

## Children incited to vandalise cars

Two children in Kensington, West London vandalised cars causing damage amounting to £15,000. A nine year old girl and a boy of eleven managed to scratch nineteen Porches, Mercedes and BMWs in an underground car park. When questioned by police their excuse was that their primary school teacher had taught them that car exhaust fumes were destroying the environment. It is unlikely that the girl will be prosecuted because she is below the age of criminal responsibility. The boy is likely to be cautioned.

The two had been forced to take part in an anti-car propaganda exercise, disguised as an "educational" play called *Road Race*. Devised by West Sussex County Council, the play is due for performance in schools around the country to coincide with the "Travel Wise" campaign. This has been taken up by thirty local authorities to get motorists to leave their cars at home whenever possible.

## National Air Quality "consultation" a charade

Earlier this year the government published a "Consultation Draft" of its National Air Quality Strategy. The closing date for responses was 21st November 1996. Yet on Saturday 7th December the press had reports announcing the publication of firm proposals on 10th December. Is it possible that the ponderous Whitehall machine could have assimilated the 500 submissions received in ten working days? Let alone modified any of their proposals?

Details of the ABD's submission are given on page 13.

## Predictable budget blows

The third major reduction in road schemes and fourth year of cuts were announced by the Chancellor.

The total road expenditure planned for next year was reduced by £560 million as compared with 1993. 110 road schemes were withdrawn worth about £6bn, including motorway widening schemes and 21 bypasses. The remaining programme consists of just over 114 schemes funded directly together from Government funds with a further 32 schemes earmarked for PFI/Tolling. At the current rate of funding the reduced programme could take 15 years or more to complete. *More details on page 4*

## Big Brother tells children: Get your parents to drive less

According to a spokesman, the play aims to help pupils to become aware of the alternatives to car travel in their own lives and appreciate the influence they can bring to bear on their parents and other adults.

## Orwellian nightmare comes closer

The ABD has predicted for some time that the continued abuse of technology by the authorities would lead to your movements being tracked mile by mile around the country. Evidence that this is even closer than you might have thought was published in the Sunday Telegraph on 15th September in a report headed "Cameras to record all number plates".

According to Andrew Gilligan of the Sunday Telegraph, "Police and security agencies are placing large orders for 'Big Brother' surveillance cameras". These cameras, made by Racal, can read car number plates and convert them to computer data. Presumably they are developments of the ones used "experimentally" near Dover three years ago. They can even recognise multiple number plates in the same shot; they can read plates regardless of speed and they can read them at night. They can identify "over 90%" of plates according to Nigel Edwards of Racal.

The cameras have been on test on the M1 and M5 since 1993 and have already been purchased or ordered by the Met,

Issue 13, Winter 1996

£3.00

## Inside this issue

Tolls and taxes	p2
Sunday Times vies for propaganda top spot	p3
Maintenance problems	p3
Traffic forecast	p3
Rail brings home the bacon - yours	p3
Budget details	p4
War on drivers	p5
Your letters	p6
ABD Gatso watch	p7
Membership application	p10
Motoring, USA	p11
National Air Quality Strategy: ABD's response	p13
Technology continues to reduce emissions	p13
US and European approaches to air quality issues	p14
Accidents and causes	p15
More on accidents	p17
Pro-Motor News	
- Media Successes	p18
- Motoring Web sites	p18
- ABD supporters & advertisers	p18

Essex, Sussex and Dorset police. The DVLA is planning to set up a nationwide network to spot untaxed cars, and data "will be shared with police".

The report continues, "As the network expands ... it could become possible to find or track any vehicle in Britain simply by tapping its registration number into a computer."

We thus have the prospect that your movements will be tracked and logged on computer, "speeding" tickets could be issued automatically based on times between cameras and tolls could be imposed using the same system.

The ABD maintains that systems such as this are not only unnecessary but they are a gross waste of your hard-earned

... continued on page 2

## Thought for the day

*"All it needs for evil to triumph is for good men to stand by and do nothing" - Edmund Burke*

# UK News Roundup

## Dartford Crossing toll rip off up by 11%

Motorists using the Dartford Crossing have been hit by a savage 11% hike in the one way toll charge up by 10p to £1 despite, Kvaerner Trafalgar House, the crossing operator, earning in excess of £50 million pa in toll revenue, according to Construction News.

It was further reported that KTH was making so much out of the project that it risked having to hand back the project eight years before the twenty year concession deadline. The company had apparently written to the Government offering to build yet another bridge over the Thames for free in exchange for keeping the concession.

This example demonstrates the colossal revenue raising potential of road tolling and the cavalier attitude of those in authority to motorists' interests.

## Public ignorance of fuel-tax rip-off revealed

A joint survey by the AA and RAC found that most drivers did not know the extent to which they are being robbed (legally, of course) at the fuel pump. Four out of five drivers questioned thought the level of tax on fuel was less than 70%.

In fact it is more like 80%; about £2.40 out of a £3.00 gallon. Taxes on fuel contribute £15 billion to the Exchequer each year yet less than one third of this is put back into

transport expenditure of any sort. This despite the gross inadequacy of roads leading to stress, extra business costs passed on the consumer and even the death of road users.

When presented with the facts, two thirds of drivers thought this situation was unacceptable. And that was before the latest, unjustifiable tax rise imposed in the Budget.

## Fleet manager denounces toll plans

VELO Vehicle Management publishes quarterly statistical reports on accidents and insurance claims. Its latest report shows that damage to vehicles after motorway accidents is on average cheaper to repair than damage sustained on other roads. The figure given is £936 after a motorway accident, but nearly double that after an accident on a B-road.

This is consistent with motorways being the safest roads from the point of view of injuries and fatalities.

Alan Hale of VELO has called on the government to reconsider its plans for tolls on motorways as these would compromise safety by forcing traffic onto less safe roads.

## Prudent new AA chief?

The AA's new Director-General is John Maxwell, formerly Development Director of Prudential Assurance. We shall see whether he will be more interested in upholding motorists' rights or selling financial services.

## Orwellian nightmare

... continued from page 1

taxes and last but not least an unwarranted intrusion upon your privacy and civil liberty.

Regarding the Road Fund Licence, this technology is taking a sledgehammer to crack a nut. There are other ways of enforcing this. It could even be scrapped and the revenue gained from fuel tax. Then no-one could avoid it and tax paid would be related to the use made of the road system.

Regarding speed limit enforcement the ABD rejects the enforcement of unrealistically low speed limits by heavy-handed measures such as this as the mark of a totalitarian state. The ABD wishes to see sensible speed limits, sensitive enforcement and above all, improved driver training. (Every penny spent on the mindless "Speed Kills" campaign is wasted because it could have been spent on educative advertising.)

Regarding tolling (not mentioned in

the Sunday Telegraph report but clearly a possibility), not only is tolling unsupportable as a revenue-raising idea because the government already takes such huge amounts in taxes on road users but the ABD has produced evidence that tolling would have a devastating impact on safety as it would drive vehicles off safe motorway-standard roads onto minor roads.

So what excuses do the authorities have for this system? It may help in the fight against crime. So do they really imagine the serious criminal travelling with anything other than kosher plates? The report quotes a Dr Clive Norris, criminologist at Hull University: "I do not necessarily trust government and police agencies to use this information wholly benevolently." Understatement of the decade, Dr Norris.

The article can be read on the Electronic Telegraph web site at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk>. First select "UK News", then at the foot of the page click "Previous" to get back to Sunday 15th September.

## The Association of British Drivers

**On The Road** is published by Pro-Motor, a company limited by Guarantee and registered in England under no: 2945728.

For contact details see:  
[www.abd.org.uk/contacts.htm](http://www.abd.org.uk/contacts.htm)

# UK News Roundup

## Sunday Times' credibility on the line

The Sunday Times, which vaunts itself as *the* Sunday papers, has a somewhat tarnished image after publishing an article on 17th November headed, "Air pollution soars above danger levels" which contained a number of mistakes.

It informed its readers that, "Some councils in London, such as Camden, are taking action [on pollution], running buses on gas rather than petrol." Such an error could be laughed off as mere incompetence or even some kind of Freudian typo had it not followed a much more serious "mistake".

Particulates (PM10s) are "dust-sized pollutants mainly from car exhausts" claimed the ST. Now anyone who has followed this debate for more than about five minutes knows that modern petrol-engined cars emit very low levels of PM10s. Figures are provided in the government's recently published National Air Quality Strategy Consultation Draft which records that only 5% of particulate emissions are attributable to petrol engines.

Yet the article went on to blame particulates, and thus by implication cars, for the discomfort of asthma sufferers in Sheffield, 4000 excess deaths in London and 10,000 deaths a year in Britain overall.

It is indeed sad when a formerly respected journal sacrifices its reputation on the altar of political correctness (green fanaticism chapel).

Just for the record, particulate emissions (1993 figures as given in the government's National Air Quality Strategy draft) are as follows:

Source	Percentage of total
Diesel road transport	19%
Power generation (fossil fuels)	15%
Domestic	14%
Industrial processes	11%
Mining and quarrying	11%
Iron and steel	8%
Other industrial combustion	7%
Petrol road transport	5%
Refineries	3%
Other transport	3%
Commercial/public service	2%
Construction	2%
Tyres & brakes (road transport)	2%

The above figures were rounded to the nearest percent so do not total 100.

## A stitch in time ?

According to a report in Construction News Lawrie Haynes, the Highways Agency chief executive, had written to Nicholas Winterton MP admitting that routine preventative works including strengthening old roads and bridge re-painting had been cut back due to under

funding. The report went on to indicate that the shortfall in maintenance would lead to a very great increase in repair and reinstatement costs and disruption to road users in future years.

He was reported to have said "On the A14 trunk road through East Anglia, a 50mph advisory speed restriction had been put in place because funds are not available to deal with ruts in the road surface. We estimate that, if all vehicles observe this restriction, delay costs of £18,000 a day will be incurred, or £6.6million per annum." He was also reported to have said that, "We judge that an increase in the overall trunk road maintenance budget from £536 million to some £600 million next year will enable us to prevent further deterioration."

Motorists may consider the proposed increase a piffling drop in the ocean compared to the £400 million collected at the Dartford River Crossing (see elsewhere this issue) or the twenty or thirty or so billion pounds that road users pay in fuel excise duty, related VAT and road fund license fees.

## Autoglass Survey gives the lie to doom-mongers scare stories

According to Motor Trader, a trade newspaper, they have done a study with the following findings:

- There could be 3.3million teleworkers by the year 2000.
- This will cut the average number of commuter journeys per worker from ten to 5.7 taking 186 million car trips off the road.
- Company car drivers are looking to cut car use to every other day.
- These factors add up to a halving of car

journeys.

- Young people expect trips to friends will drop by a third.

This view puts in true perspective the politically correct nonsense pumped out by the anti car movement who use doom laden, wildly exaggerated traffic forecasts to justify their repressive measures.

## Road versus Rail: no contest when it comes to your money

The second Severn crossing, a vital part of Britain's road network, cost £330 million. By contrast a recent programme of resignalling and refurbishment on the railway line out of London's Liverpool Street station cost £200 million. Those numbers are not too dissimilar, in fact to a man like Ken Clarke they both amount to peanuts. But look a little closer.

The railway's dosh was virtually a gift, no strings attached, no need to pay it back. The bridge however has apparently still to be paid for by inconveniently stopping travellers and taking tolls from them.

But those road travellers have already contributed handsomely to Mr Clarke's funds: £25,000 million per year of which he only ploughs back about £8,000 million into transport of all sorts. (So we know where the railway's £200m came from.) But what about the £330 million for the bridge? That sum is already covered about *fifty times over* in the excess taxes paid by road users.

Why should we pay twice for the use of our roads?

## Delta Computer Services

"Making the most of IT"

Lotus Business Partner

- Consultancy
- Worldwide Web site design
- Training for computer users
- Documentation authoring and design
- Application development: database, spreadsheet, publishing and mailing systems etc.
- Uninterruptible power supplies (UPS)

Special Offer  
5% off UPS  
Available to ABD members until  
31 January 1997

☎ 01206 240120 \_\_\_ <http://www.deltacom.co.uk>

# UK & World News Roundup

## Significant backlog in road and bridge maintenance.

At the current rate of funding 6,000 of the 150,000 bridges in Britain that cannot carry the 40 tonne Eurotruck weight limit due in 1999 will not have been strengthened in time. An expert has warned MP's that " If the proper level of preventative maintenance is not carried out there's a risk of bridges collapsing."

## Lack of maintenance turns Britain's roads into Death Traps

Both the AA and the RAC have condemned the state of Britain's roads which, they say, are resembling more and more those of some impoverished state. The RAC's Edmund King claims that even parts of the motorway networks are becoming death traps, due to underfunding and lack of maintenance.

Highways Agency boss Lawrie Haynes claims that there is so little money available that many maintenance tasks have simply been abandoned, and that another £600 million will be needed in the next financial year simply to prevent any further deterioration.

In some areas, including the A6 near Manchester and the A14 in East Anglia traffic is suffering severe delays as a

result of speed restrictions imposed on safety grounds - down to just 50 mph on parts of the A14 dual carriageway.

Predictably, Transport Minister Sir George Young has played down the problems, quoting the increases in funding for roads won by some of his predecessors in the late 1980s. However, it is not easy to take Sir George's comments seriously, because his position is compromised by his known links to the anti-car "Friends of the Earth" organisation.

## More jam tomorrow, promises Bayer chief

Horst-Martin Rothermel, Bayer's Polyurethane Group's Marketing Manager for Automotive applications believes that Bayer's efforts in PU performance should be directed at making cars more comfortable. Why? Because "construction of new roads will not keep pace with the increase in traffic, so that whether you like it or not you will spend more time sitting in your car in traffic jams". Gee thanks, Horst!

## Office workers vote for car parking spaces

Commercial Property agents, Healey and Baker recently conducted a survey of office workers to find out which features of their workplace they considered to be most important. 650 occupiers were

asked for their views, and a space to park the car was voted top of the list, ahead of air-conditioning, natural light, spacious accommodation, a smoke-free environment and the existence of nearby shops.

It is about time that Environment Secretary John Gummer asked them the same question.

## Drift to out-of-town retail sites continues

The overwhelming majority of the new retail space opened this year will be in out-of-town locations despite Environment Secretary John Gummer's aim to force shops and shoppers to move back into town centres.

Most of the newly constructed retail space received planning permission before the draconian restrictions were announced in 1993, and a number of major new developments like Blue Water Park in Kent and Cribbs Causeway in Bristol will not come on stream for several years. However, there is evidence of a growing shortage of good quality out-of-town space, with a number of retailers reporting difficulty in finding suitable sites.

Ironically, the shortages are likely to push up rents and may make out of town sites a good investment for property companies. Shrewd property managers are a jump ahead though - Newcastle's Metro Centre is aiming to be re-classified as a town centre site to make it easier to get permission to expand!

## Danes pander to "greens"

Denmark, having already banned hydrochlorocarbons because of their ozone destroying powers, is set to phase out their replacements, hydrofluorocarbons, within ten years because of their alleged global warming potential, with no obvious cost-, or energy-efficient alternative available. While it is true that HFC-134a (ICI trade name Klea) reputedly has a 1300 times greater potential for initiating the (anyway doubtful) global warming phenomenon than CO<sub>2</sub>, it is more energy efficient over the life cycle of a refrigerator.

How many more imbecilic decisions are politicians going to make on environmental issues to be "seen to be" environmentally friendly - and who do you think the is softest current target for any such measures?

## Details of the Budget

The overall shape of the budget as it affects road users is shown below

Amounts in £,000,000,000

### National Economy

	95/6	96/7	97/8	98/9	99/00
Gross Domestic Product	708.5	745.7	786.9	826.0	864.0

### Government Spending

DoT (inc Public Transport & Roads )	4.2	4.9	5.2	4.6	4.3
Roads Budget (England)	1.8	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.6
Overall Spending	306.1	307.4	314.7	322.2	330.6
PFI (Transport)			1.0	1.3	1.4
Rail only (inc DoT above)			1.5	?	?
(National Roads - over next three years total	3.5)				

### Taxes

Fuel Duties (Excluding Vat receipts)		17.4	17.4	19.6	
Vehicle Excise Duties	4.3	4.3	4.5		
Overall Taxation		268.7	265.6	282.1	

### Tax rises targeted at motorists

	1997/8
VED (cars only ) increased by	£5 pa.to £145 pa.
Fuel Excise Duty (petrol & diesel)	3p per litre (14p per gallon)
Insurance Premium Tax increased by	1.5% to 4%
Increased Fuel Scale charges (Co' cars)	£26pa. for 2.L car - basic rate
Reduced Fuel Excise Duties for LPG/LNG and city diesel	

# Safety and Speed Issues

## Caught three times by speed camera...

A hidden speed camera on Hull Road, York has resulted in rough justice for one man. Lecturer, David Daulby faces a possible driving ban after being photographed doing 41 mph, 42 mph, and 43 mph in an area limited to 30 mph on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of one week on his way to work. He is now waiting to hear if he was caught on the Thursday and the Friday of the same week. If he was caught on either of those days then he could be banned from driving under the totting up procedure (4x3 points=12=banned).

Mr Daulby claimed that the whole purpose of the totting up procedure - to warn drivers to modify their driving - was undermined where a driver did not even know that he had been found to be speeding before being "clocked" again.

During North Yorkshire Police's recent "Operation Plague" campaign 1,250 drivers were caught. This is just the kind of situation that the ABD foresaw and has been warning about ever since the speed camera menace began.

## Highways Agency declares war on drivers

In a highly controversial move, the Highways Agency will require Gatso cameras to be installed by contractors at all road work sites on trunk roads and motorways wherever mandatory speed limits are in force. Their use will be completely indiscriminate, with no account taken of the real risk of accidents.

The cameras will remain switched on day and night, regardless of whether any work is being undertaken. The Highways Agency will pay for the cost of the camera, which will be built into the contract price, thus will be included in the figure that the Government is "investing" in road maintenance. Fine revenue, already netting the treasury £10 million per year will go to Government coffers.

Even the politically correct AA has expressed its concern at the catch-all nature of speed enforcement, and says that the speed restrictions at many roadwork sites appear to have no justification.

The Highways Agency keeps no records of actual accident statistics at road work sites, and appears unconcerned at the threat to liberty posed by the automatic imposition of at least three penalty points on offenders licences.

## "Road Safety" campaigners demand drive time curbs

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents wants to introduce truck-style limits on the number of hours that business drivers can spend on the road in any one day, because, they claim, about 1,000 out of the 3,500 road deaths which occurred in this country last year were caused by people who drive for their job but whose hours are unregulated.

Many such drivers keep working for as long as possible because they want to build up their businesses, and make a decent living, and have to work long hours to do so. Many would go out of business, or suffer severe financial hardship if such rules applied. It seems that the meddling bureaucrats have an ally in their efforts to stifle every form of enterprise and reduce us to a state of dependency.

### ABD - Drive for Membership

**The Government is taking decisions which affect you as a motorist. Your liberty and your wallet are under threat!**

**It is vital that we organise now! If we delay, it will be too late.**

**So encourage your friends and colleagues to join the ABD and help in the campaign to protect our freedom.**

**You will find a membership application form with this issue. Telephone for more copies if you need them.**

## X Cars: Who is the real enemy of public safety?

On Monday 2nd September the first episode of a new series showing the Manchester Police anti car crime unit was screened on BBC1. This featured two young coppers in baseball caps having a great time chasing stolen cars around the city with their Sapphire Cosworth.

### one officer said, "We're doing 135 ..."

Worthy quotes included the statement that the latest pursuit was the 800th theft in Manchester that week. During a crazy drive down a busy motorway to get to a new chase, one officer said, "We're doing 135, if that Volvo estate pulls out, we're dead".

The really telling moment came during an extended pursuit of a stolen Peugeot 205 driven by two sixteen year olds at up to 80mph in an urban area. Despite having the Helicopter and Stingers available, they chased this car straight through a red light whence it was 'kippered' by another car. Both vehicles were written off but, miraculously, no-one was hurt.

With this lethal, modern-day game of cops and robbers going on in our major cities, the ongoing persecution of responsible drivers for breaking arbitrary speed limits on the open road seems ever more farcical and unjust.

## HAVE YOU BEEN INJURED IN AN ACCIDENT? WE CAN HELP

You may be able to claim compensation.

PARDOES have a specialist team of solicitors experienced in Personal Injury Claims

**FOR FREE INITIAL ADVICE contact:**

**Guy Eskill, Elaine Potter or Mark Hollidge on 01278 457891**

You may be entitled to Legal Aid or we may be able to pursue your claim on a conditional fee basis "No win, No fee"

PARDOES SOLICITORS 6-9 KING SQUARE BRIDGWATER SOMERSET TA6 3DG  
TEL: 01278 457891 FAX: 01278 429249



## Editorial support

Sir - I would like to offer you my support and say what a necessary job it is you are doing. If Britain's motorists do not wake up from their lethargy and start campaigning at least as energetically as the loony brigade, we will shortly end up with drastic restrictions on our freedom of movement in cars.

A year ago I was privileged to enjoy a House of Commons lunch with John McGregor, then transport minister. He made it clear that it was up to people who valued a modern roads network to start to make their voices known, or the "antis" would carry on winning the day. They may not win arguments but they certainly succeed in shouting down pro-motorists.

The car is, of course, the greatest liberating influence in our lives, which is why authoritarian-minded people wish to regulate it out of existence, forcing us instead on to cycles, trains and a hugely expensive system of civic tramways.

Driving our daughter to school the other morning, my wife and I were incensed by a typically stupid BBC person remarking: "Of course, drivers all worship their cars." Instead of just raging among ourselves and switching off the programme we faxed a strong rebuttal of this nonsense straight up to this lady's editor. As practising Christians a car is the last thing in the world we would "worship" - it's just a necessity of life. Without joining the debate we will not win any of the arguments.

Having lived in and frequently visited America, where my wife comes from, I can vouch for the fact that decent road systems and superb parking facilities at every business take much of the stress out of daily life. Our business here has lots of extra tensions associated with trying to park in yellow lined streets with yellow perils hiding behind every bollard ready to slap on a ticket.

On top of a woeful road system which is little better than tarmacked cart tracks our local council in Rushmoor, Hants is joining the idiotic craze for road narrowing, installing bumps and closing roads at every opportunity. Then they wonder why towns like Aldershot are dying! Fortunately as editor of the local paper I am proceeding to tell them every week.

Keep up your excellent work - I will encourage our readers to join both your organisation and the fray.

Alan Franklin, Editor, Surrey-Hants Star  
*Thanks for your comments and congratulations on your own efforts. The Star is one of the few local papers which does not meekly churn out the "party line" - Ed.*

## Undertaking doesn't work

Sir - In Hugh Bladon's article on motoring in America he claims that permitting overtaking on either side on the US interstates works well. The experience of our family in Canada is that it definitely does not.

The corollary of undertaking is that no-one is obliged to move over. And they don't. The majority of motorists are amblers and all three lanes are often filled with traffic travelling at about the same slow speed. Once this happens nothing will shift them; and they resent being flashed even more than British drivers.

Lance K Green, Newport, Gwent

## Radar frequency question...

Sir - We get a few members and non-members who ask us if we know the radar frequencies in use in the UK. Unfortunately, we don't. Most likely these people are asking so they know if they can use their US-spec. radar detector over there. I do know that European radar guns work on different frequencies than ours.

Do you know the frequencies of police radar in the UK (to include gatsos)?

Here's the data for the USA:

- X band: 10.500 to 10.550 GHz
- K band: 24.050 to 24.250 GHz
- Ka band: 33.4 to 36.0 GHz. (Photo-radar normally operates only in this band)
- Laser: 904 nm

Detectors for the US and Canadian markets can hear (and see) in those bands. Under US law, radar jammers are illegal, but laser jammers aren't.

Bob Morrow,

National Motorists Association, USA

nma@motorists.com

## ... and answer

Sir - In response to your 'Frequencies' question, a very simple answer. US detectors will work perfectly well in the UK since we have exactly the same frequencies and bands. Most other European countries however have slightly different settings.

David Baxter, Carlisle

101546.2177@compuserve.com

## "Traffic calming" creates morons

Sir - I believe firmly that many of the legislative measures introduced without consultation (GATSOs, speed bumps, "traffic calming" etc.) tackle the symptoms of poor driving, not its cause. Removing the individual driver's ability to make basic decisions about his driving will reduce him to the level of a moron - incapable of reacting unless Nanny tells him he can.

Mark McArthur-Christie, Oxfordshire

Sir - I am writing to you, basically in support of Brian Gregory's article in 'Autocar', 26th September.

The main problem at present is, in my view, the insidious influence of minority pressure groups, who seem to have infiltrated the media (especially TV), and who are putting across totally inaccurate information on which to base their views. In the absence of an Organisation of sufficient authority and responsibility to 'put the record straight', people begin to accept what they are being told!

Another matter with which I take issue, are the wide powers that have been given to Local Authorities, to erect almost any obstacle to traffic that they choose, under the 'Traffic Calming' banner. The London Borough of Richmond, in which I live, is unfortunately a prime example of this. I find it difficult to believe that all the measures are strictly legal.

I hope that your Organisation will prove to be the one so badly needed by all responsible Drivers, to help ensure that they are properly represented.

Chris Watson

## Crazy speed limits

Sir - An example of crazy speed limits by the Department of Transport: The Batheaston Bypass famous for protestors, tree sitters and vandals is now open 3 months early and is a superb piece of engineering. It is dual carriageway with armco central reservation, well sign-posted and lit.

You arrive on it from the A46 (M4 to Bath road) which is a twisting narrow road with a 60mph limit. Just as you pull out to overtake the lorries and cars you have followed for 5 miles you are confronted with a 50 mph limit backed up by a speed camera. It appears even dafter heading out of Bath having travelled along the bypass at 50 mph you approach the old road where there is a de-restricted sign suggesting it is safe to speed up.

I saw a small official ad in our local paper asking for any objections to the enforcement order for the Batheaston Bypass. I objected. I will let you know the inevitable outcome.

Incidentally, until this order is passed, the speed limit and cameras are not legal!

Very best wishes for all your efforts trying to get some justice into motoring.

David Uwins

## E-mail address?

Do you have an e-mail address? A lively correspondence takes place among members. Just notify the Secretary via 100740.2032@compuserve.com and you'll be copied-in.

# ABD Gatso Watch

## CAUTION: Why the ABD publishes Gatso Watch

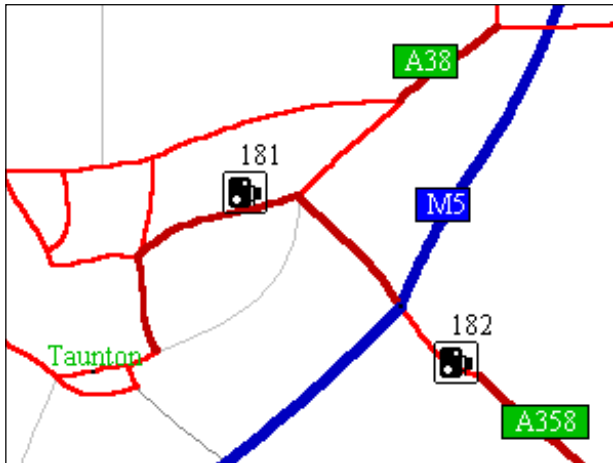
Members will not need reminding, but "On the Road" is obliged, for other reasons, to mention that:

- The ABD does not condone the abuse of speed.
- Drivers should travel at a speed safe for the conditions and with due regard to hazards such as schools.

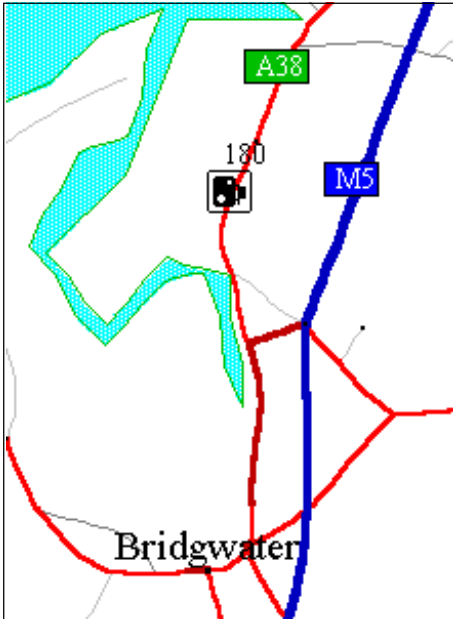
- Drivers should be able to stop within the distance they can see.

- Drivers should observe the two-second rule.

However, the ABD deplores the abuse of Gatsos and other devices. That is, where they are deployed in locations where the speed limit is unrealistically low.



**Disclaimer**  
This information is provided in good faith. However the ABD can accept no liability for errors or omissions.



Maps produced in Microsoft Autoroute Plus © 1988-1995 Microsoft Corporation, Maps © Ordnance Survey 1994

Ref	County	Town	Road Direction	Location	OS Map Ref	Limit
180	Somerset	Pawlett	A38	S ..... N of Bridgwater by roadside	ST301433	
181	Somerset	Taunton	A38	R ..... central reservation just W of traffic lights at A358 junction	ST249256	50
182	Somerset	Henlade	A358	W ..... just after 50 at end of dual carriageway behind direction sign	ST271240	50

### E-mail snippets

Chris Longhurst invites you to join his Campaign against the CLOOLESS (Centre Lane Owner Occupiers who Lead to Extra Stressful Situations)

email: [chrisl@division.co.uk](mailto:chrisl@division.co.uk)

### On US speed limit compliance:

Paul Hemingway wrote:

My experience on a recent visit to the US (my first) is that the limits are lower than the UK and there appears to be a higher level of compliance.

Bob Morrow replied:

That's surprising. Here in Wisconsin, where the limit is 65 mph, we have only 40% adhering to it. In New Jersey where the limit is still 55, less than five percent adhere to it. Contrast that with states that have 75 mph limits - 85-90% abide by it.

**Change of address?**  
Please notify the Secretary of any change of address. (See page 2 for details.)



**DIRECT INSURANCE**

**ABD Members' Scheme**

*Preferential rates with all leading Insurance Companies*

for

Motor - House Buildings & Contents - Travel

Our associated company offers:

Life Assurance - Pensions - Savings

**\*PLUS\***

**25% of first year commission donated to the ABD**

For a no-obligation quotation tel:

**0345 573075**

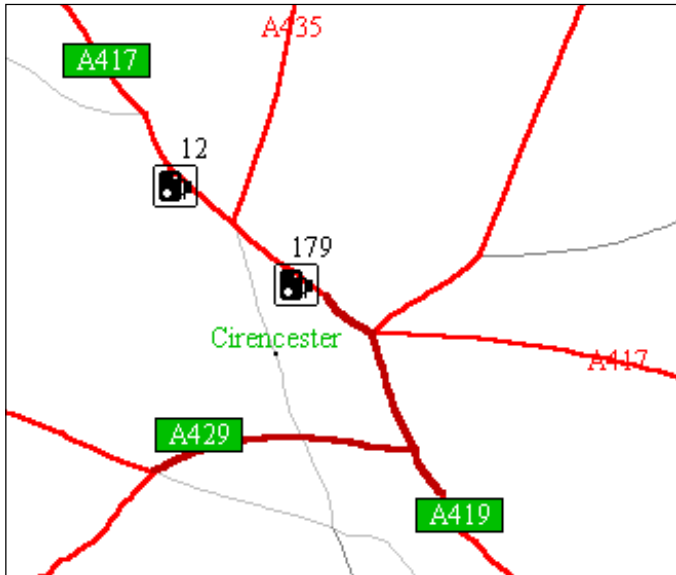
Hours of business: Mon-Thur 8.30 - 7.30; Fri 8.30 - 5.30; Sat 9.00 - 4.30



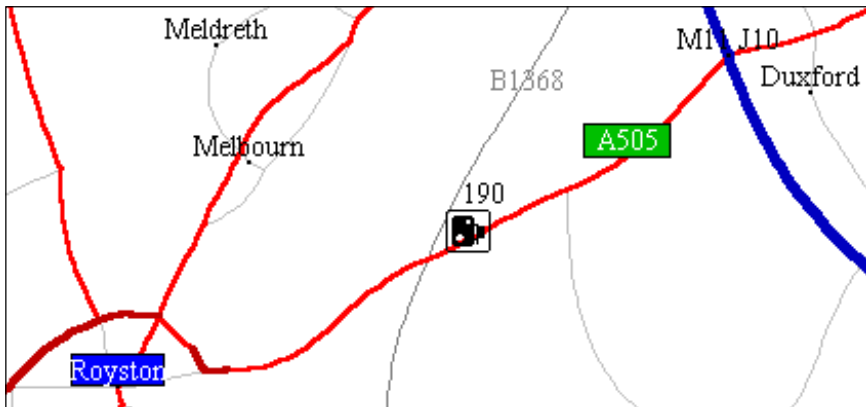
## Unmarked cars

The following unmarked patrol cars have been reported:

- M3 Surrey/Hants border, September, metallic grey Senator K878YPL - probably a Surrey car.



Ref	County	Town	Road Direction	Location	OS Map Ref	Limit
12		Stratton	A417 SE	nr Cirencester	SP012038	40
179	Glos	Cirencester	A417 NW	At crossroads	SP024024	40
190	Camb		A505 W	3m W of M11J10 (Duxford air museum)	TL418433	60
191		Pensford	A37 N		ST619637	40



### Important:

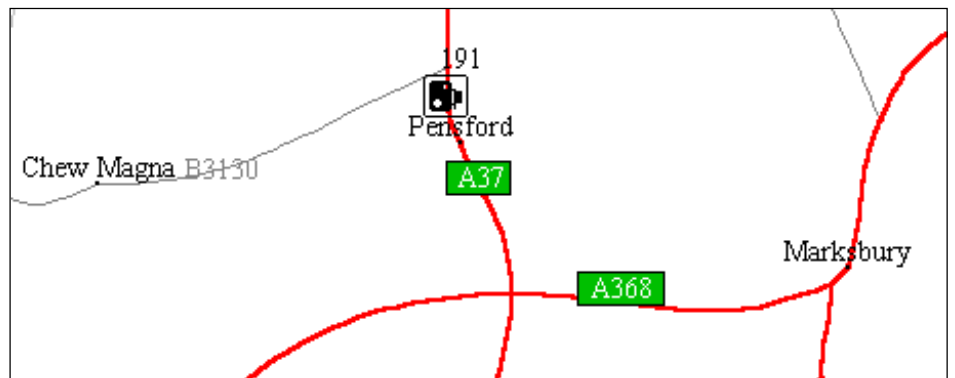
If you can correct or add to any of the information shown in Gatso Watch, please contact the editor.

Can you supply the missing speed limit values?

Can you fill in missing county names?

Thanks to all members who contributed to Gatso Watch in this issue.

Maps produced in Microsoft Autoroute Plus © 1988-1995 Microsoft Corporation, Maps © Ordnance Survey 1994



## Contributing to Gatso watch

All members should report the location of camera sites known to them. Use copies of the form printed on a later page, noting all appropriate details such as Town, Road name and a six-figure OS map reference if at all possible. Remember, the scheme depends on *you!*

If you have access to a computer and could supply the information on disc, please telephone the Editor and ask for a template file.

Don't forget, we are concentrating on motorway, trunk roads and other main roads.

## Gatso Watch - The latest

Latest information on camera sites will be posted on the ABD's site on the Worldwide Web, <http://www.deltacom.co.uk/abd>. The site is available to the public so if you do not have access to the Web, tell a friend who does.

As for the future, in what format would you like to see the camera site information (to which you have contributed) made available to Members?

### Is anyone there?

Our camera site map is noticeably blacker in the southern half of the country; we have one recently reported site in Cheshire, but not a lot else. Has anyone any others to report or is the upper half of Britannia spared the ghastly Gatso?

### Recently reported sites:

Location: High Lane, Disley, Cheshire. A6 northbound, 30 mph limit. At 05:00 it would be safe at 50mph; at 08:30, 20mph should be limit as you leave the village.



# ABD Gatso Watch

**Camera Notification Form** Please photocopy, complete as fully as possible and send to PO Box 3151, Colchester CO6 3JH

Your name: ..... ABD Membership No.(if known) .....

<b>County</b> <i>Example entries:</i> <i>County, if known.</i>	<b>Road No</b> <i>E.g. A1</i>	<b>Road Name</b> <i>E.g. Great North Road</i>	<b>OS Map Ref</b> <i>Please give this if at all possible! E.g. AB123456</i>	<b>Speed Limit</b> <i>E.g. 60mph</i>
<b>Town</b> <i>If in or near a town</i>	<b>Direction</b> <i>N S E W, Both or Reversible</i>	<b>Location</b> <i>Description of location up to 60 characters.</i>		<b>Category</b> <i>Speed or Traffic light</i>

<b>County</b>	<b>Road No</b>	<b>Road Name</b>	<b>OS Map Ref</b>	<b>Speed Limit</b>
<b>Town</b>	<b>Direction</b>	<b>Location</b>		<b>Category</b>

<b>County</b>	<b>Road No</b>	<b>Road Name</b>	<b>OS Map Ref</b>	<b>Speed Limit</b>
<b>Town</b>	<b>Direction</b>	<b>Location</b>		<b>Category</b>

<b>County</b>	<b>Road No</b>	<b>Road Name</b>	<b>OS Map Ref</b>	<b>Speed Limit</b>
<b>Town</b>	<b>Direction</b>	<b>Location</b>		<b>Category</b>

<b>County</b>	<b>Road No</b>	<b>Road Name</b>	<b>OS Map Ref</b>	<b>Speed Limit</b>
<b>Town</b>	<b>Direction</b>	<b>Location</b>		<b>Category</b>

<b>County</b>	<b>Road No</b>	<b>Road Name</b>	<b>OS Map Ref</b>	<b>Speed Limit</b>
<b>Town</b>	<b>Direction</b>	<b>Location</b>		<b>Category</b>

# ABD Membership Application

## Application to join the Association of British Drivers (the operating name of Pro-Motor)

Title: Mr./Mrs./Ms./Dr./Other (Please specify)	If you have been convicted of any motoring offence within the last 10 years, please give details. (Pro-Motor reserves the right to refuse membership to any persons convicted of dangerous or reckless driving, drunken driving, and similar offences.)
Initials:                      Surname:	
Usual First Name:	
Address:	
Postcode:	I/We undertake to contribute such amount as may be required (not exceeding £1 for individual Members or £2 for joint Members) to the Company's assets if it should be wound up while I am/we are Members, or within one year if I/we cease to be Members, for payment of the Company's debts and liabilities contracted before I/we cease to be Members, and of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up, and for the adjustment of the rights of the contributories among themselves. I consent to becoming a Member of Pro-Motor.
Home Tel. No.                      Fax	Signature:
Office Tel. No.                      Fax	Joint member's name:
	Signature:

### Subscription rates

Membership subscription is £15.00 per year if you pay by cheque or postal order.

If you pay by Standing Order the subscription is £12.00 per year. The same amount covers single membership or husband and wife membership.

Members are invited to make additional, voluntary "Fighting Fund" donations all of which will be used for campaigning.

Please make your cheques or postal orders payable to "Pro-Motor" or complete the Standing Order authority below.

Subscription to be paid:	£.....
Voluntary "Fighting Fund" donation:	£.....
Total enclosed/authorised:	£.....

### Bank Standing Order Authority

#### Customer and Account details:

Name of Bank: .....

Branch Name: .....

Bank Address: .....

Sort No: .....Account No: .....

Account Name: .....

#### Payee Details

Please make the following payment(s) to :  
**PRO-MOTOR LIMITED**  
 Lloyds Bank, 2 South Parade, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 1JL  
 Sort no: 30-99-51    Account No: 1411943

Amount of payment: £.....

Amount in words: .....

Date of Payment(s): .....monthly/annually\* until further notice.

Customer's signature: .....Date: .....

Name in block letters: .....

\* Please delete as appropriate.

### Send to:

Send this *whole page*, with cheque or authorisation for your subscription, to the Secretary at the address below.

Why not request more application forms to enrol your friends? Please send ..... application forms.

How did you hear about the ABD? .....

.....

The Membership Secretary  
 PO Box 181  
 Bridgwater  
 Somerset  
 TA6 3YT

**Please photocopy and distribute this form as necessary, or request copies of the separate ABD flier and application form from the Secretary or the Editor.**

---

# Motoring Abroad

---

## America - 1996

*Hugh Bladon, ABD Treasurer, continues the account of his journey in the USA.*

While in San Diego I took the Toyota back to Avis since it was making a nasty graunching noise from the brakes. They made one attempt to cure the problem but it came back with the brake warning light stuck on so I took the car back again and the nice man there gave us a replacement vehicle. "We're talking luxury here" he said as he handed me the keys to an almost new Cadillac DeVille Northstar. I took one look at it and said a little prayer of thanks that I was not going to have to drive it on congested roads in this country. My wife sank back into the huge armchair and thought she had been transported to Heaven. I don't know how big the engine was but it was 300bhp which I thought might be fun!

### **"We're talking luxury here"**

We eventually dragged ourselves away, said our farewells and pointed this monster east and north through the Chocolate Mountains on our way to the Grand Canyon. We drove alongside the Colorado river which is a great holiday centre with loads of Recreational Vehicles in massive camping sights at various points along the way. They drive these RV's and have their cars in tow so that they are mobile when they reach their destination. The majority are retired couples who come south for the winter months and are called 'snowbirds'.

We were on quite a lot of single carriageway roads now and there was a fair amount of traffic. It was interesting to explore the Cadillac's ability to get a move on and to see how far behind the Americans are in car design. Perhaps Cadi drivers are not supposed to drive their cars hard. Full throttle acceleration to pass other vehicles showed a complete inability to master the power as the torque steer made the car snake left and right requiring plenty of effort on the steering wheel to keep the thing more or less straight. It had plenty of go but the power was far too much for the chassis. The suspension, of course, was fine and soaked up the bumps with ease. Not that there were many as their roads are generally billiard table smooth. It seemed to corner quite well too, once the thing had settled on its springs but with so much metal and weight I was not prepared to push things too hard as I could imagine the

armfulls of lock needed if things got out of hand!

This journey nearly ended in disaster. We got onto I-40 and passed a sign which told me the next fuel was in 56 miles. The Cadi showed 5 gallons on the gauge and I thought that would be plenty. However, we had no sooner passed the sign when the gauge changed to 4 and we started climbing. Every crest we topped I expected the road to level out or drop but each time there was another hill ahead and the gauge soon dropped through 3 and 2, skipped 1 and showed E when we had covered barely half the 56 miles - and still we climbed, with this massive engine swallowing fuel for all it was worth. My wife and I reached the stage where I was convinced we were going to run out and we dared not speak as we listened for the engine to start coughing. Eventually we saw the sign for Seligman and knew we would not have far to walk as I nursed the beast along in true Economy Run fashion. It was with great relief that we must have driven in on the fumes to a gas station on the old Route 66 to put 20 gallons into the tank and vowed never to go past a station with less than 5 gallons again. We had climbed over 6000 feet on that stretch - little wonder the fuel consumption had been a bit on the high side. The bonus is that the cost to refuel was only about £12.

We made Grand Canyon village as it started to get dark having done 527 miles and once again settled for a Holiday Inn.

### **one of the most fantastic sights we have ever seen**

We got up early the next morning to see the sunrise at the Grand Canyon. Unfortunately some nitwit had let the air out of both our rear tyres during the night, which presented a bit of a problem. The hotel staff were astonished, saying that they had never heard of such a thing before and quickly arranged for a taxi. The idiot who did it actually did us a favour since we then had a most interesting drive by a taxi driver who knew exactly where to take us and told us what to see. In fact we had our own conducted tour which lasted for about an hour and he only asked for \$10. We arrived at an excellent viewing point about 10 minutes before the sun came up. Our friends in San Diego had said that it was only a hole in the ground. Some hole. It is impossible to convey the impression you get when you first see this sight. It is simply huge and awesome. Look down and you are looking at the Colorado river which is over a mile away and seems like a small blue band in the bottom. As the sun came up, the shadows descended and the sunlight picked up on the topmost points, gradually going down and picking out the many colours in the rocks. We watched, spellbound, one of the most fantastic sights we have ever seen, thanking our lucky stars that the day had dawned with a clear blue sky and not a breath of wind.

Our taxi took us back to the hotel and the Sheriff appeared soon after to arrange for our tyres to be inflated so that, after a quick breakfast, we were able to drive back and see the sight again with the sun fully up. We then drove back to the little airport, from which planes were coming and going, for a helicopter flight which was the icing on the cake. The north rim, at nearly 8000 feet is more than a 1000 feet higher than the south rim and the helicopter flies at 6000 feet so that you are effectively *in* the Canyon. Grand Canyon village is at 6860

## **Write for "On the Road"**

Do you have memorable experiences of driving abroad you would like to share with fellow members?

Or perhaps you have news of what is happening (or not happening) in your town, village or county.

Perhaps there are just issues you feel strongly about!

Short letters or longer articles - all are welcome!

If you use a word processor and could send a disc as well as a copy on paper this would be appreciated but is not essential; it's your views that count.

The Editor's address and contact numbers are given on page 2.

## Motoring Abroad

feet. The fixed wing aircraft have to fly higher so the advice we were given by the hotel staff was good as you see much more and the scenery does not whizz past. The only trouble is that a 30 minute flight is not long enough.

You can go into the Canyon on the back of a mule but that is a day trip and we had a train to catch so we left just after lunchtime, driving along the south rim easterly to Cameron and then south to Flagstaff and on to Sedona and then Payson where we found an hotel for the night. We had covered only 262 miles that day but it was a day we will not forget and next time we shall spend two or three nights there so we can go down on the mules.

We now had some serious driving to do and fortunately the roads were deserted as we made our way east. To begin with we remained high up and it was interesting to see the American way of warning signs. We saw the message which read : "Watch out for Elk", followed by another which said : "They run in packs" and then a third : "Across the road". I think I was watching the trees on either side so much for the next 50 miles that I would have hit an Elk if it had been in the middle of the road. It certainly concentrates the mind.

Eventually the road opened out and we drove through Indian territory and eventually long straight stretches through open countryside. I had been warned that the Arizona police are particularly hot on speeding and we would be lucky if we did not get caught. Having done Arizona from East to West without incident I was feeling quite pleased with myself until, suddenly we got done by a cop coming the other way, only 17 miles short of the border into New Mexico. It was no surprise to see him doing a u-turn in my rear-view mirror and I resisted the temptation to have a chase. When he realised what he had caught his attitude was one of amusement. I pointed out that 55 mph was absurd on those roads. He said he was going to give me 'a big break' and put me down for 65 instead of the 80 which registered on his radar gun. Fortunately I had braked when I saw him or the damage might have been worse and we ended up with a fine of \$23.85 which I feel honour bound to pay. If you are exceeding the limit by more than 35 mph you 'have to see the judge', which could be a bit time-consuming.

We were soon out of Arizona and into New Mexico where the roads are, if anything, even straighter and longer. In fact, if you look at the map and say you are going from point A to point B the road probably does just that, in a straight line. The land became flatter and we entered the oilfield area which is an extraordinary sight. As far as you can see, on both sides of the road are these little drills pumping up and down with their counterweights - simply hundreds of them. There was a strong smell of gas but virtually no sign of habitation. Little wonder I suppose since who would want to live in those conditions ?

By now a very strong wind had got up from the north and great balls of tumbleweed kept rolling across the road - impossible to miss at the speed we were doing but it did not matter since they are only light. Texas is in another time zone and since we were travelling east it meant that we were to lose an hour once we had crossed the border. We decided to lose it that evening rather than the following morning so we pressed on until we got to Andrews, just over the state line. This meant doing the last 80 miles or so in the dark but it was only 8pm Texas time when we stopped, having covered 629 miles that day.

That left us with just over 500 miles to do the next day to

get back to Houston, which we did with ease on lovely roads with barely another car in sight. Sunday seems a good day to travel over there as there are churches everywhere and they are well patronised. Only on the last 30 miles into Houston did the traffic get heavy.

Before handing the Cadi back to Avis, I decided to have a look at the NASA space centre where there is a conducted 90 minute tour of the various facilities including the famous control centre which has featured so often on the television but which will now no longer be used. Also the huge hanger where the centrifugal arm used to whizz round. This has been replaced by a large water tank in which they simulate weightlessness instead.

We had been told that only a few months ago a drunken barge captain had rammed one of the bridges over the Mississippi basin and, unknown to the railway authorities, had dislodged the rails slightly. The Amtrak train had plunged into the river with the loss of 35 or so lives. In a separate incident, a fanatic had unbolted the track somewhere near Phoenix and the train had been derailed at speed. I was mighty pleased to get back safely to Orlando for our flight back home.

### The roads are superb, the scenery ever changing

A four hour flight delay had us sitting around in the airport chatting to another couple and it transpired that the lady was the missing third lottery winner from the £42m roll-over just before Christmas. They had fled the country to get away from the press. There are probably more exotic places they could have gone to but Orlando takes some beating if you want to get away from it all. We thoroughly enjoyed ourselves while we were there. As for the motoring part, it was a wonderful experience and, combined with the train journeys, an excellent way to get a taste of the country and its people. We covered about 4000 miles in the two weeks, although one of those weeks was spent in San Diego. The roads are superb, the scenery ever changing and when we think about what else there is to see over there I am not sure that we've got enough holidays left. ☺

**▼ RADAR DEFENCE SYSTEMS ▼**



For the very best advice on purchasing  
a portable or installed radar/laser  
detector speak to the experts...

 **01555 772001**

Ask for a Free Information Pack! 20% Discount for ABD Members!



Network Ltd • 6 Malplaquet Court • Carlisle  
South Lanarkshire • ML8 4RD  
Tel 01555 751707 • Fax 01555 751666  
E-mail 101546.2177@compuserve.com

## ABD responds to Government's National Air Quality Strategy Consultation paper

The ABD has submitted a formal response to the Government's National Air Quality Strategy Consultation Draft, published by the Department of the Environment earlier this year. The paper covers emissions from all sectors of the economy, but continues to single out transport in general and the motor-car in particular to take the brunt of any measures to clean our air.

Amongst the options being considered are further improvements in vehicle engine design to reduce emissions, and reformulated fuels which could have a rapid and material effect on air quality, as well as the traditional barrage of proposals to please the anti-car luddites.

The paper includes proposals to ban car usage at times of poor air quality, as well as legislation to allow local authorities to impose congestion charging, cordon off sections of cities turning them into virtual no-go areas, and introduce local permit systems which will allow local dignitaries, officials, and those with the right connections to drive their cars, Soviet style, along traffic free town centre roads, whilst the great unwashed can wait in the rain for the bus. Also mooted is the idea of allowing local authorities to impose tax on all non-residential car parking spaces - guaranteed to make shopping at Sainsbury more expensive.

The idea of handing over the power to local authorities is clever, of course. Members may have noticed the current (pre-election) silence on the motorway toll proposals - the Government has simply decided to devolve power to local councils to do their unpopular dirty work for them. When you are unable to drive into your town, they will simply point out that it was your Council that has made the offending regulations.

The paper reinforces the planning guidelines which seek to make shops, offices, factories, leisure centres and other new developments inaccessible to motorists by restricting them to congested town centre sites, and by refusing to allow car parking spaces.

Especially worrying is the proposal that school class rooms should become politicised by including study about air quality in the National Curriculum. It may sound innocent enough, but there have already been instances of extremist teachers indoctrinating pupils into believing that the car is "destroying the environment", leading in one recent case to actual incitement to commit criminal damage.

Our response seeks to be positive, practical and commonsense. The ABD has always argued in favour of effective measures to reduce air pollution, taken across the economy as a whole. That includes measures to clean up power stations, industry, domestic heating, and even lawn mowers (which, as regular readers will know, can create as much

air pollution in an hour of grass cutting as driving a Porsche from London to Manchester).

It also includes support for the policy of reducing emissions from new cars, which, according to the Government's own figures, will lead to a two-thirds reduction in vehicle related emissions between 1990 and 2010. We have given qualified support for measures to make vehicles cleaner still, highlighting the fact that the best car manufacturers such as Saab are already far ahead of the average.

We have argued strongly against further tax rises, as we believe that drivers are carrying more than enough of a burden already, pointing out that over 80% of the price of petrol in this country already flows straight to the Great Bottomless Pit of Government spending. We pointed out that this policy is at odds with the Government's stated commitment to free-market principles, especially noting the Government's reluctance to impose a more general fuel or Carbon tax, which would cover fuels used domestically and by industry.

We have strongly criticised what we see as an abuse of the planning system in making car parking difficult, and discriminating against car users. We mentioned our concerns about civil liberties, and our concerns for the 850,000 people in this country employed in a newly resurgent car industry, and their dependents.

We rejected the "traffic management proposals" as currently drafted, and pointed out the many practical difficulties associated with closing roads on air quality grounds: diversion of traffic and consequent increase in congestion elsewhere, and the difficulties faced by business people and tourists alike, who might find themselves prohibited from continuing their journies. We have said, however, that, if smog restrictions were to be imposed, drivers of vehicles with full 3-way closed loop catalytic converters should be exempt from them. This mirrors German practice, and reflects the fact that a "cat" can filter out 80-95% of the noxious pollutants.

We expressed alarm at the "educational" proposals (is it any wonder that our children are bottom of the international league tables for Maths and science when teachers are being asked to teach politicised nonsense instead of taking real lessons?).

Our proposals, in brief are:-

1. Action across the economy to tackle air pollution, with less emphasis on the car
2. Continuing to improve vehicle and fuel efficiency
3. Action to ensure proper maintenance of the vehicle fleet as a whole.
4. Considering ways of speeding up the renewal of the vehicle fleet, especially old buses and taxis which pollute our city streets so badly.
5. No further tax rises on motorists above the rate of inflation
6. Use of surplus revenue raised from motorists for a variety of purposes including research into cleaner vehicles and energy efficiency across the whole economy.
7. Rejection of traffic targets at local or national level.
8. Rejection of proposals to allow local authorities to tax non-residential parking spaces, as well as rejecting road charging, permit schemes and congestion charging, but encouragement for voluntary strategies to promote cycling and public transport where they are genuinely viable.
9. Exemptions from all restrictions for cars fitted with 3-way closed loop catalytic converters
10. Public education on the importance of proper car maintenance. ☺

## Japanese develop NOx-absorbing coatings

A research group in Japan's Agency of Industrial Science and Technology National Institute for Resources and the Environment has developed a NOx/ SOx absorbing exterior coating and a low-energy NOx/ SOx absorbing device for underground tunnels and car parks.

Both developments, based on a titanium dioxide optical catalyst, remove around 80%

### PRIVATE MEDICINE

One of our members is Group Secretary of a Private Patients Group.

The group enjoys a 25% discount from the normal rates.

Should any of our members be interested in joining, please contact:

Brian Sealy-Clarke  
11 Glenross House  
107 Belsize Road  
London  
NW6 4AJ

Tel 0171-624 2971

for further information.

---

# Pollution, Health and the Environment

of the NOx/SOx emissions. The catalyst reacts with UV light to convert ambient NOx/SOx to nitric and sulphuric acids which are leached from the system by rainwater (or in the case of the tunnel / car park device, a water spray) restoring the catalyst's activity. This device is considerably cheaper to operate than previous ammonia-based NOx absorbers. Bearing in mind that, even without these technology advances, vehicle NOx emissions are set to fall by 66% over the next 15 years, the air quality predictions of the eco-terrorists are shown to be blatantly alarmist and totally without scientific foundation.

---

## Destruction of Forests Threatens Global Disaster

In a report published by the Environmental Investigation Agency this autumn, governments are accused of failing to act to conserve world forests, which, it claims, are now being destroyed at a record rate. The activities of the multi-national logging companies that dominate the timber business are described as "systematic, unchecked plunder".

Ms Juliette Williams of the EIA says that the logging companies simply exhaust one region before moving onto the next, using their economic and political might to go where they want. Only 6% of the world's remaining forests are formally protected. At the United Nations "Earth Summit" in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, governments pledged to conserve the forests, but in most cases no action has been taken.

In the Brazilian Amazon, for example, the deforestation has actually accelerated by 34% since 1992. It was claimed at Rio that rising levels of Carbon Dioxide were responsible for "Global Warming", yet it is destruction of forests, rather than emissions from man-made sources, which are contributing to a rise in the level of Carbon Dioxide in the air.

The figures released by the EIA are proof, if any was needed, of the seriousness with which many governments are taking the threat to the planet from rising Carbon Dioxide levels. Meanwhile, the British Government continues its obsessive war against its own citizens as it tries to secure a reduction in emissions of Carbon Dioxide from "transport" (which, of course, means the car).

Cars do emit some Carbon Dioxide, of course. But only about 3% of all emissions come from man-made sources, the rest coming from nature. And, as only about 13% of all man-made emissions in the U.K. come from petrol engined vehicles, that means that the Government is seeking a reduction in emissions from motorists despite the fact that they are responsible for just 0.39% of total emissions.

---

If the Government is serious in wanting to Carbon Dioxide emissions fall, they would do better to target the wasteful use of energy in the domestic and industrial sectors, and better still to target those countries like Brazil which are allowing the destruction of the very lungs of our planet.

---

## European employers deride Carbon Tax proposals

The Brussels based European Employers' Confederation, UNICE, has slammed the European Commission's Energy and Carbon tax proposals as: "an ineffective instrument from an environmental angle" and as stemming from "political motivations". UNICE has appealed to the European Commission, the member states and the European Parliament to: "develop other approaches with a clear and well thought-out environmental objective". Very laudable requests, but with little or no chance of receiving a fair hearing from a bunch of mendacious, money-grubbing politicians who smell taxation megabucks from a Carbon tax, however unjustified.

Appealing to these revenue vampires isn't the answer; shaming them into retreat by supporting those who loudly express scientifically valid counter-arguments, is. Are you listening UNICE?

---

## US restrictions proposed ... and opposed

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing a change to the regulations relating to ozone and particulate matter. Observers in the US suggest that EPA is doing this simply to justify their continued existence. The air is so clean now, it is becoming harder to justify new anti-pollution programmes. Since some EPA administrators have said the only way to clean air is to get people out of their cars and into public transport, one may question their true motives.

The EPA's proposals are that the particulate standard should be reduced from 10 microns to 2.5 (PM10 would become PM2.5) and the ozone standard would be similarly reduced.

The EPA has the support of the Clinton administration which is proposing to allowing the EPA to seize the property of alleged polluters. There would be no trial and no compensation. However, Congress has in the past (94-96) taken a different view and cut funds to the EPA for a year.

---

## Clean fuels reduce emissions in USA

(7-13/10/96) reported that compulsory oxygenates have dramatically reduced US road transport emissions. The frequency of ozone limit breaches has fallen by 30 to 40%; toxic and specifically CO emissions by 25%, and 10 to 15% respectively; and ambient benzene levels in California by over 50%, according to consultants Tecnon, speaking in Vienna.

Initial results from 12 months US "reformulated gasoline" (RFG) show the following percentage changes:

Ozone limit breaches -30 to -40  
Toxic emissions -25  
CO emissions -10 to -15  
Ambient benzene (Ca) -50

The benefits in California have been equivalent to removing 7 million vehicles from the road, said the US Environmental Protection Agency's Carol Browner.

Yet the EC's proposals for maximum aromatics, benzene and RVP's in 2010 are virtually identical to current actual levels:

**Emission: Euro avg %; EC proposed 2010 %**

Total Aromatics:	40;	45
Maximum Benzene:	2.3;	2.0
RVP:	>9;	8.7

Why, you may ask, when the technology exists to bring about yet further dramatic air quality improvements than have already been achieved since 1970 without dramatically impacting on people's lifestyles, does the European Commission see fit to do nothing?

When will we see these improvements in fuel technology in the UK and Europe?

---

## EU states to be forced to make air quality data public property

The European Parliament has won European Commission backing for the public availability of urban air quality data through mandatory national data reporting requirements from January 1997. However, The first information 'available to the public on request' is unlikely to be obtainable until October 1999, after validation procedures have been completed.

The Environment Committee's "rapporteur", MEP Anita Pollack commented bizarrely: "It is only when this information is made public that it can be used as a tool for pollution control" - or does she really mean political control?

Two questions spring to mind: 1. Will the true sources of high emission incidents (as opposed to the easy target, the private car) be divulged - or even known? 2. Will the public be adequately and objectively informed of the facts concerning the potential effects of any given level of emissions? I leave you

... continued next page



# Speed and Safety Issues

## Unravelling The Politics of Accident Causation

*Paul Hemingway, ABD Roads and Traffic spokesman, searches for the real cause of an accident and calls for a logical approach to road safety instead of the kneejerk reactions currently so prevalent in local authorities and national government.*

I have often wondered where the DoT get their figures from when assessing accident cause. The ABD has suggested that, due to the absence of properly collated statistics, pure guesswork is the usual answer. Whilst this is true, I have always suspected that such information would be unreliable as accidents often have multiple causes which are difficult to assess and so the actual box ticked would be at the mercy of the preconceived views of the assessor.

It was a Friday night in March and there was a bomb scare in Aldershot. Some poor prune had left his broken down Montego near the army barracks and so the town was sealed off. I spent an hour getting out of town, on my way to an ABD meeting. On my return I discovered that a friend, Gill, had been involved in a serious accident and was in intensive care. I visited her as soon as I could and discovered she was fortunate to be alive. She had been out walking her dog that very Friday evening when an Alfa Romeo 164 had lost control and spun across the pavement, demolishing a row of conifers before ending up in someone's garden. Gill was standing in front of the hedge and her body had pushed the B post of the 164 in about six inches, rendering it a write off.

### **this sort of thing prompts a re-examination of your basic attitudes to your own driving**

Fortunately, she was made of stronger stuff than Italian cars and has made a good recovery, although her knee will never be totally right and her pelvis contains enough Titanium to build a Tornado fighter! (Her humour and strength in dealing with this has been an inspiration to all, so I know she roars with laughter at this description.)

#### **EU Air quality data**

to draw your own conclusions as to the answers based on the less-than-promising indications of recent history.

*The Worldwide Web is one of the best ways of making such data public, but the Eurocrats have just started charging: £1.40 per minute. - Ed.*

So what caused this potentially fatal accident? As Hugh Bladon so rightly said in the last issue of OTR, this sort of thing prompts a re-examination of your basic attitudes to your own driving and to the campaign we are all involved in. I resolved to make my own assessment of the cause - a process which turned out to be very revealing and somewhat like peeling an onion.

### **the answer to accident causation lies ... in careful examination of actual accidents**

Firstly, the driver failed a breath test. Not by much, but he failed. To an anti drink drive campaigner that would be the end of the investigation. Open and shut case. Indeed, all accidents where any driver tests positive are regarded as alcohol related in the official statistics, even if the other driver is totally to blame. Of course, there are no statistics as to how many drunken pedestrians or cyclists are knocked down, but that's another story....

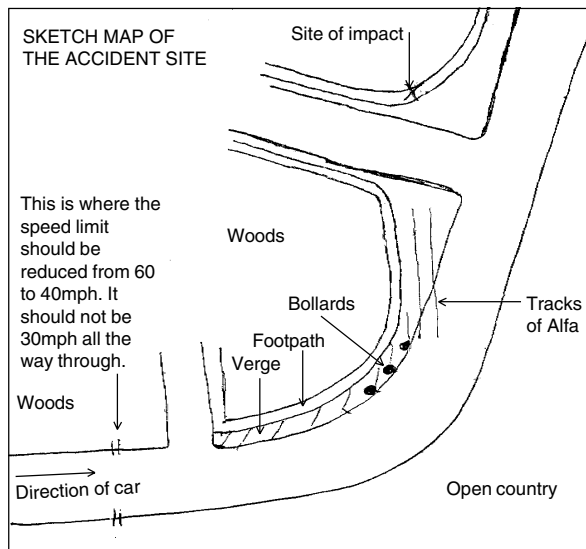
Secondly, the accident happened on a bend on a road with a 30mph limit, so to those indoctrinated by 'speed kills', 'excessive speed' must have been 'a factor' in this accident. Obviously. But, wait a minute. The bend was a left hander but the accident happened on the LEFT, just after the bend. If the driver had been going too fast to negotiate the bend, he would have crashed to the RIGHT. In fact, he mounted the verge just after the apex, crossed a side road located just round the bend, and hit Gill on the pavement on the other side of this road, spinning in the process. There was no suggestion

that he was avoiding a turning vehicle at the junction due to travelling too fast before a blind junction. There is, therefore, no credible rationale for a speed related cause and no way of accurately determining the speed of the vehicle at the beginning of the incident.

Thirdly, as an ABD campaigner I started to look at the speed limit. Half a mile of open road before this bend has a 30mph limit but no urban features. A pavement behind a grass verge begins on the left, just before the bend, and beyond the accident site is a row of houses set well back from the road. To the right is open country. On several runs past to assess the road whilst looking at my speedometer at the same time I established that 40mph was the maximum safe speed that my built in autopilot would allow me to take the bend and still leave room for me to stop easily for turning vehicles. Clearly, the speed limit of 30mph was inappropriate - the open section of road should have had a 50mph or 60mph limit and a 40mph (or 30mph) should start just before the bend. It would be easy for a campaigner like me to blame this bad speed limit for the accident, but, like the other campaigners, I would have missed the real root cause.

The road is dimly lit, and three reflective posts were placed on the edge of the verge around the apex of the bend. The last of these is just at the point where the verge starts widening for

... continued next page



---

# Speed and Safety Issues

---

## Causes of accidents

... continued from previous page

the 'flare' at the junction. A few runs past in my car and a study of the tyre marks on the grass revealed what I believe to be the correct theory - the driver had mistakenly followed the reflected line of the tarmac pavement as it continued to turn but the road didn't. The dirty kerb had blended with the verge and fooled him for long enough to mount the verge and lose control on the slippery grass.

This, then, is the cause. After this was related forcefully to the local council a few more posts appeared which should prevent a recurrence. A triumph for common sense. But how seductive are the other 'causes' for someone with an axe to grind. It is possible but not proveable that less or no alcohol, a slower speed and a more sensible speed limit regime could

have prevented this accident, but they are no more the cause of it than the man who triggered the bomb scare resulting in the driver taking an unfamiliar route home.

**This assessment has convinced me that the answer to accident causation lies not in simple box ticking by the first policeman on the scene but in careful examination of actual accidents and on rational, logical and progressive thinking through of driving situations to see how the accident occurs and what can be done to prevent it. If this happened then we would see more driver training, better signage of hazards and logical, reasonable speed limits in place of arbitrary enforcement of bad limits and meaningless TV campaigns. Yes, and our roads would start getting safer again. ☹**

---

## Politics

---

### Where the Greens & Reds are going - and how

*With a general election in the offing, Lance Green is prompted (by Jeremy Clarkson's article in the Sunday Times) to look at the alternatives on offer.*

Mr Blair plans to stabilise traffic levels by the year 2010. He is on a fairly safe wicket there, of course, since British traffic is likely to top out about then anyway. As ABD members have pointed out, there are simply not enough people in the country for much more congestion. I would like to think that he has worked this out and intends to grab the credit for the inevitable. But when did anyone last hear of astute transport thinking? (It comes to something when we hope that a politician is being devious.) So Prime Minister Blair is going to find some stooge to take enough measures to get us out of our cars. He is not saying that his party will cut pollution or road deaths - both of which are happening anyway. He is just intent on reducing the number of cars for its own sake.

To this end, does Labour really plan to fine people for parking their own cars at their place of work? Is he really going to take that kind of measure in a blind, uncomprehending, and uncaring pursuit of conventional wisdom and political correctitude? Perhaps Jeremy is exaggerating. He does exaggerate. One might call it hyperbole. Whatever one calls it, I would not bet against some kind of drastic action against the motorcar.

The question now is how do we stop it? The ABD - and very few others - has tried the rational approach. This campaign must continue, of course. And we must be rigorous and tell the whole truth. It is the green movement and the media that omit the unhelpful. But we would be foolish to believe that this approach - on its own - will suffice. We need (in the vernacular) to "play dirty". We must find the ulterior motives and/or hypocrisy of the green misanthropes. Catch and publicise them accepting lifts, or even owning cars. Look into their backgrounds. That kind of person has a tendency to belong to fringe groups. Communist leanings may not be very damning nowadays; but what if we found some National Front tendencies? More likely perhaps is a little soft drug use and dealing on the side.

In a less speculative vein, I saw Jonathan

Porrit on what was actually quite a good environmentalist TV programme recently. He was speaking from all four corners of the world (but not at the same time - not even Mr Porrit has learned the art of bi-location). He talked about sustainable development - and he made some sense. He did not mention a study in the 1970s which, by random sampling methods, produced scientific evidence that sufficient raw materials exist for a 100,000 years of economic growth using contemporary technology. But that cannot apply to all the Earth's resources uniformly - especially land and forests.

---

### How does Mr Porrit get to all these places?

It was not until a day or two had passed that I suddenly wondered - how the hell does Mr Porrit get to all these places? He could get there by Rainbow Warrior 49 disguised as a Libyan U-boat to forestall French boarding parties. But my guess is that he flies - in an aircraft, that is. When I was in my twenties I once worked out that a single operational run in a Sunderland bomber used twice as much fuel as I thought I would need to run my car for the remainder of my life.

(And that was at a very low 20 MPG.) Maybe a modern jet airliner is more economical than a war time combat plane, and dear Jon was unlikely to have been the only passenger. None the less, how many of these trips has he made? Does he refuse to own a motorcar? Does he go everywhere by train? Not quite everywhere, it seems. Let's find out and - if these greens are jetting/zooming about - let's publicise it!

Less controversially, we could point out the huge range of modern activities to which the greens are opposed. Is it generally known that they are against wind farms and trade growth? If we dig a little deeper we may well discover that they are trying to stop photography, package holidays using aircraft, air conditioning, refrigeration, central heating... ☹

---

*Remember our "Thought for the day" last issue? Julian Rowden has researched the original text:*

### Nostradamus's Warning

*Nepveu et sang du saint nouveau venu,  
Par le surnom soustient arc et couvert,  
Seront chasses mis a mort chasses nu,  
En rouge et noir convertiront leur vert*

Nephew and blood of the saint newly come,  
By the surname upholding arches and covers,  
They shall be driven, put to death, and chased  
out nude,

And shall change their red and black to green

*Nostradamus*

This is thought to predict that the tyrannical European regimes (Communists = Red and Fascists = Black) will come trying to reimpose their will on the peoples of Europe by changing their "colour" (to "Green").

# Speed and Safety Issues

## Wheel of misfortune

*ABD Chairman, Brian Gregory, witnesses the aftermath of an accident and muses on the causes and the government's response to genuine safety issues.*

Towards the end of June I once again retraced my now well-worn path between Hull and Teesside. On the three lane stretch of the A1(M) near Wetherby the traffic began to slow dramatically with no immediately obvious cause: no lurking left-hand lane jam-sandwich (probably the most frequent source of such deceleration episodes).

Finally, I inched close enough to see the reason for the holdup: a heavily front-end customised (it looked to the point of write-off) Golf GTi.

Another boy-racer driving too close to the preceding vehicle? If so, where was the unfortunate who had been ahead of him and subsequent column of damaged vehicles this type of nose-to-tail multiple shunt inevitably produces?

Then I got a clear view of the driver. No boy-racer this; but a sober, grey-haired, and clearly shaken middle-aged man being comforted by a Royal Army squaddy.

Then the accident cause became crystal-clear: a half-tonne or so of Army lorry-wheel that had separated from its attachment point on one of the convoy of Army vehicles on the opposite carriageway, had vaulted or demolished the central barrier reservation, and promptly attempted to mate with the hapless middle-aged driver's Golf.

The damage to the Golf was colossal. It is nevertheless a tribute to the construction of modern cars that the driver could walk away unaided from the scene.

Such accidents may be caused by inadequate maintenance. If the Army could make that sort of mistake, where does it leave us with respect to the many fly-by-night, Bodgit, Bodgit and Scarper goods transport operations who do everything on a shoestring or less?

## **10 to 20 drivers a year are killed in collisions with components or part-loads from goods vehicles**

The answer is in the accident statistics. It is estimated that 10 to 20 (usually car) drivers are killed per annum in collisions with components or part-loads which have detached themselves from goods vehicles.

But since the DoT does not accurately

track the real causes of accidents (if it did, the current "Speed Kills" campaign would have an even more hollow ring to it) we can't be certain of the true annual toll from this type of event.

It brought things into very sharp focus for me, however: observing safe following distances and driving defensively offer little or no protection from projectiles whose source is the opposite carriageway.

## **the DoT does *not* accurately track the real causes of accidents**

And what is the DoT doing to address this type of totally preventable lethal occurrence? Posturing and wittering on about the merits of speed cameras. They should be forced to account for their (in)actions over such true road safety issues to the poor man who was driving the Golf! ☹

## Membership renewals

Many of our members' subscriptions fall due for renewal on 1st January (newer members are on twelve months from date of joining). Don't delay sending in your subscription for 1997. We are planning a heightened campaign of press releases and other activities so your support (both financial and in lending your weight to the cause by writing to MPs, newspapers, radio and TV) is essential to the eventual success of the campaign.

You may like to make an additional donation to the fighting fund. The ABD currently spends far more on campaigning than it receives in subscriptions. This is possible because of the generous additional support by many members.

Finally, are there any of your friends and associates who might join the ABD? The more the merrier! Photocopy the membership form in this issue or contact the Secretary for brochures.

## Action checklist

Members often ask, "What can I do to help?" Here are a few ideas:

- Write personally to your MP.
- Write to your local press to protest about anti-car proposals by local government.
- AA and RAC members should write to these organisations asking what they are doing to support their members' interests and to combat anti-car propaganda.
- Write to the BBC and other national media whenever emotive, anti-car sentiments are presented as "fact".
- Enrol more members! You should find a membership form inside this issue. 'Phone or write to the Secretary for more copies.
- Do you have skills, or access to facilities, which could help run the ABD? Write or 'phone to let us know.

**Apathy is our main enemy. Many news media present anti-car viewpoints as though they are held by the vast majority of citizens. We need to show that this is not the case!**

**Do not think that your actions will be a waste of time. There is already evidence that Government and organisations like the AA are taking our views on board.**

**Keep up the pressure!**

## Media Successes for the ABD

Since our last edition, the ABD has received a mention in Performance Car, and an important article in Autocar magazine on the 25th September 1996 in which Chairman Brian Gregory attacked the tired all arguments of the environmental lobby and emphasised the continual improvement in car emissions. The publicity not only helps to set straight some facts about the car's real impact on our environment, and influence those who we need on our side, but has also lead to another flurry of enquiries and membership applications.

Paul Hemingway has had an article published in his local newspaper, the Star, which is on sale in the Aldershot/Camberley area, on the effect of so-called "traffic calming" measures. In the Rushmore area, recent road narrowing schemes, adopted by the local council, have eliminated safe parking spaces, caused congestion and danger where none existed before. The editor of the Star has offered us his full support.

Another set of Press releases is shortly to hit the streets....

## ABD Web site

Recently updated, our site includes links to most of the pages mentioned below. Why not pay it a visit? The links are on the page headed "We are not alone".

A number of sites have links to ours, one recent example being the BBC Tomorrow's World site which has a page on speed cameras. This has already resulted in membership enquiries.

You can use the e-mail links on the site to notify us of camera sites for Gatso Watch, apply for membership etc.

Please share your further discoveries of motoring sites with other readers. E-mail the editor: [steve@deltacom.co.uk](mailto:steve@deltacom.co.uk).

## Other motoring sites on the Worldwide Web

Any readers who have access to the Worldwide Web may like to know that there are number of interesting sites.

### North American Motorists

The National Motorists Association (NMA) has the distinction of having successfully campaigned for the lifting of the 55mph limit

## Season's Greetings

Wishing all our readers a  
Happy Christmas  
and a good year's motoring in 1997!

in the USA. They can be found at:

<http://www.motorists.com>

Canada's Society for Safety by Education, Not Speed Enforcement (SENSE) is at:

<http://www.eznet.ca/~sense>

### Motoring down under

Even sunny Australia is not immune from predatory policing, it seems. If you're planning a visit, take a printout of their list of "photo fuzz" cars from:

<http://netspace.net.au/~smack/traffic/spdcam.html>

### Traffic news

The Vauxhall Vectra site includes a traffic density map, updated at frequent intervals, showing the presence of jams on the motorways and other trunk roads. It's all computerised (based on the Traffic Master system) and fed by those induction coils you will have noticed at intervals on the motorways. Just have a quick look, before setting out on a journey, at:

<http://www.vauxhall.co.uk/vectra-cgi/index>

### Other UK-based sites

Take a look at the site set up by motoring enthusiast, Chris Longhurst:

<http://www.geocities.com/MotorCity/2195/>

If you enjoy motoring anecdotes you'll particularly like the page, [clueless.html](#).

### Government

In common with other government offices the Department of Transport publishes information, including all Press Releases, on the Web. The home page is at:

<http://www.open.gov.uk/dot/dohome.htm>

### The Automobile Association

Whilst we have criticised the AA in the past (and will continue to do so whenever they fail to support their members by acquiescing to government and "politically correct" anti-motorist pressure groups) we will also give credit where it is due.

The AA site has an abundance of information including press releases. One page which we noticed concerns shared road use by cyclists and motorists. Since several Committee members are keen on two-wheeled as well as four-wheeled travel, this caught our eye. This one Web page contains more common sense and good advice than we have seen in a long while. Take a look at:

<http://www.theaa.co.uk/theaa/U8.HTM>

### Know your enemy

Mentioning the home page of the Gatso company on these pages is probably akin to advertising an arms dealers' convention to

CND members... but if you're interested they can be found at the eminently unsuitable address:

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/funpages/gatso.htm>

Although headed "The *unofficial* Gatsometer pages" they carry the company's logo, address and copyright claim. Perhaps this is part of a devious plot, or perhaps it continues a rather unfunny sense of humour.

## ABD supporters and advertisers

The advertisements you see in OTR are all placed by organisations which in some way provide assistance or resources for the ABD.

### Car and home insurance Offer - Exclusive to ABD Members!

ABD Member Andrew Lee of Direct Insurance has kindly offered an exclusive deal on insurance products for ABD members. In the absence of any clear action from the established motoring organisations, your subscription to the ABD has always meant that you were a member of Britain's leading lobbying group; now membership could bring you a financial benefit as well.

Andrew's offer means that you could easily save more than your year's subscription to the ABD in the form of reduced premiums, and he is able to offer nationwide quotes on his telephone Hotline: 0345 573075. Better still, Andrew has generously agreed to donate 25% of his first year's commission to the ABD's fighting fund.

We do not normally use On The Road's editorial space to advertise goods or services, but the nature of this offer makes it an exception. We urge you to contact Direct Insurance to obtain a quote - it won't cost you more than the cost of a phone call.

Andrew joined the ABD in the very early days, after reading about us in Car Magazine, and shares all the concerns which are regularly covered on these pages. He is also a member of the Jaguar Enthusiasts Club and runs an E-Type Jaguar.

**If you run your own business and could assist the ABD with its campaign, we'd be pleased to consider running an advertisement for your company.**

## ABD Subscriptions

**If your subscription runs from 1st January, may we remind you that it is time to renew! £15 by cheque or £12 by standing order.**

**The ABD is run entirely on a voluntary basis. All subscriptions are used for campaigning.**