

# The Effect Of Text Messaging On Driver Behaviour: A Simulator Study

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The detrimental effects of mobile phone use on driver performance have been widely studied (e.g. Brown & Poulton, 1961; Burns, Parkes, Burton, Smith & Burch, 2002; Parkes, Luke, Burns & Lansdown, 2007). However, there is a significant gap in the research literature, namely the effects of text messaging on driving. In 2008, The RAC Foundation asked 2002 members of the social networking website Facebook ([www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)), to self report on whether they text whilst driving and 45% admitted doing so. In response to this, the RAC Foundation commissioned TRL to investigate the relative driver impairment caused by texting whilst driving.

The aim of the study was to assess the impact of text messaging on driver performance, and the attitudes and beliefs that surrounded the activity in the 17-25 age category. Reaction times, car following ability, lane control, and driver speed were used as measures of driver performance and driver attitudes were assessed using personality questionnaires.

The full study is available below.

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