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## RAC reacts to immediate points and fine proposals for drivers caught using a handheld phone

Commenting on [today's proposals published in the Government's consultation response](#) on proposed new handheld mobile phone use penalties, RAC road safety spokesman Pete Williams said:

“We welcome stiffer penalties for handheld mobile phone use and believe this will send a very strong message to motorists. However, we believe this has to be done in conjunction with a heavyweight road safety campaign so we therefore welcome initial proposals for a new THINK! initiative. The RAC's Report on Motoring 2016 identified that the problem is at epidemic proportions as almost half (48%) of motorists admitted to using a handheld phone at the wheel to talk, text or use other apps in the last year.

“Many drivers might be surprised that the Government is proposing doing away with the option for offenders to take a mobile phone awareness course. Police forces have been using such courses as an option and alternative to points and fines which demonstrates that they believe there is a need for better education of the risks and dangers. They are the ones tasked with enforcement when challenged with diminishing budgets so we would be interested if they believe that this approach will succeed.

“From 2017 taking a short call at the wheel or quickly checking your texts will have far greater consequences, particularly for anyone with existing points on their licence as they will suddenly be much closer to having their licence taken away. For new drivers a prosecution will mean instant disqualification as they only need six points within two years of gaining their licence to have it revoked by the DVLA.

“The Government, police, road safety and motoring organisations must accept some responsibility for failing to encourage motorists to change their behaviour and make handheld mobile phone use as socially unacceptable as drink-driving since it was made illegal in 2003.

“It has been allowed to go on for too long and we now need to send a shockwave out there and encourage any drivers still flouting the law to go cold turkey on handheld mobile phone use.”

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The press office email address is [press.office@rac.co.uk](mailto:press.office@rac.co.uk) and media centre is at [media.rac.co.uk](http://media.rac.co.uk). **Please note:** the press office is unable to help with individual customer enquiries - please visit the [RAC contacts page](#) to find the right contact.

## About the RAC

The RAC, an iconic UK brand, provides complete peace of mind to nearly 14 million UK private and business drivers, whatever their motoring needs. As well as its premium nationwide breakdown assistance service – with an expert branded patrol workforce attending more than two million breakdowns every year – it offers a wide range of market-leading products across insurance, legal services, vehicle inspections and service, maintenance and repair. Included in this is the first-of-its-kind nationwide Mobile Mechanics service which brings the garage to homes and workplaces.

At the forefront of new solutions for business fleets and consumers, the RAC's breakdown service is electric-ready with mobile EV charging technology and can be called on using [myRAC](#) – the all-in-one route planner, fuel finder and breakdown reporting app.

Visit the [RAC website](#).

## Contacts



### **RAC Press Office**

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