



**PACTS RESPONSE TO  
THE TRANSPORT SELECT COMMITTEE'S CALL FOR  
EVIDENCE REGARDING THE GB INTERPRETATION OF THE  
NEW EUROPEAN MOTORCYCLE TEST**

THURSDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2009

# THE PARLIAMENTARY ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR TRANSPORT SAFETY (PACTS)

## Response to the Department for Transport (DFT) review

### 'Review of UK domestic Drivers Hours Rules'

The Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety (PACTS) is a registered charity and an associate Parliamentary Group. Its charitable objective is "To protect human life through the promotion of transport safety for the public benefit". Its aim is to advise and inform members of the House of Commons and of the House of Lords on air, rail and road safety issues.

Casualty rate per billion passenger kilometers  
Source: Road Casualties Great Britain (2007)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
<b>Bus or coach</b>							
Killed	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.3
KSI	11	11	11	10	9	7	8
All severities	195	191	173	175	167	146	130
<b>Car<sup>7</sup></b>							
Killed	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.5
KSI	32	31	29	27	25	23	22
All severities	335	323	304	291	282	275	260
<b>Van<sup>7</sup></b>							
Killed	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.8	0.6	0.6
KSI	12	11	11	10	8	7	6
All severities	100	102	96	92	76	72	68
<b>Motorcycle<sup>7</sup></b>							
Killed	122	112	111	120	104	98	107
KSI	1,493	1,405	1,367	1,328	1,184	1,116	1,155
All severities	5,712	5,539	5,168	4,931	4,566	4,257	4,156
<b>Pedal cycle</b>							
Killed	31	33	29	26	32	34	31
KSI	666	632	555	543	550	536	527
All severities	4,953	4,512	3,874	3,838	3,964	3,764	3,494
<b>Pedestrian</b>							
Killed	49	47	42	41	35	36	36
KSI	543	521	471	424	394	384	371
All severities	2,404	2,332	2,117	1,944	1,836	1,794	1,631

The motorcycle rider is overrepresented in road accident and road casualty data. A close analysis of the casualty rate per billion passenger kilometres shows that motorcycling continues to be the most high risk mode of travel. In 2006, motorcyclists were 52 times more likely to be killed or seriously injured than car occupants and 356 times more likely to be killed than bus or coach occupants.<sup>1</sup> The above statistics highlight the very obvious need for greater protection of powered two wheeler riders through the training of other road users, vehicle design, informative campaigns and rider training and testing. It is vital that the likelihood and severity of collisions involving motorcyclists is reduced. PACTS therefore welcomed the EU directive which called for a change in motorcyclist testing methods.

The following will respond to questions one, two and four from the Transport Select Committee enquiry.

[1. Has the DSA interpreted the EU Second Driving Licence Directive correctly and applied it appropriately?](#)

Based on analysis of the directive, analysis of the new DSA test, consultation with our members and a look into the interpretations from other member states, it is fair to say that the DSA has interpreted the directive correctly and applied it appropriately. We were able to compare interpretation of the directive in France, where it has been applied more stringently than in GB, and Germany, where the interpretation is similar to that of the DSA.

There are important questions to be asked however around the quality and availability of training for instructors on the new test. The lack of syllabus makes it difficult to say whether or not sufficient support and guidance is available to learners and instructors. PACTS would like to see a framework in place which ensures that instructors are able to train learner riders, enabling them to complete the test safely.

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<sup>1</sup> Per billion vehicle kilometres travelled

## 2. Are the off-road motorcycle tests safe and appropriate?

It is vital that skills are adequately tested before riders become fully qualified. It therefore seems appropriate that the new test place higher demands on the learner rider, preparing him/her for what we already know to be high risk conditions on the road. The greater the level of exposure to risk within the controlled conditions of learning, the better prepared a rider will be once s/he has gained a full licence.

This is of particular importance in the UK where the average age of new riders is rising. As such, new, inexperienced, older riders have been able to ride more powerful machines sooner. The testing procedure should encourage longer, more technical training. We feel that the new off-road tests provide this.

Despite a number of parliamentary questions on the matter, it is not possible to find a reliable incident rate for motorcycle testing before and after the application of the directive. If the incident rate is higher following implementation of the Directive, it is important to ensure that adequate training is given to learners and to instructors for whom the testing is new.

Importantly, the more difficult aspects of the test are kept off-road<sup>2</sup> in a supervised and controlled environment. As a result, the learner is much safer than s/he would be completing the manoeuvres on the road.

## 4. What is the impact of recent changes in motorcycle testing?

It is too soon to tell. Close monitoring and evaluation of the new testing requirements, procedures and training are necessary over at least the next year.

It is important to bear in mind the likelihood of an influx of test applications directly before the application of the directive which could distort the pass-rate comparisons.

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<sup>2</sup> We are aware that this is a result of the speeds at which the manoeuvres are required to take place, although we imagine that in other member states it would also be safer to encourage an off-road interpretation.

For more information on any of the points made, please contact PACTS:

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