

30 June 2010

Older drivers refresher courses benefit all, says IAM

The IAM (Institute of Advanced Motorists) has welcomed the new RAC report on older drivers which finds that 84% of drivers aged 70 or over acknowledge the value of a refresher driving course.

Neil Greig, IAM Director of Policy and Research said: "With ever-growing numbers of older drivers looking to stay safe and maintain independence, it is encouraging to see that there is a high degree of support for refresher courses.

"Older drivers have most of their crashes on high speed roads, particularly on slip roads and at junctions and roundabouts. Updating their skills to deal with these hazards and helping them to stay mobile for as long as possible should be the key aim of refresher courses. The IAM provides a Drive Check 55 refresher course which specifically address these issues.

"The IAM does not support compulsory retesting or medicals as we believe they will force many perfectly safe drivers to give up driving too early. This loss of mobility makes them a far greater financial burden on society and less able to access services and support. GPs need more training and information to help them advise patients on giving up driving and refresher courses."

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

- The IAM has already called for a wide debate on how we will deal with older drivers on our roads. Over the next 30 years **the number of male drivers over 70 on the roads will double, and the number of women drivers will treble.** By raising the issue now we can have the right structure in place to deliver the refresher courses that older drivers want without putting in place a restrictive and expensive new licensing regime.
- IAM research in 2005 found that seven out of ten older drivers would like refresher courses to include a brush-up on driving on busy motorways.

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ENDS ALL

1. The IAM (Institute of Advanced Motorists) directly influences the driving and riding of more than 100,000 full members in the UK and Ireland. Established in 1956, the IAM is today best known for the advanced driving test and the advanced driving course, which is available to car, motorcycle and commercial licence holders. The IAM has grown to become the UK's largest independent road safety charity, dedicated to raising driving standards, engaging with the road-using public and influencing road safety policy. The commercial division of the IAM operates through its occupational driver training company IAM Drive & Survive.

2. A 2006 report by Brunel University, following an 18 month study, concluded that "advanced driver training produces safer drivers and lower accident involvement", with measurable improvements in knowledge, skills and attitude.

3. In January 2007, the IAM established the Policy and Research Division to undertake research, promote practical policies, act as an advocate for safer roads, safer drivers and safer vehicles and encourage responsible motoring through education and training.

4. Skill for Life programmes are delivered through a UK wide network of over 200 voluntary IAM groups, details of which can be found at iam.org.uk.

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News Release (Continued)

