



Media Release by the Motor Schools Association

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Release: Immediate

Private practice fails the test!

Survey data has been released suggesting that attempts by the Driving Standard's Agency to promote private driving practice, the means whereby learner drivers bolster their driving lessons by practising with a responsible adult, has simply failed to gain traction.

The nationwide survey of driving instructors, undertaken by the Motor Schools Association, looked at pupils learning habits, access to private practice and whether it affected the number of driving lessons they required.

The survey results, released today, shows that only about a quarter of learner drivers actually have access to private practice, despite data from the same survey suggesting that driving is improved and fewer lessons are required amongst those that do. Furthermore, nearly 30% of driving instructors said that none of their pupils were having any extra practice at all.

John Lepine, the MSA's general manager, said: "The concept of private practice is excellent and all of our research shows that access to it improves the student's driving and potentially reduces the number of lessons required. However, it is apparent that the cost of insurance on, for example, a parental car far out ways the savings benefit gained from having fewer lessons. There is also the issue around the confidence and experience of the supervising driver and the lack of guidance available to them."

The survey also reveals that, overwhelmingly, driving instructors support private practice and the DSA's promotion of it with 75% of driving instructors actively encouraging it as part of the learning to drive curriculum and, where their pupils do take it, involving the parents in the process.

John Lepine continued: "If this is to be a success, the process not only needs to be promoted but requires active buy-in from both parents and insurance companies. We have raised this issue with the Department for Transport as part of our submission on the soon to be published Green Paper and our position is that the DSA needs to promote a syllabus for use by parents or supervising adults, so that they feel comfortable in providing additional support and introduce a system of record keeping which allows novice drivers to keep and understand a proper record of their progress."

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Editors note:

The MSA was founded in 1935 as a representative body for driving instructors and driving school owners and is the voice for around 6,400 instructors.

The MSA has consultative status with the Driving Standards Agency (an executive agency of the Department for Transport)

MSA lobbies on behalf of its members for and campaigns for better road safety.

Transport Select Committee submission:

Follow the link below to see the full MSA submission to the Transport Select Committee:

<http://www.msagb.com/news/responses/2013.04%20Response%20to%20Transport%20Select%20Committee%20Report%202012.pdf>

Media Area:

Follow the link below to see the MSA media area:

<http://www.msagb.com/news/nw-media.asp>