

# Women improve driving more than men following 'black box' feedback

October 7 2014, by Thomas Deane

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A cross border road safety study using the latest 'black box' telematics technology has found that, after training and when presented with relevant feedback, the driving behaviour of young women motorists improves significantly more than that of young men.

The 54-driver study was conducted by researchers in the School of Engineering at Trinity College Dublin, in partnership with leading accident management company CRASH Services. The goal was to assess the potential for using [telematics](#) technology to improve [road safety](#) among young and inexperienced [drivers](#). This is the first study of its type to be undertaken on the island of Ireland.

The drivers, all aged between 17 and 22, had their [driving](#) assessed over a 17-week period from April to July 2014. A 'black box' device was fitted to each participant's car, and sent information on the motorists' location, speed, acceleration, deceleration and cornering to a central computer. The telematics solution then scored driving performance based on the frequency and severity of incidents of risky driving behaviour.

The volunteers were divided equally into target and control groups. Drivers in the target group were provided access to their driving data and were trained on the use of the telematics product and how the feedback could be used to improve their driving behaviour. After training, data on driving behaviour was collected for 13 weeks. During this period drivers in the target group were encouraged to view the feedback on their

driving.

Assistant Professor in Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering and Director of Teaching and Learning in Trinity's School of Engineering, Dr Ciaran Simms, said: "This preliminary study is an important step in understanding the potential for using technology to help young, inexperienced drivers reduce road risk. It was interesting to observe that feedback had more impact on women drivers. Approximately 80% of women drivers showed a change in their driving behaviour compared to 20% of men, and the training also had a longer lasting effect on women."

Assistant Professor in Civil Engineering at Trinity, Dr Bidisha Ghosh, added: "Although this was a small study, we believe that the results indicate that telematics technology, in conjunction with ongoing driver training or the incentive of insurance premium discount, has the potential to help young drivers improve their driving behaviour."

Martin McRandal from CRASH said: "This important study has discovered many interesting results – not least that women tend to drive better when shown how to. However, it's really important to remember that when it comes to the battle of the sexes of bad driving habits, there can be no winner – men and women alike really need to do their best to ensure they drive safely."

He added: "At CRASH Services we firmly believe that effective deployment of a quality telematics solution can help to make Ireland's roads safer. We were delighted to support Trinity with this study and thank the team for all their hard work. We hope that the findings of the study will be of use to all with a stake in road safety, including government and the insurance industry."

Provided by Trinity College Dublin

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