

Department for Transport – Road Safety Statement Jul 2019

The Department for Transport have just published a document spelling out their approach to moving the UK towards an integrated approach to road safety. It focusses on 4 priority road user groups: Young drivers, rural road users, motorcyclists and older vulnerable road users.



The Road Safety Statement 2019 A Lifetime of Road Safety

Moving Britain Ahead



The department is committed to the idea that road deaths and casualties are not merely the result of bad driving, centrally relevant though that is, but to a transport system as a whole from signage to road user education, from enforcement to infrastructure design and education. They believe that the effect of this approach should be to raise standards so that avoidable road deaths or casualties and injuries are significantly reduced to an absolute minimum.

As Advanced Drivers and Riders we care passionately about road safety and look forward to the implementation of the new approaches described in this document.

The 69-page document is available to download in its entirety from the Department for transport website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/road-safety-statement-2019-a-lifetime-of-road-safety>

It covers a wide range of measures and initiatives ranging from landmark policies, to more investment to large research projects and education campaigns. It is divided into 3 areas – safer people, safer vehicles and safer roads.

We have only listed a limited selection of the initiatives in this summary:

Safer Younger Children Initiatives:

- Nationally accredited Child Safety seat training programme for retailers to ensure seats are fitted properly and raise parents' awareness child seat safety matters.
- Imbedding a deeper understanding of road dangers by developing primary school children's road safety understanding and skills.
- Dangerous habits distraction – making children look for dangers when using Smart-phones (surfing the net or texting) or listening to music players when walking to school. Further research into this is to be performed.
- Research into road safety support for SEN schoolchildren especially those with autism, ADHD or learning disabilities in order to develop further inclusivity in a future road strategy.

Safer Younger Drivers

- DVSA Behaviour change campaign to encourage learners to broaden the range of roads they practice on prior to taking the DVSA test. This includes driving on rural roads and driving in the dark.
- Graduated Driving Licence which involves meeting certain requirements around the learning period as well as types of driving that may be done after passing their practical test. The document lists a range of learner requirements in 5 other countries, which are under consideration for the UK.

- Improved driving test – the practical test will evolve to keep up to date with technological changes while the theory test will include a broader scope of clips in its hazard perception element.
- Evaluating the recent policy of allowing learners to practice on motorways with an ADI supervising with a view to developing this further.
- Promoting safe and efficient driving in conjunction with the driver training sector to both encourage responsible driving and an understanding of how the style of driving impacts the environment. The DVSA will also increase awareness of fuel-efficient driving.
- Changing public norms particularly of male drivers younger than 24 years old. Campaigns will use peer dynamics which use the power of friendships to positively influence improved driving behaviour and negatively change attitudes to at-risk behaviours.

Adults staying within the law

- Improving digital enforcement – by using a web-based platform to submit footage from dashcams of careless or dangerous drivers and their vehicles leading to enforcement and potential prosecution.
- New cycle offences where cyclists cause serious harm through careless or dangerous behaviours. Penalties are likely to be broadly in line with those for vehicle drivers.
- Hand held mobile phone use still accounts for a significant number of fatal and serious vehicle accidents even though fines and penalties were raised in 2017. Current analysis is due to be published later this year to help decide what further measures need to be put in place.

Older Drivers

While the number of road deaths in younger drivers has been steadily falling each year, the statistics for drivers older than 65 has remained static for the last 10 years or so. If the current trends continue, older driver road traffic deaths will overtake those for younger drivers by 2025. The Government are keen to keep people mobile for as long as possible and have commissioned a number of studies to report on how to keep older drivers safer. There may be compulsory eye tests every 3 years to coincide with license renewal every 3 years after the age of 70 as well as improved driver support facilities. Assessment such as those provided by IAM RoadSmart are an important element in evaluating whether a person can continue driving as he or she gets older.

Motorcycling

The DVSA has refreshed and continues to promote its Enhanced Rider Scheme (ERS) with a syllabus now comprising 7 basic modules and a further 12 optional modules. Further measures to improve motorcyclist training include:

- Strengthening the standard of training for motorcycle instructors and how they are quality assured.
- Updating the Compulsory Basic Training syllabus including a theory test.
- Restricting learner riders to automatic-only motorcycles. How automatic-only motorcyclists can upgrade their entitlement is under review also.
- Introducing a scheme for M/C training schools to be given recognition for consistently high standards. Appropriate criteria are under development by the training bodies.

Of course, there is a lot more detail in the document itself, but we hope this sheet gives a flavour of what is being considered. Furthermore, as Advanced Drivers and Riders we are ahead of the game as we continuously practice driving or riding in a safe, smooth and efficient manner at all times.