

The IPSGA system and PLANNING

Your observer and the examiner expect each drive to be

- S**afe and legal, never sacrificing safety for anything
- S**mooth and flowing
- S**ystematic, making full use of IPSGA and planning
- at a **S**peed giving good progress and flow, consistent with the prevailing driving conditions, and always within the speed limit

What are the first essentials in hazard perception which will enable you to **COAP** with the challenge of today's road conditions and achieve the four Ss?

- C**oncentration
- O**bservation
- A**nticipation
- P**lanning

IPSGA

IPSGA is the acronym for 'The System of Car Control' also known as 'The Planned System of Driving'. This system is a way of approaching and negotiating hazards that is methodical, safe and leaves nothing to chance. It promotes careful observation, early anticipation and planning, and a systematic use of the controls to achieve maximum vehicle stability. It is a systematic way of dealing with an unpredictable environment. It gives the driver the time to select the best position, speed and gear to negotiate hazards safely and efficiently. The system consists of five separate phases, applied in the same order, and - apart from the first - without any overlap :

1. INFORMATION - this phase is continuous, overlapping and framing the four other phases

- T**ake - sight, by scanning - ahead, spread, mirror
sound, including the sound of silence = black ice
touch, as provided by feedback through the controls
smell
- U**se - plan for known and anticipated hazards
- G**ive - position & speed on the road; signal if it helps other road users

2. POSITION - giving the best view to negotiate hazards safely and smoothly

3. **S**PEED

- plan early; adjust speed smoothly using accelerator and brakes to achieve a speed that enables safe and smooth negotiation of the hazard. Matching speed to the movement of the 'limit point' enables bends to be negotiated safely

4. **G**EARS

- when the appropriate speed is achieved, select the gear to match and complete the negotiation of the hazard

5. **A**CCELERATION - accelerate away from the hazard if safe and legal to do so

The five phases of IPSGA are always applied in the correct sequence, but the system must also be used flexibly so as to match any situations indicated by changes in the information available.

In this context the word 'hazard' has a very flexible meaning, referring to any situation encountered while driving which has the potential to cause danger either to the driver or to any other road users. In reality this means anything encountered by the driver requiring him or her to consider a change of either position or speed, eg other road users, road features, weather conditions and animals. A good plan will always consider potential hazards, as well as those that are clearly visible.

PLANNING

During the **Information - Take** phase of IPSGA, new hazards are constantly being identified. Each hazard requires a plan to negotiate it safely, with all the initial planning done as far as possible in advance, during the **Information - Use** phase of IPSGA. If necessary the plan may be modified later, in light of changing circumstances.

- What can I see?
- What can I not see?
- What can I reasonably expect to happen?
- List hazards in order of importance, adjusting the order as necessary
- What is my contingency plan?

Safe and effective driving depends on systematically using all the information gained from observation to plan driving actions. Good planning is achieved by early observation and early anticipation of the risks. ANTICIPATE and RESPOND to situations rather than REACTING to them. Skillful drivers anticipate in order to make their plans more effective. Careful planning as an integral part of the IPSGA system ensures that sufficient time is available to deal with each hazard safely and efficiently.