

RSA observational study 2015 – fog lights misuse

Research Objective

To determine the incidence of drivers of all vehicle types driving on Irish roads using fog lights inappropriately, and therefore presenting a road safety risk. Study conducted by Amárach Research.

The RSA logo consists of the letters 'RSA' in a white, sans-serif font, centered within a red, rounded rectangular shape.

Methodology

In November 2015, an observational study was conducted at the roadside at 95 sites: 36 urban and 59 rural. Cars, rigid goods vehicles, semi-articulated vehicles and buses were observed from Monday to Friday during the morning, afternoon and evening. It is recommended that fog lights be used only at times of fog and falling snow. As part of the study, the weather was also recorded to ascertain when fog lights are misused.

Key Findings

- Approximately 1 in 7 (14%) found to be improperly using their fog lights, an increase on the number in 2014 (10%).
- There was an increase in the misuse of fog lights across all vehicle categories
- Car drivers remain the least likely to use their fog lights improperly with 13% recorded as using their lights incorrectly.
- The worst offending category was that of Semi-Articulated vehicles where just over 1 in 4 (23%) were recorded with fog lights on.
- Urban roads had a higher incidence of incorrect use of fog lights (16%) compared to rural roads (13%), and was least common on motorways (6%).
- Drivers were more likely to use fog lights incorrectly in dark and raining conditions (1 in 5, 21%) compared to dark and clear driving conditions (1 in 10, 12%).
- Misuse of front fog lights (8%) is higher than rear fog lights (2%) but 4% were misusing both front and rear fog lights.

Total 2015 (2014)	Total N=35,912 (N=34,593)	Cars N=29,474 (N=28,742)	Rigid Goods Vehicles N=3,335 (N=2,561)	Semi-Articulated Vehicles N=2,146 (N=2,458)	Buses N=957 (N=832)
No fog lights on	86% (90%)	87% (91%)	84% (87%)	77% (85%)	82% (85%)
Front only	8% (6%)	8% (6%)	9% (7%)	11% (9%)	9% (8%)
Rear only	2% (1%)	2% (1%)	2% (1%)	3% (1%)	1% (1%)
Both front & rear	4% (3%)	4% (3%)	6% (5%)	10%(5%)	8% (6%)