

UK should take lead from Arnie on phones and driving, says yesinsurance.co.uk



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Industry: [Automotive](#)

Press Release Summary: yesinsurance.co.uk states its support to new Californian law prohibiting hands free mobile phone use in drivers under the age of 18, but we would also like to see this extended to all teenagers in the UK

Press Release Body: A new law preventing teenage motorists from using even a hands free mobile phone whilst driving, which was introduced last month by **California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger**, should be adapted for use in the UK, according to car insurer, yesinsurance.co.uk.

Research studies indicate that around 24% of UK drivers occasionally use the phone whilst driving, but yesinsurance.co.uk believes that this figure is much higher in the under-20 age group. Statistics also show that this is the most dangerous age group as far as driving accidents are concerned.

"The California law prohibits mobile phone use in drivers under the age of 18, but we would like to see this extended to all teenagers in the UK," said **Paul Purdy of yesinsurance.co.uk**.

Latest figures show that 32 per cent of 17 to 20 year-olds currently have a full driving licence, and 96 per cent own mobile phones.

Research compiled last month by **yesinsurance.co.uk** indicated that motorists using mobiles, including hands-free sets, are four times more likely to crash and have an average 30 per cent slower reaction time than drinkers at the UK legal limit. As a result, the insurer says that up to 8 million drivers in the UK may be taking risks that can equal those of drink-driving, simply by using mobile phones.

The research came from the Transport Research Laboratory, The University of Sydney and the University of Utah.

"We know from our own experience as an insurer that teenage drivers present a significantly higher risk than older motorists," said Paul Purdy.

"With research proving beyond doubt that mobile phone use increases the likelihood of an accident, we feel it would be in the interests of both the driver and other road users for mobile phone use to be restricted to drivers aged 20 and above," he said.

- ENDS -

Editors notes

- **yesinsurance.co.uk** is a trading name of **yesinsurance Services Limited**, which is authorised and regulated by the **Financial Services Authority**

- [Insurance](#) policies provided online at **www.yesinsurance.co.uk** are designed to provide competitive [car insurance](#) deals for drivers with cars or vans that are over 5 years old, which account for around 60% of all cars currently on the road, as well as [home insurance](#) and [van insurance](#) policies.

Research on mobile phones and driving

University of Sydney: Research conducted at the University of Sydney's Injury Prevention and Trauma Care Division indicates that people who use their mobile phones whilst driving are four times more likely to crash. This includes people using hands-free devices.

Transport Research Laboratory: In the UK, research conducted at the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) has found that drivers talking on both hand-held and hands-free mobile phones have on average 30 per cent slower reaction times than those who have been drinking, and 50 per cent slower times than sober drivers. Research conducted by the TRL in 2006 indicates that, at any one time, 2.5% of drivers are using the phone whilst driving – with two-thirds of them illegally using hand-held phones. In London the figures were higher, with 3.7 per cent of car drivers and 4.8 per cent of van drivers being on the phone at any one time.

University of Utah: Similar results on reaction times to those found at the TRL were found during tests which were undertaken at the University of Utah in the United States, comparing use of hands-free phones and drinking at the UK limit. **Ohio State University:** Research conducted this year at America's Ohio State University indicate that pedestrians are also at increased risk of road accidents when they are using a mobile phone. Their tests showed that 48 per cent of cell-phone users crossed the road in front of approaching cars, compared with 25 per cent of those not using gadgets. Interestingly, only 16 per cent of iPod users took the same risk.

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