



FIFE IAM

Kingdom of Fife Group IAM, helping improve road safety in Fife and beyond.

March 2019

National Traffic Statistics

In the last issue of the newsletter we looked at some statistics from the Fife division of Police Scotland in terms of accident rates and reported incidents. Inside we capture the latest information at a Scottish level.

Rural Roads

I'm hitting you with statistics in this edition of the newsletter. Did you know that 3 out of 4 deaths on Scotland's roads happened on rural roads?

I drive the majority of my commute to work on rural roads and they can be challenging. On the Fife IAM Facebook page, I posted 3 incidents that happened in one day this week (11 March). It started with seeing the top of a female drivers head as she focused on her phone, not the road, whilst driving. This was closely followed by a van driver reading his paperwork on and above the steering wheel. Finally a Fiat 500 approached a bend too fast, and towards me, and almost lost it right on the corner as I approached.

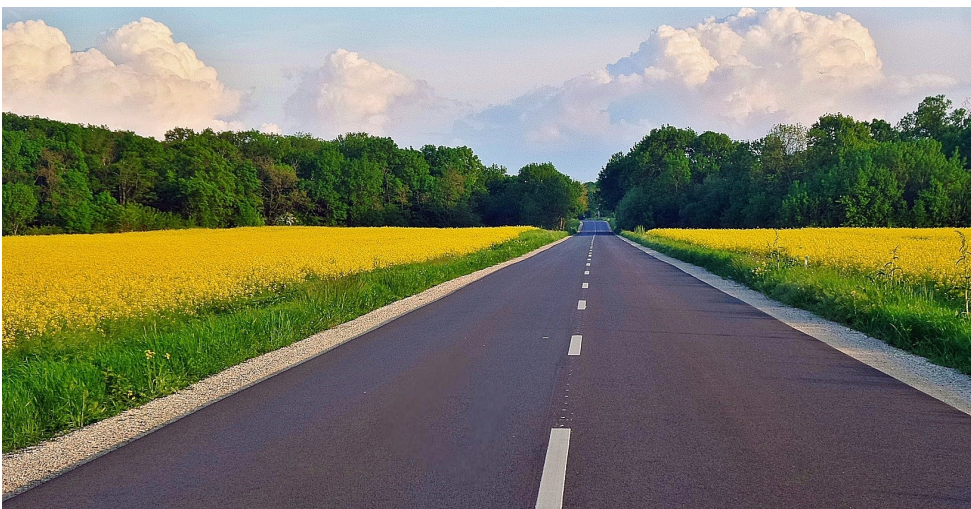
Its easy to see how accidents are more catastrophic on rural roads and we look into this on page 3.

Don't be a statistic

We are into the month of the year when most accidents occur, with the exception of November. What do you think is the most common accident:

- *Lane change incident?*
- *Hitting parked car?*
- *Rear end shunt?*

Find out on page 5!



In This Issue

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Road Traffic Collisions and Civil Law - Brenda Mitchell

Brenda is the Founder and Senior Partner of [Motorcycle Law Scotland](#). She gave an excellent presentation on the above subject and a packed room was in place to listen.

Brenda explained the difference between Civil and Criminal law and how it relates to damages. Civil Law is about damages and its up to solicitors such as Brenda to establish that the individual that caused the accident was negligent.

There are 3 main judgements that can be made in the case of an 'accident'. The first is 'fault' - where they cannot establish negligence on anyone else's part. Part fault—as described to the right is where both parties have some responsibility for the incident. Finally non-fault would be when the person involved in the accident had no responsibility for their injuries.

The group were treated to a few examples to put these definitions into context. An example of part fault was [Gray vs Botwright](#) that concluded that each party was 50% responsible for the incident. You may find this a little odd but the defendant of the case drove through a red traffic light and collided with the claimant who was turning right as permitted on a right hand filter traffic light. The part fault claim was decided in court as the claimant failed to look ahead to see if any vehicles were approaching before he started to turn. The court found that this amounted to negligence on the part of the claimant.

However, the defendant also had responsibility as they admitted to travelling through a red traffic light, at a speed slightly over the 30mph limit. As a result, ultimately both parties had part liability in this accident.

We were then told of an incident involving an advanced rider that crashed into the back of a vehicle. Initially you would think that the rider would be at fault for going into the back of the vehicle however this was not the case. The judgement ruled in favour of the rider as it emerged during court that the car had saw the motorbike approaching, had panicked, braked and stalled the car. This resulted in the rider having 0% fault in the incident.



Why the unusual picture?

As part of the talk, Brenda gave an example of a drunk woman walking down the middle of road when a car collided with her.

This was the case of [Eagle vs Chambers](#). Although Eagle, a 17 year old under the influence of alcohol, should not have been in the road, Chambers was ultimately held more liable due to the 'destructive disparity' that reflected the pedestrian was more vulnerable. Upon Appeal, the driver, Mrs Chambers was found to be 60% responsible for the collision and proportionate compensation was due to Miss Eagle.



Top tips

Brenda finished the presentation giving us a few top tips. These were:

1. Don't take out insurers 'legal protection' when renewing insurance premiums
2. Obtain key information if involved in an incident including: Police incident information form; photos from the scene and 3rd party registration number
3. Don't let your insurance appoint a 3rd party solicitor. Find your own to represent you
4. Don't let the 3rd parties insurer act on your behalf - they are the competition.

Rural Roads

Apparently 3 in 4 deaths on our road occur in a rural setting and if you drive on rural roads for any length of time its easy to see why.

This stat is taken from an ITV article [here](#).

IAM also produced a report on the dangers of rural roads that can be found [here](#).



This time of year can be a challenge driving on any road; we have sun glare affecting vision, loads of surface water, flooding, potholes that are exacerbated by the cold weather, as well as a dusting and sometimes dumping of snow. We touch on this a little more in page 5 of this newsletter but the conditions are a challenge on a straight, reasonably well maintained motorway or dual carriageway but in a rural setting they become a danger that a lot of drivers just aren't prepared for.

In Scotland and wales, two thirds of fatalities on our roads occur on rural roads. They also account for more than half of the serious injuries that occur on our roads. The graphic to the right shows who was killed or seriously injured (ksi). Its surprising to me that motorcycles aren't higher but maybe that's reflective of two things; firstly a lot of motorcycles are put away for the winter and secondly a motorcyclist is more aware that any mistake is likely to result in them being seriously injured or worse.



The statistics in the IAM report are interesting and I urge you to look at the report for yourself but I found a few points interesting and partly unexpected.

Seasonality - there is little difference between seasons but surprisingly more people die or suffer serious injuries in Summer than at any other time of the year. This is followed by Autumn, Spring and finally Winter.

Age - This differs between car drivers and bike riders. 31% of death or serious injuries occurred in car drivers aged between 17-25 whilst for riders it was highest in 25-39 year olds (49%).

Manoeuvres - This was very similar between riders and car drivers. Surprisingly the majority of ksi occurred on straight road (49% for cars and 45% for bikes). Accidents on bends accounted for 36% for cars and 39% for bikes whilst overtaking accounted for 4% in cars and 10% in bikes.

What are the potential challenges of rural roads that make them so dangerous?

Speed has to be a significant contributory factor. The majority of these rural roads will be 60mph national speed limit that means any collision will have significant impact. There is also the potential for a vehicle travelling too to be a hazard as it can result in frustration in those following, who then take unnecessary risks borne out by that frustration.

Experience; particularly young car drivers are inexperienced and may not be equipped with the skills or knowledge to drive even within the speed limit on these roads. I suppose that's where we come in and we'll continue to provide skills that will hopefully stop people becoming a statistic.

It was a simpler time

Remember when you had the choice of petrol or diesel? Now you have 4 options to choose from when buying a car. Do you go petrol, diesel, a hybrid of either or all out electric.

Either way there is no denying that all options have an impact on our environment but by how much?



The Environmental Factor

You may not have thought about the science behind it but I'm sure you've noticed the cost impact more 'polluting' vehicles are starting to incur. For a start, the Vehicle Excise Duty (VED), particularly in year 1, is higher whilst some areas are introducing parking charges that reflect how polluting your vehicle is. That's before we even think about certain types of vehicles being banned from entering particular areas. So where is all this coming from and is Diesel really the monster its being made out to be?

Climate Change

In 2001 the government wanted to tackle Greenhouse emissions by cars and in doing so they introduced a sliding scale for VED that made it cheaper for cars that produced lower Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) emissions. Enter the 'age of diesel'.

CO₂ is the main greenhouse gas, it contributes to climate change and the transport sector accounts for around a quarter of the UK's total greenhouse gas emission. The majority of this come from petrol and diesel engines. That's why the government introduced the sliding scale VED that favoured diesel vehicles as they emit less CO₂ but in trying to address one problem the inadvertently contributed to a more localised problem.

Air pollution

Prior to the VED changes coming in, Diesel cars only accounted for about 1 in 7 new car sales. These days its closer to 1 in 2 with electric/hybrids coming up the inside fast. The huge increase in sales resulted in a huge increase of other pollutants, namely Nitrous Oxides (NO_x) and Particulate Matters (PMs). Both of these can contribute to respiratory illnesses, lung cancer and heart attacks. PMs in particular are an issue as they are so small that we breathe them in and they pass into our lungs. The government is now looking at VED again to discourage diesels along with a higher tax on their point of sale and through increasing the fuel duty on diesel at the pumps

Bikes don't escape

Motorbikes don't escape. Did you know that 1 in 4 vehicles on the road is a motorcycle? Some of their emissions are thousands of times greater than a car although they do emit less CO₂. Part of the problem is that bikes haven't been given the same scrutiny as they are not as prevalent but also because they don't have the space to have the same control systems that can be fitted to cars. Its such a big problem in some cities, such as Hanoi in Vietnam, that bikes will be banned from the city from 2030.

So do we have a conclusion?

Not from me in this article. I've highlighted some of the top level issues but I've also ran out of space. There are other things to consider so we'll pick it up in a later issue of the newsletter.

It's the most accidental time of the year

Unlike Andy Williams singing about get togethers over Christmas, fellow drivers will need to get together this month to exchange details in what is predicted to be the month that most accidents occur this year.

The information is from figures from the automotive and insurance industry and you can see the full article [here](#).



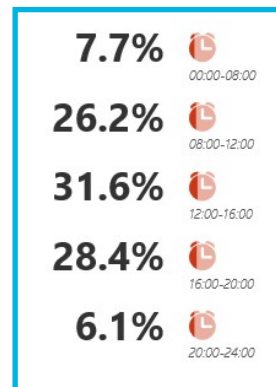
Where does this prediction come from?

AX have pulled together information from over 57,000 different vehicle accidents to analyse trends and estimated that March will be the second busiest month for car to car accidents, second only to November. As I mentioned earlier in the newsletter, there is rain, snow, sleet, winds, rain, sun glare, rain and probably some more snow before the month is out. Is that the factor? I don't know but I've certainly seen more near misses in March than I have over the last few months. A report by [Transport Scotland](#) suggest that environmental factors were responsible for 16% of accidents. Driver / rider error was cited in 65% of incidents. Injudicious action e.g. travelling too fast for conditions, following too close or excessive speed was involved in 18% of all accidents.

Type of accidents

The 5 most common accidents in winter probably result from the injudicious actions. These are:

1. Hit in rear - 34%
2. Hit whilst parked - 31%
3. Third party pulled in front of car - 13%
4. Third party reversed into stationary car - 8%
5. Lane change - 6%



Time of day

The figure on the right shows the percentage of accidents that take place at any given time range and overall most accidents occur in the afternoon between midday and 4pm. However, about 1 in 6 crashes occurred within a ten minute period starting at 5pm - all those that are excited about leaving work or are still in work mode and haven't transitioned to concentrate on the driving.

The second highest time range for crashes was between 2pm and 4pm however the majority of these occurred within 10 minutes of 3pm or as it is also known as - the school run - and if you've ever been involved in that you'll realise that it is wacky races.

Stopping distances

I think at this time of year it would be useful to highlight stopping distances. That is more than just the braking distance as it includes a 'thinking distance' - the time it takes our brains to process there is something wrong and in poor weather this can increase also. Its said that in wet conditions stopping distances double and in snow or ice it can be 10 times longer. Some food for thought in March.

Upcoming events - we need your help!



Easter Egg Run

The motorbike section are organising an Easter Egg run for the sick kids at Victoria Hospital.

If you would like to help, we are asking you to donate £10 by Friday 12th April.

We will use any money donated to buy toys for the kids in hospital and will give them a smile. Anything you can contribute would be greatly appreciated.

How to donate to our Easter Egg run

PayPal – treasurer@kofgiam.org.uk

Bank Transfer – Sort Code 09-01-54 & Account Number 62776085.



Kart-harthic event

Need to feel the need for speed, to release some pent up frustration or you would just like a fun day out going round a local track? KOFG are looking to arrange a go-karting event in the local area and we think this would cost around £20-30 per person.

If you would be interested in going let us know by emailing events@kofgiam.org.uk



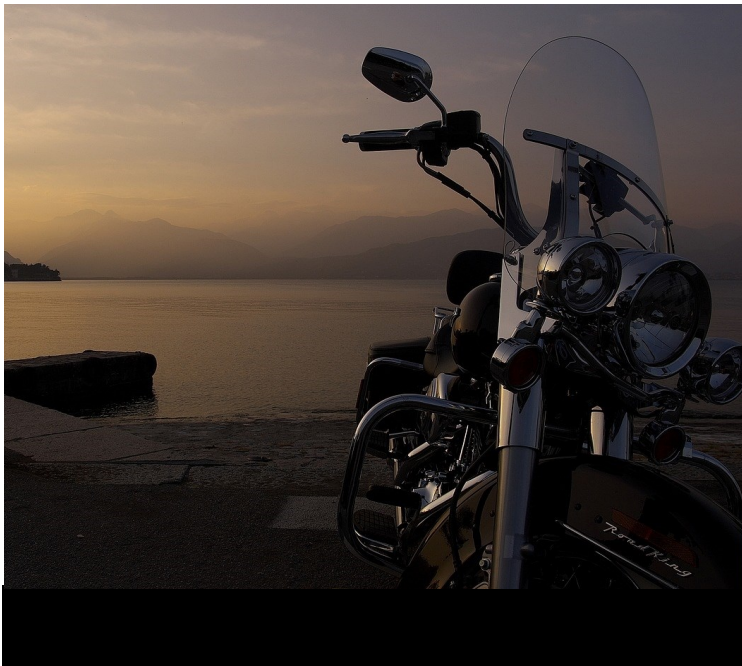
Police stats

A snapshot of the Scotland wide traffic offences recorded for quarter 3 of the financial year 2018/19. That covers the period October - December 2018.

Across Scotland the top 3 offences were: Speeding, No insurance, No MOT.

In Fife, the top 3 offences were: Speeding, No insurance, No driving license so very similar to the national statistics

| | Number recorded | | Rate per 10,000 population | |
|--|-----------------|---------|----------------------------|---------|
| | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2017/18 | 2018/19 |
| TOTAL GROUP 7 | 99 836 | 88 788 | 184.7 | 164.3 |
| Dangerous driving offences | 2 213 | 2 214 | 4.1 | 4.1 |
| Drink/ drug driving offences (incl. fail to provide a specimen) | 4 518 | 4 463 | 8.4 | 8.3 |
| Speeding offences | 23 670 | 20 705 | 43.8 | 38.3 |
| Driving while disqualified | 1 091 | 997 | 2 | 1.8 |
| Driving without a licence | 4 950 | 4 396 | 9.2 | 8.1 |
| Failure to insure against third party risks | 12 176 | 10 798 | 22.5 | 20 |
| Seat belt offences | 2 543 | 2 291 | 4.7 | 4.2 |
| Mobile phone offences | 2 591 | 2 295 | 4.8 | 4.2 |
| Driving carelessly | 6 367 | 6 062 | 11.8 | 11.2 |
| Drivers neglect of traffic directions (not pedestrian crossings) | 3 293 | 3 070 | 6.1 | 5.7 |
| Using a motor vehicle without test certificate | 11 649 | 10 682 | 21.6 | 19.8 |
| Other Group 7 offences | 24 775 | 20 815 | 45.8 | 38.5 |



Motorbike Section

Well the bike section is slowly building and although many of the associates have taken their bikes off the road for the winter the committee have been busy behind the scenes organising events for the coming year. Although I will always email you all please do follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

Find us on Facebook [here](#)

Or Twitter @KoFGIAMMC

We have observer training coming up shortly, this will allow four trainee observers to hone their skills and once they have successfully passed their course, they will then pass their new skills onto new associates. We wish them well.

There is also an observer training weekend in April through in Stirling where observers from all Scottish IAM groups will get together and ensure we are all singing on the same hymn sheet. It will also allow us to hone our skills as we are all human and need to keep on top of skills. Remember it's a skill for life but if you don't put the time and effort in keeping on top of it your skill level may drop. When did you last have your riding assessed? Remember we have FREE assessed rides if you want an observer to ride behind you and pass on feedback. If you feel you would benefit from this then please get in touch.

Remember we have our monthly ride outs which you are encouraged to attend. Come along meet other group members, socialise with us and enjoy a great ride. Always good coffee stops somewhere too.

The Scottish Motorcycle show took place at Ingliston showground the weekend 9th March. this was a great success for the IAM stand and 71 new associates signed up, several of whom will be KoFG associates. We look forward to seeing them on the road.



Fire service donation

If you've been to some of our events, meetings or training days, they may have taken place at Dunfermline Fire Station in Pitreavie.

As we are a local charity, the Fire Service kindly provide us the free use of a room for some of our events in the West Fife area.

In order to say thank you, we normally provide a small annual donation to the fire fighters charity. Pictured is our Chief Car Observer handing over a cheque recently.

If you want to help too, you don't need to wait on us donating. You can visit www.firefighterscharity.org.uk to donate, shop or find out what events are happening in your local area to support this fund.

Car Section

The car section has been busy since the beginning of the year. We currently have 14 Associates preparing for the IAM Test and 1 Associate on the Waiting List.

In February we held a Theory Event at the Fire Station in Dunfermline which was a successful event and it was good to see so many new Associates.

We had a Practical Driving Event in March in Dunfermline where Observers took Associates out for a drive covering various roads. These events give new Associates the opportunity to meet other Associates and Observers in the Group. The next Practical Driving Event will be held at Home Farm in Kirkcaldy on Sunday, 5th May.

The Group has arranged a meeting on Monday 18th March with 2 of the IAM Examiners who are coming along to the Group to give a talk on their own background and some tips on what the Examiner expects on the Test.

On 2nd April we are holding another Theory Event and we look forward to a talk on cornering and limit points from Gary Daly, who was traffic policeman. This will be a very useful talk for both Associates and all members in the Group.

The Group has had 3 car IAM Test passes so far this year, Scott Blyth, Andrew Laing and Emma Hulme who achieved a First. Congratulations to all three.

Gary Lawson, one of our Observers passed his National Test, well done Gary. Two of our Local Observers are working through their Local Observer Assessments and hopefully will be signed off very soon.

Contact Us

If you have any general queries or feedback you can contact us:

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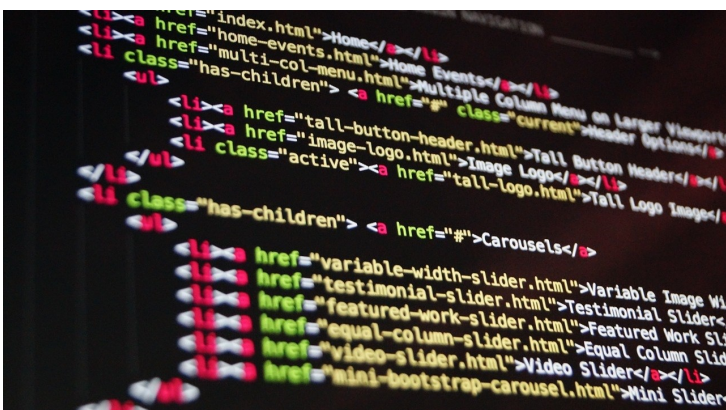
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Emma Hulme receiving her pass certificate

New Fife IAM website coming soon!



We are in the process of updating our website which I'm sure you'll agree needs done if you've visited it recently.

We hope the website will be another tool that we can use to keep you updated and allow you to interact with us on a more frequent basis.

We appreciate your patience whilst we complete this and if there is anything you think would be useful for our website then please let us know.