

DSA ezine for road safety professionals

Observer on test - one year on

This time last year, DSA launched a campaign to encourage more people to take an observer with them on their practical car test. Although this is something that had always been encouraged, DSA decided to take a much more proactive approach in promoting it.

Examiners started asking candidates if they would like an observer - usually the person who had taught them to drive - to sit in the back seat during the test and listen to the feedback at the end.

Since April last year, when the campaign kicked off, the number of candidates who take someone with them on test has gradually increased, from just four per cent at the time to over 20 per cent today.

"It's good to see that more candidates are asking their driving instructor to accompany

"I don't mind sitting in the back of a test if my pupil asks me to. It gives me a chance to see how they drive with someone else sitting in the front and how the examiners do their job."

ADI

them on test," says DSA's chief driving examiner, Trevor Wedge.

"If the candidate fails the test, the instructor will have witnessed the drive and heard the examiner's feedback first hand. This means they can discuss it with the candidate afterwards and work on particular areas of weakness in future lessons.

"But even if the candidate passes, the instructor can still give useful feedback about how to further improve their driving."



"I found it a lot easier having someone in the back with me, it made me feel a lot calmer, but I guess everyone is different."

Candidate

Are you an ADI? What do you think about being an observer on test? Email us with your views and experiences at pressoffice@dsa.gsi.gov.uk.

The Highway Code turns 80

It's one of Britain's most popular non-fiction books, sells hundreds of thousands of copies a year and has been in constant publication since 1931. But more importantly, it's one of the few books that can lay claim to saving thousands of lives.

On 14 April this year, the Highway Code celebrates its 80th anniversary.

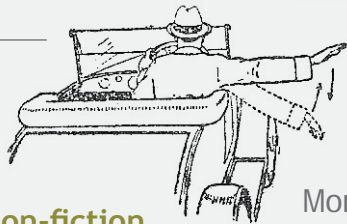
When it was introduced in 1931 there were just 2.3 million motor vehicles in Great Britain, yet over 7,000 people were killed in road accidents each year.

In 2009, this had fallen to 2,222 killed, despite there being over 30 million vehicles on the road.



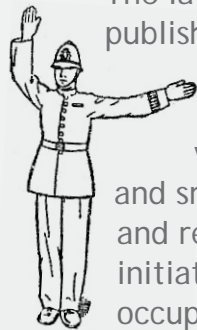
Although road safety has come a long way over the years, the spirit of the Highway Code remains the same: the very first edition urged all road users to be careful and considerate towards others, putting safety first.

But of course some aspects of the Code have changed considerably. For example, in 1931 mirrors were not even mentioned and drivers

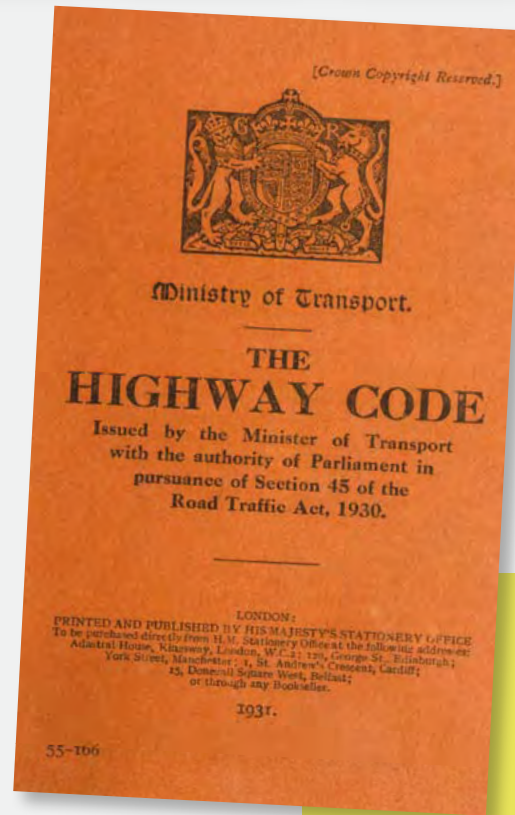


were advised to sound their horn when overtaking.

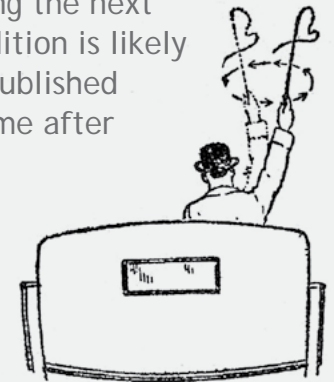
More than a third of the original 24-page booklet was given to hand signals, compared to the single page covering the subject in the current edition.



The latest edition, published in 2007, was updated to include new legislation on vehicle emissions and smoking in vehicles, and references new initiatives like high-occupancy vehicle lanes, home zones and active traffic management schemes.



The Code is substantially updated every 8-10 years, meaning the next new edition is likely to be published sometime after 2015.



The 1931 edition:

- cost one old penny
- was the only one to carry advertisements
- contained 18 pages of advice, compared to 93 pages in the 1999 edition
- included advice to drivers of horse drawn vehicles to 'rotate the whip above the head; then incline the whip to the right or left to show the direction in which the turn is to be made.'



Take the quiz

DSA's official publisher, TSO, has created a short quiz so all road users can see whether they need to brush up on their road knowledge. Take the quiz here: <http://tinyurl.com/68u968p>

Benefiting from CPD

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is used by many professions to help individuals maintain and develop their knowledge and skills.

Within the driver training industry, CPD enables instructors to broaden their skills, or the range of services that they can offer. It also gives their customers greater confidence that they will receive up-to-date instruction.

Mark Magee, head of modernising driver training, commented: "CPD is not just a DSA initiative. It is strongly supported by all the national driving instructor associations.

" DSA continues to work with the industry to encourage and promote the take up of CPD. Practical test centres are now displaying a poster giving information on local and national associations, and



Driving Instructor Associations

These organisations provide information, advice and support to their members. Many provide training and hold conferences and meetings in a range of areas including continuing professional development (CPD).

ADI Federation Telephone: 01933 461821 Web: www.theadifederation.org.uk	Approved Driving Instructors National Joint Council Telephone: 01543 256578 Web: www.adinjic.org.uk	Delivering Information Developing Understanding Telephone: 0800 6226027 Web: www.didu.co.uk
Driving Instructors Association Telephone: 020 8665 5151 Web: www.driving.org	Driving Instructor's Branch of Unite the Union Telephone: 07812 644825 Web: www.unitetheunion.com	Driving Instructors Scottish Council Telephone: 01506 855 455 Web: www.d-i-s-c.org.uk
Motor Schools Association Telephone: 0800 0265986 Web: www.msagb.com	Local driving instructor association Assoc. name: _____ Telephone: _____ Web site/Email: _____	Local driving instructor association Assoc. name: _____ Telephone: _____ Web site/Email: _____
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how they can support you with your CPD."

Mark highlighted that CPD is, however, personal to the individual: "Each ADI should identify their own development needs and consider what will give them the best return for their investment of time and money.

" There are resources out there to help ADIs do this. I'd recommend visiting the CPD area on **Business Link**. It includes a useful **self assessment tool** to help you put together an

Michelle Dunning sees CPD as: "a vital part of our business as it pushes the instructors to keep up to date with current issues."

A qualified ADI and ORDIT trainer, Michelle is studying for the Diploma in Driving Instructing: "I have pushed myself to learn something new about our profession which in turn I can pass on to my pupils. I also give up my time to do tutorials at my local college about safe driving, effects of alcohol on driving and how to choose a driving instructor. I don't get paid for these but they give me a chance to keep up to date with what is happening in our industry."



individual development plan and record your CPD, as well as a series of short **videos** giving examples of CPD and how it can enhance or broaden your skills."

Don't forget to declare that you are committed to CPD. Tick the box on the **instructor homepage** of the Integrated Register of Driver Trainers (IRDT). It's as simple as that.



To find out more about Steve's work, visit his website adittraining123.co.uk

Teaching the deaf and hard of hearing

Steve Swinton has 18 years' experience teaching deaf people to drive. As well as being a Grade 6 ADI, Steve is a registered instructor trainer and has also qualified as a further education teacher. Now, he's developing a training course to help other ADIs teach learner drivers who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Q: How did you first become involved with teaching deaf people to drive?

A: I was approached by the secretary of our local deaf society back in 1992. One of their members had been to see two driving instructors but they had both declared him un-teachable. I took it on myself to give it a go and I found that with a simple sign I could say more than I could in a whole sentence. So I took an introductory course in British Sign Language (BSL) at our local adult education college, and since then I've completed level 1 and 2.



Q: Have your lessons evolved as you've gained more experience?

A: It's something that I've had to learn through experience because there aren't currently any courses available for driving instructors who want to learn how to teach deaf people. That's why I've decided to develop my own course - it's still a project in the making but I think having more driving instructors who know BSL would make a real difference.

Q: Is it harder teaching deaf students than it is hearing students?

A: Not necessarily. Deaf people rely more on their other senses. For example recently I was teaching a deaf pupil how to do the biting point - she felt when the clutch was at the biting point by the change in vibration on the steering wheel. And she found it just as well, if not better, than some of my hearing pupils.

Q: What advice would you give to other ADIs who may be considering teaching deaf people?

A: Don't be afraid to give it a go. Teaching deaf people gives me a lot of satisfaction, and it makes me feel so much better about getting up in the morning and going out to work.

Two years' prison for test bribery ADI

An approved driving instructor has received a two year prison sentence for her part in a bribery conspiracy which allowed driving test candidates to pay for passes. A former examiner, who was also convicted, is awaiting sentencing.

A total of 75 suspicious tests at Barking driving test centre, Essex, were investigated, and 24 licences subsequently revoked after a tip off from a candidate.

ADI Mrs Salim Rashid, from Barking, was found guilty of bribery and money laundering after a trial at Snaresbrook Crown Court. She was sentenced to two years in prison.

Former driving examiner, Nick Madigan, from Canvey Island, admitted bribery and money laundering at a previous hearing. His case has been adjourned for sentencing.

The court heard candidates paid up to £1,000 a time for a pass. In some cases they didn't even have to take the test.

Andy Rice, head of DSA's Fraud and Integrity Team, said: "Criminals of this nature - including those who paid bribes - put the lives of other people at risk by allowing unqualified drivers to get behind the wheel on their own.

"I am really pleased with this result and would like to acknowledge the value of the joint partnership work undertaken with the Metropolitan Police in this case."

DSA launched a full investigation as soon as the allegations were made and Madigan has been dismissed.

Andy Rice added: "Around 1.5 million practical driving tests take place every year and thankfully such crime is extremely rare. But we will always take the strongest possible action against any of our staff or approved driving instructors who fall short of the standards we and the public expect of them."

In a separate case, former teacher Jin Su of Swinton, Greater Manchester, pleaded guilty to offering a bribe and common assault, after attempting to slip examiner Keith Ashcroft an envelope stuffed with cash during her driving test.

The mother-of-one handed over the money just before she tried a road manoeuvre. The packet contained between £400 and £500, Manchester Crown Court heard.

When Mr Ashcroft refused the bribe and terminated the test, Su attacked him, trying to push him back into the car. When questioned after her arrest she said the money was to bring good luck, but later admitted it was a bribe.

She was ordered to carry out 50 hours of unpaid work and pay Mr Ashcroft £100 compensation.

If you suspect anyone of driving test fraud, please contact the fraud and integrity team: integrity.team@dsa.gsi.gov.uk



A round up of this month's news

Pass Plus training report forms

Completed training report forms must now be sent to our current address and not our previous Stanley House address, even if our previous address is given on the form. We no longer receive post sent to Stanley House. Our new address is:

Driving Standards Agency
The Axis Building
112 Upper Parliament Street
Nottingham
NG1 6LP

DSA business plan published

DSA's business plan for 2011/12 has been published. [Find it here.](#)

Changes to the module 1 motorcycle test

The government is working with the motorcycle industry to review the delivery and content of the motorcycle test.

This work (along with DSA's ongoing monitoring and review process of all tests) has identified a number of minor changes that can be quickly introduced before the main review is finished.

These changes will take effect from 16 May 2011. See the full details [here.](#)

ADI re-registration reminder letters

From 14 April, ADIs will receive only one reminder letter for the renewal of their registration with DSA, six months before it's due to expire. DSA will no longer send a second reminder at three months before the expiry date.





Maestro cards

From 14 April 2011, DSA will no longer be accepting Maestro cards for test bookings and other payments.

If you're registered with DSA as a business or trainer booker and your nominated payment card is a Maestro, you'll need to change it to another card in writing (post or fax) to DSA Business ID section, PO Box 280, Newcastle upon Tyne NE99 1FP or fax 0300 200 1155.

Theory test trainer bookers must log onto the online booking service and either delete or amend their nominated payment card details saved within the 'Favourite form of payment' field.

DSA accepts the following cards:

-  MasterCard,
-  Visa,
-  Delta,
-  Visa Electron

Get in touch

For the latest DSA news and information visit dft.gov.uk/dsa

Information for candidates is available on direct.gov.uk/motoring and driver and rider trainers can visit businesslink.gov.uk/transport

Book and manage your test appointments at direct.gov.uk/drivingtest or businesslink.gov.uk/transport

A list of useful contact details can be found at dft.gov.uk/dsa

What do you think of this issue of Despatch ezine? Email your comments to pressoffice@dsa.gsi.gov.uk



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