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TÜV tests display shorter braking distances*

* 2.6 metres shorter braking distance on wet roads (9% better performance) and 1.3 metres shorter braking distance on dry roads (4% better performance), compared to average performance of 3 latest designs from main competitors in UHP segment (Michelin Pilot Sport 3, Bridgestone Potenza S001, Continental Sport Contact 5). Tested by TÜV SÜD Product Service GmbH in Sept – Oct 2015 by order of Goodyear Dunlop. New UHP, Tyre Size: 225/45 R17 91Y; Test Car: VW Golf; Test Locations: Mireval (F), Papenburg (D), TÜV SÜD PS Garching (D); Report No. 713066268.
WELCOME

ALTHOUGH I’VE NEVER really been away completely, continuing to write and work with the DIA team over the last few years on their various publications, it’s interesting to be back in the editor’s seat at Driving Instructor again.

And what interesting times they are, industry-wise – not least with ongoing issues over practical test waiting times, the costly and continuing saga of the theory test contract, and the impact of the Standards Check (over 15,000 ADIs now having experienced their new test). In this issue we look in at what can be done to transform driver testing, to ensure it meets the need of its customers – something that is clearly challenging to achieve at the moment.

As we went to press our CEO was at the DVSA raising the current issues of test waiting times directly with the key managers of these services, trying to get some idea of why these issues were still occurring and what was being done to resolve them. In the next issue we’ll report on the responses, but we’ll keep you updated on this important issue via our online channels in the meantime.

Talking of transforming the test, we also have news on the progress of the driving test trial. Although a success so far, online comments suggest some ADIs are puzzled over the feedback that trial candidates are “less decisive, experienced, confident and fast”. While the intention was to communicate that pupils are reflecting more on their competency and confidence – and not be so quick to decide on what may be a risky course of action as a consequence – the DVSA has acknowledged the explanation might be confusing, but reassures us that overall the trial test is being very positively received by pupils, trainers and examiners alike.

So with all the challenges, issues, but also positive developments in the industry, there is lots to write about. It’s good to be back.

Craig Thomas
INSTRUCTOR
CONTENTS

06 MEMBER OF THE MONTH
ADI Jimmy Ho explains how, after diversions into the worlds of banking and insurance, he’s now found his vocation

07 READERS’ FEEDBACK AND HELPDESK
Advice on how old your training car can be and on marking a Pass Plus student whose driving has deteriorated

08 ADI NEWS
All the latest news from the worlds of driver training and road safety, including the latest on the government contract for the theory test

18 CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT
Carly Brookfield is encouraged to see real progress on some key elements of the Road Safety Statement

19 INTENSIVE COMMENT
Noel Gaughan looks at the realities behind the latest statistical report from the Department for Transport

20 PASSING COMMENT
Tim Clayton thinks again about intensive driving courses, based on some recent new experiences of his own

21 KING’S COMMENT
Edmund King OBE explains how high-quality customer service is the key to successful businesses of all types

23 TESTING, TESTING
Carly Brookfield looks at the current issues with theory and practical tests – and how both can be improved

29 LEARNING NEVER STOPS
Tom Harrington considers the importance of CPD, the driver trainer and the challenge for change
Driving Instructor

35 TAX HELPDESK
Keith Halstead clarifies the recently introduced changes to the state pension and the costs of residential care

36 DIGITAL MARKETING
201
In the second part of our digital marketing guide, Amy Turner explains how to put your plan into action

40 BACK TO BASICS - PART 2
Olivia Baldock-Ward and Matthew Rathbone offer two contrasting perspectives of the learning-to-drive experience

43 DIA TRAINING
James Whalen explains how and why routines can be highly effective in the work of the driver trainer

49 DRIVING
The cars under the microscope this month are the Seat Ibiza FR 1.4 TDI, Citroen DS3 and Mazda 3

51 DIAMOND COMMENT
Karen Bransgrove explains how Diamond is responding to demand for taxi tests, enabling councils to bypass long waiting times

53 SAY WHAT YOU SEE
Steve Garrod tackles the coaching and assessment of commentary driving, a lesson theme in the new Standards Check

56 THE FUTURE OF MOTORING
The Auto Express team reveals the latest on wireless roads and a proposed Dutch ban on petrol and diesel cars

70 FINAL WORD
Marc Frost explains why now might just be the perfect time for ADIs to focus more on fleet training
Why did you become a driving instructor?
I’ve worked in banks, insurance companies and as a private mathematics tutor for many years and have always enjoyed the coaching side of these roles, whether it was in classrooms or as on-the-job training with new starters and employees. But then I decided to take it up a gear and coach on the roads. I wanted a real challenge, I wanted to run my own business, make a success out of it and make a real positive difference to people’s lives. I’ve never looked back since: it was the best decision I have ever made.

What do you get out of your profession?
I get a great deal of job satisfaction. It is invigorating to see my pupils progress, from the moment they first turn on that ignition, all the way up to passing their driving test (and beyond). Transferring knowledge can be a long and complex transition, but I get that amazing feeling when a pupil passes their driving test – I get to reflect back and see how all the work was well worth it, making a positive difference in the their lives. It goes without saying that as an ADI, you get to meet some amazing people from diverse backgrounds and I stay in touch with many of them, years after passing their tests.

What differences were there between when you started and now?
I was fortunate enough to have a pretty much full diary as soon as I qualified as an ADI. I’ve worked with hundreds of people before becoming an ADI and so people knew me anyway and what I do. I would say the first year or two of being an ADI is all about getting that experience in coaching and fully understanding how the industry works, the market and what everyday life is like as an ADI. I would now consider myself as an experienced ADI, helping learners, full licence holders, taxi drivers and instructor trainees. I’m currently working with the DIA to obtain my fleet badge too, so I can diversify my business further.

What was the most unusual driving/training experience you had?
Helping those learners with diverse needs is always a challenging experience. I’ve taught learners with extreme depression and anxiety, are partially blind, with cerebral palsy, missing limbs… the list goes on. However when they pass, it is truly an incredible moment. Like many other ADIs, I do like a challenge.

What obstacles have you faced and how did you get over them?
Earlier this year, I obtained my DIA Certificate in Coaching for Driver Education which will count towards my Diploma in Driver Education. The course proved to be a difficult one and it can also be quite time-consuming for an ADI, while still trying to run your own business and working every day on the roads. But my end goal and regular feedback from customers has constantly pushed me to strive and strive and strive. I am an extremely motivated individual and an incredibly hard-working ADI. I am motivated by success and I am extremely excited to see my future in this industry.

What is your fondest memory of being a trainer?
The DIA has asked me if they could use some of my in-car video clips as part of their training aid when delivering their National Standards training around the UK. I took this as a compliment. Coaching is so much fun and I am happy to share some of my experiences with other ADIs.

What advice would you give trainers starting out?
Do your research and give it a go... and, like anything else in life, don't be afraid of failing. People generally try so hard to avoid failure but you have to remember that failure is the real evidence that you have tried. If you avoid failure, you avoid taking action. Expect and accept that failure is part of the success experience. And remember, the more you put in, the more you’ll get out!

Would you like to be our member of the month? Contact us at feedback@driving.org and tell us why you think you should be nominated.
I am currently a driving instructor franchised to a driving school, and I am considering going out as an independent instructor. I was wondering how old a vehicle needs to be for it to be converted to a tuition vehicle. I currently have my own vehicle that is nine years old and would like to know if this can be used.

A vehicle used for driving tuition of this age should be no problem as long as it is safe, legal and roadworthy etc. Have a look at the minimum test vehicle requirements here: https://www.gov.uk/practical-driving-test-for-cars/rules-for-cars-used-for-driving-tests

Another consideration is your breakdown and recovery policy - some policies may only recover a vehicle up to a certain age. The DIA recovery policy will recover a UK-based car up to 20 years old, so take a look at this link to read more about our recovery policy http://www.driving.org/services/discountsdeals

I'm taking out a pupil for Pass Plus. His driving has seriously gone downhill since his pass in December, even though he's been out driving. So how do I mark up his report when I'm actually having to instruct him and have even had to use the dual controls?

The Pass Plus course requires you, as the ADI, to assess the driving of the candidate, and on the assessment sheet, you will need to state whether they have achieved (A) or exceeded (E) in each of the six subject areas. If you believe that their standard of driving does not meet with this criteria, then this will need a conversation between you and them to work towards improving their standard of driving. If they have recently passed a test with you and you say their standard has seriously gone downhill, then this will need addressing sooner rather than later. Depending on how old the pupil is and if they have parent(s) involved with helping to pay for the lessons, they will need to be included in the discussions about what is causing the standard of driving to be so poor and how you can help his driving standards improve. In short, you wouldn’t sign someone off for driving below standard for Pass Plus.

For more info on Pass Plus, go to https://www.gov.uk/pass-plus/how-pass-plus-training-works

UK Petrol Prices for 14 April 2016

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Source: Petrolprices.com
Theory Test furore – Learndirect lose out

Mainstream media outlets are claiming that the calamitous handling of the Theory Test contract will result in taxpayers footing a multimillion pound bill. But this is not the first time there has been an outcry at the mismanagement of this process and its impact on the public purse.

Sky News led with the headline ‘Taxpayer Pays Out Over Driving Test Fiasco’ with a special report by Mark Kleinman, Sky’s City editor, stating that taxpayers have been “left nursing a substantial bill after Whitehall officials slammed the brakes on a contract to move the management of Britain’s driving theory tests.”

Sky News has learnt that the government agreed a multimillion pound settlement this month with Learndirect, the privately owned company that was due to begin supplying the tests later this year.

The decision to cancel Learndirect’s involvement was taken by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA), with input from the Cabinet Office and the Department for Transport.

Officials refused to disclose the size of the payout to Learndirect, but it is said to have run to millions of pounds.

According to Sky, Whitehall sources conceded that taxpayers would also suffer financially, because of the cost of running the next procurement process and the fact that current supplier Pearson’s deal is significantly more expensive than the one proposed by Learndirect.

As Sky was quick to point out, this is the latest “botched procurement exercise involving Whitehall officials and another undistinguished chapter in the administration of tests for learner drivers.”

Issues over the handling of the Theory Test contract first hit the papers over two years ago when the DVSA was originally forced to pull back on a decision to hand the contract to Learndirect (from 2014) because they had failed to carry out proper checks on the company.

Pearson issued a formal challenge at the time and were rewarded with a two-year extension to their existing deal, which meant that Learndirect could not take over until at least 2016.

The contract with Learndirect was estimated, at the time, to be worth £20m-25m per year, leading to accusations in The Daily Telegraph in January 2014 that the botched process could have cost the taxpayer up to £20m over two years.

In response to the latest furore over the settlement paid to Learndirect, an official statement was has been released, stating: "The DVSA and Learndirect have concluded an exit from the contract for the provision of the UK Driving Theory Test, which was due to transfer to Learndirect in September 2016."

"Since the award of the original contract in 2013, demand for the test has increased by over 50% to 2.4m (2015/16) and is now forecast to reach 2.8m in 2017/18. Against that background, and because continuity of service is of primary importance, it has been decided that now is not the right time to transfer. Pearson VUE will therefore continue to provide the service for some time."

The DVSA, Learndirect, LDC, Pearson and the Cabinet Office declined to comment beyond the official statement. The Driving Instructors Association did contact the regulator directly earlier this week (on the publication of Sky’s story) to request further comment on the issue – particularly given the huge concern and interest the driver training industry would have about this latest news, and in the wider context of ongoing issues with the provision of driving test services in the UK – but the DVSA was unable to comment beyond its official statement.

DIA Chief Executive Carly Brookfield commented:

“Clearly, we will be raising this issue (among other concerns over the current provision of test services) in our meeting with the DVSA next week and pushing for a further explanation as to why this issue occurred at all – and asking what steps are being taken to better manage this process and the overall service in the future.

“With the added burden to the taxpayer, there obviously needs to be more serious consideration of how these services can be delivered more effectively, efficiently and economically in the future. With respect to DfT, the recent Motor Services Consultation asked for stakeholder views on ways in which the government could deliver such services more effectively and the DIA made a number of suggestions on how services such as the Theory Test could be better delivered.

“It is our view that a considerable amount of money could conceivably be saved by capitalising on the digital nature of the test. Huge resources (and a major element of the delivery costs in such contracts) are expended on delivering tests from dedicated Theory Test centres, premises that are costly to resource and also require other costly resources, such as staffing. The test is digital, so can be delivered anywhere. The reality is, increasingly, many such assessments and tests are delivered online and so can be done at low cost in more accessible locations such as schools, further education colleges and libraries (which, facing funding cuts, would probably welcome additional use of their resources).

“There were obvious areas where costs could be saved on the delivery of the Theory Test before the mishandling of the contract process. We should expect that the government and Pearson will now seriously consider how this service is better managed in the future.”
Pothole-ridden roads claims second cycling victim this year

The death has been confirmed of an 83-year-old cyclist who suffered serious head injuries in a fall from his bike after striking a pothole on a busy main road.

Roger Hamer, of Manchester Road, Ramsbottom, died at Salford Royal at 12.45pm on Sunday, April 4.

Hamer had suffered a ‘life-threatening’ head injury after hitting the pothole on Bury New Road in Ramsbottom on the afternoon of Saturday, March 5.

Hamer, who had not been wearing a helmet, was treated by paramedics at the scene before being taken to hospital. Police said that there is no evidence to suggest that any other vehicles were involved.

Earlier in March, Surrey resident Ralph Brazier, 52, of Thames Ditton, suffered fatal injuries when he rode over a deep pothole on a busy road in Weybridge.

DIA CEO Carly Brookfield commented:

“Incidents like these are all the more tragic as they are avoidable. Although £250m was apparently set aside in the Autumn budget (in a special pothole fund) to help fill the ruts, it’s too little money and what there is isn’t reaching our roads quick enough. In fact, according to a rather depressing report issued by Asphalt Industry Alliance, it will take an £11.8bn investment and 14 years to fill all the potholes currently littering UK roads.

“Coming from Rossendale, where the latest man perished, and still visiting the area regularly, I know how bad the state of the roads are all over the valley – and also in Surrey, where the DIA is based. However, it is equally tragic the latest victim was not wearing a helmet either, to offer some level of protection. With the roads in such a state of poor repair, and with all the other hazards they face, cyclists really must take safety seriously and wear the right protective clothing. Having lost my uncle to a similar accident I am so saddened to see people still taking these risks.”
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Learner driver threatened to kill examiner and instructor after failing test

A learner driver could face a prison sentence after threatening to kill his examiner and instructor, when he failed halfway through his practical driving test.

Antony Kevin Alltree, 25, also chased his driving instructor Kenneth Spencer down the street while shouting expletive language.

Burnley Magistrates Court heard how Alltree flew into a rage after Williams stopped him entering a roundabout by using the dual-control brakes, on February 9. After pulling over to the side of the road, Alltree got out of the car, slammed the door and shouted at Williams: “You would not have one that if you knew who I was.”

Driving instructor Kenneth Spencer tried to calm Alltree down, but Alltree shouted: “All I have to do is make one phone call and you are both dead. I’ll kill you.”

Alltree then started banging on the car and continued to shout expletives and when Williams began to drive off towards the test centre, Alltree chased after the car screaming abuse.

Defending, Graeme Parkinson said that Alltree suffers from anger management issues and also suffers from ADHD and dyslexia.

Parkinson said his client accepts he had handled the situation badly but chased after the car and went to the test centre to obtain his provisional licence, which he was fearful of losing.

“But he said it wasn’t until later he realised it had been in his jacket pocket throughout. He said his client did not recall using any expletives but accepts he probably did.

Parkinson added: “He does apologise for his behaviour and he accepts his behaviour was totally unacceptable.”

Alltree has nine previous convictions for offences including assault, disorderly behaviour and dishonesty.

The case has been adjourned until April 25, with Alltree given unconditional bail.

ADI reregistration bill passes Lords second reading

A bill to simplify the reregistration of ADIs has passed its second reading in the House of Lords.

The Driving Instructors (Registration) Bill allows for the voluntary removal from the ADI register and simplifies reregistering if registration has lapsed for between one and four years. It will now go to committee stage in the House of Lords following a short debate.

The cross-party-supported private members’ bill was brought to the house by Earl Attlee, who said the bill to allow ADIs voluntarily to leave the register at a time of their choosing was “only right”.

He added: “An ADI may wish to take a break from the profession and it is somewhat perverse that they are not able to do so without it being treated as a disciplinary matter if they have failed to attend the Standards Check because they are no longer practising.”

He continued: “Being able voluntarily to leave and then return at a later date without having to requalify will remove barriers that are out of date with current work practices and help reduce any stress for the ADI concerned.”

Labour peer Viscount Simon pointed out that the process of qualifying as an ADI was costly, difficult and time-consuming, and “sometimes those doing so are taking a leap into the unknown in respect of future employment”.

Transport minister Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon commented: “We must recognise that some of the legislation regarding the registration of instructors is out of date and due for a change. That is why we are here today — to make some minor, deregulatory changes to update that legislation and modernise the system for registering driving instructors.”

�erintendent, Pertemps.

‘Bored’ mobile phone course driver asks for fine and penalty points

A driver caught using his mobile phone asked for penalty points and a fine rather than a ‘boring’ course, according to West Yorkshire Police.

The unnamed motorist stated on a caution form he had completed a driver improvement course the day before.

He wrote: “Just give me the points and fine - I did the mobile phone course yesterday. It was as boring as hell.”

Police forces in England sometimes offer courses as an alternative to penalties for motoring offences.

The force’s road policing team shared a photo of the form on Twitter with the comment: “Some will never learn”.

Officers said the risks associated with using a phone while driving are very clear.

No details about where the man was stopped have been released.

DIA’s Olivia Balckdock-Wardcomments:

These courses exist with the view to providing some education to people who have been caught for doing something they shouldn’t. Rather than just taking points and a fine, the course aims to engage them in the day, highlighting the consequences of a driver’s actions. In this way they can take on some ownership and responsibility, and become safer drivers by being more self-aware of what damage they could cause themselves, their passengers and everyone else on the road.

FREELANCE DRIVER TRAINERS REQUIRED

To help deliver the driver training contract for the Royal Mail and future planned work.

We are particularly looking for trainers in the following areas. Mid and North Scotland including Aberdeen, Elgin, Thurso, Fort William, Perth, Dumfries and Inverness, Carlisle, Cumbria, Penrith, Cleveland, Scarborough, Grimsby, Darlington, Norwich, Great Yarmouth, Penzance, Cornwall, Mid and North Wales, Northampton, Herefordshire, Oxford, Hampshire, West Sussex.

If you are a DVSA Car / Fleet ADI or DVSA LGV Instructor, and passionate about coaching please email a full CV to sandra.macdonald-ames@ pertemps.co.uk, National Driver Training Manager, Pertemps.
The British Horse Society launches driver horse awareness campaign

The British Horse Society (BHS) has launched a new campaign that aims to encourage drivers to go slow when sharing the road with horse riders.

The number of reported accidents and incidents involving horse riders and cars is currently on the increase: in the last five years, there have been over 2,000 reports of road incidents involving vehicles and horses. The most common month for these incidents to occur is June, with the peak time for these accidents being 11am. Of the over 2,000 incidents reported, 181 resulted in the death of a horse and 36 caused the death of the rider.

The BHS has launched this campaign to make drivers aware of the need to slow down to 15mph when encountering horses on the road, as well as to give riders plenty of room.

When passing horses, drivers are urged to not only slow down to 15mph, but also to be patient, not to sound their horn or rev their engine, pass at least a car’s width wide and drive away slowly.

DIA’s Karen Bransgove comments: “The theory and hazard perception tests do incorporate ‘dealing with horses’, but instructors have a responsibility to discuss and teach all potential hazards, including horses and how to overtake them safely as part of, and included in, the learning process. It is not realistic to incorporate passing and approaching horses as part of the driving test, as this can be, for some areas, not possible or appropriate i.e. Greater London and built-up areas in cities”.

Part 3 to be replaced by Standards Check

The DVSA is to replace Part 3 of the ADI qualifying process with the Standards Check.

The change is intended “to improve the ADI qualification process and align it with the post-qualification assessment,” according to the DVSA’s business plan for 2016/17 as laid down in Parliament by transport minister Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon. In addition, the agency would work with key ADI stakeholders to agree proposed indicators for an earned recognition scheme for ADIs; consider options for introducing an online booking system for the ADI Standards Checks, so ADIs can book their own Standards Checks at a time that’s convenient for them; work with the DfT to move deregulation on to let fully qualified ADIs with dual-controlled cars offer lessons on motorways to learner drivers; and make changes to regulations so that ADIs can resign voluntarily from the register and allow those who’ve lapsed voluntarily to rejoin the register by successfully completing a standards check rather than requalifying.

The latter plan, to allow rejoicing of the register, is already at committee stage in the House of Lords following cross-party support for a private members bill introduced by David Amess.

In the plan, the DVSA said: “We’ll continue to regulate approved driving instructors who give paid car driver training, to make sure minimum standards are met and the overall integrity of the industry is maintained.”

London tops global city jam list

London topped the global list for congestion, according to analysis of the world’s traffic levels, becoming the first city to surpass 100 hours wasted per driver in gridlock.

With 101 hours, or four days, on average stuck in jams, London beat other cities around the world to top spot, according to the INRIX Traffic Scorecard.

The result was attributed to strong economic growth and record population levels, which ensured that London remained Europe’s gridlock capital for the second year in a row.

Congestion was up slightly in 11 of the 18 UK metropolitan areas in 2015, compared to 14 in 2014. The biggest increase outside of London was in Belfast, where drivers sat idle for 38 hours, affected by roadworks on the M2 as a result of a road improvement scheme. Birmingham experienced the biggest decline in traffic delays, with a decrease of 2.5 hours annually, which could be attributed to the completion of roadworks on the M6 and redevelopment projects in the city centre.

Nationally, UK drivers spent 30 hours on average in delays last year, consistent with 2014, but dropped to sixth in the European ranking as a result of Switzerland seeing a rise in traffic levels. Belgium remained Europe’s most gridlocked country, with drivers stuck in traffic for 44 hours on average.

“London is the victim of its own success, with a robust jobs market and a growing economy attracting more people, more construction and, consequently, more traffic,” said Bryan Mistele, president & CEO, of INRIX. “Transport for London is tackling this problem with its £4bn Road Modernisation Plan. While in the short term the roadworks from this initiative are frustrating for drivers, they are a step towards creating a more sustainable and modernised transport network.”

Petition to change driving test after horse killed

Thousands of people have signed a petition calling for a change to the UK driving test after a horse died when a car crashed into a funeral procession in Bridgend, Wales.

More than 13,000 people have already signed the petition, which calls for making passing and approaching horses and horse-drawn vehicles part of the driving test.

This means that it has already exceeded the 10,000 signatures required for the government to respond.

A current driving test trial is looking at updating the test.

Natasha Thomas from the Welsh Pony and Cob Society said that the current Highway Code guidance on passing horses did not go far enough.

“You never know where you are going to meet a horse. It needs to be part of the test.

“More and more people riding now carry cameras to video everything, so they can pass recordings to police if necessary.”

Following the crash in Sarn, Bridgend, the horse leading the carriage had to be put down by the roadside.

Coach master Mark Evans posted photos on social media showing his 13-year-old Belgian black lying dead in the middle of the road, and wrote: “I’m sorry if these pictures are distressing.”

The owner of the horse-drawn carriage business said he wanted the graphic images of his dead stallion to be shared to show what could happen when a car came into contact with a horse.

The South Wales Police is still investigating the cause of the crash but no arrests have been made.
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Pothole damage hits 6m drivers

More than six million UK drivers had to pay for repairs to their vehicles in 2015 because of potholes.

Research from car repair company Kwik Fit found that over the last year, 6.3m drivers had suffered damage from hitting potholes, with bills totalling £884m – an average £108.60 for repairs to tyres, wheels, suspension, exhausts or other bodywork.

Hitting a pothole is most likely to have caused damage in Yorkshire & Humber and London, where over a third (37% and 35% respectively) of drivers hitting a pothole had to make repairs. Welsh drivers were least likely to have to suffer from the effect of hitting a pothole, although even here 17% faced repair bills.

Collectively, drivers in the South-East, had to pay most for repairs caused by potholes (£108,149,130), followed by drivers in London, with the capital’s roads causing £91,368,450 worth of damage.

Per individual driver, the costliest damage was suffered in the East of England, where drivers had to pay an average of £163.68, nearly three times as much as drivers in Wales, where the average repair bill was £51.83. Welsh drivers have collectively faced the lowest bill of all regions at £12.4m, less than half the cost to drivers in the North-East of England, the second least-affected region.

The most recent Annual Local Authority Road Maintenance survey reveals that only £13.5m has been paid out in compensation in England and Wales, just 2.1% of the total cost of damage.

Kwik Fit also found that 31% of motorists who hit a pothole in the last 12 months say they did so because it was hidden by water that they thought was just a puddle. Kwik Fit found that nearly half (46%) of those hitting a pothole said they would have risked colliding with other traffic if they had swerved around it, while 4% of those hitting a pothole were honest enough to admit that they were driving too fast and couldn’t stop in time.

Roger Griggs, communications director at Kwik Fit, said: “We all understand that council budgets are stretched right across the country, but this research shows the financial burden being placed upon people in having their cars off the road for repairs.”

UK concerns over driverless lorries

Nearly half of those questioned wouldn’t feel safe knowing driverless lorries are on the road, according to new research.

With the government announcing trials on the M6 in Cumbria, a survey from business intelligence research consultancy Future Thinking found that 43% of respondents would not feel safe being on the same road as driverless lorries.

However, 27% said they may feel safe if more testing has been done and 22% said they would only feel safe if there was someone in the cab with override capability.

The survey also found that men were twice as likely to agree to feeling safe if driverless lorries were on the road, with 13% feeling safe, compared to just 6% of females.

Results by age indicate that older generations of motorists are less likely to agree to feeling safe knowing that driverless lorries are on the road: 47% of over-55s would not feel safe, compared to 38% of 18-34-year-olds.

The government announced in the recent Budget statement that “lorry platooning” trials, in which vehicles form a convoy headed by a driver in the leading lorry, would go ahead, with driverless cars being trialled on UK roads by 2017.

Many motoring organisations have questioned the feasibility of a lorry platooning scheme in the UK.

AA chairman Edmund King noted: “The problem with the UK motorway network is that we have more entrances and exits of our motorways than other motorways in Europe or, indeed, the world.

“Therefore it’s very difficult to have a 44-tonne, 10-lorry platoon, because other vehicles need to get past the platoon to enter or exit the road.”

Lisa Bedwell, senior director at Future Thinking said: “Consumers are clearly cautious towards the concept of driverless vehicles. Despite being surrounded by technology and the increasingly important role it plays in all our lives, one suspects that people remain wary of its reliability in this instance. In addition, there are a number of legal and ethical issues, which will need to be addressed by policy makers and manufacturers to ensure consumers fully understand the implications of driverless vehicles on our roads.”

Survey seeks drivers’ perceptions of automated vehicles

The University of Southampton is seeking members of the public for a new study (which can be found at www.isurvey.soton.ac.uk/19791) into people’s perceptions of automated vehicles.

Participants will be required to view a series of short videos of a white Tesla Model S making lane changes, while driving on a motorway, and decide whether it is being driven by a human driver or a computer. The survey, which can be done from any computer or mobile device, takes about 10 minutes.

The study’s leader, Professor Neville Stanton, said: “The study will help us to understand the effect of new vehicle automated systems on driving behaviour and cognitive abilities. We hope that the results will help to detect potential problems before the automated systems are launched on the market.”

The research is part of the ‘Human Factors for Automated Driving’ project, funded by the European Commission, which involves European industrial and academic partners investigating relevant issues that the implementation of highly automated vehicles will pose to society.

For further information on the project, please email N.Stanton@soton.ac.uk or Alexander.eriksson@soton.ac.uk
Man impersonating driving instructor arrested on suspicion of fraud in Wales

In an operation by police and the Driving and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA), a man has been arrested on suspicion of fraud.

This comes after a crackdown on unqualified driving instructors. The individual was thought to be taking payments in return for training without holding a valid ADI badge.

Driving school vehicles were stopped and driving instructor accreditations were checked in a series of roadside checks in Bangor.

Investigator Gareth Edwards said the organisation urges all learners to ensure their instructor is qualified to teach by checking they display a valid DVSA badge in their windscreen.

He said: “Learners can also use the free ‘Find a Driving Instructor’ service on Gov.UK to see details of the nearest instructors who are approved and registered with the DVSA.

“All approved driving instructors undergo regular assessments of their ability to teach and are also CRB checked.

“ Illegal driving instruction is rare but when it happens can potentially be very serious. We investigate all reported cases and work with the police to bring offenders to justice.”

More child road casualties over summer months

Research conducted by the RAC Foundation has found that more children die on Britain’s roads in the longer summer days than during the winter.

The RAC’s research, based on a five-year average over 2010-14, found that the largest number of child casualties recorded was in June.

June saw the lowest monthly averages, with 227 children under 15 being hurt or killed out of a total of 1,733 road casualties in this age group.

December saw the lowest monthly averages, with 122 children being hurt or killed out of a total of 1,103 casualties.

These figures are attributed to the fact that more children play outdoors with friends, walk to school or cycle during the warmer, longer summer days, which means a potentially higher exposure to risk, according to the RAC Foundation.

The research also found that 40% of child road casualties are pedestrians and that 13% of all child road casualties are cyclists.

In addition, the peak hour for child road casualties occurs between 3pm and 4pm, with many children also being hurt in the couple of hours following. The research also indicated a spike between 8am and 9am, during the school rush hour.

The regions with the highest child casualties were Blackpool, Hyndburn, Blackburn with Darwen, Burnley, North East Lincolnshire, East Lindsey, Boston, Ceredigion, Preston and Liverpool.

RAC Foundation director Steve Gooding said: “Instinctively we think of the dark, cold months as taking the biggest toll on our children. But the opposite is true.

“We don’t want to wrap our children in cotton wool, and walking and cycling are generally good for our health, so as adults and parents we need to lead by example whether we are driving a car, crossing the road or on two wheels.

“The more we act responsibly, the faster young children will learn and the more likely they will be to stay safe when they have to make decisions for themselves.”
Parallel panic for UK drivers

Almost half of UK drivers would park further away from their destination just to avoid having to parallel park.

According to a survey from vehicle supplier OSV, 47% would drive further away to avoid parallel parking, such is their hatred of the manoeuvre.

Out of those surveyed, 15% would avoid parallel parking completely, while 75% said the pressure of having another driver waiting for them puts them off while attempting to parallel park.

The survey also found that a fifth of drivers admitted to circling around town to find on-street parking to avoid paying for parking tickets and a further third (33%) say that they always forget to bring along change for the ticket machine, so look for alternatives.

“I think that everyone has experienced the panic of parking poorly in front of an audience,” said OSV director Andrew Kirkley.

He continued: “An inability to parallel park can be a real disadvantage though, especially if you regularly visit the suburbs. All it takes is a little confidence, so I’d advise nervous drivers to practice.”

Drivers average 2.8m fixed penalties annually

Motorists in England and Wales have managed to clock up 2.8m fixed penalty notices over the past 10 years.

Analysis from Direct Line Car Insurance found that drivers were fined 2.8m times a year on average, with 5.6m FPNs for parking offences alone.

The research also found that over 15m FPNs were issued for speeding, while 2.01m motorists were issued with fines for neglect of traffic signs and directions, or pedestrian rights, including failing to give way, running a red light or driving elsewhere than on the road.

Meanwhile, 2.03m motorists received a fine for not wearing a seatbelt and 5.6m FPNs were handed out for behaviours such as obstruction and parking offences.

Some 852,488 drivers were fined because they were not up to date on their paperwork, including vehicle registration and excise licence offences, as well as driving without valid insurance or while disqualified.

On a regional basis, drivers in Suffolk, South Wales and Merseyside were the worst offenders overall (982, 351 and 341 per 1,000 of the population respectively).

Event diary

April

Wednesday 27

Manchester National Standards Training Day

Manchester Holiday Inn - West

New and updated for 2016 with a whole host of real driving videos, interactive sessions and discussions, to equip ADIs to deliver grade-A standard training each and every day.

£79 for members, £89 for non-members

www.driving.org/training/standards

Thursday 28

Leeds National Standards Training Day

Mercure Leeds Parkway Hotel

New and updated for 2016 with a whole host of real driving videos, interactive sessions and discussions, to equip ADIs to deliver grade-A standard training each and every day.

£79 for members, £89 for non-members

www.driving.org/training/standards

Friday 20

Surrey Neurodiversity Training Day

Coulsdon Manor Hotel

This course will provide an invaluable insight into teaching those with diverse neurological needs.

£79 for members, £89 for non-members

www.driving.org/training/neurodiversity

May

Wednesday 4

Plymouth National Standards Training Day

Future Inn Plymouth Hotel

New and updated for 2016 with a whole host of real driving videos, interactive sessions and discussions, to equip ADIs to deliver grade-A standard training each and every day.

£79 for members, £89 for non-members

www.driving.org/training/standards

Friday 6

Glasgow National Standards Training Day

Glynhill Hotel and Leisure Club

New and updated for 2016 with a whole host of real driving videos, interactive sessions and discussions, to equip ADIs to deliver grade-A standard training each and every day.

£79 for members, £89 for non-members

www.driving.org/training/standards

November

Friday 20

Fresh Direction Driver and Rider Expo

This course will provide an invaluable insight into teaching those with diverse neurological needs.

£17 for members

drivertrainerexpo.com

The ADI News event page aims to showcase the best in events and courses from around the driver trainer industry as well as the general motoring, driving and motorbike worlds. If you want a course or event included, please contact us at amyturner@driving.org
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PRING IS CERTAINLY in the air in Road Safety strategy, even if it’s not in the weather! To extend the vernal metaphor further, there are more than a few green shoots of enthusiasm pushing through at the Department for Transport, as it explores better ways of tackling road safety – including potential policy developments and new initiatives that could bode well for driver training community, by placing more of a focus on the importance of pre-test training.

Attending the latest meeting of the government’s Road Safety Delivery Group this month, I was encouraged to see real progress on some key elements of the Road Safety Statement (published in December last year), which sets out the government’s key strategic priorities in relation to improving the safety of our roads for all road users. The DTfH already commissioned a research project to evaluate road safety education interventions worldwide and establish which particular interventions appear to be the most effective. Out of the massive amount of activity taking place across the globe, there are clear activities that have a positive impact (and, importantly, are properly evidenced: one negative aspect of road safety education is that, sadly, so many projects aren’t properly evaluated and resources, and the opportunity to do something more effective, are wasted as a result). As a result of the initial research project, a number of key interventions have been identified as having a clear impact and further research will now be undertaken into these in order to understand how we can implement them in the UK and how effective they would potentially be.

Sadly, I can’t say too much about those key interventions to be further evaluated and scoped right now, as the research project is ongoing. But I can say I am excited about one in particular and the role ADIs will necessarily play in both the research element – and the eventual delivery of it (if the evaluation shows it could be effective and workable in the UK). Hopefully, by the time our National Driver Training Conference rolls around in September (the date will be announced very soon) we can share a lot more detail on this and get your input into shaping what this would look like in practice. The DfT is very enthusiastic about getting driver and rider trainers to play a bigger role in road safety education, and sees DfT members as a key channel for dialogue on developing driver training and education in the UK.

Spring also signals the return of our National Standards Training Days. While the team is available on the phone every week to give one-on-one advice to ADIs on how they can better work towards meeting the National Standards in the everyday (as well as demonstrating how they do that on the Standards Check itself), these one-day sessions are an excellent opportunity to learn more about the three key sets of National Standards themselves, the Standards Check assessment, and how to develop your skills and knowledge to meet the key requirements of driver and rider training. And further CPD is still necessary. One of the key agenda items for a meeting with the DVSA scheduled this month was to look at the progress of the Standard Check and how ADIs are performing against it. It appears there are still a number of trainers failing on the risk management element, as they struggle to demonstrate that they are both aware of their responsibility to manage risk and to also communicate to the pupil their responsibility for managing risk.

Other areas of weakness include failing to adequately demonstrate how learning is adapted to meet the specific student’s needs, or learning environment, as the lesson progresses. As over 15,000 Standards Checks have now taken place, we learn more and more about where ADIs perform well or need more development – and we’ll continue to share that learning with you via training days and updates in the magazine.

Another issue being experienced with the check is the number of failures to attend still occurring, with 10% of ADIs invited to Standards Check not turning up at all. When you think about the impact that has on examiner resources (at a time of great pressure on those resources) we really do encourage some ADIs to be more responsible about their professional obligations.
Transport has released its latest statistical report, which makes interesting reading: if you haven’t already read it, I would suggest you get yourself a copy. It tells us that there have been fewer practical car driving tests conducted and a big drop in the numbers of driving instructors on the DVSA register. It also gives a rundown of how many driving tests were conducted, along with a breakdown of pass rates of the candidates by age and sex. The good news is that there doesn’t seem to be a major percentage point difference on the pass rates between the younger and the older candidates, for which we should all give ourselves a big pat on the back. The bad news is there is a big difference between male and female pass rates, where we have a major problem, as there is no difference between the ability of men and women learning to drive. Let’s take a closer look at these statistics.

I know from personal experience that women tend to work harder in lessons and take more of them to ensure that they are test standard. My experience is that the women I’ve taught had a slightly higher pass rate than the men, but according to the DVSA stats, the pass rate for men is just over 50%, while for women it’s 44%.

I was more than surprised at this. Are we treating women differently when we teach them, or is the way the driving test conducted skewed against them?

The other main statistic that concerned me – but definitely didn’t surprise me – was that there was a major drop (over 5%) in the number of practical car driving tests conducted. This is not what the DVSA has been telling us: indeed, it seems to contradict its assertion that it has been working hard to bring waiting times down at test centres. Fewer tests conducted has a major impact on our earning power. Those of you who read my piece on this in the last issue will know I have set up a petition (https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/123957) to pressurise the DVSA to get its act together and increase the number of tests conducted, and reduce test waiting times to five weeks or below.

Please support us and sign the petition, as I believe it’s in all our interests.

ADIs on the DVSA register also saw another big drop of over 13% since December 2011. That is a pretty major fall that would put any industry under a lot of pressure: we need as many good instructors as we can get. As there are more people learning to drive, we should be seeing an increase in instructors on the register. We have to ask ourselves why there has been such a decrease and how we can reverse this trend. Has it got anything to do with the new Standards Check or is it something more fundamental. Is the industry seen as a drab career choice? I hope not. But if we are, we will need to get out there and show people the wonderful work we do to keep our roads safe, because we’re at the forefront of road safety. Tell your friends that becoming a driving instructor was the best choice you ever made and perhaps they will want to become an ADI too.

Now for the really big one, the pass rate: fewer than half the people who take their driving test pass first time. How can this be?

I talk to lots of ADIs and nearly everyone tells me their pass rate is around 70%. Of course, people tell lies when asked about how good they are at teaching people to drive, but having a pass rate of less than half in this country is shameful. I think the only way to get the pass rate up quickly is for the DVSA to call in every instructor with a pass rate below 50% and tell them that if they do not get their act together they will be taken off the register. I think the only way to get the pass rate up quickly is for the DVSA to call in every instructor with a pass rate below 50% and tell them that if they do not get their act together they will be taken off the register. Such a short, sharp shock might help to remind the lazier instructors out there that this is not a job for life and if they do not get their pass rates up quickly, they will soon become an ex-ADI. I would personally like to see the national pass rate at 75% or above. Let’s hope.

Until next time...
PASSING COMMENT

TIM CLAYTON RETHINKS HIS ATTITUDE TO INTENSIVE COURSES

DON’T KNOW what I think about intensive courses. I used to, and it wasn’t very positive, but now I’m not so sure. During a recent lull in booking activity, I opened an email from a company offering such things, which had found me on the Gov.UK site.

Their own website read well. The founder was an ex-ADI and the company now appeared to cover the nation, with sensible prerequisites for their 19-, 30-, and 42-hour offerings, respectively. The instructor pages were convincing too, as was the 90-second video about why cramming made sense. Good for an instructor, but what about the all-important Client, on whose Learning we are encouraged to Centre?

There was no hassle involved: I simply agree to take an individual whose postcode and name are divulged, with a few words about previous experience, and the site guides you through what’s expected (make contact with them, take regular breaks while teaching, have the remainder of their course fee from them when you meet). Other benefits include being relieved of any dead time or fuel cost between short teaching commitments, a faster getting-to-know-you experience (which can accelerate your teaching approach) and a mind-focusing deadline. There’s still the flexibility of changing pace and it’s easier to go further afield. Plus there’s the chance of recommendations (intensive or not). The hourly rate was 10-15% below my usual, but that computed.

It’s just as deserving of our aim to always strive to deliver best-value learning.

The student also has a fixed target, can be encouraged to be more realistic about the endpoint (if they start a over-optimistic) and can fit lessons into a busy schedule. They also have their test booked and paid for, and a free retest if it doesn’t work out.

But does it make for effective long-term learning? I took on two pupils. Matt, a late-20s barber, was first. He’d had an hour in mum-in-law’s C-Max but spent his late teens on a bike — which showed in awareness and road sense. By the end of day two (12/30 hours in) we’d covered the whole syllabus and were up to test standard.

But Matthew was aiming high and applied his not-inconsiderable stamina to strive for perfection. My own stamina, though, meant I needed a break after day three, conscious my teaching was affected. We adjourned for half of Thursday, both later admitting that’d been crucial for freshening up. Nonetheless, it remained a challenge to find sufficient faults to focus upon, but Matthew was worried he might forget the directions in the Indy Drive so we sauntered about the test suburbs doing plenty.

Come Friday and the last test slot of the day, Matt declared himself slightly nervous but well rested. He acquitted himself very well (only 2 DFs) despite me marooning us too far north just as the private schools emptied and the roads clogged with Touaregs and Discoverys: I drove barely legally to get us to the centre only five minutes late (all credit to the examiner for hanging on). It was a test of Matt’s capabilities (under undue pressure, for which I heartily apologised) that served to illustrate just what kind of road-user he would be. Moral: don’t let final-day indy driving lull you away from interpreting your digital dashboard clock.

Samantha was different. She’d had three lessons, was younger, but just as mature. She did 12-hour shifts at a hotel and was pursuing a science degree. We clicked, so the learning occurred more steadily and was fun. The town was different, too, which made a good psychological change, but a DVSA strike caused Sam’s test to be rebooked where Matt had taken his: the company did the rearranging and our blocks of time made for easy travel between towns.

Learning from my previous week, I recommended Wednesday apart and continuing beyond the usual six-hour day (to experience rush hours and gloom). We set the tenor and timetable of each day.

More immersively trained but less natural than Matt, Sam fared less well on test. Her stamina and self-confidence was less, and nerves made her go at an early roundabout when she should have paused. Still, her overall tally was creditable and the free retest kicks in.

So, has my view on intensives shifted? Sure. It’s good for the instructor and at least no worse for the student. And if the weather’s too consistent, or someone gets too saturated, you can always defer some hours to maximise the upselling. It’s as flexible as you both wish and just as deserving of our aim to always strive to deliver best-value learning. And for a quick boost to finances or refilling the diary after a career-break, what’s not to like?
HEN I FIRST started running a car rental business in Los Angeles some years ago, I was often surprised that even when we had no cars to rent we often had customers willing to wait for cars. This is a city where there are more cars to rent per square mile than anywhere else in the world. Why was this?

To put it into context, when we started Marathon Rent A Car in West Los Angeles it was half a grade higher than Rent-A-Wreck. Unlike the big boys, we never had new cars to rent.

We had just 13 vehicles. We were cheap, but not the cheapest (for $2 a day more you could even get a brand new vehicle down the road). So why were our customers so loyal and why didn’t we buy more cars?

I put our customer loyalty down to excellent service rather than excellent products. Our tagline was “We go the extra mile” and we did. We would always pick up our customers, as we reasoned that if they wanted to rent a car they might not be able to get to us. Even though our cars were old, they were always meticulously clean. We even squirted special cleaner on the tyres to make them shine and the final touch was a splash of perfume inside. We were also polite to our customers (to their faces) and we added little touches – fresh ground coffee on the go and sweets in a jar on the counter.

Our English accents probably helped make us sound honest and decent (which we were) but the real lesson I learned was that going that extra mile can pay dividends when things go wrong — which they sometimes did.

Your customers have a choice of where they go to learn to drive. You might not be the cheapest, but if you offer excellent service, your reputation will spread quickly. At Marathon we never advertised but word soon got around. Garages, hotels and individuals would recommend us. Try thinking of some of that extra service that you can offer to your customers. Go that extra mile.

Our customer service was good but not that good if we ran out of cars to rent. The worst time was during the 1988 presidential campaign when I received a call from an aide to Michael Dukakis, the Democratic candidate, who was coming to town, needed an open-top car and it had to be American. Thinking about the PR potential I said we would sort it out for them.

But we had a pick-up truck on the forecourt and nothing else. The candidate would be in town in 3 hours. We decided that the only thing was to phone the renter of one of our Jeeps and convince him to bring it in. We uttered some half-truths about the Jeep needing a recall to check the brakes and we would upgrade. I wasn’t looking forward to explaining that a pick-up truck was an upgrade from a Jeep.

The renter arrived 30 minutes before Dukakis, helpfully pointing out that the Jeep wasn’t running well. By chance, one of our Cadillacs had come in, so I convinced the renter to take it. Our backroom staff were cleaning and adjusting of the Jeep, just fixing a brand new numberplate holder on the back when the presidential hopeful arrived.

I completed the paperwork and sent the Senator on his way, praying that the jeep wouldn’t backfire as he departed. That evening, our PR dreams came true when an NBC camera crew crashed into the back of the Dukakis Jeep and Marathon was all over the nightly news. And he hadn’t taken the collision damage waiver, so had to pay for the damage.

The moral of the story was that we needed to expand the business and buy more cars. We were jeopardizing our customer service as we were always sailing close to the wind. In any successful business there comes a time when sensible expansion of the business should be considered. Incremental change is often the best way forward when the economic outlook is uncertain.

If you are having to turn away potential customers due to lack of time and resource, perhaps it is time to look at more cars and instructors. But do your sums. Research the potential market. Model best- and worst-case scenarios. Look at potential returns. Consider temporary solutions for busiest times of the year.

Don’t have a closed mind. Have a vision of how you would like your business to develop. You might be a one-man band but would a duo be more effective.

My answer was to buy more cars. Pretty obvious really, but we needed to hear it from someone else. So talk to other businesses, competitors, advisers, bank managers and plan your future. Don’t just sit back and wish you had a Jeep.

EDMUND KING OBE GOOD CUSTOMER SERVICE IS THE KEY FOR ANY BUSINESS

ABOUT THE WRITER
Edmund is best known for media appearances on the subject of motoring and transport policy. He is president of the Automobile Association and a visiting professor of transport at Newcastle University.
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TIME TO TRANSFORM TESTING SERVICES?

CARLY BROOKFIELD LOOKS AT THE FUTURE OF DRIVER TRAINING AND TESTING REGIMES

REGULAR READERS OF my columns know I love a topical pun and I can’t resist the temptation now. Currently the DVSA is facing very ‘testing’ times, and no little criticism, when it comes to the provision of both the practical driving test and the theory test.

Not to rub their noses in it, but as a useful reminder of what brings us to this point, the last couple of years have indeed been challenging. 2014 saw much being made in the media of the apparent botching of the change in provider for the theory test contract, with the then-contract holder (and still the incumbent) Pearson successfully challenging the decision to move to Learndirect. Pearson’s challenge was upheld, as a number of crucial checks required in any such process, and on any new contract holders, had not been effectively carried out on Learndirect. The upshot was that Pearson got to keep the contract for a further two years, earning a lot more money, given their fee and costs to provide was higher than that which Learndirect proposed — although the Coalition government at the time insisted Pearson would be operating the tests for a lower fee than they
had previously been paid. But this still meant
the taxpayer was left to foot a reported £2.5m
bill for the bungled process. Learndirect,
although clearly unhappy about the decision
at the time, could at least take comfort in the
knowledge that they would be able to take over
at the time, could at least take comfort in the
knowledge that they would be able to take over
the contract in 2016 instead.

Or so we all thought. News of another
multimillion bill for the taxpayer related to
this contract broke this month, as the DVSA
paid an undisclosed sum to Learndirect to
compensate them for the fact they will not now
be getting to take up the contract in 2016. The
DVSA has pulled the plug on the transfer of
the contract and issued this statement by way
of explanation:

“Since the award of the original contract
in 2013, demand for the test has increased
by over 50% to 2.4m (2015/16), and is now
forecast to reach 2.8m in 2017/18.

“Against that background, and because
continuity of service is of primary importance,
it has been decided that now is not the right
time to transfer. Pearson VUE will therefore
continue to provide the service for some time.”

We all recognise, of course, the very real
fact that demand for tests has increased
and there is a strong argument in favour of
questioning whether, when the pressure is
on, you really want to be bringing in a new
provider, with a new way of doing things
(which could cause delays and gaps in
delivery – an inevitable consequence of
a change in provider on such large-scale
outsourced contracts). However, the fact that
the Learndirect proposal originally offered a
less costly solution – with proposed wider
access, coupled with the financial costs
already mounting due to the mismanagement
of the contract – does raise some serious
challenges and puts some real pressure on
the DVSA and Pearson to deliver the Theory Test
service much more efficiently and effectively in
the future.

Then we have the issue of practical test
waiting times – 20 weeks or even longer for
your L test and vocational tests (although
you could always find another provider, such
as Diamond). The peak of the crisis seemed
to hit just as the DfT’s Motoring Services
Consultation asked stakeholders for views on
how the test could be better provided, perhaps
skewing some respondent’s responses. There
were a number of reasons for the increased
waiting times. First was an unforeseen peak
in demand. Unforeseen? Those of us who
understand the basics of economic and market
trends – and you’d expect there to be at least
a few of those in the employ of key government
departments – would realise that a recovery
from recession would result in an upswing in
demand that could be met if you are managing
resources correctly. Next was an unexpectedly
high number of apparently sudden examiner
retirements, which leaves me picturing a load
of ex-examiners reclining on loungers in their
gardens, being served cocktails on repurposed
clipboards, directing their spouses how to
mow the lawn). Finally, there have been issues
with recruiting and training new examiners in a
timely manner.

It’s not like the DVSA is unaware of
the issues

All of these factors, it could be argued,
could have been, better managed. And matters
haven’t been made any better by industrial
action from examiners.

I’m sure there are more issues that members
could point to, but – even though listing all
the issues is necessary to both set out the
context, and the rationale, for radical reform
and fresh thinking when it comes to test
services – I’m not here to crucify the DVSA.
And, in fairness, it’s not like the DVSA is
unaware of the issues, isn’t asking for input
on how best to develop what it does and isn’t
working towards creating better solutions itself.
There are a raft of changes that staff at the
DVSA themselves have worked hard to set in
motion and would love to see happen, but are
unable to be progressed because of economic
or political factors outside of their control.

Indeed, we have to allow that a lot of positive
and progressive changes have been achieved
by the agency, or are in the process of being
made. For example, the introduction of a new
and completely world-leading, up-to-date
HPT test (using state-of-the-art, computer-
generated imagery, which means new films
and tests can be generated and updated far
quicker and cheaper). The new driving test
trial has also seen over 4,000 pupils, hundreds
of ADIs and Britain’s top transport research
talent work together to discover a better way of
making the practical driving test a much more
effective assessment of a candidate’s ability
to drive independently. And new procedures
have been put in place to enable the agency
to recruit and train examiners in a much more
expedient way, so the successful candidates
can be put to work as soon as possible.

And recent discussions with the DfT, and the
publication of the Road Safety Statement in
December, signals a real desire by the wider
transport agency to engage with stakeholders
like you and me to find other ways of making
testing services better. Plus, whatever we
may read on industry forums and blogs, you
don’t really seem to think the DVSA does the
worst job in the world when it comes to the
test: over 58% of respondents said in a survey
we carried out in response to the Motoring
Services Consultation in October that you felt
the DVSA was the best-placed organisation to
carry out this role in a trusted and transparent
manner.
So what is the point of this article? Well, we’ve looked at what’s wrong, but what could make it right, or at least better? We’ve had a few thoughts on this and received some really good ideas from our members too. Some of these suggestions we fed back in our official response to the Motoring Services Consultation back in October and we continue now to develop as more solid ideas. Some of these include:

- Evolving the learning-to-drive pathway so, instead of a headlong rush at the practical test and one theory test in between, it is instead made up of a series of competences and assessments that candidates must work through (and formally record via a log) with a professional instructor en route to full licence acquisition, more like the Private Pilots Licence (PPL) framework than what we have now for driving. As well as having the clear benefit of ensuring more pupils engage in more formal training for a more appropriate period of time (with a suitably qualified and regulated trainer), and the additional benefit of greater standardisation of the required competences for all trainers and pupils to work through, it would also control the flow of candidates to test better. In our modelling of this brave new world, you would only be able to book your practical test on completing all the designated modules and their accompanying assessments, regulating the flow of candidates to test and easing the pressure on resources and reducing waiting times.

- Exploring how driving tests could be offered more flexibly, with more test slots available at weekends and evenings, as well as offering more flexible and accessible locations. As well as better meeting the needs of the customer, this could also help reduce costs (or at least help the service generate more fees to cover costs by charging a premium for premium slots – without, of course, economically discriminating against those unable to pay more). For example, will we still necessarily need lots of physical test centres – operated at significant cost – in the future or could tests be delivered from centres already in use for other educational purposes (FE colleges, for example). And this could also apply to the theory test: after all, it is a digitally delivered and assessed test, so why do we have to have dedicated physical centres across the country, staffed specifically for that one purpose alone? Could more theory tests instead be delivered (again) at FE colleges or other learning resource centres such as libraries. These are currently fighting to maintain their funding in many areas, yet these are buildings with the ICT resources, space and even staff who could conceivably host these services.
Why do we have to have dedicated physical theory test centres across the country?

Exploring whether the DVSA itself is best placed to provide all aspects of practical testing or whether there are more suitable entities to provide some of those services more efficiently. When it comes to vocational tests, there are clearly options to be considered in terms of other organisations being able to carry out those specific tests. In areas where L tests are almost impossible to get in less than a 10-week timeframe, taking away the need to resource vocational tests additionally would allow for better service and quicker turnaround for both vocational test candidates and learners, as they would no longer be competing for the same resources (i.e. examiners). We have certainly got an insight of how this can work better, with more and more licensing authorities using the Diamond Taxi Test and Diamond examiners, as they feel we not only offer a more responsive service, but also a better test product for their specific customers.

Other ideas mooted by the government and other stakeholders that are interesting to explore (and debate, as they are quite controversial) include:

Is there an opportunity for sharing physical facilities with other educational or wider public sector bodies, to provide tests utilising other public sector staffing resources? There is some available capacity in some public sector roles – roles that are also conveniently based in publicly funded buildings, with the physical capacity to host tests – which perhaps could be utilised more widely to deliver greater value. Using other public services to provide test services is quite a rational, if not radical (and potentially unpopular, in some quarters) move:

Employers and specific industry sectors, in particular, could equally be encouraged and enabled do more in-house, in terms of testing and training. We already support entire industries (such as oil and gas) overseas with large driver training and testing requirements to be able to carry out more training and assessments with delegated examiners and it’s worth exploring how – with obviously the right safeguards and quality assurance mechanisms in place – this could be developed further within companies and whole industries in the UK.

These are just a few of the many thoughts we and others have had about how driving test services could be provided in the future. I’d love to hear (and have already incorporated into our feedback to the DfT and DVSA) suggestions from you as to what we could do to improve the provision of services so fundamental to driver trainers and their pupils.

In the meanwhile, however, I’ll leave you with this thought.

We think we have it bad at times here, but have a look at an article in The Daily Telegraph I found from 2012, entitled ‘France’s driving test bureaucracy keeps the young in the slow lane’ (just Google that title and it will come up). There are elements of their learning-to-drive regime that we do envy, such as the fact that pupils must mandatorily complete at least 20 hours with a professional instructor and also driving schools themselves booking the test slots, so the pupil is reliant on the driving school for a test (which, in turn, is reliant on tests being granted by local bureaucrats, which can be problematic).

But there is also a lot to dislike and which was (at the time) slowing the system down to an snail’s pace and allowing corruption and quasi monopolies to exist. And, indeed, at least we have an existing test regime, however imperfect it may be.

The roads to Croydon aren’t paved with perfect drivers every morning, as I make my commute into the office, but at least I know the majority of motorists have at least had a form of driver training and testing – unlike parts of the world where neither is still required to take to the road in a what can often end up being a killing machine.
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ROFESSIONAL TEACHING AND training is no easy task. Parents train their children, employers train their employees, sports trainers’ coach their players, wives train their husbands (and vice versa) and, of course, professional driver trainers train their pupils (or even other instructors). Training is an art form where one requires craft, sensitivity, creativity and intelligence. Whether you train one person or 20, it’s important to be as effective and successful as possible, both for the education of your students and for your own professional and personal growth. To train effectively, we need to understand how people learn. Most people can learn at an acceptable or satisfactory level if they are given sufficient time and correct training. Therefore, the problem with training is time. The difference between training that works, training that fails, training that brings rewards and training that causes pain is the effectiveness of the trainer to establish a good relationship with the individual trainee or group. It is the quality of the trainer/trainee that is crucial. What goes on between trainers and learners will be determined by the quality of their relationship than by any other factor.

When deciding on a career path it’s important to find out if your potential profession requires ongoing continuing professional education. From massage therapy to counselling, to medicine to law, many professionals must stay up to date through courses, workshops, seminars and other types of continuing professional development throughout their career. The progressive driving educator/instructor recognises this and continuously endeavours to improve his/her overall knowledge, skill and attitude. Some trainers fail to commit to CPD, citing reasons such as time pressures, family commitments, financial barriers etc, along with an education system largely created and developed to meet the education of young people.

In this article, the issue of CPD – a vast subject in its own right – is explored in relation to driver trainers and the driver training industry. It attempts to explain what CPD is, who needs it and its benefits and effectiveness relating to personal development. Also, we look at how trainers benefit in terms of knowledge, skill and attitudes. It is considered that CPD goes beyond what ADIs already do, and yet there is no single or correct way of doing it. Apart from the opening quote, one of this writer’s favourite and inspiring quotes regarding ongoing education is by that great commander of the Confederate Army during the American Civil War:

“In a man empties his purse into his head, no one can take it away from him. An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest”.

Robert E. Lee

Learning never stops
TOM HARRINGTON CPD, THE ADI AND THE CHALLENGE FOR CHANGE

“If a man empties his purse into his head, no one can take it away from him. An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest”.

“...”
What is CPD?

Different professional organisations/bodies give their own particular description of continuing professional development. CPD has been defined as: “The systematic maintenance, improvement and broadening of knowledge and skill and the development of personal qualities necessary for the execution of professional and technical duties throughout the practitioner’s working life”.

The Driver Vehicle and Standards Agency (DVSA) GB defines CPD as:

“The conscious updating of professional knowledge and improvement of professional competence throughout a person’s working life, and a commitment to being professional, keeping up to date and continually seeking to improve”.

Gov.UK goes on to describe ADI voluntary professional development as:

- Update your teaching skills
- Go to local or national meetings or seminars
- Research new vehicles for your business
- Spend time developing your business skills
- Go to formal courses
- Spend time on the internet carrying out research
- Network with other driver trainers

It has always been the responsibility of any member of a profession to maintain his/her professional skills and to take steps to stay well informed about developments in their relevant field. It is incumbent on ADIs to participate in CPD, not only for their own benefit and development, but also for the benefit of their learners and their profession. However, in recent times the pace of change has made keeping up to date an increasingly onerous task. At the same time, increasing expectations on the part of controlling bodies and the paying public put pressure on both instructors and the paying public put pressure on both instructors and the paying public put pressure on both instructors and those who undertake CPD programmes in driver training and other professional industries – such as architecture, healthcare, banking, accountancy and engineering – and these programmes are recognised by these sectors as being of great importance to developing the industry, benefiting the member company and the individual. Many of the CPD programmes in other professions are developed by the relevant representative body in partnership with businesses and employees in the sector and, in some cases, third-level education. A number of these bodies formally recognise learning undertaken by the individual through CPD. There are a number of driving instructor organisations that offer CPD that is accredited by learning institutions.

CPD as Learning

CPD is seen as essential to effective practice and to an individual’s development within the profession, whether or not that results in career progression and is linked to a trainer’s personal learning needs. Ongoing CPD is often referred to as ‘moving on’ or ‘continuing to develop’.

CPD is a continuing process outside formal qualifications (e.g. in driving) – IAM, RoSPA, DIA, RAC, Cardington Special, etc. – and in training – DVSA, RSA, DIA, City and Guilds – train the trainer and others. These qualifications enable individual instructors to maintain and improve standards of training for drivers, both learners and full licence holders, through the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours. CPD should also support the specific changes in training/teaching. Learning is not just about acquiring information: it’s learning that you’ve done wrong and doing it right and doing it better; and learning what you’re doing very well and perhaps, passing the message on to your colleagues who may not be doing quite so well. A vital role of CPD is that of ensuring that everyday practice is best practice. Not only is a conference or a meeting a chance to network and talk to colleagues: it’s rather like browsing around a library in that you serendipitously find out things that wouldn’t have occurred to you to look for in the first place.

Learning and CPD

It is often said that when you think you know it all, that’s when you begin to learn. The raison d’etre for why professional trainers undertake CPD is to improve their knowledge and keep up to date with all matters relevant to, and associated with, their profession. This includes driver education/training, the driver testing industry e.g. teaching skills, new teaching methods and changes to driver testing etc. CPD is learning – and both are intrinsically linked with ‘doing the job’. Learning has two forms: (a) in addition to something and (b) verifying that practice is the same or similar to what everybody else is doing. CPD is learning that deliberately provides a range of different approaches, variations on practice and knowledge of professionals. Keeping up to date and confirming practice can range from attending conferences, workshops, and external meetings, in-house meetings (large driving schools or franchisees) through sharing in-car training sessions, to interaction with colleagues. Professional ADIs should be able to self-reflect, appraise and critique their own practice.

There are a number of accredited CPD programmes in driver training and other professional industries – such as architecture, healthcare, banking, accountancy and engineering – and these programmes are recognised by these sectors as being of great importance to developing the industry, benefiting the member company and the individual. Many of the CPD programmes in other professions are developed by the relevant representative body in partnership with businesses and employees in the sector and, in some cases, third-level education. A number of these bodies formally recognise learning undertaken by the individual through CPD. There are a number of driving instructor organisations that offer CPD that is accredited by learning institutions.
Lesser ADIs

Some less progressive ADIs will see CPD as an unnecessary and an extra expense in time and money. They may well have passed the DVSA or RSA basic three-part examination required to have their name entered on the Register of Instructors and provide training for reward. Also, they have to undertake the check/standards check periodically – but are their teaching and other important business skills current and up to date? Do they really understand how their pupils learn and the different techniques and practices to apply in teaching pupils with differing learning needs? Mention just a few well-known academic teaching words – didactics, andragogy or pedagogy – and the below-standard ADI may well look at you in awe and perhaps consider you to have a ‘big head’ or ‘above your station’. However, the question on many professional trainers’ lips is: should it be a requirement by the DVSA or the Road Safety Authority (RSA) for ADIs to complete a certain number of CPD hours annually to remain on the Register? CPD would certainly help all ADIs – especially those ADIs who are less competent and perhaps it may instil in them a desire to seek further knowledge and skills. Good trainers recognise the need for CPD and upskilling, therefore, do not need to be compelled to further themselves.

Why CPD is Important?

It is often said that the day you stop learning is the day you shouldn’t be doing the job. Education and professional development are two of the most important activities you need to undertake to ensure your career in driver training continues to flourish. The ultimate outcome of well-planned CPD is that it safeguards the public, the employer (if you have one), the profession and the professional trainer’s career. Well-crafted and skillfully delivered CPD is important because it delivers benefits to the individual, their profession and the public. CPD is an activity where an individual learns new skills and knowledge relevant to their professional role. According to the TPO (2007), CPD is an ongoing cyclical process in which individuals reflect on their practice and assess their knowledge and skills identifying learning needs to decide on actions required to meet their learning needs, implement the learning plan and evaluate the effectiveness of their learning. Have you ever noticed the remarkable ability of athletes, world-class musicians and grand chess masters to pursue a relentless programme of training activities, whether or not they feel like doing it? Once an individual recognises the benefits of CPD, they invariably should be more willing to participate further.

Standard Check Test

In GB, at present, the new DVSA standards check is causing difficulties for a sizable portion of ADIs. This should present an opportunity and a challenge for driver trainers to undertake CPD and upskill to meet this new challenge. Learner- or student-centred instruction is all about the importance of students feelings and the teacher/trainer cares about their learning and them as individuals. The following Standards Check figures were taken from the Approved Driving Instructors National Joint Council (ADI NJC) website and the failure rate indicates a definite need for CPD for those unsuccessful ADIs. There were 11,459 Standards Checks conducted on 9,544 ADIs (April 2014 to March 2015). The results were as follows:

- 2,633 ADIs achieved a Grade A = 23pc
- 6,565 ADIs achieved a Grade B = 57.3pc
- 2,261 ADIs Failed = 19.7pc

Unstructured CPD

This can be any alternative form of learning where there is no interaction with other people and no assessment is required. It can be home study, reading, or networking.

Writing and researching this article (plus many previous and articles currently under research) can be considered unstructured CPD. Time spent participating in network and focus groups meetings may constitute part of CPD undertaken. It is accepted that reading the Financial Times is important but it should not constitute a major part of CPD. Normally, credit will only be given for technical articles and credit for this type of reading is unlikely to account for more than 25% of the total unstructured CPD.

Structured CPD

According to Kennedy (2005), CPD can be structured and organised in a number of different ways and for a number of different reasons. Structured CPD includes courses, conferences, seminars and structured

CPD is learning – and both are intrinsically linked with ‘doing the job’
The important thing when measuring CPD is learning outcomes and changes in practice

Verifiable CPD should have documentary evidence that they have undertaken CPD and that the verifiable has:

• Concise aims and objectives
• Anticipated learning outcomes
• Quality controls.

Engagement in CPD activities, learning outcomes and reflection on learning should all be documented.

The Benefits of CPD

Unless you undertake and experience quality CPD you will be unaware of its value and benefits. The Latin saying nec scire fas est omina (neither is it permitted to know all things) applies to all knowledge: however, one should always endeavour to expand one’s existing knowledge and skills.

The same has applied to all truck drivers since September 2009. (There are some exemptions) Under EU Directive 2003/59, the Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) was introduced where all bus and truck drivers must undertake 35 hours of training over a five-year period. Following completion of the five modules (over a five-year period) for bus or truck (six modules for both bus and truck drivers), these professional drivers must then continue taking a one-day (seven-hour) course on an annual basis The aim of CPC is ensuring that all professional drivers have good driving and safety standards and that these standards for training are maintained throughout their career. Also, CPC creates a common standard for the training and testing throughout the EU.

Conclusion

CPD is a never-ending pursuit of knowledge while there is life. The benefits of CPD are many. It keeps the professional educator/trainer up to date with all matters pertaining to their profession. It provides structure and support for their goals. It can also open many doors for job opportunities and niche markets. Effective CPD will improve overall performance and enhance job satisfaction. It will enhance standing and credibility in the driver training industry and develop knowledge, skills and attitudes. Business acumen will improve and, therefore, a realistic charge-out rate can be achieved for your professional services. There is clearly a need to develop ongoing standard universal CPD for ADIs. However, whether it should be compulsory or not is a matter of debate. Judging by the aforementioned DVSA standards checks, where one in five instructors fail, it would appear not only desirable but necessary. Unless there is some form of financial incentive (e.g. subsidised course fees), the funding of CPD can be problematic for some ADIs.

Some instructors will not take extra training or gain extra qualifications unless they are obliged to do so. Surely, if the humble bus or truck driver is compelled to undertake annual CPC training, then it must stand to reason that teachers of driver education – similar to other professions – should not only welcome the opportunity to develop and enhance their existing affective, cognitive and even psychomotor skills, but demand that it be made compulsory. As a trainer, you must be alert and conscious of the necessity to be as effective and successful as possible, both for the education of your students and for your own professional and personal growth. Bear in mind that the key purpose of the teacher is to create effective and stimulating opportunities for learning through high-quality teaching that enables the development and progression of all learners. That can only be achieved through development of their own skills and practices. Finally, it’s worth remembering the previously mentioned maxim: the day you stop learning is the day you shouldn’t be doing the job.

References

Continuing Professional Development is any activity where an individual learns new skills or knowledge relevant to their professional role.

Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790), one of the founding fathers of the USA and, in many ways, the first American is often credited the above quotation about education. However, a book by the Library of Congress – Respectfully Quoted: A Dictionary of Quotations (2010) listed the quotation as “unknown.”

Tom Harrington (January 2014) Taken from an article entitled “Trainers – How Do Your Pupil’s Learn?” (Note: Tom Harrington is the author of this article.)


https://www.gov.uk/approved-driving-instructor-adl

The art or science of teaching. Initially defined as, “the art and science of helping adults learn.” Andragogy has become to be understood as an alternative to pedagogy.

Today, pedagogy refers to the theories and methods used in teaching. However, in the past pedagogy referred specifically to the methods used to educate children.

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http://www.hse.ie/eng/staff/benefits/Services/.../Appendix_3d.pdf

“Neither is it permitted to know all things”. (Horace, Roman lyric poet and satirist. 65–8 BCE)
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**Images used and offers are for illustration purposes.
Focus on the new state pension

The biggest shake-up to the state pension since it was created more than a century ago came into effect from 6 April. The government has scrapped the two-tier system and replaced it with a new flat rate worth £155.65 a week. The pensions minister has vowed to ensure how much of it the public understands, so we’ll demystify it by providing some facts about the new arrangements.

- The new single tier pension will be £155.65 per week. But not everyone will receive this, as it depends on whether you’ve paid full rate National Insurance contributions for 35 years. If you reached state pension age before 6 April, the current rules will continue to apply. If your state pension age is later, some complicated transitional adjustments will make allowance for the benefits you have earned under the old system.
- The new system will save the government money, so it will create more losers than winners.
- If you are self-employed, you will be entitled to the new state pension based on your Class 2 NI contributions record.
- You cannot receive your new state pension before your state pension age. You can check this by using the tool on Gov.UK (https://www.gov.uk/state-pension-age/). In November 2018 state pension ages equalise at 65 for men and women. In October 2020 state pension age increases to 66.
- You won’t get your new state pension automatically: you’ll have to claim it. You should be sent a letter four months before your state pension age telling you how to claim your pension. If you haven’t heard by three months before, ring 0800 731 7898 or go to https://www.gov.uk/claim-state-pension-online.
- As indicated above, the amount you receive still depends on your NI contributions record. You need 10 qualifying years to get any new state pension at all. You need 35 years paying the full rate to get the full new state pension. You are able to obtain a record of your NI contributions from HMRC.
- It’s a good idea to ask for a new state pension statement, which you are able to do if you are 50 or over. Just ring 0345 3000 168 or go to the Gov.UK.
- If you’re not entitled to the full pension because of gaps in your NI contributions, think about paying voluntary contributions to achieve the minimum of 10 qualifying years, or to maximise your state pension. You need to do this before your state pension age. NI credits as a parent carer, for unemployment and sickness count towards the new pension.
- If you’re not happy with the level of pension you are likely to receive from the state and, if you are able to, consider starting or increasing regular savings, or contributing to a personal pension.
- You can’t inherit your spouse’s or civil partner’s new state pension. In some circumstances, you can inherit an extra state pension if you’re widowed.
- If you can afford to wait before receiving your state pension, you can increase the amount if you defer receiving it for by at least nine weeks. In broad terms, your state pension increases by 1% for every nine weeks deferred (5.8% for a full year).

Cap set for residential care costs

The government has set a cap on how much you have to spend on your long-term care needs, but it won’t come into effect until 2020 and it’s not as generous as it looks.

Under the current system, social care is means-tested, which means only the poorest get state help towards their costs. Anyone with assets of over £23,250 has to pay the full cost of their care. If you move into a care home, the value of your home may be taken into account, depending on your circumstances. The costs you face, therefore, can run into thousands of pounds. One in 10 who enter the care system end up paying over £100,000 in fees. This often means that elderly people are less able to pass on a decent inheritance to their children.

From April 2020 the amount you pay for care if you are over 65 is being capped at £72,000. But to be eligible, you first need to be assessed by your council as having very high needs. Whether care is provided in your home or in a residential home, only the rate set by the council will count towards the cap, not the actual charges made by the care home you have chosen. Based on the average cost of a care home in England, it has been estimated that someone might need to have spent over £150,000 before they reach the cap. The cap also just covers the care costs: in residential care, you will still be responsible for food and lodging when you hit the cap.

It is estimated only one in eight people will reach the cap, mainly because people do not live long enough in care homes to accrue such spending on care. But if longevity is in your genes, it could be quids in for you!
In this second chapter, we will be honing in on putting your planning into action and provide you with some helpful hints and tips on what you could post. More importantly, we will also be taking a look at how to measure all your hard work, in order to see how successful your efforts have been in capturing your audience.

**Tactics**

In the previous article, I spoke about how a driving school can accomplish its goals and objectives, through identifying its core target market and where this target market is situated online. Five key channels were discussed and these platforms are undeniably the most popular among marketing professionals in a variety of different sectors.

- **Situation analysis**
  - Where you are now

- **Objectives**
  - Where you want to be

- **Strategy**
  - How you are going to get there

- **Tactics**
  - The details of getting there

- **Action**
  - Putting your strategy to work

- **Control**
  - Monitoring your work

Your website is your central hub, so the branding needs to be consistent.
communicate what your business is about. When it comes to the actual posts you send out across these digital platforms, it’s best to keep to an 80:20 ratio. That means that 80% of the messages you send out – whether it be posts and updates on your website, emails or social media posts – should serve to educate and inform your audience. This ensures that your audience becomes genuinely interested in your posts, as they are either newsworthy or informative. Only 20% of the messages you send out should be purely sales based, communicating promotions or special offers. Aggressive sales tactics that inundate followers’ timelines and inboxes are considered spam and an audience will be quick to switch off and stop listening. Rather than alienating your audience and potential customers, engage with them by posting news and photos related to learning to drive, your latest recommendations from pupils or top tips for learners. If you are posting photos, try to include your logo wherever possible, as it may be reshared on social media, which will help get your brand in front of people who have not come across your business as yet. Another helpful tip is to include your website address on as many of your posts as possible, to drive traffic back to your main site. This is excellent for SEO (search optimisation) purposes, also.

**Monitoring your work**

After taking your time to lay out a game plan and action your digital marketing strategy, you would need to monitor how well your campaign has performed. Unlike a lot of marketing (specifically print marketing), it can be incredibly difficult to measure exactly and quantifiably how well your campaign is performing. Luckily, that is not the case for digital marketers, where analytics are the lynchpin of any digital campaign. Let’s segment our platforms to see which type of analytics work best for each type of digital marketing.

**Action**

Once you have planned what types of messages and information you are going to send out, and on which channels, it’s time to look at actioning all of these communications. Firstly, you need to determine who is going to update the website, send out the emails, post on social media and bid for PCC adverts. If you had your website designed, more often than not, you will be able to ask your designer or website provider to make amendments for you as part of your monthly subscription, depending on the package you paid for. From there, most driving schools will have agency over sending out their own emails, social media posts and putting together the PPC adverts. If you are a franchise you can assign multiple administrators to your social media accounts, so all your instructors can play a part in updating your profiles and pages, answer enquiries and share news. It is also advisable to put together a digital marketing schedule so you have a clear idea of when you are going to send out emails, post updates, etc. This needn’t be cast in stone but having a basic framework makes digital marketing that much more manageable. So for instance, perhaps on Mondays you post news stories; on Tuesdays a recommendation you’ve received from a pupil; on Wednesdays a quiz or theory test question; on Thursdays you could post something called Throwback Thursday where you post an old photo or a fun fact, possibly about the history of the L test or road safety; and on Friday you could feature a promotion. On the weekends you can look at reposting or retweeting other people’s posts, so it’s not just one-way traffic.
Website:
We spoke about having a streamlined, consistent and up-to-date website and how this will help your performance, traffic flow and SEO immensely. It is helpful, though, to know exactly how many ‘hits’ (i.e. visitors your website receives), how long they stay for, where they spend the most time, and where they are located. This kind of information is crucial in ascertaining whether your website hooks and engages your audience and whether it is relevant to their needs. The amount of enquiries you receive on your website also goes a long way in telling you how well your website communicates your brand and sells your product. There are a number of analytics products, both free and paid, for that can help you analyse how well your website is performing, so you can tweak and change things when necessary. Some of the most popular platforms are HubSpot, Adobe Marketing Cloud and Moz. Undoubtedly the leader in this space is Google Analytics. In short, Google Analytics is a free application provided by Google that allows you to track a whole host of information regarding traffic on your site. Although the entry-level Google Analytics is free, it is incredibly comprehensive and provides in-depth analysis that may take a little while to get the hang of and navigate, if you are just starting out online. With Google Analytics, you can see how many people have landed on your website, how many return to your website, where they found you, where they are located, what language they speak and how old they are, among other statistics. It’s quite a dense platform, but well worth it once you get the hang of it.

Social Media Insights:
Social media platforms have also cottoned on to the importance of providing their users with valuable insights into how their profiles and pages are being picked up. They used to be very basic, simply showing how many people a post has reached, but they have grown to become thorough and incredibly comprehensive. Digital marketers can use platforms such as HootSuite, where users can not only post updates to multiple social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter simultaneously, but also schedule posts to be sent out at specific times and, more importantly, track how well their posts perform. Also, Hootsuite can cleverly pull through all your Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Google Analytics, but this is reserved for the Hootsuite Pro, which is a paid-for service. There’s no need to upgrade a to Pro service, as it’s becoming increasingly easy to track your insights and analytics on the actual platform itself. Taking Facebook as an example, it has never been simpler to track the growth of your Business Page and the reach and performance of your posts in general. Facebook Insights are incredibly user friendly, with an interface that is intuitive and high on images and graphs, which makes analysing your Page a breeze. Using your Facebook Analytics you can determine how many people have viewed and ‘liked’ your Page, how many people have viewed, ‘liked’ or commented on your posts, what time your fans are online – as well as a demographic breakdown of your fans. Twitter works in much the same way, and both Facebook and Twitter allow you to run paid advertising and boosted posts for a nominal fee, this ensures that your posts are seen by a guaranteed audience, and can help up your engagement rate and awareness of your business. We would advise not to be too heavy-handed with Facebook or Twitter adverts, as organic and meaningful engagement is always worth more than buying up advertising space that inundates users timelines and sidebars. Another helpful tool to track the performance of your posts is Bitly. Bitly is great, specifically for platforms such as Twitter, which have a word count limit. If you are tweeting links to your website or anywhere else, you can often find yourself running out of space. If you copy and paste your link into Bitly it will shorten it for you, so you can fit in a bit more about the link you are posting about. You can set up a free platform on Bitly and once you’ve shortened and sent out your link on your chosen social media platform, you will be able to track how many people clicked on your link and when this occurred.

Other channels:
There are a number of other ways you can monitor your digital marketing operations and this largely depends upon what kind of platform you use. If you opt to send out marketing emails, I would recommend sending them out using MailChimp or the like, as you will be provided with in-depth analytics regarding your emails’ open, bounce and click rates, and exactly who is engaging with your emails. If you’re going the paid-for route and want to do some PPC advertising, Google AdWords is the way to go. The basic principle of Google AdWords is that you pick certain keywords that are most relevant to your business and then create an advert based on those keywords. From there, you bid on these keywords and you only pay for the clicks your listing receives as a result of a search. AdWords allows you to see how many people notice your business and visit your website by logging on to the AdWords website – or, alternatively, through a monthly summary of stats, sent directly to your inbox.

Using this kind of marketing strategy helps you break down digital marketing into manageable chunks, so you are able to tailor-make a strategy that suits your business’s needs, as well as your own capabilities. For those just starting out online, the best advice would be to start small, getting your website up and maybe a Facebook Business Page established, and then add on platforms as your following, business and tech savvy grows.
One-man-band?
Time to get a full orchestra behind you

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Managing appointments, taking lessons, doing the books – running a driving school on your own is always hard.

By taking up an AA Standard Franchise you’ll make things easier and really get your business moving. And with **25% off our weekly franchise fee for 12 months and free In-Car WiFi for 6 months**, now’s the time to join forces with the AA.

You’ll pay just £161.25 a week instead of the usual £215. There’s an AA liveried Ford Fiesta EcoBoost included. And there’s help with managing and marketing, as well as specialist coaching and new business opportunities. Plus lots more.

Just give us a call to have all the benefits explained in detail.

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Driving instructor

ON THE DRIVE up to a quiet area on Matt’s second lesson, on another February afternoon with the light quickly fading, we had a chat about the previous lesson and what we covered, which was going over the controls of the car and discussing their location and function. And as Matt managed to move the car towards the end of the last lesson, we also recapped the POM routine, discussed normal driving positioning (not forgetting parked cars), how to pull over at the side of the road and securing the car.

Once we had arrived in the quiet side roads of south Croydon, we swapped seats and Matt started to get the seat, controls and mirrors ready with a couple of prompts from me, to ensure he got the order right. So, for example, a common fault is to adjust the mirrors first, before getting the seat into the right place and – you guessed it – Matt did just this, as many of people do at this stage in their training. But with a couple of questions about this, he soon understood the reasoning behind the method.

We started off by covering moving off and stopping again, and Matt had several goes of this, each time improving a little more and understanding more about the biting point. Again, a common issue here is coordinating all of the controls, keeping feet and hands still, and combining this with all-round effective observation and the decision-making process behind whether a signal is necessary or not.

After a few run-throughs of this, Matt was getting the hang of it and I was giving him the option of whether he still wanted me to prompt him, or whether he was happy to take responsibility for an aspect of it himself. He first took on the steps of getting the car ready himself, but he still needed some input when it came to getting the observation right before moving off. We had a chat about the reasons why you would get the car ready to go, combining this with looking around and the consequences of not doing this in this order. But, as Matt was getting to grips with it all, he could still get this in the wrong order, look around too early and leave too long a time between this and moving away. So I had to stop him and provide a more detailed explanation of the reasons and also, get him to understand this from another point of view – from other people’s point of view, plus also link it to him being a pedestrian. This last part was more about addressing his questions about whether he should signal or not. We got to the stage where he was getting on well with this and so I introduced some basic junctions and building on what he already knew about the MSPSLADA routine. Again, when it came to discussing how to judge whether to pull out in front of a car or not, using his existing knowledge and skills as a pedestrian is usually the first port of call.

Coming up to the first T-junction, we kept it very slow. Being a quiet area helped us a great deal here, as there was no one around, helping take the pressure off of Matt. We covered other observational skills once at the junction, such as listening for approaching traffic and even turning down music or the fan to help hear, if the sightlines are not too good.

Keeping the car slow gave us enough time to see what we were dealing with. Early on, I was asking Matt if he could see the road markings and then when he would start the MSPSLADA routine on approach. Once we got a couple of closed junctions under the belt, we moved onto open junctions and we discussed looking earlier than usual, as there are occasions when stopping may not always be necessary.

We concluded the lesson after nearly two hours of good progress and I asked for Matt’s feedback on his own progress and how he felt things were going. I gave him my take on things and we set the goal for the following lesson.

Special thanks to Suzuki with providing the Celerio.

OLIVIA BALDOCK-WARD GOES BACK TO BASICS AND DESCRIBES THE EARLY STAGES OF THE LEARNING-TO-DRIVE JOURNEY

ADI view

Olivia Baldock-Ward

A common fault is to adjust the mirrors first

Early days
Driving Instructor

DAY TWO, LESSON two and I found myself back on the road with Olivia preparing myself for another two-hour-long driving lesson. The goal we set last lesson for today would be to start pulling away from a parking position going over the routine that I learned in the first lesson. Also on the agenda was how to approach T-junctions, learning the correct time to do mirror checks, when to signal and the appropriate time to stop before completing the turn into the new road. We also planned to touch upon smaller and less busy roundabouts and when the right times to signal were.

After the short drive to our destination (needless to say, Olivia was behind the wheel, not sure fellow road-sharers were ready for me just yet) we parked up on a quiet road. I made my journey around the car and I was positioned in the driving seat. The first task was to go over the procedure I had learned the previous week, making sure everything was positioned correctly before setting off. Once the seat was adjusted and the mirrors were in place, after a short recap of last week’s lesson on the routine before pulling away, I was on the move.

The first drive of the day felt similar to the one before, where controlling the car was unfamiliar but, as the lesson went on, the familiarity began to settle in. After a few journeys down the road, I suddenly felt like I was the Kimi Raikkonen of the suburban roads (if Kimi drove at an average of 15mph every race, that is): the feeling of being in control of the car was one of triumph. However, I soon came crashing back down to earth when facing my first T-junction challenge.

Just before tackling my first T-junction Olivia went through the MSMPSTL (Mirror, Signal, Manoeuvre, Position, Speed and Look) routine, which seemed like a lot to take in at first. It took a little bit of time for the order of each action to cement its place in my brain, but once Olivia had explained each move in detail, it made it easier to understand why they were done in a particular order. I felt fairly confident of putting it all into action, so it was time to put it into practice.

Olivia gave me the option of trying it by myself or whether I wanted her to prompt me when to undertake each procedure at the relevant time. Since this was my first time, I went with the option of her prompting me, as I felt it would help me understand when and why each action needed to be done. After the first run-through, I felt that I understood pretty quickly what needed to be done and when, so I was eager for my second run-through. This time, I asked Olivia if I could attempt to perform the MSMPSTL routine myself to see if I could perform it as confidently as I felt. The first obstacle I came across was knowing the correct distance I had to be from the car to the T-junction I was approaching and when to make my signal. Reality soon hit that this was a task that was a lot more difficult to learn than I first thought.

When delaying thinking about when the appropriate time to signal would be, I felt like it then had a domino effect on the rest of the routine. I had lost that time to make sure my positioning was perfect and that I was going at the right speed to approach the junction. Since I was turning left, I didn’t leave myself enough time to position the car appropriately and the delay in action also meant that I had to bring the car to a sudden stop rather than gradually slowing down the closer I got to the junction. This provided me with another indication that even though I felt like I knew what to do, putting it into practice was another story.

Along with pulling away and tackling T-junctions, one of the goals Olivia and I had set out for this second lesson was to further familiarise myself behind the wheel. By the end of the two-hour lesson, I was no longer worried about the unfamiliar feeling of controlling a car, as my thoughts shifted to the new obstacles I had tackled in the lesson. While driving back to the office, I couldn’t help but notice how other cars on the road tackled T-junctions, as well as observing when Olivia performed the MSMPSTL routine. Before the end of the lesson, we had planned the next goal for lesson number three and agreed to continue to tackle T-junctions. Olivia suggested that next lesson we could also address using second gear more frequently, as we had only recently touched upon this. 

I was the Kimi Raikkonen of the suburban roads

Matthew Rathbone

The feeling of being in control of the car was one of triumph
New opportunity
New franchise: £89 pw.*
New Renault Clio: £71 pw.**

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✔️ Outstanding Business Support
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A very good example of how the use of a routine can lead to improved driver performance is the introduction of the roadcraft system of car control introduced by the Metropolitan Police in 1937. The Metropolitan Police had found that the number of collisions their drivers were involved in was far too high; in 1934 it was at a rate of one accident for every 8,000 miles (Metropolitan Police, 2016). It commissioned Lord Cottenham, a well-known racing driver at the time, to train their driving instructors in advanced driving. The goal of the system he introduced is to achieve ‘right place, right time, right speed and right gear’ to give a driver or rider time to think before entering a hazard (Police Foundation, 2014). The introduction of the system of car control and the training that the drivers received achieved a reduction from an accident every 8,000 miles to an accident rate in 1938 of one every 27,000 miles (Metropolitan Police, 2016).

This article will discuss why routines work to improve driving performance and how they can be used by trainers to raise their trainees’ performance. After the rationale for using routines in training has been outlined, six routines will be mentioned to help the implementation of the ideas introduced in this article.

Last year I covered how important memory structure was for expert performance (Whalen, 2015) and how knowledge of theoretical models of memory can help when training (Whalen, 2015) in two training articles for this magazine. Here, memory theory is revisited to help explain how the automatic processing that comes with experienced performance develops.

In 1932 Sir Frederic Bartlett published a book called Remembering, which put forward a view of memory in which subjects recalled new material in terms of existing structures in memory he called schemas. For Bartlett, a schema referred to an action-oriented organised structure that captures our knowledge and expectations of some aspect of the world (Bartlett, 1932). Three aspects of schemas (knowledge storage, information retrieval and knowledge acquisition) are briefly described next.

It is argued that there are several levels of schemas (e.g. parent and child) with each particular schema being made up of slots, variables and memory traces. Slots contain information about something that is recurrent (or nearly always true). Thus for example, the schema for the concept T-Junction would contain constant parts (the slots) such as “a T-junction has two roads that form...”
the shape of a T’ and “a T-junction is a type of junction”. An example of a variable in the schema for T-junction would be its control, as T-junctions can be controlled by a stop sign, a give-way sign, a set of traffic lights, a merging situation or be unmarked. An important feature of slots and variables is that they have default values. That is, the schema contains information about what values to assume for incoming information that is unspecified (Rummelhart and Norman, 1981).

An example of a default value would be a value for “two roads that form the shape of a T” for the example given here. Having experienced T-junctions already, a learner driver might have learnt that a T-junction has a 90° angle between the two roads (the default value) but when observing the T-junction the instructor has just given them directions for, they notice the angle is much sharper: in this situation, the default value of “90° would be overcome by the explicit information received through the visual system. The trainer would need to be anticipating a driver error of some sort to occur due to the novel nature of the junction for their pupil.

When particular aspects of an event are sufficiently irregular or unexpected, in terms of the schema that has been activated, to have consequences for the organisation or the contents of the schema itself, episodic traces of the relevant deviations are formed (Groeger, 1997). These represent the lowest level of the schema with which they are associated (Schank, 1981). An example of a memory trace for the T-junction example being used here would be the unusual angle described in the previous paragraph may lead to a different use of the steering wheel in order to gain effective observations at the junction. These memory traces can eventually lead to schematic modification, or even new schemas being formed as a result of the new experience (Morton and Bekerian, 1986). Information retrieval in schema theory is briefly outlined next.

Any experienced event will evoke the general structure available from memory that offers the best match to the information being processed. The slots will be filled with either schema-driven information (e.g. the default values) or information received from the environment when a partial mismatch occurs. This will lead to other schemas at the same level of abstraction being switched off (e.g. when a T-junction is encountered, schemas for roundabouts, crossroads, merging, etc. will be stopped). Schemas embedded within the chosen schema may continue to operate (e.g. clutch control) if they are required.

When acquiring knowledge there are three qualitatively different kinds of learning for schemas (Rummelhart and Norman, 1981): 1) accretion, 2) tuning and 3) schema evolution or schema creation. The term ‘accretion’ refers to the encoding of new information in terms of existing schemata. Tuning, in relation to learning, refers to Rummelhart and Norman’s (1981) view that the most common way in which people acquire knowledge is through analogical reasoning. The fundamental process of learning by analogy is taking a schema and creating another one identical to it, except in specific ways. An example of this would be a driver learning how to select gears in a car fitted with a manual gearbox. Having mastered learning the change from first gear to second, the only adjustment required in the routine to change gear (hand on gear lever, disengage the clutch while releasing the accelerator slightly, select the appropriate gear, re-engage the clutch and replace left hand back onto the steering wheel) would be the third step (select the appropriate gear) where the driver would need to learn how to move the gear lever from second to third gear.

Two processes create new schemata: evolution and structuring. Evolution refers to a particular schema being tuned through repeated exposure to the appropriate task and modifying it to conform better to its task. Often during this process, memory traces become variables or, eventually, slots, if they are repeated with sufficient frequency. Structuring refers to the construction of new schemata, often by changing a few details. An example of this would be a schema for watching a programme on television being revised to create a schema for watching a programme on a DVD. Once created, new schemata no longer depend on the schemata from which they were spawned, but are fully-fledged procedures in their own right, with all the features of procedurally represented knowledge. However, a number of schemata, all spawned in different ways from the same schema, will share a good deal of common structure and it is possible to compare pairs of them to find the pattern of modifications required to get from one to the other (Rummelhart and Norman, 1981).

A good learning model that can help explain how schemata may be formed is the Conscious Competence Learning Model. In this model, learners or trainees start at the first stage, which is Unconscious Incompetence, before proceeding through stage two (Conscious Incompetence) and stage three (Conscious Competence) before ending at stage four (Unconscious Competence). This model is also good for illustrating why staged training is important and how trainers can incorrectly assume which stage of learning a trainee is in (businessballs.com, 2016). A matrix (Figure 1, businessballs.com, 2016) has been provided here to help driver trainers use the model. Once a person has reached stage four (Unconscious Competence), it is reasonable to suggest that the appropriate schema for the task has been formed and it is now driving the processing required. A fifth step to the model has been suggested – “Conscious competence of unconscious competence”, which refers to a person’s ability to recognise and develop unconscious competence in others. This relates to our role as driver trainers and it is important for us to be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of unconscious competence.
Whether schema theory or other theories (e.g. script theory, neuropsychological parallel processing networks) is the correct one to explain how automatic processing occurs is the correct one to use or not, it is a safe statement to say that automatic processing does exist. The table below gives some advantages and disadvantages of automatic processing in a driver training context (Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competence</th>
<th>Incompetence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conscious Competence</td>
<td>3 Conscious Competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The person achieves ‘conscious competence’ in a skill when they can perform it reliably at will</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The person will need to think and concentrate in order to perform the skill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The person can perform the skill without assistance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The person can not reliably perform the skill unless thinking about it – the skill is not yet ‘second nature’ or ‘automatic’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The person should be able to demonstrate the skill to another, but is unlikely to be able to teach it well to another person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The person should ideally continue to practice the new skill and, if appropriate, commit to becoming ‘unconsciously competent’ at the new skill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Practice is the single most effective way to move from stage 3 to 4.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conscious Incompetence</td>
<td>2 Conscious Incompetence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The person becomes aware of the existence and relevance of the skill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The person is therefore also aware of their deficiency in this area, ideally by attempting or trying to use the skill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The person realises that by improving their skill or ability in this area their effectiveness will improve</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ideally, the person has a measure of the extent of their deficiency in the relevant skill and a measure of what level of skill is required for their own competence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The person ideally makes a commitment to learn and practice the new skill and to move to the ‘conscious competence’ stage.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unconscious Competence</td>
<td>4 Unconscious Competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The skill becomes so practised that it enters the unconscious part of the brain – it becomes ‘second nature’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Common examples are driving, sports activities, typing, manual dexterity tasks, listening and communicating</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- It becomes possible for certain skills to be performed while doing something else (for example, knitting while reading a book)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The person might be able to teach others in the skill concerned, although after some time of being unconsciously competent the person might actually have difficulty in explaining exactly how they do it – the skill has become largely instinctual</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- This arguably gives rise to the need for long-standing unconscious competence to be check periodically against new standards.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unconscious Incompetence</td>
<td>1 Unconscious Incompetence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The person is not aware they have a particular deficiency in the area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The person is not aware of the existence or relevance of the skill area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The person might deny the relevance or usefulness of a particular skill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The person must become conscious of their incompetence before the development of the new skill or learning can begin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The aim of the trainee or learner and the trainer or teacher is to move the person into the ‘conscious competence’ stage by demonstrating the skill or ability and the benefit it will bring to the person’s effectiveness.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Advantages and Disadvantages of Automatic Processing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gives the pupil more time to concentrate on new information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives the pupil more time to concentrate on new information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides detailed instructions on how to perform a task (e.g. use of controls)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creates a store of scenarios to compare to the driving scene around them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allows learning without conscious awareness to take place – a previous skill will be improved while an instructor is developing a new one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allows multi-tasking to take place – the instructor can introduce secondary tasks (e.g. switching on the demisters or using the main beam headlights at night)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The advantage of using a routine while carrying out a task is that people are reminded of what they should be doing. It is important to realise that knowledge of these routines will also become automatic, leading to problems such as those listed above (Table 1) so a person needs to consciously remind themselves to use them. A good training tool to use, both when developing a routine or improving an embedded skill, is commentary driving, as it tells both the driver and trainer the order in which they (the trainee) are thinking through a process.
It is important to use routines while training drivers, as they will learn logical ways to carry out tasks – which will help to set up the correct automatic processing in their memory (or forming appropriate schemata). Another advantage of using routines as a trainer is that we can think through the routine while watching a pupil carry out a task, to ensure they are performing it correctly.

The most effective way for a pupil to develop appropriate routines is to use a coach approach, where they are actively involved in working out a process of steps to go through. The trainer may have a particular routine in mind, but the thoughtful use of questions may prompt the pupil to come up with it themselves. A good question to start with, when introducing approaching junctions, would be “Imagine you are approaching a junction, what would you need to do?” Routines can also be used in discussions with pupils to determine when and why an error had occurred.

Six routines are all that are required to help the driver carry out driving tasks. They are:

- **F.L.O.W.D.E.R.Y.**
  - predrive checks: Fuel, Lights, Oil, Water, Damage, Electrics, Rubber, Yourself
- **P.O.M.**
  - anytime a car is stationary and is about to move: Prepare, Observe, Manoeuvre
- **M.S.M.**
  - whenever a change in direction or speed is required: Mirrors, Signal, Manoeuvre
- **M.S.P.S.L.**
  - when approaching a junction or hazard: Mirrors, Signal, Position, Speed, Look
- **P.S.L.M.S.M.**
  - when overtaking: Position, Speed (Gear), Look, Mirrors, Signal, Manoeuvre
- **L.A.D.A.**
  - whenever a decision is needed: Look, Assess, Decide, Act.

The most effective way for a pupil to develop appropriate routines is to use a coach approach.

There are, of course, many other examples and it may be very effective if your pupils work out their own routines. It will be your job as a trainer to ensure that their ideas are suitable for the task concerned. Many theorists point to driving as an example of automatic processing (indeed, it is given as an example in Table 1). I feel it is wrong to say this, as driving requires conscious monitoring of performance (I would argue that in order to carry out any task to a high standard, some degree of conscious monitoring is required), both to learn from new situations more effectively and to reduce error. The purpose of routines is to ensure this conscious monitoring takes place.

You’ll find a good time to reintroduce a particular routine will occur when your pupil is becoming more independent at a skill and is driving more naturally. This will be a sign that they are becoming unconsciously competent in the skill but they will still be making errors. A good way to reduce these mistakes will be to get them to consciously work through a routine – just as Lord Cottenham got Metropolitan Police drivers to start doing in 1937. Compliment them, as it is a sign that they are getting better and then discuss why the conscious use of routines will improve their driving. With this approach you will be able to get your trainees to perform at a good level; no matter what stage of experience they are at (e.g. my practical test fault average for learner drivers is 4.03). As I have started this article with using the police system of car control as an example, finishing with it would make sense: I.P.S.G.A. – whenever approaching a hazard (can be anything really): Information (used throughout), Position, Speed, Gear, Acceleration.

### References

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Karen Bransgrove runs the rule over the Spanish supermini.

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I THOUGHT IT WOULD be a good idea this month to update you on some of the progress being made in the world of Diamond – in particular our connection with local authorities and taxi testing.

We have been receiving a steady flow of Diamond advanced test bookings from councils in Chester and surrounding areas, which have been authorised by the councils as an alternative to the DVSA taxi test. Diamond is able to give taxi drivers a prompt test booking (within 5-10 working days), which in turn means taxi licence applications are processed quickly and efficiently. Taxi drivers are issued with an advanced driving test certificate and the councils are reassured that a good standard of driving has been achieved, in line with DVSA requirements. In order to pass the test, applicants need to achieve no more than six driving faults, with no serious or dangerous faults.

Taxi licensing is different for each local authority and the process requires a variety of criteria and documentation for each area. Licensing enforcement officers and departments seem to vary significantly, in terms of how taxi applications are processed: some authorities require theory/college work to be completed before a taxi licence can be approved, while others also require an advanced test or taxi test.

With long DVSA taxi test waiting times (in some areas, it’s up to three months), this presented a good opportunity for Diamond to get involved. The Diamond tests (both advanced and elite tests) are annually accredited by the DVSA and, with the marking system being very similar to the DVSA taxi test requirements, it is an ideal opportunity to offer our services as an alternative. The Diamond advanced test has not been altered in any way to accommodate taxi drivers, the only addition for some councils being two or three relevant theory questions at the beginning of a test.

The difficulty in getting all councils on board is making contact with the right person and/or department, in order to offer them Diamond tests as an alternative. The word is spreading, however: we’re getting more enquiries from taxi drivers, taxi companies and councils interested in Diamond and the tests we can offer.

All Diamond tests are conducted by our qualified Diamond examiners, who have undertaken the relevant training with the DIA. With more than 100 Diamond examiners nationwide, there are at least one or two examiners in each county to assist local councils as the tests come in.

We are continuing to develop this area of Diamond and, if you would like to get involved, please feel free to give me a call on 020 8253 0120.

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### Lowest waiting times in Welsh counties

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**ABOUT THE WRITER**

Karen is an experienced driving instructor and is available to help with the training – and Diamond-related – queries of DIA members. Karen heads up our post-test training division exploring how we can help both occupational drivers and general motorists develop their driving.

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Correction

No, it wasn’t an April fool’s joke: I did make a mistake! Last month’s article on bends contained an error relating to where to position while negating the curves.

When approaching a left-hand bend Driving – the Essential Skills, explains that you should position your vehicle towards the middle of your lane, and towards the left of the lane on a right hand bend to get a better view.

Thank you for the emails pointing this out: it was great to hear from you and I now know how to get in contact with lost friends and colleagues!

Say what you see

STEVE GARROD EXPLAINS HOW TO COACH AND ASSESS COMMENTARY DRIVING
In this article we will look at how to coach/assess commentary driving, which is one of the lesson themes in the new Standards Check.

A good commentary drive promotes forward planning and is an essential part of an advanced driver or trainer’s toolbox. In general terms, a commentary is used to inform a student, trainer or assessor of the thought processes of the driver or to help enhance and develop hazard perception skills.

A commentary should emphasise the action to be taken to deal with potential hazards.

Developing good commentary skill is about practice, so that the quality of the drive will be enhanced rather than degraded. In the early stages of learning to commentate while driving, the driving performance often dips. A commentary should emphasise the action that is to be taken in order to deal with each potential hazard. The contents of the commentary should be current and not historical. I always think of it a casting out a fishing line: you start from behind your head (mirrors) then cast it to the furthest point before reeling it back in and casting it out once more from behind your head. As you reel it in you scan from side to side from the far ground, middle ground and near and rear ground.

Throughout the drive it is important to use a clear distinct voice and avoid talking too quickly. A good tip to remember is ABC – Accurate, Brief and Concise.

It may be appropriate at some stage to define a hazard that contains an element of actual or potential danger, along with anything that may cause a driver to change course or speed. Actual danger is where the law or the rule of the road places the responsibility on the driver to ensure that it is safe before continuing. Such circumstances may require a delayed gear change, such as at give way or coming to rest at a stop sign, or obstructions on the nearside.

Potential danger is where common sense or road sense suggests that safety precautions should be taken before entering the danger area. Such action may require an early gear change – for example on the approach to a bend, narrow section, hump-backed bridge, or obstructions on the offside causing oncoming drivers to cross the centre of the carriageway.

Roadcraft explains there are three main types of hazard:

1. Fixed physical features such as road junctions, bends or crests of hills
2. Risks arising from the position or movement of other road users
3. Problems arising from variations in road surface, weather conditions or visibility

A driver is constantly making driving plans to deal with immediate circumstances and is designed to ensure that the vehicle is always:

- At the correct speed
- In the correct position
- In the correct gear

The driving plan will take into account:

- What can be seen
- What cannot be seen
- What a driver may reasonably expect to see
- Which hazards present the greatest threat
- What to do if a situation develops differently from expected

It is often the hazards that can’t be seen that catch drivers out: many will pride themselves on being observant, but few think of the ‘what
Good commentary is about good observation, planning and implementation

Observation

Use sight, hearing, feel and even smell (think of cut grass or fuel) to gain as much information as possible about what lies ahead. It is the result of this observation that principally dictates the content of the commentary. A driver should also refer to the more obvious features that can be seen, such as:

- road signs
- obstructions
- road markings

A reasonable prediction of how weather conditions and visibility will affect the driving plan is also required. What actions will the driver need to take to be able to deal with the situation and what alternative courses of action may be required if the situation develops? A big omission in many commentaries is that of the road surface (e.g. leaves, potholes, mud on the road, animal droppings or loose gravel).

Anticipation

Observation links are also useful as a commentary device and therefore support or dictate the driving plan. We can comment on the lampposts (are they on the right- or left-hand side of the road), black and marker posts, a Royal Mail van slowing down, brake lights on cars, cut-out-turned front wheels and exhaust fumes, for example.

The following distance calculation and application can effectively be included as part of a commentary. Employing a two or more second time gap behind the vehicle in front, depending on conditions, will ensure that the driver:

- Has a good view and can increase it along both sides by slight changes of position
- Can stop the vehicle safely in the event that the driver in front brakes sharply without warning.
- Can extend the braking distance so that the driver behind has more time to react.
- Can see when it is safe to move up into the overtaking position

Planning

Is a brief explanation of what is intended to be carried out.

For example:

- Restricted view, intending to slow and looking to go
- Church spire ahead, anticipating reduction in speed, therefore I will need to slow before the bend

It must be emphasised that good commentary is about good observation, planning and implementation. Responding to what can be seen or in some cases not seen. In certain circumstances there may be several simultaneous occurrences and it is up to the driver to prioritise accordingly.

Effective commentary is about current and future events. History has no value.

To sum up it should Obsere, Anticipate & Planning ….OAP!

A good way to start is by watching a hazard perception DVD, try to say aloud what you are observing, then anticipating and finally planning to do. Once you feel comfortable with this, try including all three elements (OAP) before you arrive at each hazard, then take those skills into the car.

Once you feel confident, why not teach your students (or clients if your focus on fleet) how to do it. It does make the session more interesting and will really bring home the need for full concentration while driving.
ADAR, WIFI ROADS and autonomous cars will be trialled in the UK by the end of 2017, as part of a £150m government project. Unveiled by Highways England, the strategy will run until 2021, and advances in this driver assistance tech are expected to reduce insurance premiums by more than £14bn.

Included in the UK trials is a connected corridor on the A2/M2 between London and Kent, where information will be transferred wirelessly to specially adapted vehicles and passed on to other cars suggesting changing lanes or alternative routes.

Information will be transferred wirelessly to specially adapted vehicles

Radar technology will be set up on motorways and in tunnels – specifically the Hindhead Tunnel in Surrey – to improve
The Dutch Parliament has passed a motion that would mean all new cars sold would have to be electric by 2025. This means that petrol and diesel cars in Europe may get the boot sooner than thought, as Dutch politicians attempt to eliminate internal combustion engines from the middle of the next decade.

The eco-ruling was initiated by the Dutch Labour Party (PvdA), and has since garnered support through the lower house of the Dutch parliament. However, to become law, the motion still has to gain the approval of the Dutch senate.

If introduced, the new law would mean a major boost for electric and hydrogen fuel-cell cars. In its current form, it would still allow the use of existing petrol and diesel cars, but the government would strive to prevent any sales of these cars beyond 2025, thus ensuring a slow filtering into an electric and hydrogen powered future. Currently, one in 10 new cars bought in the Netherlands is electric.

Similar plans have been proposed in other corners of Europe: the city of Oslo in Norway, is looking to ban private cars completely by 2019 in a bid to cut emissions by 50%, while the mayor of Paris previously announced the city will be rid of diesel cars by 2020.

It’s not just cities and countries abroad that are leading the charge to a cleaner future. From September 2020 onwards, London will introduce a Ultra Low Emissions Zone, where all vehicles inside the existing congestion charge zone will be hit with new emissions penalties.

The Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs has also imposed plans to build clean air zones similar to London’s by 2020 in Birmingham, Leeds, Nottingham, Derby and Southampton.

So how do instructors feel about going all electric? We’d love to hear from members who drive or have trialled an electric vehicle and will be looking at the benefits of plugging into greener cars in future issues.

MARTIN SAARINEN DUTCH MOVE TO BAN DIESEL AND PETROL CARS BY 2025

Driving Instructor
Balearic attraction

SEAT IBIZA FR 1.4 TDI  KAREN BRANSGROVE RUNS
THE RULE OVER THE SPANISH SUPERMINI

**HAD THE OPPORTUNITY** of driving a SEAT Ibiza last summer – a petrol 1.0-litre, 12v 75PS five-speed manual version. As with that model, this 1.4 TDI version handles well, the steering is accurate and at all times you feel very much in control while enjoying a comfortable drive. The gears, controls and pedals are all very straightforward and easy to use. I feel that this range is very much aimed at the younger market and I can see why: the car looks attractive, the simplicity of the internal equipment is easy to get to grips with and feels straightforward to master.

However, this diesel version is not, in my opinion, as desirable as the petrol alternative. The car felt clumsier and less refined. I have to confess the clutch was easy to use but felt very springy and it caught me unawares a few times, causing me to stall. I own a diesel car myself so I am used to the handling, but there was no disputing that this particular car felt like a diesel – a bit noisy and sluggish. I would certainly choose the petrol option, given the choice.

The FR 1.4 TDI is a highly specified trim level model and comes with all sorts of add-on funky bits and pieces such as sports seats, trim-specific bumpers, twin exhaust pipes, 16-inch alloy wheels, cruise control and sports suspension.

There is a long list of standard equipment but some of the other features that stand out are a gearshift indicator, media system (including...
5-inch touchscreen and USB port), three cup holders in the cabin, tyre pressure monitoring, multi-collision braking system and anti-theft roof antenna, to name a few.

To the standard model you can add a fair few extras, some of which include air conditioning (plus dust and pollen filter), DAB, Bluetooth audio streaming and handsfree system, remote central locking and an alarm system.

The build quality on the Ibiza looks and feels good, the upholstery seems hardwearing, visibility – including the dashboard and controls – were all of a reasonable and functional standard and I would certainly advise an ADI that this car is worth consideration as a driving tuition vehicle.

I’m sure it would also attract the learner market, in terms of kerb appeal, and it is certainly suited to people of different shapes and sizes. Being fairly tall myself, the seat had a decent adjustment, with room to move back further if and when needed.

All in all, I can see the benefits to owing this car, but I’m not sure I liked it enough to buy one. It is very functional, with good handling and visibility. I would certainly look at upgrading the standard model with some of the extras, which would obviously bump up the price, but I think in it is still a reasonable and affordable option.

This car is worth consideration as a driving tuition vehicle.

### Stats

- **Five-speed manual**
- **1.4-litre**
- **£17,280**
- **Five**
- **Band B**
- **72.4mpg**

### Score

- **Internal visibility**: 
- **Passenger comfort**: 
- **Economy**: 
- **Value**: 

### Citroen

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### Fiat

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**Overlooked gem**

**MAZDA 3** THE JAPANESE HATCHBACK IS A SERIOUS RIVAL TO THE ESTABLISHED CLASS LEADERS

**T’S A RELATIVELY** small player in the hatchback market, but the Mazda 3 demonstrates that the Japanese firm is doing things right, thanks to its combination of sporty handling, low running costs and decent value for money line-up.

The Mazda 3 features three trim levels - SE, SE-L and Sport Nav - and there are four engines to choose from in a range of power outputs. There are 1.5 and 2.0-litre petrols and 1.5 and 2.2-litre diesels, while Mazda has foregone the current trend of turning to turbo power to boost efficiency, instead opting to reduce weight to improve economy.

The Mazda 3 is a rival to mainstream family hatchbacks such as the Ford Focus, Volkswagen Golf and Vauxhall Astra, and it’s definitely a front-runner in the class. The classy interior and sharp handling mean it may also steal a few buyers from more upmarket hatchbacks such as the BMW 1 Series and the Audi A3, although the lower spec models are just about affordable enough to muscle in on cheaper rivals such as the Kia Cee’d or Hyundai i30 as well. The 3 sits above the 2 supermini and below the 6 saloon in Mazda’s range.

The last-generation Mazda 3 was sold as a hatchback only in the UK, but the current car is available as a Fastback saloon, which puts it in the same territory as fellow small saloons such as the Volkswagen Jetta, the Seat Toledo and the Audi A3 Saloon. There is no price premium for the Fastback, while it adds more space and is also slightly more efficient than the hatchback.

Underpinning the 3 and all of Mazda’s recent models is its ‘SkyActiv’ engine technology, which focuses on low weight to improve efficiency and handling. The 3 is a great example of this, as it’s lighter, more frugal and better to drive than the old model. Quality is up too, although the rakish shape does mean the 3 isn’t as roomy in...
the back, and the narrow rear windows inhibit visibility.

The Mazda 3 isn’t the most economical car in its class but given the performance, it does very well indeed.

It isn’t hard to find rival family hatchbacks that do better than the Mazda 3 in terms of fuel economy and emissions, but when you consider the size of the diesel engine (it’s a 2.2-litre) and how fast it is, the 3 does extremely well for itself. The most economical version is the 1.5-litre diesel, which returns a combined economy of 74.3mpg and emits 99g/km of CO2.

A lot of the components and characteristics that make the MX-5 sports car so much fun tend to find their way into more conventional models, and the Mazda 3 is no exception. Thanks to its involving handling, well-weighted controls and lively performance, the 3 sets the standard for driving fun in the hatchback sector.

A twisty back road is where the Mazda 3’s nimble handling, strong grip and easy to control nature really come to the fore. The steering is also well balanced, direct and positive, plus the brake pedal is nice and progressive – it doesn’t bite too low or too high.

The ride smooths out most bumps, but there is a bit of a trade-off in exchange for the 3’s sporty handling, as potholes can send a shudder through the cabin. It isn’t bad enough to really mark the car down but don’t expect the same levels of comfort as you would find with the likes of the Audi A3 or a Volkswagen Golf, both of which excel in this area.

All versions get alloy wheels, colour-coded door handles and mirrors as standard, while the SE-L gets bi-Xenon headlamps and LED running lights thrown into the deal. Top-spec Sport Nav models also benefit from all of this kit, plus 18-inch alloy wheels.

Though both leg and headroom have been improved over the old Mazda 3 by mounting the seats lower, neither are best in class and it’s quite easy to find rival family hatchbacks with more spacious interiors, such as the Peugeot 308 or the Nissan Pulsar.

---

**Stats**

- **Six-speed manual and auto**
- **1.5 (petrol and diesel), 2.0 petrol, 2.2 diesel**
- **£17,095-23,995**
- **Five**
- **Bands A-E**
- **50.4-74.3mpg**

**Score**

- **Internal visibility**
- **Passenger comfort**
- **Economy**
- **Value**

---

**Driving Instructor**

**1.1 CRDi Blue**

- £11,795
- 5
- 88.3
- 5
- 84
- L

**1.4 Active**

- £15,705
- 7
- 47.1
- 5
- 139
- F

**1.6 CRDi**

- £16,295
- 12
- 5
- 97
- F

---

**Reliable cars for the brand unconscious: highly underrated**

**Kia**

- **Picanto**
  - 2.0
  - £9,845
  - 67.3
  - 5
  - 99
  - L

- **Rio**
  - 1.1 CRDi
  - £11,895
  - 88.3
  - 5
  - 85
  - L

- **Ceed**
  - 1.6 CRDi
  - £16,295
  - 76.3
  - 5
  - 97
  - F

**Mazda**

- **2**
  - 1.3 TS
  - £10,995
  - 56.5
  - 9
  - 115
  - L

- **3**
  - 1.6D Tamura
  - £17,495
  - 65.7
  - 5
  - 115
  - F

---

**Driving Instructor**

**61**
HE THIRD GENERATION DS3 will hit UK roads this summer and sits within the competitive supermini car segment. This is the second revision to the model within the last year, further differentiating the car from the previous model, when it was previously rebadged under the separate DS3 brand (rather than the Citroen brand) and now expresses all the hallmarks of the DS brand.

The new facelift model has a complete front end redesign, where the old Citroen ‘double chevron’ design has been replaced with DS-badged hexagonal grille, together with LED indicators and front fog lights. Newly designed black alloy wheels, together with subtly reprofiled rear lights complete the look. On the inside, the in-car technology has significantly improved with latest-generation connectivity based around an updated 7” screen featuring Apple Carplay and Mirror Link smartphone connectivity.

The DS3 is relatively spacious for a three-door with sporting pretensions. It has a distinctive, bold look and offers enough customisation options to satisfy the buyer in search of ‘individuality’, particularly the contrasting roof colour, a trend that many manufacturers are now following. Practicality and all-round visibility are hampered a little as it is only available in three-door guise, but this is a choice that you make when you opt for the DS3. With safety as a focus, it also carries the maximum five-star Euro NCAP crash safety rating.

There are six trim levels, but if you opt for the entry level Chic you won’t be disappointed by the specification. It includes air conditioning, electrically adjustable roof-coloured door mirrors, height adjustable driver’s seat, electric

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<td>New Mini due later this year. Will look the same as the current one</td>
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<td>Micra not the default choice it once was, facelift promising</td>
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<td>£10,145 A 65.7 3 ★★★★★★ 5 99 L</td>
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front windows, 7" colour screen (with DAB radio, Bluetooth), trip computer, 16" black alloy wheels, leather steering wheel with column-mounted controls, steering column adjustable for rake and reach and cruise control with speed limiter. Upgrade to the mid-range Elegance and you also get 16" ‘blade’ black alloys, climate control air conditioning, height adjustable passenger seat, LED front fog lights with chrome front light surrounds, dark-tinted rear windows, rear parking sensors, DS3 connect box, and emergency assist and black gloss dashboard strip (which can be a little distracting). Upgrade to the upper mid-range Prestige and you get a 17" black alloys, electrically heated and folding door mirrors, premium leather steering wheel, upgraded hi-fi audio system and satellite navigation, front parking sensors, active city brake safety system as standard, automatic lights and windscreen wipers, rear spoiler, contrast pack (with the bi-tone roof colour) and space saver wheel as standard.

Surprisingly below the Prestige model, heated door mirrors are only available as an option, as part of an upgrade pack that costs between £250 and £500, dependent on model. It comes with an inflation kit as standard (on all except the Prestige models and the Puretech130 and BlueHDI 120 engines) but you can upgrade to a space saver wheel for minimal cost when factory ordered (for use as an emergency tyre but not suitable for test). When teaching, the speedo is not visible from the passenger side, but can be easily rectified with a head-up display. A great new safety feature is Active City Brake, with its autonomous urban braking system that helps to prevent low-speed collisions: this is available as standard or as option on the Prestige model upwards and as option on the Elegance model.

There are now six manual engines, four petrol (one available as a full automatic) and two diesel engines. The revised efficient 1.6BlueHDI 100PS five-speed diesel manual engine comes complete with stop/ start (which can be de-activated) and has a good combined fuel consumption of 83.1 mpg. If you are looking for a little more power there is a 1.6BlueHDI 120PS six-speed diesel engine, again with stop-start, delivers a combined fuel consumption of 78.5 mpg. The 16,000-mile service intervals will keep dealer visits regular but bear in mind that with the diesel vehicles you may need to top up the adblue tank inbetween service: however, this is at a minimal cost.

If you opt for the entry-level Chic trim you won’t be disappointed by the specification

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Driving Instructor
Our new guide examines the key standards for driving, as well as driver and rider training in the UK, focuses on the core competencies of driver training (assessed under the Standards Check), and looks at client-centred learning in detail — the foundation stone for the effective delivery of driver education.

THE DIA ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO THE NATIONAL STANDARDS AND THE STANDARDS CHECK

Members: £12.00
Non-members: £20.00

ORDER CODE
0134

Does driving ever make you feel nervous, anxious or angry?
Do you get frustrated with other road users?
Do you want to know how you can beat stress and enjoy your driving?
If so, you’ll find Better Driving packed with practical strategies to help. This official DVSA guide will give you the tools you need to drive with confidence.

THE OFFICIAL DVSA GUIDE TO BETTER DRIVING

Members: £7.99
Non-members: £9.99

PRODUCT CODE
1055

AD1 and DIA magnetic signs (180mm)

A set of two 180mm size magnets to represent being an Approved Driving Instructor as well as a proud member of the DIA. Here is your chance to get both at a reduced price, the perfect opportunity to attract more student drivers.

ORDER CODE
3035

£6.00

DIA Members only

Offer ends 31/05/16

Register of Approved Driving Instructors (car)
Leading up to the introduction of the new test there was considerable hype in the instructor community about it and much concern among instructors about how different their teaching would need to be. In this book the content is broken down into manageable units that the trainer can dip into when time permits.
In-car resources

Driving assessment report pad (20) Members £4.75 Non-members £6.65 Order Code 1008

Colourfile Professional 3 – coilbound Members £45.95 Non-members £49.95 Order Code 1047

Warning cards – coil bound Members £10.95 Non-members £11.95 Order Code 1071

Driving assessment pad (25) Members £15.00 Non-members £18.35 Order Code 1105

Show Me, Tell Me pad (50) Members £5.95 Non-members £6.95 Order Code 1030

Responding to emergency vehicles (50) Members £3.95 Non-members £6.95 Order Code 1032

Colour lesson recap pads (2 x 50) Members £11.95 Non-members £13.95 Order Code 1031

Mock theory test papers (20 per pad) Members £8.00 Non-members £8.99 Product Code 1009

Five-pad bundle of mock theory test papers Members £24.95 Non-members £39.95 Product Code 1010

Clutch demonstrator Members £15.00 Non-members £18.35 Order Code 1105

Occupational driver assessment pad (25) Members £4.75 Non-members £6.65 Order Code 5025

Mag board Members £47.50 Non-members £51.00 Order Code 1065

Reversing demonstrator Members £7.00 Non-members £8.99 Order Code 1100

In-car resources

Diaries

Large appointment diary 2016 (21x270mm) Members N/A Non-members £61.00 Order Code 1035

Large diary refill 2016 Members N/A Non-members £61.00 Order Code 1037

Compact appointment diary 2016 (160x240mm) Members £7.00 Non-members £7.00 Order Code 1045

Compact diary refill 2016 Members £5.00 Non-members £5.00 Order Code 1047

Vision impairment goggles

Standard (blood alcohol level .05 to .15) Members £58.00 Non-members £61.00 Order Code 1035

Twilight (blood alcohol level .10 to .17) Members £58.00 Non-members £61.00 Order Code 1037

DIA Drug Simulation Goggles Members £58.00 Non-members £61.00 Order Code 1033

DIA Snooze Goggles Members £58.00 Non-members £61.00 Order Code 1034

Books

Know Your Traffic Signs Members £4.35 Non-members £4.99 Order Code 1012


Highway Code – English Members £1.99 Non-members £2.50 Order Code 1013


How to Pass the ADI Exams Members £15.99 Non-members £19.99 Order Code 1013

Riding The Essential Skills Members £12.99 Non-members £12.99 Order Code 1017

How 2 Become A Driving Instructor Members £15.00 Non-members £17.00 Order Code 1042

Driving Instructor's Handbook Members £11.75 Non-members £19.99 Order Code 1011

Motorcycle Roadcraft Members £15.50 Non-members £16.99 Order Code 1028

Roadcraft Members £15.50 Non-members £16.99 Order Code 1018

The DIA Essential Guide Members £12.00 Non-members £20.00 Order Code 1014

The DIA Essential Guide Members £12.00 Non-members £20.00 Order Code 1014

Can Drivers Really Teach Themselves Members £9.50 Non-members £9.99 Order Code 1043


Target 51 Members £22.99 Non-members £24.99 Order Code 1056
## Computer resources

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## Business items

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## HOW TO ORDER

You can order shop goods from us via our website at [driving.org/shop](http://driving.org/shop) or over the phone by calling us on **020 8686 8010**

You’ll need to have your **credit/debit card details** handy and your **membership number** available to make use of our special member prices. If you’d like to pay by cheque, get in touch and we’ll post you an order form that you can fill out and return to the office. Postage costs £4 per order, so get the best value by ordering more items in one go. We aim to despatch items to you the next working day, but allow up to five working days for delivery. UK and NI only.
Marc Ford MBA is a professional coach with 25 years' experience working in businesses of all sizes, from one-man bands to global multinationals. To contact Mark email him at marc@freshideas.tv

The rumour has it that over 25 buyers are interested in the purchase of DriveTech, but will it be taken over by people who actually understand what the vision and goals of the company should be? Or will it be used to deliver little value and plain Jane training and education?

One of the key phrases from its half-year results was the quote from the AA saying, “volumes of police referrals for Driving Services are down and buoyant economic conditions make it more difficult to recruit instructors.”

The statement can be read in many different ways, including, as one ADI friend said: “No more jobs for the old boys’ network,” but I believe it’s the end of quote that holds more interest.

The real growth area in the ADI industry, as it sits in 2016, is the growth of quality, value-driven, medium-size schools. Some of these schools price their services at more than their national school rivals and are far busier. The ease at which these schools can react to events is far easier and faster than a big national company with layers of management with their endless meetings.

So it appears now is the ideal time to diversify. Companies that have training and education delivered to them by big companies will now be unsettled. Nobody likes dealing with people they don’t know. Not knowing a company’s ethics, values and vision deters people doing business with them. People buy from driving schools with quality instructors – and proud and ambitious owners who display a real passion and vision for driver education can show the people that matter they are the people to do business with.

There are thousands of fleet-registered instructors around the country: some do nothing with the qualification, while others work for companies that act as the middle man and take a chunk from the daily fees that they could be earning.

Now is the time to get brave. For every boom of learner pupils, there will be a trough. If you want to diversify, now is the time, as companies look for first-time or alternative providers for fleet education.

I believe there is a path to forge and it’s the bravest of you that will pave the way for the rest. Someone said to me, “People don’t want fleet, because they have to get ADIs to do it.”

That is true. However if we apply the same logic to learners, according to the letter of the law, you only have to be 21 and been driving for three years to accompany a learner. So tell me again, why does anyone need ADIs?

If you come at me with the usual training skills, knowledge, understanding, etc, I will only come back at you with the notion that that is exactly why companies need you.

So, my friends, as the AA gears DriveTech up for sale I look forward to hearing some great stories of brave ADIs forging a new income channel for themselves and being paid what they’re worth.
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ONE COMPLETE
PAIR OF SPECS

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