smoother driving/ better progress	Yes, a lasting effect	88	88	86	87	90	88	<b>88</b>
	Yes, for a while	8	8	7	2	2	2	<b>4</b>
	No	3	3	8	11	8	9	<b>8</b>
More fuel efficient driving	Yes, a lasting effect	51	62	60	58	62	62	<b>60</b>
	Yes, for a while	20	13	11	10	10	8	<b>10</b>
	No	29	25	29	32	28	30	<b>29</b>
Improved confidence	Yes, a lasting effect	80	80	78	72	80	80	<b>78</b>
	Yes, for a while	8	8	4	4	5	4	<b>5</b>
	No	12	11	18	24	15	16	<b>18</b>
Improved use of road space	Yes, a lasting effect	85	86	85	84	87	86	<b>85</b>
	Yes, for a while	11	8	7	5	3	2	<b>5</b>
	No	4	6	9	11	10	12	<b>10</b>
Greater sensitivity to/ awareness of potential hazards incl. difficult driving conditions	Yes, a lasting effect	93	93	92	89	92	91	<b>91</b>
	Yes, for a while	5	3	3	2	1	1	<b>2</b>
	No	2	4	5	9	7	8	<b>7</b>
Greater awareness of other road users	Yes, a lasting effect	87	90	88	89	92	90	<b>90</b>
	Yes, for a while	11	6	3	2	1	1	<b>2</b>
	No	2	5	8	10	7	9	<b>8</b>
More tolerant and aware of the behaviour of other road users	Yes, a lasting effect	64	68	71	78	84	85	<b>78</b>
	Yes, for a while	21	18	15	8	6	4	<b>9</b>
	No	15	14	13	14	10	12	<b>12</b>
Improved planning or anticipation	Yes, a lasting effect	87	90	89	89	91	88	<b>90</b>
	Yes, for a while	11	7	6	3	3	4	<b>4</b>
	No	2	3	5	8	6	7	<b>6</b>
More conscious, less 'automatic' driving	Yes, a lasting effect	71	77	80	86	91	89	<b>85</b>
	Yes, for a while	24	16	12	6	4	4	<b>8</b>
	No	5	7	8	8	5	7	<b>7</b>
Improved general driving outlook or philosophy	Yes, a lasting effect	81	86	86	91	92	93	<b>90</b>
	Yes, for a while	14	9	8	2	3	2	<b>4</b>
	No	5	5	7	7	6	5	<b>6</b>
I have passed on what I learned to others	Yes, a lasting effect	58	66	61	66	61	55	<b>62</b>
	Yes, for a while	27	23	22	19	22	19	<b>21</b>
	No	15	11	17	15	18	25	<b>17</b>
Helped me to avoid specific incident or collision	Yes, a lasting effect	68	72	67	63	67	67	<b>66</b>
	Yes, for a while	7	8	5	4	4	4	<b>5</b>
	No	24	20	28	33	30	30	<b>29</b>
<b>Number of respondents</b>		<b>95</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>655</b>	<b>744</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>2,444</b>

**Table 11 Do you feel that preparing for the IAM test has increased the enjoyment you get from driving?: age when passed IAM test**

Increased enjoyment of driving	Age when passed IAM test					Total %
	17 – 29 %	30 – 39 %	40 – 49 %	50 – 59 %	60 + %	
Yes, definitely	62	66	63	71	70	<b>67</b>
Yes, probably	31	22	25	21	21	<b>23</b>
No	7	11	11	8	9	<b>9</b>
Number of respondents	<b>317</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>579</b>	<b>673</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>2,440</b>

**Table 12 Do you think preparation for the advanced driving test has had an impact on your driving in the following ways?: age when passed IAM test**

Impact	Response	Age when passed IAM test					Total %
		17 – 29 %	30 – 39 %	40 – 49 %	50 – 59 %	60 + %	
<b>Better car handling skills</b>	Yes, a lasting effect	83	79	78	80	83	<b>80</b>
	Yes, for a while	7	6	4	4	2	<b>4</b>
	No	10	15	18	16	15	<b>15</b>
<b>Smoother driving/ better progress</b>	Yes, a lasting effect	89	88	87	87	90	<b>88</b>
	Yes, for a while	8	6	2	3	2	<b>4</b>
	No	3	6	11	10	8	<b>8</b>
<b>More fuel efficient driving</b>	Yes, a lasting effect	57	65	59	60	61	<b>60</b>
	Yes, for a while	15	9	11	11	7	<b>10</b>
	No	28	26	31	29	32	<b>29</b>
<b>Improved confidence</b>	Yes, a lasting effect	82	78	72	78	80	<b>78</b>
	Yes, for a while	7	4	5	4	4	<b>5</b>
	No	11	17	23	18	16	<b>18</b>
<b>Improved use of road space</b>	Yes, a lasting effect	87	86	85	84	86	<b>85</b>
	Yes, for a while	9	5	5	4	3	<b>5</b>
	No	4	9	10	12	11	<b>10</b>
<b>Greater sensitivity to/ aware potential hazards</b>	Yes, a lasting effect	94	93	90	91	91	<b>91</b>
	Yes, for a while	4	3	3	1	1	<b>2</b>
	No	2	4	7	8	8	<b>7</b>
<b>Greater awareness of other road users</b>	Yes, a lasting effect	90	91	89	90	90	<b>90</b>
	Yes, for a while	7	2	3	1	1	<b>2</b>
	No	3	7	9	9	9	<b>8</b>
<b>More tolerant and aware of the behaviour of other road users</b>	Yes, a lasting effect	69	75	75	83	84	<b>78</b>
	Yes, for a while	20	12	11	5	4	<b>9</b>
	No	11	13	13	11	12	<b>12</b>
<b>Improved planning or anticipation</b>	Yes, a lasting effect	91	90	90	89	89	<b>90</b>
	Yes, for a while	7	6	4	3	4	<b>4</b>
	No	2	4	6	8	7	<b>6</b>
<b>More conscious, less 'automatic' driving</b>	Yes, a lasting effect	74	81	86	90	89	<b>85</b>
	Yes, for a while	18	12	7	4	4	<b>8</b>
	No	8	7	7	6	7	<b>7</b>
<b>Improved general driving outlook / philos.</b>	Yes, a lasting effect	85	86	91	91	93	<b>90</b>
	Yes, for a while	10	8	3	2	2	<b>4</b>
	No	4	6	6	7	5	<b>6</b>
<b>I have passed on what I learned to others</b>	Yes, a lasting effect	64	64	63	61	58	<b>62</b>
	Yes, for a while	24	22	20	22	19	<b>21</b>
	No	12	14	17	17	23	<b>17</b>
<b>Helped me to avoid specific incident or collision</b>	Yes, a lasting effect	73	72	62	66	62	<b>66</b>
	Yes, for a while	8	5	5	3	4	<b>5</b>
	No	19	24	33	31	34	<b>29</b>
<b>Number of respondents</b>		<b>317</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>579</b>	<b>673</b>	<b>501</b>	<b>2,440</b>

**Table 13 Do you think preparation for the advanced driving test has had an impact on your driving in the following ways?: significant differences with mileage - men**

Impact	Response	Level of mileage			Total %
		Low %	Medium %	High %	
Better car handling skills	Yes, a lasting effect	81	79	77	<b>79</b>
	Yes, for a while	4	3	4	<b>4</b>
	No	14	18	19	<b>17</b>
Improved confidence	Yes, a lasting effect	79	76	73	<b>76</b>
	Yes, for a while	5	5	4	<b>5</b>
	No	16	19	23	<b>20</b>
Greater sensitivity to or awareness of potential hazards including difficult driving conditions	Yes, a lasting effect	91	93	89	<b>91</b>
	Yes, for a while	2	1	3	<b>2</b>
	No	7	6	8	<b>7</b>
More conscious, less 'automatic' driving	Yes, a lasting effect	89	86	83	<b>85</b>
	Yes, for a while	6	6	9	<b>7</b>
	No	5	8	8	<b>7</b>
Improved general driving outlook or philosophy	Yes, a lasting effect	91	92	87	<b>90</b>
	Yes, for a while	4	3	6	<b>5</b>
	No	5	5	8	<b>6</b>
I have passed on what I learned to others	Yes, a lasting effect	59	61	69	<b>63</b>
	Yes, for a while	21	21	19	<b>20</b>
	No	20	18	13	<b>17</b>
Number of respondents		<b>563</b>	<b>633</b>	<b>779</b>	<b>1,975</b>

**Table 14 Median perceived driving style score: time since passing the IAM test**

Perceived driving style	Number of years since passed IAM test				Total
	0 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 14	15+	
Attentive careful responsible safe	26	25	25	26	<b>25</b>
Placid patient considerate tolerant	20	19	19	19	<b>19</b>
Decisive experienced confident fast	24	24	24	24	<b>24</b>
Maximum score: 28 on each scale					

**Table 15 Median IAM driving behaviour scores: time since passing the IAM test**

IAM driving behaviour	Number of years since passed IAM test				Total
	0 - 4	5 - 9	10 - 14	15+	
Planning and awareness	39.1	39.1	39.1	39.1	<b>39.1</b>
Advanced car control	34.5	34.5	34.5	34.5	<b>34.5</b>
Advanced driving methods	41.9	41.9	41.9	40.3	<b>41.9</b>
Number of respondents*	721	758	546	293	<b>2,318</b>
* Drivers who reported no advanced training since passing the IAM test Maximum score: 50 on each scale					

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