

24 June 2010

## Cuts must not halt drive to reduce road deaths, says IAM

The reduction in the number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads must not be compromised by anticipated cuts in government spending, said the IAM (Institute of Advanced Motorists) as the latest figures were released by the Department for Transport (DfT).

Neil Greig, the IAM's Policy and Research Director, said:

"The IAM is pleased to see the continued downward trend in road deaths in the UK. As ever there is no single factor that you can point to. We would argue that the focus on rural roads in the last two years has undoubtedly helped with rural road safety campaigns by the DfT and the police raising awareness that drivers are most at risk in the countryside.

"Two other factors to consider are that fewer youngsters are taking the test due to demographic trends and we are all driving safer cars as the old pre airbag, non crash tested bangers go off the road."

Mr Greig said that the IAM's main concern is that road safety is an easy cut in the light of the public sector spending problems. "We must maintain budgets if this downward trend is to continue and we are to make Britain's roads the safest in the world," he said.

Today's DfT figures show overall casualties down. The number of people killed in road accidents fell by 12 per cent from 2,538 in 2008 to 2,222 in 2009. In accidents reported to the police 26,096 people were killed or seriously injured in 2009, six per cent fewer than in 2008. There were just over 222,000 road casualties in Great Britain in 2009, four per cent less than in 2008.

"If the results continue to improve like this, we will be well below 2,000 fatalities by 2020," said Mr Greig.

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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 Policy and Research Division was established 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.

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