



## HOW SAFE ARE WE AS ADVANCED DRIVERS AND RIDERS?

By Mark Lewis, director of standards

**IAM drivers and riders are safer than the average – that's a fact. Our own insurer, IAM Surety, confirms we have very few serious collisions and incidents and that when we do make claims, it is less often the IAM member found to be at fault.**



Mark Lewis is seen here with stunt champion Lee Bowers at Santa Pod Raceway, during the recent filming of an IAM/Kawasaki safety skills video.

Here are the top five incidents we claim for on our insurance:

- 5 – Hit a wall or post (8%)
- 4 – Pulled out on a third party (9%)
- 3 – Lost control of vehicle (9%)
- 2 – Hit a parked vehicle (13%)
- 1 – Hit third party in rear (13%)

While we are all advanced drivers and riders, there is no harm in us revisiting some basic skills. Everyone can 'top up' their knowledge – that includes me, all our senior team and all of you.

So let's look at ways to overcome the issues I have highlighted above:

### HITTING A WALL OR POST

As you approach any parking opportunity or confined manoeuvre, take your time. If necessary stop, walk around and ensure you have seen all possible obstructions.

If you have parking sensors in your car, use them – but practice and get used to how far you are from the obstruction when the beeps get faster/higher or become constant (depending on the model). Motorcyclists, don't forget the width of your mirrors or panniers/crash bars and take this into account when doing any slow speed or confined space manoeuvring.

### PULLING OUT ON OTHER ROAD USERS

Firstly, identify the blind spots in your vehicle or on your machine including limitations on movement caused by crash helmet and bulky motorcycle clothing. Make sure you look for long enough to detect movement before actually pulling out. If your view is limited by vehicle or building obstructions and you have to creep forward to obtain a better view, then do it extremely slowly - windows down in the car/visor up on the motorcycle - and listen for approaching traffic.

### LOSS OF CONTROL

Driving and riding within the ability of your vehicle is essential. A bend may



be taken at a maximum speed of 60mph, but is the limit point such that anything over 30mph means you are unable to stop in the distance you can see to be clear? Know how the safety aids on your vehicle work and more importantly – their limitations. Anti-lock brakes are an excellent safety aid, but steer too quickly in a car and you will still go straight on instead of being able to turn. On a motorcycle, remember that traction control will only limit loss of traction in relation to the rotation of the wheel – if the wheel breaks traction and slides sideways in a bend, traction control has no way to help you recover.

### HITTING A PARKED VEHICLE

Know the width of your vehicle and leave a safe margin to both sides. If in doubt, stop and wait. Let oncoming traffic pass first if that will give you more room. Progress is often made through restraint. Bikers – again, remember those wing mirrors and panniers.

### REAR-ENDING ANOTHER VEHICLE

Observation, anticipation and planning will ensure you are aware of everything in front of you. Scan from the horizon back and keep the two second rule – and four seconds at least in wet conditions. Keeping a safe distance

between you and the vehicle in front often encourages others to pull into that gap. Stay calm and move further back to maintain the safe gap at all times.

### OVERALL STRATEGY

Leave in plenty of time for any journey so you are not under a time pressure. Remember your training and take a refresher session if necessary. An advanced driver/rider knows when to slow down as well as when to make progress and is a master of their machine. Never stop practicing your skills, concentrate at all times and hopefully you will never need to ask for an insurance claim form!

## IAM GETS RACY FOR SPRING

The IAM launched its free 60 minute taster campaign for riders on 7 March called #IAMRideFree, working with Kawasaki UK to create a fun safety video, demonstrating great riding done slowly to promote it.

The taster campaign offers a 60 minute introduction to advanced riding and is open to all motorcyclists across the UK, to coincide with springtime and the start of the racing season. Applicants will be allocated their session with their closest participating IAM group, and all bookings must be made by 30 June.

The film, shot at Santa Pod Raceway, features the talents of Kawasaki-backed stunt riding champion Lee Bowers and car and bike racer Emma Selway – who are stopped in their high-speed tracks and set a series of slow-riding challenges by Mark Lewis, director of standards and Richard Gladman, standards compliance manager.

Even as professional riders the pair found slow skills tested their abilities to the maximum – and they came away with a set of new abilities to help them become even safer on the roads.

Mark Lewis said: "I want to thank Lee and Emma for their enthusiasm in taking part in our challenge. It shows no matter what professional standard you reach, there



is always scope for improvement. It also shows that becoming an advanced driver and rider can be enjoyable – and if you enjoy it more, you will be better and safer as a by-product."

To watch the video, which has just been released on the IAM's youtube channel [click here](#). To reach the special booking page for the IAM free rider taster sessions [click here](#).



## TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

The Insight team would like to know what you think about Insight, so it can better tell you important information from the IAM and its leadership. We would appreciate a few minutes of your time to answer a survey by 31 March on what you think about it. And to thank you for your troubles, we will select one entry at random to win a £50 voucher to spend on the amazon.co.uk website. To reach the survey [click here](#).

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