



Department of the
Environment
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Northern Ireland Road Safety Monitor Bulletin 2006

Introduction

The Northern Ireland Road Safety Monitor 2006 is the latest in a series of research on attitudes, behaviour and awareness of road safety issues in Northern Ireland. The survey has been carried out since 1995, but in 2002 was revised to reflect changing driving habits and to allow new topics to be explored. Whilst some of the original questions remain, many have been removed and there has been a substantial introduction of new material.

This bulletin highlights the key points arising out of the 2006 survey. The Northern Ireland Road Safety Monitor is a sample survey, the results of which are subject to both sampling and non-sampling errors.

Key Points

Speeding

- Just over one in five motorists (22%) stated that they never exceed the speed limit. Almost one quarter of drivers (24%) admitted that they exceed the speed limit on all road types.
- Males are more likely than females to speed on all road types (33% compared to 14%).
- Three quarters of respondents (75%) felt it is fair that the police issue speeding tickets with penalty points for drivers who exceed the speed limit by up to 10 mph, 26% of which felt it is fair for drivers who exceed the speed limit by 5mph.
- In 2006, 56% of respondents thought it was likely that they would be stopped by the police for speeding, 64% thought it likely they would be caught speeding by a mobile camera and over half (55%) thought it was likely that they would be caught on a fixed camera.
- Almost one third of respondents (31%) agreed that it is always dangerous to exceed the speed limit on a motorway by less than 5 miles per hour.

Drinking and Driving

- In 2006, 28% of motorists who drink stated that they would be likely to drive after one drink. This decreased to 12% after two drinks and 5% after three or more drinks.
- More than two thirds of respondents (69%) stated that they would be unlikely to travel in a car in which the driver has had a single drink.
- 92% of respondents agreed that the police should be able to stop people at random and breathalyse them. 58% of respondents thought it was likely that they would be stopped by the police for drinking and driving.
- Half (50%) of respondents felt that motorists should not be allowed to drive if they had consumed any alcohol. Just over half of respondents (51%) think that the penalties for drinking and driving are not very severe, even if caught.
- 37% of motorists who drink stated that they could not have a single drink without it affecting their driving. Just over one quarter (26%) said they could have one drink and one fifth said they could have two drinks without it affecting their driving.
- Two fifths (40%) of respondents consider that it is acceptable to drive after having one drink. One fifth think is acceptable to drive after two drinks and 7% after three drinks.
- Two fifths of respondents underestimated the number of units contained in a pint of beer. 43% underestimated the number of units contained in a bottle of beer and 39% underestimated the number of units contained in a glass of wine. 37% underestimated a pint of cider, 30% a can of beer and just over one in five (21%) underestimated the number of units contained in a measure of spirits. Approximately 3 in 10 respondents did not know how many units were contained in the various measures of drinks.
- With regard to the drinking and driving campaign 'Shame', 95% of respondents were able to correctly identify the campaign after seeing still pictures from the TV advertisement. 96% of respondents were aware of the campaign, and 84% admitted that it had influenced their behaviour in relation to drinking and driving.

Pedestrian Safety

- Three quarters of pedestrians stated that they would always or almost always use a pedestrian crossing if they are at or near one when crossing the road.
- Just over two thirds (68%) were aware of what 'amber light flashing' meant when driving and approaching a pedestrian crossing. Just one in five respondents were aware of what 'green man flashing' meant when at a pedestrian crossing.

- 83% of respondents recognized still pictures from the TV advertisements relating to pedestrian safety called 'Texting' and 'Home'. 91% stated that they were aware of the campaign and 93% stated that it had influenced their behaviour.

Fatigue

- 46% of motorists stated that there have been occasions when they have felt drowsy when driving. There was a marked difference between male (50%) and female (40%) respondents.
- One third (33%) of occasions of drowsiness mentioned had happened on motorways, and 32% had happened on roads outside a built up area.

Additional Information

Electronic and hard copies of this bulletin and the full Northern Ireland Road Safety Monitor Report (2006) are fully downloadable from the CSRB website and are also available from:

Central Statistics and Research Branch,
Room 4.02,
Clarence Court,
10 - 18 Adelaide Street,
Belfast, BT2 8GB

Telephone: (028) 9054 0808 / (028) 9054 0390
Fax: (028) 9054 0782
E-mail: csrb@doeni.gov.uk
Web: <http://csrb.doeni.gov.uk>