

DRAFT PRESS RELEASE**In-car distractions drive a quarter of motorists to an accident or near miss**

- Nearly all (84%) drivers admit they have taken their eyes off the road as a result of an in-car distraction in the last 12 months, with 28% saying it led to an accident or near miss
- The most common distractions that have caused an accident or near miss include adjusting the radio (7%), kids shouting (6%) and interesting sites and locations outside (6%), while social media distractions significantly declined
- Personal grooming, flip flops and unharnessed pets were named by drivers as distractions they'd favour banning in the car

A quarter (28%) of UK drivers surveyed by MORE TH>N have had an accident or near miss as a result of an in-car distraction. Applied to the UK driving population, this could mean as many as 11.4 million licensed drivers have been dangerously distracted at the wheel.¹

Nearly all (84%) drivers also admitted they have taken their eyes off the road as a result of an in-car distraction at least once in the last 12 months.

The top distractions that caused a car accident or near miss include:

- adjusting the radio (7%),
- kids shouting (6%), and
- interesting sites and locations outside (6%).

The research, released by MORE TH>N to coincide with [Road Safety Week](#), shows that nearly one in ten (7%) drivers claimed on their insurance following an accident caused by an in-car distraction. These claims cost an average of £472 to repair, costing the insurance industry around £1.3 billion in total².

The findings follow MORE TH>N's '[Give Your Mobile the Boot](#)' campaign in 2017, which provided tips to help phone-addicted motorists put down their mobiles when driving. Since the 2017 study, the proportion of drivers who check their social media while behind the wheel has decreased from 28% to 3%. While it's positive that fewer people seem to be using their phone while driving, the same vigilance should be applied to other potential distractions too.

MORE TH>N asked drivers about whether they think certain items or behaviours should be banned from cars to make driving safer. The top three distractions drivers thought should be banned are:

- personal grooming, such as brushing hair, putting on make-up and painting nails (62%),
- driving with pets not secured in a cage or harness (59%), and
- wearing flip flops while driving (47%).

The wrong footwear can be a significant contributor to car accidents. When asked which types of footwear should be banned due to the lack of control they provide while driving, seven in ten (68%) said flip flops and three fifths (60%) said high heels. Slippers (47%) and wellington boots (39%) were also among the most dangerous types of footwear acknowledged by drivers.

Gareth Davies, Head of Motor Insurance at MORE TH>N, said: "In-car distractions not only put drivers' lives at risk, but those of passengers and pedestrians too. If we learn anything during this

year's Road Safety Week, it should be to remain totally focused while behind the wheel. We hope that highlighting some of the most common distractions will help drivers to remain vigilant and reduce the likelihood of an accident occurring."

"Before stepping into the car, drivers should actively check if there is anything that may distract them while driving, whether it's the clothes they're wearing or the items they have in their car. Removing these distractions should be a top priority and will help reduce the chance of them damaging their car and putting people's lives at risk."

MORE TH>N has compiled a list of five steps drivers will need to take if they are unfortunate enough to experience a car accident: <https://www.morethan.com/car-insurance/news/what-to-do-in-a-car-accident/>

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About MORE TH>N

MORE TH>N is the direct financial services brand of RSA. Established in 2001, the company offers car, home, pet, business and travel insurance

Notes to editors

All figures are from an online survey conducted by Opinium on behalf of MORE TH>N in November 2019.

- 1 There are currently 40,932,294 licensed drivers in the UK, and 28% of the drivers we surveyed have had a crash or near miss as a result of an in-car distraction. This suggests that in-car distractions may have caused as many as 11,461,042 licensed drivers to have an accident or near miss.
- 2 Figure worked out based on 7% of the total number of licensed drivers multiplied by average insurance claim cost. There are currently 40,932,294 licensed drivers in the UK and 7% have accidents worth on average of £472 – costing an overall £1.3 billion in total claims