

DRIVING PENALTIES TOO LENIENT SAYS GREEN FLAG SURVEY

Research reveals that motorists believe penalties for serious road offences are currently too lenient.

([PRWEB](#)) February 23, 2003 -- In a study by Green Flag Motoring Assistance, more than three-quarters (76 per cent) of drivers said motorists convicted of speeding or dangerous driving, that resulted in death or serious injury, should be sent to prison for five years to life.

The results demonstrate motorists' support for new recommendations, published this week by the Independent Sentencing Advisory Panel, that drivers who cause fatal accidents through mobile phone use or drowsiness should face up to five years imprisonment.

Green Flag spokesman Nigel Charlesworth commented: "Our research shows that the motoring public feels penalties for irresponsible driving are not strong enough at present and that there would be widespread support for the tougher punishments being introduced."

Drivers responsible for causing death and injury on our roads through drowsiness were, until recently treated leniently, and defences such as driver fatigue were considered mitigating factors. The Selby incident in February 2001, in which 10 people died as a result of a driver who fell asleep at the wheel of his Land Rover, marked a turning point in attitudes to driving whilst tired or distracted.

The Green Flag survey also revealed that 70 per cent of drivers would take more care if the penalties were more severe. Green Flag suggests some simple behaviours that could help reduce the risks to motorists, their passengers and other road users:

- Keep under speed limits in towns and villages and never set off tired or stressed
- Never drive while under the influence of alcohol, or drugs
- Put your mobile on message service and catch up on your calls when you stop for a break
- Always keep a look out for people on bikes, foot and horses.

Green Flag motoring assistance serves some 4m UK motorists and is a sponsor of this year's Road Safety Week (September 22-28).

Notes to editors

- 1,001 motorists were interviewed in a study conducted in conjunction with road safety charity, Brake.
- There were 3,409 road deaths in Britain in 2000. Some 850 pedestrians were included in this figure. *
- Government figures show that alcohol causes one-in-eight fatalities on Britain's roads. **
- About 70% of drivers break 30mph limits. **
- A pedestrian hit at 20mph stands a 90% chance of surviving. At 40mph they stand a 10% chance of surviving.
- Two thirds of people who live in the countryside and want to walk, cycle or ride horses on country lanes, feel threatened by speeding traffic. Eight out of ten want drivers to stick to 30mph or less on country lanes. **



*Source: Road Accidents Great Britain 2000: DETR (2000)

** The Green Flag Report on Safer Driving

Press calls

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