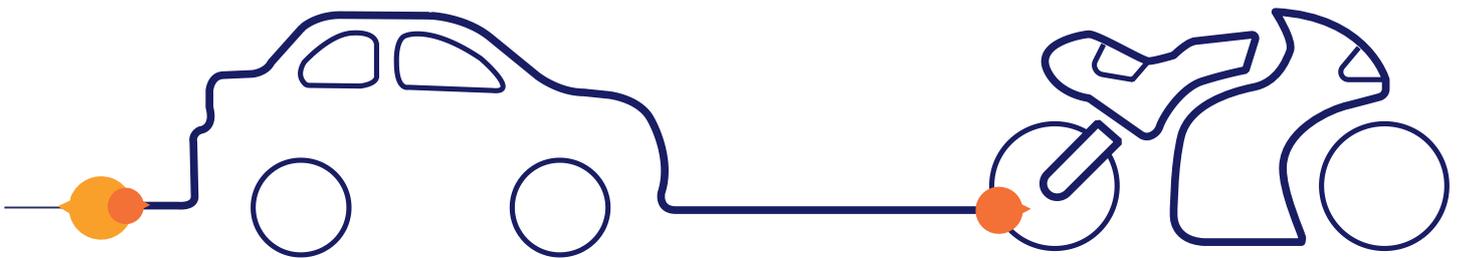


# Eastern Region Groups' Newsletter

November 2020  
Simon Burgin  
Regional Co-ordinator



# View from the East

## November 2020

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**Hello and welcome.**

### **Out and about:**

Sadly I have attended a number of fatalities on the Counties roads this month, none related to poor driving conditions or unforeseen hazards, just drivers making poor decisions or consuming substances and liquids that are not conducive to driving.

Colleagues have been dealing with far too many drivers who insist they are 'Ships Captains' and have been caught trying to negotiate roundabouts and other such junctions whilst peering through 4" porthole sized clearings in their frozen front windscreens, forgetting that they also need to be able to see through the side windows too. Winter driving tips are all over social media and the various motoring outlets and organisations. Please spread the news – Allow more time, check the weather forecast, cover your vehicles windows overnight if you can, to avoid the need to de-frost, check all your vehicles fluids, and keep your lights, windows and number plates clean, these are the absolute minimums checks and considerations. Please please do not be tempted (we have had 2 stolen cars already) to go out in your PJ's, start your car up and leave it with the fans on to de-frost – whilst it is commendable that you will probably have the cleanest clearest windows, you will also be providing some local criminal with a pre-heated ready to go get away vehicle.

### **In the news:**

#### **Court Appearance**

I was in Crown Court at Peterborough today (30/11) for one of my cases and the sentencing of David Reid. Mr Reid was the driver of a 44-ton articulated goods vehicle that ploughed into the rear of stationary traffic on the A14. At the rear of that queue and sandwiched between Mr Reids HGV and another was Beverley Garner. She was the front seat passenger in a Taxi that was hired to take children to and from school, and she was a chaperone for the children. Mr Reid failed to see the queueing traffic ahead for at least 17 seconds and was only alerted to it when the MAN Trucks (the vehicle he was driving) EBA (Emergency Brake Assist) activated. It was of course too late for him to do anything and he ploughed into the queue squashing the Taxi and propelled the HGV ahead into 3 other vehicles. He was unable to explain what happened, and fully admitted his guilt, he's only explanation was "I must have dozed off for a second". He was



sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment with a driving disqualification for 2 years, to start after he had served 7 ½ months (which is when he will be released). Beverley Garner died instantly.

## **Observations, Observations, Observations...**

For those of you new to advanced driving or are in the middle of being tutored (Covid allowing) and wonder why 'observations' features at the top of the list for what makes a good driver, this is a good example of how rear observation may have mitigated risk. Whilst no blame can be levelled towards the taxi driver, the outcome may have been different if he had eyeballed the truck closing down on him, with an empty hard shoulder to his left. We must always check our mirrors whenever we slow down, move position or accelerate. Always leave a large enough gap in front to create a space for you to escape, and on fast roads when the traffic ahead has come to an unexpected stop, try to slow down over a longer distance and allow an even larger safety margin ahead. Should the worst happen you have hopefully created enough space for you to get out of the way, even if it means taking to the hard shoulder or another lane, it is vital for your own safety.

## **Vehicle Technology**

The MAN Trucks EBA system mentioned above was the first vehicle that we have dealt with in Cambridgeshire that has such a system. MAN Trucks were extremely helpful during the investigation helping me understand how their system worked and provided me with very detailed reports in to what when and how the system was acting in the 2 minutes leading up to the crash. The system is designed to be fully autonomous and had Mr Reid not acted when the audible and visual warnings in the cab alerted him to the danger ahead the EBA would have brought the truck to a complete stop and avoided the collision. As the law stands the systems must allow for the driver to override the system, when Mr Reid was alerted, he panicked, jumped on the brake pedal, slipped off and in doing so de-activated the EBA. I do believe as more knowledge and trust in these systems develop the Truck will know best, exclude the driver and hopefully these collisions will be a thing of the past.

## **Lockdown II.**

As lockdown II comes to a close the Eastern Regions move into local restrictions which I think for all of us is tier 2. Thus, Car and Bike testing/tutoring is still on hold. As soon as that can change then I am keen to get back at it and enjoy meeting some of you for test, as well as monthly meetings.

Take care and stay safe

**Testing times:** Sadly, nothing to report on.

## **What's Next?**

Waiting like everyone else to see when we can get out and about again.

Please take care of yourselves, stay safe and keep in touch with one another.



Simon.

Simon Burgin  
Eastern Region Co-Ordinator

## Resources

Please remember the free RoSPA e-newsletter covering all safety matters including road-safety for all RoADAR members.

RoSPA's premier health & safety newsletter brings you the very latest safety news, expert views and advice.

Every issue includes news on road safety, workplace, home and public safety, also details of events you will find interesting! When you sign up you'll receive access to an exclusive collection of e- books covering a wide range of health and safety topics.

Don't miss out, sign-up via <https://www.rospace.com/safety-matters>

