



NORTHERN IRELAND ROAD SAFETY MONITOR 2009

October 2009

The Northern Ireland Road Safety Monitor 2009 is the latest in a research series into road safety issues in Northern Ireland. The survey has been carried out since 1995.

The results outline the behaviour, attitudes and awareness of the general public to road safety issues in Northern Ireland.

Key points from the survey:

1. Drinking and Driving

- Over two fifths of motorists interviewed who drink alcohol (44%) said that they could not drink any alcohol without it affecting their driving.
- 33% of respondents think it is acceptable to drive after one drink.
- However, 66% of respondents feel that motorists should not be allowed to drive after drinking any alcohol. (61% of male respondents, 71% of female respondents).
- Male respondents (51%) are more likely than female respondents (36%) to travel as a passenger in a car in which the driver has had one drink.
- The majority of respondents (88%) said that the police should be able to stop people at random and breathalyse them for driving under the influence of alcohol.
- 59% of respondents said they agree the penalties for drinking and driving are not harsh enough.

2. Mobile Phones

- 56% of motorists interviewed who own a mobile phone said they never use a mobile phone while driving (49% of males, 62% of females).
- The majority of respondents (95%) said they did not agree that drivers should be allowed to use a hand held mobile phone while driving.
- Almost all motorists who stated they would use a hand held mobile phone while driving said they were aware of the risks associated with doing this (95%).
- Almost three quarters of motorists who would use a hands free mobile phone while driving said they were aware of risks associated with doing this (74%).

3. Seat Belts

- Almost all motorists interviewed (98%) said they usually wear a seat belt when driving, and almost all respondents (98%) said they usually wear a seat belt when they are a front seat passenger. However one tenth of respondents stated they do not usually wear a seat belt when they are a back seat passenger.
- 88% of respondents believe that it is likely that in the event of a road traffic collision a back seat passenger not wearing a seat belt will injure a front seat passenger or the driver, with 83% thinking that it is likely that they would injure themselves.
- Almost three fifths of respondents (58%) think that the responsibility for ensuring that an adult passenger in the front of the car wears a seat belt rests with the driver.

4. Fatigue

- Over one quarter of motorists interviewed (27%) said that over the past year there had been occasions when they felt drowsy when they had been driving.
- The majority of respondents (95%) think that it is risky to drive when you are tired.
- Over half (52%) of respondents think the best way of dealing with feeling tired when driving is to stop driving completely. However only 12% of motorists who felt drowsy when driving actually did this.

Notes for Editors

1. The Northern Ireland Road Safety Monitor 2009 is the latest in a research series into behaviour, attitudes, and awareness of key road safety issues in Northern Ireland. It is commissioned by the Department of the Environment and has been carried out since 1995.

In 2002, the survey was revised to reflect changing driving habits and to allow new topics to be explored.

The 'Northern Ireland Road Safety Monitor 2009 Report' represents the findings of the 2009 Road Safety Monitor, which was collected as part of the Northern Ireland Omnibus Survey in May 2009 and includes questions on drinking and driving, mobile phones, seat belts and fatigue.

2. Hard and electronic copies of the 'Northern Ireland Road Safety Monitor 2009 Report' and the 'Northern Ireland Road Safety Monitor 2009 Statistical Bulletin' are available free of charge from:

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

Telephone: (028) 9054 0808

E-mail: csrb@drdni.gov.uk

Website: http://www.doeni.gov.uk/index/information/csrb/csrb_statistics.htm