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RAC comments on findings of US study on crash risk factors

Certain driver distractions increase the risk of crashing according to a new study from Virginia Tech Transportation Institute.

Commenting on the findings, RAC spokesman Simon Williams said: “The fact this was a long-term study using video to observe drivers’ behaviour at the wheel makes it particularly significant and its findings therefore need to be heeded as they show just how prevalent distractions in accidents are.

“We know being distracted at the wheel can have tragic consequences but, based on this research, UK Government statistics around contributory factors in accidents seem to dramatically downplay the effect of distractions as they report that [only 4% of road deaths in 2014 were attributable to them](#).

“Not surprisingly the research shows just how dangerous the use of hand-held phones when driving can be, but it also highlights the dangers of other forms of distraction such as interacting with passengers, reaching for an object and the impact of drowsiness and fatigue.

“All it takes is a moment’s loss of concentration from reaching for a mobile phone, fiddling with a sat-nav or adjusting an in-vehicle device to lose control and find yourself involved in a life-changing accident.

“The latest RAC Report on Motoring shows the dangers posed by other motorists using their hand-held mobile phones to talk, text or go online are a growing worry for many drivers with more than a third (34%) saying this is one of their top four areas of concern.

“There is still a surprising number of motorists (12%) who think that it is acceptable to take a short call with a hand-held mobile phone while driving, despite this being illegal since December 2003.”

The press office email address is press.office@rac.co.uk and media centre is at 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](#).

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