

# YOUNG DRIVERS

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Good afternoon,

My name is Colin Baird and I work in the Road Network Management Section of the Transportation Division within the Department of Environment.

I have been working in the road safety and traffic management fields for nearly 20 years.

I have been asked to provide you with information about this group of vulnerable road users and what might be done to reduce the rate at which they are being killed and injured on the roads.

## Profile

- Typically between 17-19 years old
- Held a full driving licence for less than 6 months
- Think they drive well but undeveloped hazard perception
- Enjoy driving more than any other age group
- Feeling of power, being in control and personal identity from driving
- May commit driving offences to impress their peers
- Show greater outward anger towards other drivers
- Highest violators of the Highway Code i.e. more likely to speed, race, close follow, undertake, drink and drug drive



Above are shown the typical characteristics of Young Drivers.

This information comes from research carried out for Road Safety Scotland which you might have known as the Scottish Road Safety Campaign

I think we can all recognise these traits in young drivers we have observed.

## Attitudes

- With male passenger(s), more likely to tailgate & speed
- Choose faster speeds at bends than any other driving group
- Feel unlikely to suffer any consequences from their actions
- Immediate 'feel good' emotions when committing driving offences
- Consider themselves better drivers than others do but lack experience
- Over confidence may lead to risk taking and unsafe speeds



These are some of the risky attitudes shown by young drivers

The profile and attitudes of the young drivers combined with their lack of experience and over confidence contribute to their poor accident rates. This is particularly true of young male drivers.

## Background – Scotland

- 500 young people pass their test weekly
- 1 young driver killed and 17 seriously injured every week
- 45 people under the age of 25 killed on Scotland's roads in the first six months of this year
- 20% will be involved in an accident in their 1<sup>st</sup> year
- Twice as likely to be killed or seriously injured in a rural area
- Male driver accident rate more than double that of female
- More than 10% regularly under the influence of drink / drugs
- 20% of 17-22 year old male drivers (UK) killed in collisions were driving cars more than 13 years old

 East Lothian Council

Here are some background facts on the scale and seriousness of the young driver issues nationally in Scotland.

Two points of interest are that young drivers are twice as likely to be killed or seriously injured on rural roads as compared to an urban area

And

The young male driver accident rate is more than double that of their female counterparts

It should also be noted that one in five of young drivers killed in the UK were driving cars more than 13 years old. What might be done about this issue?

Perhaps a format such as the Young Marmalade low cost insurance and purchase scheme. This provides affordable insurance hand in hand with the opportunity to purchase a carefully selected, up to date car with a high Euro NCAP safety rating.

## Background – East Lothian

- **Approx. 25 young people pass their test every month**
- **Most recent 3 calendar years - 28 ksi accidents (1 fatal)**
- **Main causation factors**
  - *9 driver loss of control (indicates excessive speed)*
  - *6 struck pedestrian in roadway (speed & hazard perception?)*
  - *5 other vehicle oncoming overtake (speed & hazard perception?)*
  - *4 turned right and struck oncoming vehicle (hazard perception?)*



This slide gives you the scale and seriousness of the problems being experienced in East Lothian.

## UK – Legislation & Initiatives

- **1997 New Drivers Act** - Driving licence revoked if six or more penalty points within two years (UK). But the Minister has recently admitted that this has not been successful in meeting its objectives
- **Feb 2007 - The Second Three Year Review of the DfT's road safety strategy - "Tomorrow's Roads – safer for everyone"**
- **Oct 2007 - "Novice Drivers" House of Commons, Transport Committee Seventh Report - Government Response (UK)**



Earlier this year the DfT's second three year review of the UK road safety strategy concluded

*time has come to reform fundamentally the way people learn to drive. The three main elements must be*

*new competency and knowledge framework setting out what a candidate must know and be able to do*

*a modern training syllabus setting out what a candidate needs to learn*

*systematic assessment criteria setting out how the testing stage will establish that a candidate has covered the syllabus properly and can demonstrate the required level of competence.*

However, recently the House of Commons, Transport Committee's responded and it was pretty scathing of the DfT's progress. It concluded

*The evidence demonstrating the scale of novice driver casualties is clear. The Department must now respond to this evidence by implementing measures which will reduce the risks novice drivers face and pose. The Department has published little research on the impact of changes made to the driver training and testing regimes over the past decade. This research must be published promptly.*

*The driver training regime needs to be modernised as a matter of urgency. We understand that the Department is due to consult on such reforms: it must be prepared to implement these changes quickly — too much time has already passed since its last consultation on this subject in 2002.*

## Scotland – Campaigns & Initiatives

- [“Crash Magnets”](#) Road Safety Scotland (RSS) resource Feb 2006
- New 10 Year Road Safety Strategy for Scotland
- Expert Group on Road Safety – first meeting Nov 2007
- *“Pass Plus”* – voluntary novice driver further education / experience initiative (£150). At least 11 Scottish Councils part funding
- Feb 2007 – Scottish Executive offering £75 off *“Pass Plus”* costs in 3 pilot areas for 6 month period



**Crash Magnets** allows young people to discover the key issues surrounding road safety for themselves through a series of online activities. These cover subjects such as driver distraction, speed, the cruise culture and drink and drug driving. The activities are combined with DVD clips of other young people sharing their experiences alongside facts and figures.

**Pass Plus** is an existing initiative promoted originally by the Driving Standards Agency back in 1995.

It gives new drivers who have recently passed their test additional driver training in safe driving, covering potential dangers encountered when driving in town; bad weather; at night; on rural roads, dual carriageways and motorways.

The additional experience can also give those who pass the course substantial discounts on their insurance rates. These aspects are not covered in the standard driving test. Around 100,000 new drivers take Pass Plus every year in Great Britain.

However, a 10 year report by the ABI suggests that Pass Plus drivers only have a marginally lower accident rate than drivers who do not participate in the scheme. Maybe this is down to the type of person taking the course rather than an effect of the course itself!

## East Lothian – Campaigns & Initiatives

- “*Crash Magnets*” resource circulated to all schools
- 2MOROs Driver – L & B Police / RSS road safety event at Brunton Theatre for all S6 pupils.
- Young Drivers Challenge - L & B Police road safety event new drivers



### **2Moro's Driver -**

2MRO's Driver is a road safety event for all East Lothian S6 pupils organised by Lothian and Borders Police Road Safety Unit. It is a multi-agency event, which is based on a play funded by Road Safety Scotland and performed by the Baldy Bane Theatre Company.

It deals with the fun, risks and the responsibilities involved with becoming a new driver and getting a first car.

2MRO's Driver complements the new national teaching resource '*Crash Magnets*'. The 2007 event (the 2<sup>nd</sup> year) went ahead in September and early feedback received described it as “fantastic.” The Community Safety Forum has recently agreed to fund the transport to this event until March 2010.

**YDC** – in it's 3<sup>rd</sup> year, the 2007 event went very well at which 65 new drivers attended. Again a multi agency event organised by Lothian and Borders Police.

During the event novice drivers have the opportunity to sign up for either: a Manoeuvrability Course; an Assessed Drive by either the IAM or RoSPA; or a Demonstration Drive in a patrol car given by a Police Class 1 Driving Instructor. This event is sponsored by British Energy, Lothian & Borders Safety Camera Partnership; Transport Scotland and East and Midlothian Councils.

## East Lothian – Future

- **Continued support for L & B Police organised events**
  - *“2MOROs Driver”*
  - *“Young Drivers Challenge”*
- **Investigate support funding for Pass Plus courses. Moray Council £60 / completed course**
  - Nov 05 to Nov 2006 - 81 successful candidates (£4,860)
  - Nov 06 to Nov 2007 - 175 successful candidates (£10,500) However it should be noted that with much greater national publicity from Feb 2007 and SE £75 completed courses only cost £15
- **Lobby for an urgent and significant overhaul of the national driver training and testing scheme**



For the future I would strongly recommend that support for the two existing pre-driver and new driver events in East Lothian is continued.

With regard to Pass Plus I am not convinced that the overall benefits are clear or have been proven. I think we should await the outcome of the Scottish Government pilot project research and the recommendations of the new Expert Group on Road Safety.

The direction and future proposals expected from the DfT and Westminster will also have a great influence on the national training and testing programmes of the future.