



NEWSLETTER 2020

Issue 33

Chair's Chat

Additional Training Materials for Bikers: I'm really excited to see our bike group distributing additional booklets to new associates. I wish these existed for car drivers. "Insights into Advanced Motorcycling" is a "light-hearted" guide to what the examiners are really looking for. I sat down and read it from cover to cover in one go (it's only 40 pages). It was so friendly, informative and interesting even for a non-biker like me! It has been written by Andy Slater who is a National Observer with Thames Vale Advanced Motorists down in deepest Englandshire and does a great job of covering material in a way that goes beyond the official line in the IAM RoadSmart Advanced Riding Course Handbook. It covers topics like:

- White lines
- Limit Point
- Speed
- Filtering (I didn't even know what this was)
- Overtaking
- Motorways
- Thinking

As a car driver it has actually helped me understand more about bikers and taught me a couple of things that I believe will help directly. There is a "Part 2", that I've not read yet, covering "Risk" and "The System".

All current associates have been sent copies of both booklets but if anyone else is interested in buying copies they are only £5 each and available on the Thames Vale AM web site TVAM.org.

Skidding: A topic that keeps popping up is "**Skid Training**": Learning how to handle your car in the unlikely event that the worst happens and it starts skidding. Exactly 10 years ago (in the Jan 2010 Newsletter) I wrote about my own experience of skid training (and how valuable it had turned out to be). Some of you have been in touch to see if we can recommend anywhere or perhaps organize something for the group. We are looking into this. The problem is to find something that's not just a fun day out – but actually covers the topic in a way that creates real learning. If any readers have recent experience of something good that's not too far away (mine was in Birmingham!) please let me know.

EV: Thanks for all the suggestions about electric vehicles I should be considering – some useful and some obviously think I have a large budget and an even larger driveway. I will write a review once I have one!

Edinburgh 20: Many of you will have noticed more and more 20mph limits in Edinburgh (and a few in Glasgow although the Glasgow ones seem to be poorly signed – I’ve seen a couple of areas with plenty of 20s painted on the road but no red-circle signs to mark the start of the limit). Anyway, I have heard from an Edinburgh based friend that the 20 limits are now being police enforced with surprise traps, so don’t be tempted to keep up with other cars that are ignoring them. In my recent experience of driving in Edinburgh I’ve seen many drivers are treating them like a 30 limit and getting upset when I drive at 20.

Mark Elder
Acting Chair & Membership Secretary

GROUP NEWS

Dates for your Diary:-
Group meetings - 7.30pm

6 February 2020 IAM-Related Pub Quiz! Please come along and pit your knowledge (and memory) against fellow members and associates. There is the distinct possibility of a prize!	Falkirk Fire Station, Westfield, FK2 9AH
5 March 2020 Topic TBC	Smith Museum, Dumbarton Road, Stirling, FK8 2RQ
7 May 2020 AGM Provisional Date	Smith Museum, Dumbarton Road, Stirling, FK8 2RQ

Congratulations to the following people who have passed their IAM Test:

Associate	Observer
Max Macdonald 13/08/2019 Bike F1rst!	David Allan
Belinda MacDonald 27/09/2019 Bike F1rst!	Fiona Robertson
Ross Tuffee 18/10/2019 Car F1rst!	John Hill
Richard Hodge 25/10/2019 Bike F1rst!	Mike Calvert
William (Bill) Lawson 01/11/2019 Car	David McCall
Heather Watson 25/11/2019 Car	Ernie Hogan

CAR / MOTORCYCLE SECTION

Smart Motorways, the way ahead?

There has been a lot of discussion over the years regarding “Smart Motorways”, why they are being built, how they operate and most importantly their safety record. I’m hoping I can provide some answers to these questions as a prelude to a presentation at some point later in the year.

The Smart Motorway Programme was started by the Highways Agency (now Highways England) some 13 years ago. The aim was to address congestion issues without significant land take and its associated environmental impact.

The first sections to open were on the M42 in the West Midlands of England and featured a Dynamic Hard Shoulder operation. When flows exceeded a certain level, signing on the motorway would activate to show the hard shoulder as a running lane, give warning of hazards and reduce speed limits.

Developing from this the next steps have included through junction running and all lane running where the hard shoulder has been used as an additional lane. Similar to the Dynamic Hard Shoulder Operation, signing is provided to show speed limits and warn of hazards. Emergency lay-bys are provided throughout these sections.

The operation of the Smart Motorway is governed using electronic signing including variable message signs and lane indicator signals. Most of which are located on gantries spanning the carriageway. Vehicle detection equipment includes the MIDAS system which monitors speeds and flows *and* will set speed limits to suit conditions ahead. CCTV cameras throughout the schemes provide full coverage of the carriageways, and enforcement cameras are installed to detect speeding and “red X” non-compliance. Many schemes also include automatic detection equipment within emergency lay-bys which will alert the traffic control room if vehicles enter them.



The greatest public concern relating to the Smart Motorways has been the removal of the hard shoulder. This creates a situation we see on most dual carriageways and on the M90 at Kinross. However, it is exacerbated by the verge widths not being as generous and therefore reduces the level of refuge area for a stricken vehicle and its occupants. The technology on the Smart Motorway is set up to detect when incidents occur and activates a protocol of reducing speeds and closing affected lanes. These protocols are overseen by Regional Control Centres who will intervene to effect closures using the motorway signals and alert the Traffic Officer Service and/or Police.

An additional concern has been drivers ignoring the lane closure “red X” signals and continuing along closed lanes. To counter this, camera equipment has now been approved for use on Smart Motorways that will detect these offences. Unfortunately, it takes the threat of prosecution to alter certain drivers’ behaviour.

The collision statistics are showing an overall reduction in incidents on Smart Motorways, most probably due to reduced congestion associated incidents such as shunts. However, there has been an increase in the number of stationary vehicles struck in a live lane, which would be expected with the removal of the hard shoulder and *additionally* there is always a risk that a broken-down vehicle may not make it to an emergency layby.

The overall evidence so far suggests that the Smart Motorway project is producing benefits in terms of improving safety and reducing congestion.

Eric Hill

About the Author: Eric Hill is a Road Safety Engineer with Sweco UK Ltd and involved in the Operational Road Safety in design of Smart Motorway Schemes in the South of England.

NATIONAL NEWS

Safer Road User initiatives recognised with Royal Award

A number of initiatives have been honoured with a Prince Michael International Road Safety Award at a ceremony in London. These schemes and organisations have been recognised for their contribution to road safety under the Safer Road Users category based on the five pillars of the Global Plan for a Decade of Action.

<http://www.roadsafe.com/saferroaduserinitiativesrecognisedwithroyalawards>

Do you drive one of the safest cars of 2019?

The 10 safest cars of 2019 have been revealed by automotive research centre Thatcham Research.

<http://www.roadsafe.com/doyoudriveoneofthesafestcarsof2019>



Oslo sees zero pedestrian and cyclist deaths in 2019.

City data for the Norwegian capital, which has a population of about 673,000, show a dramatic reduction in traffic fatalities, from 41 deaths in 1975 to a single roadway death last year.

<http://www.roadsafe.com/osloseeszeropedestrianandcyclistdeathsin2019>

A CAV Roadmap for Scotland

The CAV Roadmap sets out a vision for how Scotland can be at the forefront of developments in the connected & autonomous vehicle industry. It supports the Scottish Government's desire to take the progressive actions needed to make Scotland the best place in the world to grow up, learn, work and live in.

<http://www.roadsafe.com/acavroadmapforscotland>



5 High Risk Driver Behaviours that contribute to work related crashes

A large body of research demonstrates that the main contributor to work related road traffic crashes is the behaviour of individual drivers. That's why an essential first step in any programme to reduce crashes is to understand the specific behaviours that place drivers at risk.

<http://www.roadsafe.com/5highriskdriverbehavioursthatcontributetoworkrelatedcrashes>

IAM RoadSmart 2020 circuit-based Skills Days

Meet car and motorbike enthusiasts, improve your confidence and get the most out of your vehicle in a safe and fun environment.

<https://www.iamroadsmart.com/campaign-pages/end-customer-campaigns/skillsday>

Make the most of your membership with Cornmarket Insurance Services

IAM RoadSmart marks 15 years of partnership with Cornmarket Insurance Services. Advanced drivers and riders can take advantage of competitive prices and individually tailored levels of cover.

<https://www.cornmarketinsurance.co.uk/>

Your Committee 2019/20

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