

Distraction – Curiosity Killed the Cat

Civil Engineering Safety Day
Tuesday 29th May 2018

Professor Graham Currie

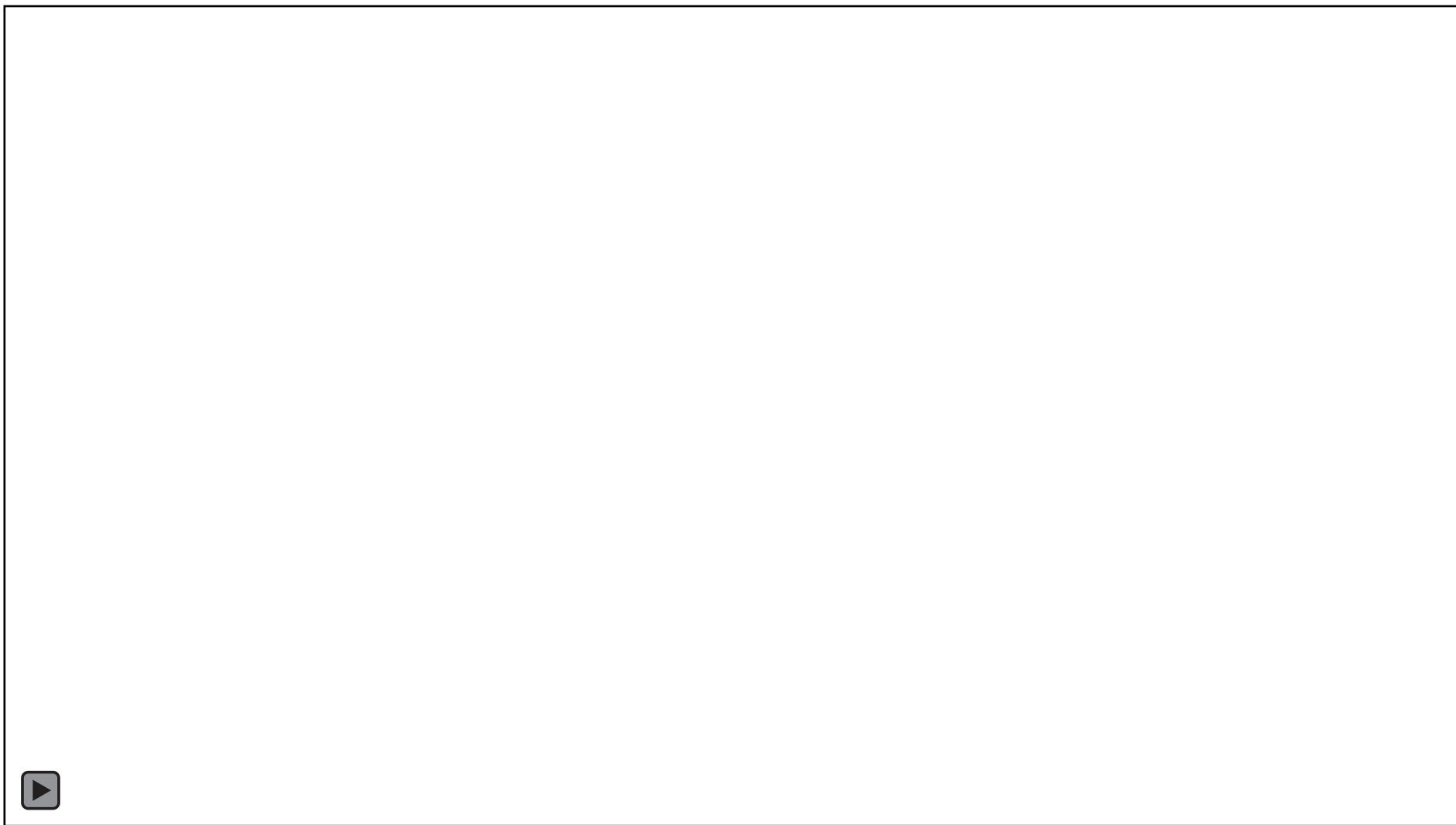
Lab Safety – Advice from a globally famous Engineering Postgraduate?

Lab Safety

World best Known Living Engineer

- One of the best known living Engineers of all time - household name internationally
- Bsc Electrical Engineering Newcastle upon Tyne University UK
- Msc Electrical Engineering, Queens College, Oxford
- Former PhD student
- Honorary Fellow Oxford University
- Appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire; 2013





Something more focussed for a safety presentation?: **Whats the biggest road safety problem today?**



Speed

Impairment

Distraction

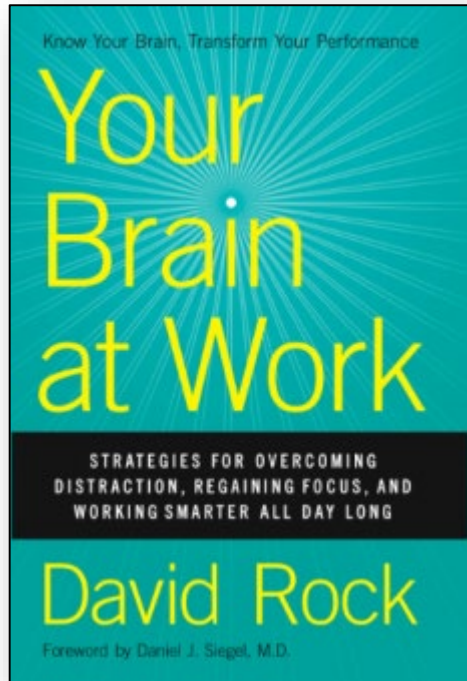
Fatigue

Seat Belts



Source: Victoria Policy: 5 Fatal Issues

Distraction - Causes



- The Epidemic of the Overwhelm
 - The amount of info we now process may be more than we have ever been used to
 - New technologies are good at distracting us
- Attention is a limited resource
 - Each task uses measurable metabolic resources; each task makes you less effective for the next notably high energy tasks like decision making or self control
 - Distractions are everywhere
 - Office distractions eat an av. 2.1 hrs a day
 - Av employee project time before distractions is 11 mins with 25 mins before return to task

Sarah – Paying Attention?



Is this you?



Distraction – Road Safety

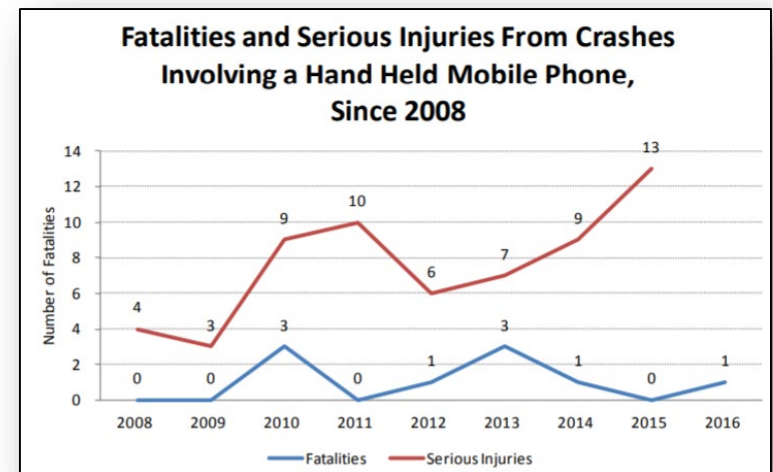
Exposure

- ~86% of drivers have admitted to eating or drinking while driving.
- ~37% of drivers have texted while driving at least once, while 18% of drivers have said they have formed the habit of doing it often.
- ~41% of adult drivers have set or changed a GPS while driving, and 21% do it "more frequently."
- ~36% of adult drivers have used a map as road guidance while driving.
- At least 20% drivers have admitted to combing or styling their hair while driving.
- ~14% of drivers have applied makeup while driving
- ~24% of adult drivers have browsed the Internet while driving.

Source: "Most U.S. Drivers Engage in 'Distracting' Behaviors: Poll". HealthDay. Retrieved 1 October 2017.

Outcome

- Australia - distraction has been identified as a contributing factor in 22% of car accidents and a staggering 71% of truck accidents.
- Also been identified as a contributing factor in 46% of 'near crashes'.



Source: Transport for NSW 'Fatigued and distracted driver trauma trends – Feb 2017

Who gets distracted most? – clever, creative and curious thinkers....you!



- The cleverest among us find it difficult to prioritise which idea to focus on first; Dr Ned Hallowell.
- Highly creative individuals are generally more easily distracted than the average person (Northwest Uni)

How to avoid distraction based safety issues

Avoiding Driving Distractions

- Focus on Driving
- Store loose gear
- Make adjustments before driving
- Finish dressing before driving
- Snack smart
- Secure children/pets before driving
- Put aside electric distractions
- Enlist passenger help
- Pull off the road for things that need attention
- Attend to distractions before/after trip

Avoiding Work Distractions

- Make time from breaks
- Block online distractions
- Set boundaries with interrupting colleagues
- Break tasks into chunks
- Work alongside productive people

Why Think Safety?

3 Reasons



1. Because you care

- Career
- Colleagues
- Students
- The University
- The Department
- Yourself
- Your partner and children
- Your future



2. Because your an Engineer

- Engineer Recognition (APEC Handbook):
 - All practitioners seeking registration as APEC Engineers must agree to be bound by the codes of professional conduct established and enforced by their home jurisdiction and by any other jurisdiction within which they are practising. Such codes **include requirements that practitioners place the health, safety and welfare of the community above their responsibilities to clients and colleagues...**



3. Because we cannot trade without it any more

- Consulting Fees
- Insurance Rates
- Safety and Quality Assurance Practices



Safer Military Engineering

