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RAC findings about illegal mobile phone use while driving lead to increased penalties

Findings from the 2016 RAC Report on Motoring showing that handheld mobile phone use while driving is now at epidemic proportions have led to an announcement that penalties for the offence are to be doubled by the Government.

Research carried out for the report found that an estimated 11 million motorists admitted to making or receiving a call while driving in the last 12 months and a shocking five million saying they have taken photos or videos while at the wheel of a moving vehicle. The findings – released on Thursday 15 September – sparked two national newspaper campaigns which were followed by a Department for Transport announcement today that the fine for the offence would be doubled to £200 and the points increased from three to six.

RAC road safety spokesman Pete Williams said: “The Government’s swift action to the findings in the RAC Report on Motoring shows they understand just how dangerous it can be to use a handheld mobile phone at the wheel. Increasing the fine from £100 to £200 and doubling the penalty points from three to six will help to deter people from doing it in the first place. However, it is just as important that laws are seen to be enforced, and the decline in the numbers of dedicated road traffic police has only heightened the feeling that those who use a handheld phone while driving simply get away with it.

“Understanding the consequences of breaking the law is also paramount, so we welcome the announcement that the increased penalties will be

accompanied by a high profile Government THINK! campaign highlighting the dangers of handheld mobile phone use at the wheel.

“While the new penalties are not due to come into force until the first half of 2017 we hope we will see an immediate change in driver behaviour and an end to anyone using a handheld mobile phone while driving. It is time for a cultural shift to make the use of a handheld mobile phone as socially unacceptable as drink diving.”

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](#).

Contacts



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