



# RoADAR CHAT

The Sussex Group of Advanced Car Drivers

Group Newsletter

August 2009

## Chairman's Welcome

I note from my last entry to RoADAR CHAT that I was commenting on the better weather and the start of the holiday season. Whilst it seems that we have had a relatively dry summer in the south east (judging by the state of my lawn), September is here, the nights are certainly starting to draw in and no doubt the weather will be getting somewhat wetter. Of course, as dedicated motorists, our vehicles are ready at any time for anything that the weather can throw at us, or so I thought! A recent MOT on my wife's car (it passed incidentally) showed an advisory item of "surface cracks to offside rear tyre inner sidewall". Obviously I hadn't been as diligent as I should have been during my tyre inspections. Pressures and tread depth are always checked, in this case the tread was still showing a depth of 3mm. Closer inspection of the outer tyre wall showed the odd crack here and there which should have flagged up some doubt in my mind as to the integrity of the tyre. The other factor to bear in mind is that being relatively newly retired the car is not covering the mileage it did pre retirement, and the tyres are on the car longer than they would have been a couple of years ago. Something to think about if anyone is in a similar situation.

On a different tack, Tesco will be recommending RoADAR and the eco benefits of advanced driving during Energy Savings Week (20 - 26th October). This will be achieved by dual branded leaflets being displayed and available to take away in over 400 Tesco petrol forecourt shops across the UK. This could result in an increase in our membership, so watch this space!

Finally I would like to welcome Alan Cooper onto the RoSPA Committee, Alan has very graciously accepted the job of record keeper for associate driving awards.

Safe driving

Malcolm Taylor

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### GROUP CONTACTS :

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**PLEASE NOTE THAT THE  
NEXT MEETING DUE ON  
24/09/09**

**HAS BEEN CANCELLED DUE  
TO THE LABOUR PARTY  
CONFERENCE**

**NEXT MEETING  
26/11/09**

Newsletter address: 19 Woodpecker Drive, Hailsham, East Sussex, BN27 3EZ



## Secretary's Corner



I hope you all had a pleasant summer and enjoyed any holidays you may have taken.

Over the summer, I took advantage of a scheme run by my employer to get a new bicycle. I managed to get 40% off so it was too good a deal to pass on. Being a driver and having ridden a bike on the road before, I assumed that I would just be able to get on and ride but I was sorely mistaken. General road sense was easy but in many cases easier said than done. I'm currently in the process of arranging some training to re-educate me as its 25 years since I passed my cycling proficiency and it shows! I'll keep you all posted.

Adam Field

## IN THE NEWS

### UNSAFE LORRIES, BUSES & COACHES

The Transport Select Committee have highlighted in their latest report concerns over the safety of particularly foreign registered lorries coming into the country and recommend that VOSA have greater power to have access to ports in order to stop such vehicles entering the British road system.

### SAFETY CAMERAS

It would appear that young people are actually more positive about Safety Cameras than older drivers according to a survey conducted by the Institute of Advanced Motorists. It would seem that this could have a lot to do with the fact that the younger generation have been brought up within the surveillance society whereas the older generation are very sceptical about being watched over by Big Brother!

### MOTORHOMES OVERWEIGHT

A recent campaign of roadside checks by the UK Vehicle and Operator Services Agency says recent roadside checks showed 80% of motorhomes it stopped and weighed were overweight.

Something as simple as putting a cycle carrier on the back of a motorhome can tip it over the edge on weight, risking a fixed penalty fine or prosecution for the driver.

### FEWER TRUCKS TO THE MAINLAND

The UK Department for Transport published data on the number of vans, trucks and trailers going to mainland Europe from Great Britain for Quarter 2, this year.

The figures show a 19% drop compared to the same period last year. Within the 590,000 vehicles there were 22% fewer unaccompanied trailers and 18% fewer trucks. 20% of the trucks were UK registered, up from the 19% for last year.

Because the UK fails to properly register trailers, there seems to be no meaningful data on their origin. On a year to date basis, 2.49m, vans trucks and trailers went to mainland Europe last year, down 14% on the figure for the year ending at Q2, 2008. Both truck and unaccompanied trailer numbers were down too. More from [www.dft.gov.uk](http://www.dft.gov.uk)

Airso

## UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Date	Details
24 September 2009	<b>CANCELLED</b>
26 November 2009	Roger Cohen: Trading Standards and Road Safety - The Bigger Picture



## NEXT MEETING INFORMATION

**Directions:** Sussex Police HQ is situated just off the A26 in Lewes. the address is Malling House, Church Lane, Lewes, East Sussex, BN72DZ

## Training Officer Writes:-

Test results since the last issue:- GOLD Peter Barrett, Robert Scott BRONZE Vic Funnell, Laura Wellings. Congratulations to you all.

Another Tutor Training Day is to be held at Wellshurst Golf and Country Club, Hellingly on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2009. All tutors should have received an invitation from me already but if not then you are invited. Please let me know if you will be attending so that I can arrange for enough buffet lunches.

If anyone out there reads this and they have a Gold but are not currently tutoring and would like to become a tutor, then you, too, are welcome.

The day will start promptly at 0930 (Tea/coffee will be available from 0900). The first session will last until 1100. It is anticipated that we will be doing some 'on road' practice of our 'coaching skills' that we discussed last time. There will then be a break for tea/coffee. The second session from 1130 until 1300 will be conducted by David Taylor (RoSPA Examiner). As well as a presentation by David there will be time for a 'Q & A' session, so have your questions ready. I now have a new supply of assessment forms which I will bring along to the training day. If any tutor needs some before then just let me know and I will post a pad to you. The forms have been amended and should prove easier to use.

The name Leslie Hoare-Belisha may well be familiar to some, if not all of you. If not, then he was the Minister of Transport when the 'uncontrolled pedestrian crossing' was introduced onto our roads. The characteristic yellow beacons became known as 'belisha beacons'

This same Minister of Transport wrote the foreword to the first Highway Code in 1935. This is what he said:-

'This Code is put into your hands in the sincere hope that the study and observance of its provisions will make the roads safer and more convenient for you and all others who use the King's Highway. Its provisions are a simple summary of the best and widest experience, each one of them written down in the resolute desire to prevent that kind of mistake or thoughtless action which may result in some one's bereavement or suffering.

In every human activity there is a standard of conduct to which in the common interest we are expected to conform. This Code is the standard of conduct for the road.

Respect for the Code and for the spirit underlying it is so much a moral duty that its practice should become a habit and its breach a reproach.'

I know that as advanced drivers we pride ourselves in knowing the contents of the Highway Code and putting it into practice. Sadly that is not the case for the majority of road users. Very few drivers I come into contact with during my work as a trainer are in possession of an up-to-date copy of the Highway Code. Some openly admit that they have never looked at one since they passed their driving test and often make the remark 'I don't suppose it has changed much.' We would do well to remember this when we are out driving as we do know how much it has changed over the years and by always 'expecting the unexpected' we may well find that we stay alive long enough to read the next one!

On a lighter note to finish with a couple of Zen teachings for you:- Never test the depth of water with both feet.

Before you criticise someone you should walk a mile in their shoes. That way, when you criticise them you will be a mile away and you have their shoes.

Keep smiling, David Raine Training Officer



We would like to acknowledge the help in producing this communication from the information supplied by The Association of Industrial Road Safety Officers (AIRSO) who have kindly agreed that we may reproduce the articles that in turn were supplied by The Department for Transport, Driving Standards Agency, PACTS, RoadSafe, RoSPA, SMMT, TRL, IAM, MSA, DIA, ADI/NJC, MCIA, The TTC Group, Fleet News, GEM, IRSO, Brake, Transport Times, ADI News, Fleet Safety Association, Norwich Union Risk Services, Motor Insurers' Bureau etc.

## ADI's SITTING IN THE BACK OF CARS ON TEST

The ADI industry is currently in dispute with the Driving Standards Agency over the forthcoming proposal that instructors are to be "forced" to sit in the back of the car whilst a pupil is undertaking their driving test.

Whilst in general the industry has no problem with sitting in the back of a car during the test it is considered that this should be an option and that both the trainer and pupil should agree.

There is currently an on line petition against the proposal which ADI's and others are being encouraged to sign.

AIRSO would say that there are at times benefits from this practice being adopted but would wish it to be left to a decision between all parties at the time and not made compulsory.

**Airso**

## Subsidised Skid Control Course – Book Now



For all drivers whether novice or skilled, the risk of skidding is there for all of us. Oil spillage, a puncture, loss of control or emergency braking.

The only place you can safely develop your skills is on a skid pan.

It is recommended that all associates and members attend a Skid Course.

Colin Wells has been running skid training at Goodwood Circuit for many years and is also a qualified ARDS Motor Racing Instructor. Course duration is approximately 3 hours using the school cars not yours.

This special subsidised course will be for a group of up to 12 participants and can cover:

- why a skid develops
- skid detection
- front and rear wheel skids
- skid control techniques
- emergency braking
- cadence braking

At the end of the course there may be enough time for a short competition to test the new skills you have learned.

Date of this course is **SUNDAY 25TH OCTOBER 2009 AT 09.30**

**COST £20.00 PAYABLE TO THE GROUP FOR MORE**

**INFORMATION CONTACT ANTHONY PLATTS**

**TEL 01444 453529 OR EMAIL**

**[aplattsdrivertraining@hotmail.com](mailto:aplattsdrivertraining@hotmail.com)**

To date I have three places booked so hurry if you want to attend.