

# BBC road rage expert to host city conference



**PSYCHOLOGICAL ADVANTAGE:** Dr Lisa Dorn, presenter of BBC1's Road Rage School, says bad tempers can lead to accidents

## Put learner drivers' state of mind to test says TV doctor

■ LINDA SUMMERHAYES  
Health Reporter

ROAD RAGE experts today called for learner drivers to undergo psychological testing to show how likely they are to lose their temper behind the wheel.

Before being handed a licence, novice drivers should also understand how stress and flying into a rage could cause road accidents.

The future of driver training and the link between bad behaviour and poor road safety will be discussed by international road safety experts in Edinburgh next week.

The conference will be hosted by BBC1's Road Rage School presenter, Lisa Dorn, who believes driving instructors will have to learn psychology to help novices understand the root cause of their irrational conduct. Dr Dorn



**FURY:** Driving can cause stress. Picture (posed by model): ROB McDOUGALL

believes that novice drivers should be subject to psychological analysis as part of the standard driving test.

"I really think that's the way forward," she said. "In the future

we need to do something with the training of new drivers that makes them consider the effect of their emotions and personality."

Dr Dorn is director of the Driving Research Group at Cranfield University, Bedfordshire, which has organised the three-day conference at the Capital's Sheraton Grand Hotel.

From November 15, around 50 road safety experts will present their research on driving behaviour and training and hundreds of delegates, including local driving instructors, are expected to attend.

Transport Minister Tavish Scott will be opening the conference and representatives from the Driving Standards Agency will also be attending.

As well as looking at states of mind, consideration will also be given to the greater use of simulators to show drivers the impact of irresponsible actions.

"People take risks because they believe they are highly-skilled and are not going to be involved in an accident," said Dr Dorn. "There are also emotional factors that cause people to take risks."

"Of course, it is important to know how to steer a car and brake and so on and that will stay the same, but additional training should be given to understand the risks that drivers run by not taking account of emotions and the way personality affects the way they drive."

Some people, said Dr Dorn, were too emotional to be capable of controlling a car safely.

"They need to find ways of calming down and relaxing and not using the car as a way of expressing their stress," she said.

"When they are going nuts, they are not driving safely. They speed up to teach other drivers a lesson and that's an accident waiting to happen."

Napier University's transport psychology professor, Steve Stradling, will also be attending the conference to discuss the risks young drivers take.

"There are some young novice drivers who need to overcome the attitude deficit, as well as the skills deficit," he said.

### YOUR SAY

Should drivers have to pass a psychological test?  
**Jo Bell, 70,**

**pharmacist's assistant, Morton Hall Park:** "I don't think learner drivers would be likely to suffer from road rage. I don't think learner drivers should be made to do this. It's unfair because people who are well past their test wouldn't have to sit it."

**Thomas Brunson, 64, retired electrician, Parkhead Loan:** "Psychological testing wouldn't

do any harm. A lot of drivers seem to be prone to bad tempers."

**Helen Walsh, 48, manager, Bothwell Street:** "I think psychological testing is a great thing, I've been the victim of road rage myself. Anything which helps to cut out this behaviour is surely good."

**Angus Hutton, 27, student, Morningside Road:** "I don't think you would be able to tell if someone had a bad temper just by making them sit a test."