



Transport Committee

Oral evidence: Cycling safety, HC 852

Monday 2 December 2013

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Written evidence from witnesses:

- [London Assembly Transport Committee](#)
- [Newcastle Cycling Campaign](#)
- [Mineral Products Association](#)
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Members present: Mrs Louise Ellman (Chair), Sarah Champion, Jim Dobbin, Jim Fitzpatrick, Karen Lumley, Jason McCartney, Chloe Smith, Graham Stringer and Martin Vickers

Questions 1-72

Examination of Witnesses

Witnesses: **David Davies**, Executive Director, PACTS, **Val Shawcross**, CBE AM, Chair, London Assembly Transport Committee, **Ashok Sinha**, Chief Executive, London Cycling Campaign, **Katja Leyendecker**, Chair, Newcycling Campaign, and **Commander David Martin**, Public Order Task Force and Roads Policing, Metropolitan Police, gave evidence.

Chair: Good afternoon. Welcome to the Transport Select Committee. Could I have your name and organisation, please?

Katja Leyendecker: I am Katja Leyendecker from the Newcastle Cycling Campaign.

Val Shawcross: I am Val Shawcross, London Assembly member and chair of the London Assembly transport committee.

David Davies: I am David Davies, executive director of PACTS, the Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety.

Ashok Sinha: I am Ashok Sinha, chief executive of the London Cycling Campaign.

Commander Martin: I am David Martin. I am a commander in the Metropolitan Police, and I have responsibility for roads policing.

Q1 Chair: Thank you very much. Mr Sinha, would you say that it is safe to cycle in London?

Ashok Sinha: In general, yes. I would still say to people that, with care and attention, it is a safe way of getting about, but my answer would need to be nuanced. I think there are places and times in London where you are not protected as well as you should be as a cyclist and will face real risks, such as at major junctions. I advise people that it is safe to cycle in London, but at the same time I am very wary about my children cycling in London, because I know that a mistake, which can easily be made by a young person, could lead to their death or serious injury. So my answer has to be nuanced. I would say to people, “Yes, keep cycling, it is a safe way of getting around, but there are dangers in particular places and particular circumstances.”

Q2 Chair: Is it better to cycle where there are lots of cyclists, or is it safer where there are fewer?

Ashok Sinha: Again, it depends. There are lots of cyclists crossing London’s bridges during the rush hour these days, and I think there is a safety in numbers effect. Where motor vehicles see lots of cyclists together crossing those bridges, they realise this is a normal mode of transport—people are just going about their business and going to work—and give them a wide berth. There are also places where it is safe to cycle, such as back streets, where there may not be very many other cyclists around but the motor traffic levels are relatively low. The circumstances will very much determine the level of safety that you experience.

Q3 Chair: Mr Davies, do you think that there has been a panic about the recent spate of deaths and accidents in London, or is it a cause for real concern?

David Davies: It has certainly come to the forefront of everyone’s attention. The *Evening Standard* has put each death on the front page. That followed *The Times* cities fit for cycling campaign, so it has certainly come to the media’s attention. If you look at it in a wider context and over a longer period of time, this year, tragically, there have been 14 cyclist deaths, as I am sure you know. That is the same number as last year. It is also worth pointing out that in London and across the UK as a whole there are considerably more pedestrians, motorcyclists and vehicle occupants who die, so the number of cyclist deaths, although it has had huge attention, is quite a small minority. It is very welcome that cycling is getting this safety attention, but in some ways it is a shame that every time a pedestrian is run over in London it does not merit similar attention.

Q4 Karen Lumley: How safe do you think cycling is in London compared with walking around the streets or going in a car?

David Davies: If you measure it in terms of casualties per mile travelled, walking and cycling are broadly comparable, which perhaps shows that walking is not as safe as some people think it is. The health experts tell us that you will absolutely live longer, on average, if you are a cyclist than if you are inactive, so that public health benefit is very

strong. There are different ways of looking at safety, though. The Government monitor how many people consider it safe to cycle on the roads. That figure went down last year, from 50% to 48% across the UK. If you compare it with Copenhagen, where apparently 75% of cyclists consider it safe and only 5% consider it unsafe, we do not have a safe system. I very much agree with Mr Sinha that you have to be competent and you have to take care. The safety record in London depends on the skills of road users, rather than segregation of cyclists.

Q5 Karen Lumley: Do you have any idea what percentage of people who cycle wear helmets? Obviously they make it safer, don't they?

David Davies: It is approximately 20%. I could come back with more precise figures on that. I would observe that in central London it is probably much higher, especially among commuters.

Q6 Karen Lumley: How do we encourage more people to wear helmets?

David Davies: The DFT is encouraging helmet wearing; it does that mostly through its THINK! campaign. Manufacturers are now producing much better designs. I think that is the way—education and better design, so that people are not worried about helmet hair.

Q7 Karen Lumley: Ms Shawcross, with the Boris bikes, you pick up a bike and, if you have not got a helmet, they are not available, are they? How would the London Assembly encourage people to wear helmets when they are riding Boris bikes?

Val Shawcross: In fact, although the London Assembly transport committee has done two reports on cycling, “Pedal Power” and “Gearing up”, and we are about to take our third look at cycling, we did not take a particular view on helmets, because there are arguments either way. Personally, I would very much prefer to see people wear helmets, and I think the head injury charities feel that, too; but, in terms of the cycling accidents we have had and safety issues in cycling in London generally, I do not think it is the crucial issue. I think the crucial issue is very much more about road layout and space for cyclists.

Q8 Sarah Champion: Mr Davies, going back to the point about helmets, do we know the data on how many people have head injuries as a result of cycling accidents?

David Davies: Those data are available. The only problem with them is that they tend to include facial injuries, which helmets would not prevent, so they can look rather higher. I believe it is in the region of 50%. Obviously it is a more significant factor when it comes to death and serious injury, although of course there is a point about how many of those would be prevented by a bicycle helmet, which is designed to protect against impacts of approximately 12 mph. Most of the 14 deaths this year involved crushing by large vehicles; a bicycle helmet would not prevent you from dying in those situations, but clearly they can give a level of protection.

Q9 Sarah Champion: But if we are looking at 50% of the injuries being head injuries, surely having a more forceful campaign to make it, if not compulsory, then highly recommended, to have helmets could prevent a lot of those.

David Davies: That is entirely possible, certainly with the less severe injuries. All I would say is that the evidence on helmet use where helmets have been mandatory is that the reduction in casualties has not been as great as anticipated. There is almost inevitably a reduction in cycling, and you have to tease out which is going on—are you having fewer casualties because of a reduction in cycling or because the helmets are protecting people? Clearly there is an element of both.

Q10 Sarah Champion: Commander Martin, we heard that fatalities are not going up particularly—they are reasonably static—but I think injuries are going up. Is that correct? Do you have data on that?

Commander Martin: Yes, very slightly. If you compare figures over the last 10 to 13 years, the increase is from 479 casualties in 1999 up to 647. Percentage-wise, it is quite large—18%—but those are the actual numbers. Obviously that needs to be set in the context of the increasing number of people who are cycling on the roads.

Q11 Chair: Is it correct that the police have instructions to target cyclists?

Commander Martin: No, that was a very unfortunate misinterpretation of an instruction that was given out. The *Times* article was misconstrued to say that we were targeting cyclists in the latest Operation Safeway campaign. That is not the case and it has been corrected.

Q12 Chair: What was the case?

Commander Martin: The case was that officers were sent out to 166 junctions. It was made clear that, because of concern about the rise in fatalities, we wanted people to take positive enforcement action. A list of the offences that are likely to be committed was pointed out. The vast majority of those are committed by motorists, not by cyclists. In fact, the figures that we have got back will show that cyclists were not being specifically targeted.

Q13 Chair: You are saying that the enforcement action was about motorists as well as cyclists.

Commander Martin: Effectively, the enforcement action was about people who were breaking the law, whether they were cyclists or motorists.

Q14 Chloe Smith: I feel that I ought to start by putting on record that I am a cyclist. I wear a helmet. I have actually been hit by a car, although not in London, and I am certainly still here.

To start with, I would like to ask the kind of questions that sit with our having five different voices here today. This is a very hot topic, current and controversial. There is advice either way floating around and there are multiple different arguments about the kind of engineering, education or enforcement that we need around cycling. It is also highly emotional, with fatalities recently. In your view—this is for anybody to answer, if you wish—what is the way to get a unified, then persuasive and then action-packed campaign from this situation?

Ashok Sinha: If I may, I will offer a suggestion, but first I would like to clarify my comments. David, I believe that user behaviour can go only so far and that the greatest dangers that cyclists experience on the roads are presented to them by the poor quality of infrastructure and the poor quality, sometimes, of driving standards. Somebody makes a perfectly innocent mistake, our infrastructure lets them down and the net result is that somebody has been killed or seriously injured.

Any campaign of the kind that you describe has to look at the root sources of danger. We do not have to reinvent the wheel; they have done this in other countries. They have done it in the Netherlands and in parts of Denmark—in Copenhagen; they do it in Berlin and they are doing it in Seville, New York and elsewhere. They said, “What are the principal sources of danger?” They identified poor quality cycle lanes; these need to offer proper protection to cyclists on busy and fast roads. There is lack of access to good routes away from major thoroughfares that cyclists can use and that are quiet and convenient. Motor traffic speeds are too high and do not give people enough time to react to the situation that they are experiencing, or to react to unexpected circumstances. Of course, with the high speed of motor traffic, simple physics means that a collision is likely to cause more damage. Another issue is too much through-traffic in residential areas. By cutting out rat runs through residential areas, you can make them much more attractive and safer for people to cycle in.

That is not to say that we should not be looking at behaviour and training—I have myself had cycle training—but we need to look at where the root causes of the danger come from and to ameliorate them.

Val Shawcross: Can I take one small step back and comment on the issue of the statistics and the dangers in general? I refer the Committee to the Transport for London surface transport publications that appear every year on casualties in Greater London. These data are available on TfL’s website. The pattern they show for vulnerable road users—pedestrians and cyclists—is that there was regular, steady decline in the number of killed and seriously injured. Then, around 2010, the trend started to move back in the wrong direction, so there has been a regular increase since then. The data we have show that the increase in serious cycling accidents does not just directly correlate with the growth in the number of cyclists; they actually show that it is worsening.

There is relatively little mystery and a lot of consensus in London around what needs to be done. I certainly agree with our colleagues from London Cycling Campaign that issues such as road infrastructure, particularly the treatment of junctions, speed, and the presence of HGVs that may not be properly treated—there is nothing that will save you if you are crushed under the back wheels of an HGV, but I accept that many HGVs are not properly fitted and could be—are the things that need to be dealt with.

Looking back over the period of time since the current Mayor has been in city hall, when we have had the latest programme trying to promote a cycling revolution, for which there is great enthusiasm in London—it is seen as an enormously positive thing for our health and environment—I think the early infrastructure was poor and weak, and did not offer the appropriate levels of protection in the most dangerous environments. I think we are on a journey—

Q15 Chloe Smith: When you say “early infrastructure”, do you mean the cycle superhighways or something else?

Val Shawcross: I mean the cycle superhighways, in particular. We did some particular work on them, if you would like me to mention that now. In 2010, we carried out an early survey of the reaction of cyclists to the installation of the two first cycle superhighways, which were CS3 and CS7, I think. We had over 1,000 cyclists commenting on them. At that point, 60% of the people who commented said they did not feel safe enough on those cycle superhighways. That was because the early cycle superhighways had issues on them. For example, there were areas where the blue paint was too narrow; they disappeared at the most dangerous points of certain junctions, and certainly there was not any physical segregation, again at the fast and most dangerous areas on the roads. We should bear in mind that they are on London's most dangerous roads to begin with; by definition, that is where they have gone.

At that point, we called for the Mayor to evaluate them properly and to retrofit to improve them before moving on. I think that since then there has been a gradual improvement in the quality of the infrastructure that has gone in. Certainly the last extension to cycle superhighway 2 was completely segregated. That probably represents the type of infrastructure that should have been put in in the first place. There has been a long process of learning from mistakes.

Q16 Chloe Smith: What are the relative costs of the line of blue paint versus the line of blue paint with a raised pavement, for example?

Val Shawcross: I do not have those figures with me. I can write to you with them, but from memory I think that the blue superhighways without the physical segregation going in were about £1 million a kilometre—something like that—so they were already pretty expensive. I think that was because a special blue paint was invented for the purpose, and so on. But there were some complementary measures as well. I think we underplay those. There were things like training schemes that went with those areas.

If you ask me to put my finger on the issue, I think it has been the balance of interests in sharing the road space. London is a congested city. We have a medieval road pattern in the centre of London. The issue has always been who gets the space on the roads and who gets the time at the junctions. If we are to achieve a cycling revolution, it must be a safe cycling revolution; the two go together. Earlier we were asked about the relative safety of walking and cycling. The whole population, but particularly the vulnerable, walk, but when you look at the cyclist demographic—forgive the stereotyping—it is fit young men. For the broader demographic—women and older people—to pick up cycling, it will need to be much safer. That is how we will achieve a cycling revolution.

Q17 Chloe Smith: May I close with the same consensus campaign question, but with a non-London perspective? That was a very interesting London beginning, but I assume there are other views.

Katja Leyendecker: I can give a perspective from outside London. Having listened to what people are saying here, I think the question might actually be a completely different one, and not so much about safety at all. I think it is about the future of our cities and how we want to run them.

Q18 Chloe Smith: In that case, can I also ask for a non-city answer, in due course, from somebody?

Katja Leyendecker: We were talking beforehand about education and enforcement. I think we have done that—in London and outside London—and it is the engineering bit that is missing. It has been done in bits and pieces, but not in a continuous way and certainly not with a holistic look at the city—the city of Newcastle, for example.

David Davies: Having been involved with cycling infrastructure for quite a long time, I think that, as Val Shawcross said, it is not really a matter of the cost of the extra kerb; it is very much about the balance of interests. It is not easy for local authorities simply to say, “We will have a continuous cycle route and ban parking all the way along this route, or take out a whole lane of traffic.” These are really tough decisions for local politicians and the officers working for them. The technical designs are there, and probably the money is there, but you have to weigh up the pros and cons.

Another thing that I would say has not been emphasised enough so far is that we have a very specific problem—certainly in London and, I think, wider than that—in that large vehicles have been responsible for most of the deaths in London this year. There are opportunities to tackle that through the design of vehicles—the cabs—training the drivers and a whole range of measures focused very much on the deaths in London that involved large vehicles. HGV is not quite the correct term; tipper trucks are responsible for a very high proportion, given the number of tipper trucks. I am not trying to correct anyone, but it is not actually goods vehicles on the whole; it is construction vehicles. London has a boom in construction. We have some very specific problems, and they could be tackled. There are discussions going on in Europe about the design, lengths and weights of large vehicles. That is an opportunity to modify these things.

Q19 Jim Fitzpatrick: Can I go back and ask a couple of questions about infrastructure? I am familiar with two cycle superhighways, 2 and 3. I have cycled both of them in the last month; I was on cycle superhighway 3 yesterday, coming into Westminster. They are completely different. Superhighway 2 is quiet roads for my stretch, which is the River Lea and the eastern boundary of Tower Hamlets into London. We have Poplar High Street, Narrow Street and then Cable Street, where there is segregation. That is completely different from cycle superhighway 2, right down the Bow Road. Neither is a cycle superhighway; one is a cycle route, and CS2 is simply a line of paint in the road. Have we given them too elaborate titles and given people the impression that they are something more than they are?

The second question is on attributing, if possible, causation to the majority of cycle serious injuries and deaths. How much of it is down to HGV tipper trucks? How much of it is down to buses? The figures recently for the number of accidents caused by London Transport buses are well documented. How much of it is down to white van man? How much of it is down to ordinary cars, and how much is attributed to cyclists? Is it possible to identify where the greatest risk to cyclists is coming from—from which vehicles—and therefore make that the priority focus in doing something about it?

Chair: Who would like to start on that one?

Ashok Sinha: I will say a few words. David is quite right. If we look at the number of deaths—focusing on those, rather than on serious injuries, which are, of course, terrible

and awful—about half of the deaths in London are due to collisions with HGVs, most of those being collisions with tipper trucks, as David said. I am sure that a lot can be done to improve vehicle design. We ourselves published about a year ago a concept design for lorries that would make them safer in London's streets. It was produced by our senior campaigner, who is a former truck driver of many decades' experience.

I go back to the point that even with the best-equipped trucks—and, of course, the best-trained drivers, who are obeying the rules, not driving for too long, and are not tired and so on—there will be occasions, especially around junctions and intersections, when there is a possibility of collision between cyclists and these large vehicles. That is where you also need an engineering solution—especially at those locations. Even more broadly, imagine trying to take your children to school. Do you really want to be mixing it with lorries on the main road, even if you knew they were the best-equipped lorries in the world? You probably don't, or you would probably be very wary of doing it.

In a sense, it goes back to what Katja said. What kind of city do we want? If we want to encourage a cycling revolution—and I think we all do on this panel and around London—we also have to look at enabling people to be less fearful, and to be confident about their cycling experience.

Q20 Chair: Let me take this back a bit. Is there enough information gathered in the right form for us really to know what the cause of accidents is? Commander Martin, isn't it the case that, when there is an accident and a police officer is there, they indicate on a form, or they communicate in some form, what they think the cause is, which might be right or, on analysing the situation, might not be the complete situation?

Commander Martin: Let me pick up a couple of those points. The HGV one is a really serious issue. We went back over four years to look at the number of fatalities, and 52% involved a large goods vehicle. Only 5% are involved in serious collisions, so statistically they are involved in fewer, but, as we have already heard, the consequences are often fatal because of the nature of the vehicles and the vulnerability of the cyclist.

When we go to a crash, we will record the factors that we think are contributory. The downside of that is that it is actually perception. You will not be surprised to hear that the ones that come out are things like "failed to judge speed properly", "failed to look" and "entered from a side road", which probably do not tell you as much as you want. To answer the earlier question about where most of the people are being killed, we have data over five years; 24% were large goods vehicles over 7.5 tonnes and 26% were cars, with a mixture of those thereafter.

Q21 Jason McCartney: I am fortunate in that I have only ever cycled through London once. It was when I was doing a charity bike ride from Huddersfield, where I live, down to Brighton. The day I cycled through London was the day of the royal wedding, in the spring of 2011, so that was probably quite an unusual day, but I cycle a lot. We have the Tour de France coming through my village on Sunday 6 July next year, which we are all very excited about.

The Transport Select Committee is holding this session today primarily because of the high profile of this issue at the moment. It is getting a lot of headlines, and a lot of people are seeing camera footage of accidents, anger and frustration, and cyclists whizzing red lights

and things. Commander, is it your perception that there is a war ongoing between cyclists and motorists at the moment?

Commander Martin: No, I would not describe it as a war. I think it is getting a great deal of publicity at the moment. From our perspective, Op Safeway, the campaign we are running at the moment, has shown us some things that are of great concern. These are not areas where we have new legislation and people are unfamiliar with it. If we look at some of the figures that have just come out on the number of people who are going through red lights—both cyclists and car drivers—and on car drivers who are still using mobile phones, those are very basic things that are major contributions to road safety, but years on people are still committing the same offences. Those are some of the difficulties that are causing the concern about what is happening at the moment.

Q22 Jason McCartney: Mr Sinha, is this publicity helping by highlighting the issues, or is it being negative, because all it is doing is giving people an excuse, with war on Twitter, and pushing the two sides apart, although we know that most cyclists are motorists as well?

Ashok Sinha: That is quite right. I think it is a double-edged sword. A number of meetings—meetings such as this, perhaps—have been held in the past few weeks because of the unusually large number of deaths that have occurred in London. That is to the good if it means that we are now having conversations about how we can make our city as safe for cycling as we want it to be and achieve all the wider environmental, health, economic development and mobility benefits. That is a positive outcome that can be said to have arisen from tragic circumstances.

At the same time, when I was at Bow roundabout, for example, after the recent death there, when we had a gathering, and spoke to cyclists, two of them said to me, “That’s it. I am either not going to work by bike any more or I am giving up cycling altogether.” I am afraid that while this attention is, rightly, making us focus our minds on the fact that cycling is not as safe as it should be and we should be pursuing a more continental approach to making cycling safer, it is also putting people off. I hope they do not get put off by that. I certainly concur with Mr Martin; there is no war that I am perceiving out there on the streets. I am actually perceiving a lot of people thinking quite soberly about what is happening out there and wondering what is going on.

Q23 Jason McCartney: One of our cycling champions in my neck of the woods, John Radford, unfortunately spent the summer in a coma, having been in a hit-and-run accident. He is in his 60s and is now starting a very slow recovery. He is a member of the CTC and a real cycling champion. Ironically, he had been campaigning for cycling safety up on the outskirts of Huddersfield. Are hit-and-run accidents with cyclists a particular problem? Who would like to come in on that?

David Davies: I believe that at least one of the fatalities in London this year involved hit and run, so it is an issue. I do not think it is a high percentage, but it is certainly an important issue. I am sure the police would take—

Q24 Jason McCartney: Ms Shawcross, do you have something to add?

Val Shawcross: We often talk about these issues from the cycling point of view, which I think is really important. Our committee has certainly done a lot of survey work; our latest survey had nearly 6,000 responses. I also took the time to meet some bus drivers. They favour cycling segregation on the most dangerous roads because it is intensely stressful to be the driver of a vehicle that is a difficult vehicle to drive and may have blind spot issues. I think you will find that there is quite a lot of support from people who have to drive difficult vehicles, and they would prefer to see cyclists in a safer place.

I think some of the conflict is about unpredictability of behaviour. We come from a place where the culture of our roads—their physical design—is that they are for motorised vehicles, and cyclists are seen as an add-on. That means that cyclists have a variety of different personal strategies for cycling. The design of the layout of the road, the junctions, the lights and so on and the signage tend to be for drivers and not for them. It is harder for them to behave in a way that is predictable because the road conditions do not make that easy for them. I think some of the behaviours and conflicts are generated by the environment people have to cycle within.

Q25 Jason McCartney: Finally, Ms Leyendecker, what is your view on those issues?

Katja Leyendecker: While I probably would not quite say that it is a war, it is certainly a battlefield out there. If anything—I am sure everyone agrees—it is a very contested space in which all of us, when we participate on it, are quite tragic participants. It brings me back to the aspect of human behaviour. Of course we as humans react in a certain kind of way, and there are a lot of subliminal messages that you get as a driver, as a cyclist or as someone who is walking in London, Newcastle or anywhere else. The way it has been tackled elsewhere is to take that human behaviour into account and, therefore, have something that you could almost call forgiving design. It might be that a cyclist is wobbling about. That is what cyclists do when they start, so you need a certain kind of lane width or path width.

There is actually a lot of Rosa Parks stuff going on that cyclists do. We talked before about cyclists going through red lights. There are certain cycle-friendly countries that have started to design those things in, where you have a permanent green left arrow—on the continent, it would be a right arrow—for cyclists. People have observed cyclists, found why they do these things and allowed for that in the road design, which might be cycle lanes and cycleways but it also has to be our junctions, the way our traffic lights are phased and all the wider picture around that. But the very starting point is the human being, and we are making mistakes—every one of us. It is just that, when one person makes a mistake sitting in a car or even a lorry, that mistake costs so much more.

Q26 Martin Vickers: Perhaps I can move on to pedestrian safety, which a number of speakers have touched on. It is quite understandable that cyclists are concerned about dangerous driving by motorists and so on, but there is considerable concern, particularly among the elderly and the disabled, about the silent approach of cyclists. I am sure that at various times we have all witnessed cyclists, just as we have motorists, breaking rules—

going through red lights, riding on the pavement and so on. Should we be making more effort to educate the cycling community on the potential dangers?

Ashok Sinha: We could do more to educate all road users to look out for each another, to obey the law and to act responsibly. Just the other day—it really was just the other day—my mother said to me that she had trouble getting across a crossing at night as a pedestrian, because one cyclist came through with a bright light that she could see and another one came through with a much dimmer light that she could not see. She is in her 80s. Everybody has to do what is responsible to look out for their fellow human beings.

Going back to Katja's point about behaviour, however, we still have to understand why people do the things that they do. I see parents cycling with their children on a short stretch of pavement—I have done it myself—because they have reached an area of road that is too tight and narrow for them to feel that they can get safely through it; it could be a junction. They resort to that in order to keep themselves safe. They have been very careful; they are not trying to run anybody down, and they get off if there is a pedestrian coming, but they do it because they feel that is the only way that they can complete that part of their journey.

We all have to obey the law and act responsibly. Educational campaigns should remind us that all of us—I drive sometimes as well—have that responsibility to bear, but at the same time I think that enforcement and policing need to take account of the circumstances and understand why certain people have done what they have done.

Q27 Chair: Mr Davies, do you have a view on that front, perhaps looking at the situation generally, outside London as well as in London? What is needed in terms of behaviour, whether it is from drivers or from cyclists?

David Davies: This raises the point you asked about earlier, Chair, concerning statistics and presentation. The UK has an excellent system—STATS19, casualty reporting and police complete casualty reports. It is very good, but it does not do everything. There is a danger that we use it for everything, but it does not reflect risks to pedestrians and it does not reflect casualties where no motor vehicle is involved—cyclists coming off on a pothole, for example. Equally, it tends to be presented in terms of the casualties—the victims—so you look at it and say, “Right, the problem is motorcyclists, pedestrians or cyclists.” From that, you would not infer that HGVs had anything to do with it. We need to consider very carefully how we present those statistics and whether we supplement them with other sources to get a rounder picture.

Q28 Chair: Commander Martin, do you have a view from a policing perspective?

Commander Martin: To add to that, one of the things that we have found from the most recent campaign is that holistic approach to road safety. We have spoken to over 5,000 pedestrians to give them advice about, effectively, crossing in areas that are largely unsafe. I would agree with colleagues that this is very much a collective effort if we are going to achieve anything in the longer term.

Q29 Martin Vickers: We have heard about the very high infrastructure costs; £1 million per kilometre was mentioned for some infrastructure. In the same way as motorists make a contribution for the use of the road, should cyclists?

Ashok Sinha: Cyclists do. I do.

Q30 Martin Vickers: Through their general taxation, yes, but I meant a specific charge.

Ashok Sinha: I may indeed be making a greater contribution to the roads than some motorists, even though I do not drive very much, through all the various taxes that I pay. I am assuming that as a matter of public policy we want to promote cycling, for all the reasons that have been trailed many times before, including because it will save the economy money. It is certainly easier to get people in large numbers from A to B by bike than it is to pay for a tunnel under the Thames or under the ground to get people from A to B by tube, for example. It can be a very cost-effective way of getting people about. It can be a very cost-effective way of ensuring that our children have an active lifestyle and are not prone to the kind of diseases that are apparently a ticking time bomb, and so on. There are environmental costs—how many people are dying prematurely in London because of poor air quality? If we put charges on cycling, I think we will see a drop in cycling.

Q31 Chair: Are there any other views on charges and cycling?

Val Shawcross: I think it would be completely wrong and unrealistic because cycling is a very socially desirable mode of transport. We have 4,000 people or so who die an early death from poor air quality, which is principally vehicular transport driven. If you did a cost-benefit analysis in terms of health—the BMA has done some work on this—I think you would find that an increase in cycling and walking would have a dramatic impact in the reduction of all kinds of illnesses and cardiovascular diseases. Cycling is really very socially desirable.

There are three things that our committee would say. One is that so far we feel there has been inadequate enforcement on bad behaviour of all kinds on the roads. Mentioning things like mobile phones is very important, but we are talking about all road users. We would like to see every child in our city taught to cycle—and cycle well—at school, in the same way that you are taught to swim and taught to read and write. We would certainly like to see physical measures that are appropriate to the type of road. I would also say that speeding enforcement is probably one of the best things you could do on all roads to reduce casualties of all kinds. I do not think we pay enough attention to the cost-benefit analysis of that.

Q32 Chair: Ms Leyendecker, do you want to comment on that?

Katja Leyendecker: Again, I am sure that everyone in the room wants that to happen. If we want more people to cycle, we have to ask ourselves how we can get them cycling, not how we can put more barriers in the way of achieving that. I do not know whether you are aware of the report “Understanding Walking and Cycling”, a three-year sociological study that involved speaking to hundreds of people and trying to find out why they are not cycling. First and foremost, it is because there is no space and there are no cycleways. The question really ought to be “How do we get more people cycling?” rather than “How do

we make it more difficult for people to cycle?” The other question would be, what would you charge cyclists for? They are actually doing a lot of good.

Q33 Jim Dobbin: I was interested in the discussion about behaviour. I picked up on Commander Martin’s comment about red lights. I am all in favour of the healthy aspects of cycling, but I think behaviour is a real issue. I do quite a lot of driving in London, and the one thing I have learned since I started driving in London is to drive straight, because you never know which side of the car the cyclist is going to come from. Sometimes they are on the inside, sometimes they are in front and sometimes they are on the outside or back again in front. That is very confusing for drivers.

Two incidents happened to me just recently. I had a new car, which I had had for only three weeks. I was at Westminster bridge, and a cyclist came right between me and a van, drew his pedal right along the side of the car and fell off. He was up and off before I could get out of the car. That is one incident. The other one was just two weeks ago, along at Lambeth bridge, where I was turning left and signalled to turn left. This fellow came up on the inside of me to go straight on and rattled his fist on the roof of my car. Quite honestly, I do not think that is acceptable.

I have two or three controversial questions. I have taken on board what you said about costs for cyclists and how that might put cyclists off, but do you think that as they have a vehicle on the road, like every other vehicle, they should be licensed? That is one point. The other point is, do you think their vehicles should be MOT-ed for safety? These are two areas that have not been asked about or discussed yet. I put them on the agenda just to get your view, because when I am on the road, whether it is a cyclist, a lorry—an HGV—or a motorcycle, we are all vehicles, driving on the same roads and in the same environment, but some are not qualified, you could say, and others are.

Chair: Ms Leyendecker, do you want to comment on that? Should cycles be licensed or MOT-ed?

Katja Leyendecker: The answer is no, unsurprisingly. I was thinking about the example that you gave—that you never quite know whether a cyclist will be on your left side or your right side. This is exactly the kind of thing that can be sorted out through design and road layouts. That is exactly what we have to do to make it a lot clearer—to give space clarity to drivers, as well as cyclists—and, therefore, remove this conflict.

Q34 Chair: Does anyone have a different view? Does anybody think there should be some form of licensing or different training, if not MOTs?

David Davies: In a sense, licensing is probably a question for politicians, but I do not believe there is a democracy in the world that requires cyclists to be licensed, so I think you would be pushing the envelope. However, we would absolutely encourage cyclist education. It is difficult to enforce actions against cyclists vigorously when many cyclists may not have had any education; the schools are not providing it. There has been the Bikeability scheme over the last few years, which has been extremely good. I know that Transport for London has helped to fund the scheme, which is absolutely to be encouraged, but it is still not reaching sufficient people.

On MOTs, Mr Fitzpatrick's recent parliamentary question suggested that only 2% of cycle casualties involved a defective bicycle. Maybe those statistics are not perfect, but things like training, education, Dr Bike schemes and so forth are the ways to reach that, rather than legislation.

Q35 Sarah Champion: I have two quick questions. In a desperate attempt to try to get rural areas into this debate, I note that my postwoman was hit by a cyclist as she crossed the road and has been off work for six months. I know countless horse riders who are thrown or whose horses bolt when cyclists come whizzing straight up behind them. Mr Davies, you have spoken about education. Would a bell help?

David Davies: It might, and many cyclists have one. It is now the law that all new bicycles are sold with a bell, although you are not required to keep it on the bicycle.

Q36 Sarah Champion: You could throw it at passing motorists. Mr Sinha, you spoke of a number of blackspots that you see in London. When you speak to the local authority and, no doubt, make recommendations about engineering modifications, what is the response that you get?

Ashok Sinha: I am very glad that you asked that question. When we put forward or suggest that international best practice should be adopted for the re-engineering or remodelling of those junctions, which are often not safe enough for pedestrians and cyclists to get across, we are often told that that kind of remodelling is not feasible because of the negative impact it would have on traffic flows; essentially, there is not enough capacity on the road for that to be permissible. We are told that, because the modelling work that is undertaken by the traffic authorities says that London will go into gridlock.

First, these models are poorly validated, from everything that we can establish. Secondly, countries around the world—I go back to the examples on the continent—put safety first and find out that user behaviour, the behaviour of people on the roads, adapts. With well-designed schemes, you do not get gridlock. Thirdly, of course, there is modal shift. The better the facilitation for cycling and walking, the more people will walk and cycle, and then fewer people will drive for short distances. We feel a straw man is being put up against high-quality, safe remodelling of our urban spaces. That straw man is the idea that London will grind to a halt. I do not believe that to be true.

Q37 Sarah Champion: Mr Davies, do you agree with that view?

David Davies: I think it is all a question of degree. Clearly, if you took away all the space and gave it to cyclists and pedestrians, London would grind to a halt. I am sure you can take away some space; it is a matter of degree.

Q38 Chair: I have two questions and I would like short answers, please. Do you think heavy goods vehicles should be banned from entering urban centres at peak times? Does anybody think they should?

Val Shawcross: The first priority ought to be to make sure that they all comply with FORS—that they all have side panels, they all have technology to deal with the blind spot and they all have appropriate training, because the cyclist—

Q39 Chair: But after that, should they be banned from city centres at peak times?

Val Shawcross: I am not sure that that is a well-researched proposal. Cyclists die under the wheels of HGVs at all times of day. At congestion times, the traffic is often very slow, and speed is often associated with serious accidents and injuries. I do not think there is enough research to back up that proposal, but I think it is important that we recognise that HGVs are a very, very special problem.

Q40 Chair: Should cyclists be banned from wearing headphones?

Val Shawcross: I have put that to some cyclists, and some of them say to me that they are listening to GPS for directions. Personally, I do not think it is sensible to have your earphones in, but I do not think there is any evidence that it has been implicated in anybody's death. The clearest indication is about junctions, and the behaviour of bigger, heavier vehicles at junctions.

Q41 Chair: Ms Leyendecker, do you have a view on either of those questions? Should heavy goods vehicles be banned from city centres at peak times?

Katja Leyendecker: In just one sentence, if there is not a separation in time, I think there ought to be a separation in space. I agree with Val on that one.

Q42 Chair: What about cyclists wearing headphones? Should that be banned?

Katja Leyendecker: Taking in auditory information from your surroundings is certainly a good thing. Sometimes you do not know why cyclists might wear headphones. You ask whether it should be banned; that would probably be going one step too far.

Q43 Chair: Mr Davies, do you have a view on either of these things?

David Davies: The HGV ban is very much a matter for Londoners. I would say that if you are considering a peak-hour ban, perhaps we should also be considering a night-time lorry ban, so that the total picture can be considered. That may be concentrating HGV movements during the daytime when it could be feasible, as during the Olympics, to allow some deliveries during the night. I do not think an HGV ban would be a solution without much better research, at least. In Paris, where there is a partial ban, in the central area I believe 17 cyclists were killed in 2012, which was more than in London, so clearly it is not a magic bullet.

Q44 Chair: What about cyclists wearing headphones?

David Davies: It seems an unwise thing to do. I am not quite sure whether it would be worth going through all the legislative process of getting a ban. We need to see some more evidence on that.

Q45 Chair: Should cyclists wearing headphones be banned?

David Davies: We would need to see some more evidence on just how severe a problem that was. Certainly it is not a wise approach.

Q46 Chair: Mr Sinha, do you have a view? Should HGVs be banned at peak times?

Ashok Sinha: I think Val is right. This is a proposal that should be looked into, because it has the ability to—

Chair: Okay. I just want to know your view; I do not want you to make a stand on it.

Ashok Sinha: My view is that it needs to be looked into, but we must avoid unintended consequences.

Q47 Chair: Should we ban cyclists from wearing headphones?

Ashok Sinha: We need to look at what all road users are doing and what may be distracting them, whether it is car drivers using mobile phones or cyclists using headphones. In that context, let's look at it.

Chair: All right. I just want to know your opinion on this—

Ashok Sinha: Not by itself—it has to be looked at in total, with other issues.

Q48 Chair: Commander Martin, do you have a view on either of these things?

Commander Martin: Our statistics show that when we look at all casualties across the range, the majority are in the peak times and are largely around commuting—from 8 till 10 in the morning, and then in the evening. On whether or not the movement of HGVs would impact on that, we know that they are involved in a small percentage of collisions; the biggest problem is the catastrophic impact they have when they have a collision. We do not have enough data around headphones, but intuitively it seems bad.

Q49 Chair: Is there any one thing that you would like London's cycling commissioner to do? He is about to give evidence here.

Ashok Sinha: I would like him to review entirely the approach to traffic modelling in London, with a view to establishing whether London—

Chair: I just wanted to—

Ashok Sinha: Well, traffic modelling.

Chair: Does anyone else want to give an answer?

Val Shawcross: A personal view is that he should back off the old “smoothing the traffic” policy and reinstate a much clearer road user policy hierarchy on many of our roads.

Katja Leyendecker: I absolutely agree with that. It is exactly what we are up against in Newcastle as well.

Q50 Chair: Ms Leyendecker, a lot of the answers we have had here relate to London. Do you find any big difference outside London, from your experience?

Katja Leyendecker: The HGV problem probably exists more in London than it does in Newcastle, certainly; I could not speak for other cities. Otherwise I think the problems are pretty much the same—or similar, anyway.

Q51 Chair: Does no one else have anything for the cycling commissioner?

Commander Martin: As a final point, I would ask him to continue some of the good work. Some really good investment has been made, which is helping not just with enforcement but around education. The one thing that I did not mention earlier was Exchanging Places, where 10,000 cyclists have got into the cab of a lorry to see some of the dangers. That has proved very useful.

David Davies: Ask the commissioner what support he is getting from the Department for Transport regarding remodelling of lorry cabs and standards.

Chair: Thank you all for coming and answering our questions.

Examination of Witnesses

Witnesses: **Christopher Snelling**, Head of Urban Logistics and Regional Policy, Freight Transport Association, **Jack Semple**, Director of Policy, Road Haulage Association, **Jerry McLaughlin**, Director of Economics, Mineral Products Association, **Dr Marcus Jones**, Principal Consultant, Transport Research Laboratory Ltd, and **Andrew Gilligan**, Mayor of London’s Cycling Commissioner, Transport for London, gave evidence.

Chair: Good afternoon. Welcome to the Transport Select Committee. Can I have your name and organisation, please?

Jack Semple: I am Jack Semple from the Road Haulage Association.

Jerry McLaughlin: I am Jerry McLaughlin from the Mineral Products Association.

Andrew Gilligan: I am Andrew Gilligan from the Mayor of London’s office.

Dr Jones: I am Marcus Jones from TRL.

Christopher Snelling: I am Christopher Snelling from the Freight Transport Association.

Q52 Chair: Thank you. Mr Gilligan, is it safe to cycle in London?

Andrew Gilligan: Yes, it is safe. We have seen a dramatic fall in the number and the proportion of cyclists dying on the roads in the last 10 years. In 2002 there were 118 million cycle journeys in London, of which 20 ended in death. Last year there were 209 million cycle journeys, of which 14 ended in death, so the death rate per journey has more than halved. Serious injuries have come down as well. One journey in every 299,000 ended in serious injury in 2002; it was one in every 320,000 last year.

There are two issues here: actual safety and perceived safety. On actual safety, as I mentioned, the figures are relatively encouraging, with one important caveat, which is that the serious injury rate has started to rise again. Of course, that is not to say that we could not and should not do more. We are doing a great deal more. We have invested £1 billion in a major cycling programme of new roads and junctions.

That is actual safety. Then there is perceived safety—the issue of fear. That is much more of a problem. You saw the poll today. Even though the figures I have quoted to you show objectively that cycling is substantially safer than it was, 68% of Londoners do not believe the roads are safe. The problem with that is that perceptions are much less in our control than are, for instance, the physical status of the roads. We can do something about the roads, but perceptions are largely in the control of others, such as the media and cycling campaigners.

I am worried about the debate on safety. I do not think there is a balance. We need to strike a balance between the understandable anger and concern that people feel about these deaths and the risk that we are scaring people away from cycling, giving succour to people who want to discourage cycling and deterring future politicians from getting involved in this. One of the slight frustrations is that my boss, the Mayor, is probably doing more for cycling than any other politician in Britain, yet he also gets more criticism about cycling than any other politician in Britain. Neither he nor I mind that—we have both been in plenty of media storms in our time—but the risk is that future politicians might say, “If that is the reward you get for spending £1 billion, what is the point of getting involved in this area?”

It reminds me a tiny bit of the debate of, say, 20 years ago on crime. Crime itself was undoubtedly a real problem, but fear of crime was a bigger problem. Dramatic and exceptional incidents were massively reported, and were presented as representing wider and more general truths, even though they did not actually mean that. There was a kind of clamour for instant solutions, some of which were not really thought through, but were tried anyway and did quite a lot of harm, such as excessive incarceration, which created career criminals. The intention in the all-consuming focus on deaths we have seen recently is right—people want to create pressure for action to get more people cycling—but the execution is at risk of causing the opposite.

Q53 Chair: Each of the 14 deaths of cyclists in London this year is a great tragedy for every family involved, but you are saying that you do not see it as a worsening trend. In view of what you have said, what do you think the Mayor ought to be doing now in relation to cycling safety?

Andrew Gilligan: He needs to be doing what he is doing. We have a gigantic investment programme; I think it is two and half times bigger than what the Government are spending on the whole of the rest of the country put together. It is £913 million over 10 years, and is front-loaded in the first three or four years. It includes a very large programme of segregated cycleways—superhighways—including two right across the heart of central London, one of which will come right past this building. In two and half years' time, you will see a segregated track crossing Parliament Square and going along the Victoria Embankment out to the City and Canary Wharf. In the other direction, it will go along Birdcage Walk in front of Buckingham Palace, through Hyde Park and out along the Westway flyover, of which we are closing one lane. It will be the longest substantially segregated urban cycle route in Europe and will be one of two crossing central London. There will be another running north-south, from Finsbury Park to Elephant and Castle. There will be a whole load of other upgraded superhighways, which will also be built to much higher standards than the current ones.

The other thing we are doing a lot about is junctions. Essentially, 85% of accidents resulting in injury or death in London happen at junctions. We have just rolled out a new template cycle-segregated junction. We issued pictures and drawings of it—ironically enough, on the very day that the first of the spate of deaths happened. It includes a segregated run-in to the stop line for cyclists, special cycle-specific traffic lights, with a cycle red-amber-green phase, and special cyclist movements through the junction to minimise conflict with other vehicles. That is essential, because that is where most of the accidents and deaths happen.

Q54 Jim Fitzpatrick: Mr Gilligan, you make some persuasive points about perception. I certainly agree that Mayor Johnson has raised the profile, and that some of the criticism he gets is unfair, but we would not be seeing the pace of change that we are seeing now if it had not been for the recent deaths and injuries over the past two or three years. Sad as that is, it is what has given momentum to the changes; the Bow roundabout and the Bow flyover are a classic example.

I have a question for the road haulage colleagues and for Dr Jones from TRL. We have seen the figures for causation. In the HGV fleet there are some companies, such as CEMEX, that got it very early on—who adopted best practice, with all the sensors and appropriate extra mirrors, way over and above what was required of them—yet there is anecdotal evidence of skip lorries, for example, whose drivers are given a sheet at the beginning of a day and told, “Get the skips out, collected and delivered.” Is that an accurate portrayal—that there is really bad practice and very good practice within the industry? How do we get best practice adopted? Or is that just too simplistic?

Christopher Snelling: I think there is some accuracy in what you said. Part of improving the potential involvement and impact of HGVs is about enforcement. We understand, from Transport for London in particular, that there is evidence that some operators that are not of the highest quality are overrepresented in the cycling casualty figures. We really welcome, therefore, the increased and targeted enforcement effort that has been going on over the last couple of months. The industrial HGV task force between the Met and VOSA is very welcome. We think there may be some operators on the road who are cutting corners, and they should be caught and got off the road.

Jerry McLaughlin: I think there is an issue; there are different standards. A year ago our organisation introduced standards very similar to the ones Mr Fitzpatrick just mentioned. These are being rolled out now across the country. With many operators, there is still probably a lack of awareness of the issue. For companies that are operating in London, there is enough publicity and knowledge. These are small companies as well as big ones; some of the best-performing companies are smaller ones. There is an awareness of it, but there is still a challenge in getting the message across to operators throughout the country, to get them to take action before a problem occurs. We have introduced a policy, and that gets at a certain number of operators. Contractors are now introducing procurement clauses that require these sorts of standards through the supply chain. I think that will work its way through the supply chain as well.

Jack Semple: As far as the RHA is concerned, we first suggested something along the lines of the HGV industrial task force five years ago, so we very much welcome that. The matching of non-compliance with road safety outcomes is not thoroughly done, but there is almost certainly a link. However, the great majority of drivers and haulage companies in London are doing a very good job under very difficult circumstances. Like others in this debate, they are probably on a bit of a learning curve, but generally the HGV driver is very highly qualified; he has passed an advanced test. The key point for drivers is to be aware of your near side and to look in your nearside mirrors.

That said, you mentioned the waste sector, for example. Arguably, there is a regulatory issue for Government. As I said, the matching with road safety outcomes is not well made, but if you speak to the traffic commissioner he will say that two thirds to three quarters of the public inquiries on this are with companies on restricted licences; a lot of those are waste vehicle-type companies. The restricted licence holder is under no obligation to demonstrate any understanding of the rules of road haulage before he gets a licence. In fact, we are currently discussing how best to catch up on that after he has been given the licence. I do not want to overstate it, because the evidence in terms of road safety outcomes is not well detailed, but you could have a waste company that looks like a haulage company, is working on its own account and has a restricted licence.

Q55 Jim Fitzpatrick: Perhaps Mr Gilligan and Dr Jones can add to this. We have heard the growing suggestion that HGVs be banned in peak hours. We saw the success of the Olympic travel plans, where many HGVs were operating out of normal hours. Is it feasible to ban HGVs in peak hours? Mr Gilligan, is that an issue that you have studied, assessed and made a judgment on already?

Andrew Gilligan: We are studying this. It is finely balanced, actually. An HGV ban in the morning rush hour could have saved two of the 14 cyclists who have died in London so far this year; the other 12 cases did not involve HGVs, or took place outside the morning rush hour. However, there are counter-risks. The first is that it would lead to a flood of HGVs on the streets immediately after the ban ended—at 9 am, say. The number of cyclists on the streets is lower at that time than before 9, but the number of people from other vulnerable groups—pedestrians, for instance—is greater; typically when pensioners go out, it is immediately after the rush hour.

It could also have quite serious effects on Londoners' health in other ways. If lorries that could not move in the morning started delivering at night, for instance, people would probably lose sleep in quite large numbers. There is no doubt that it would also have an

economic effect. The construction industry, for instance, would probably lose two of its seven or eight winter hours of daylight. That is why it has to be quite carefully studied. We are not coming down on either side of this at the moment.

It is sometimes said that the lorry ban in Paris has helped to save lives. We do not believe that to be the case, and neither does the city of Paris. In the four years before it came in, which was in 2006, there were nine cyclist deaths in Paris. The city of Paris covers an area roughly equivalent to our zone 1; it is slightly larger, but not much. In the four years after it came in, there were 18 cyclist deaths.

Jack Semple: In anticipation of this issue—there has been a lot of coverage—we surveyed our members who are serving construction projects in London. Of course they could do it, and they will work within whatever regulatory framework is required, but the feeling was that a peak-hour ban would add a minimum of 25% to 30% to haulage costs in London. So there is an increase in costs. As colleagues said, it is also far from clear that there would be a benefit in terms of road safety outcomes.

Dr Jones: The unintended consequences of this have been raised; it could relocate the accidents to a different time of day or we might relocate distribution to vans, which would increase exposure to a different rate of accidents. There are a whole lot of unintended consequences that would really need to be researched.

I wanted to raise a slightly different point that some colleagues of mine made in a recent report looking at construction logistics—actually with organisations represented here. One recommendation was that the RIDDOR HSE requirements for reporting of accidents be extended to accidents that take place on the road. One issue that often comes up in road safety is that there is a massive difference between the way in which risk and accidents are regarded when they take place on the streets and what happens when they take place in the workplace. By extending a lot of the responsibilities that companies have for their staff and for members of the public within their workplace to the road, you would see much more focus on better route planning, better training, the appropriate choice of vehicles and all those issues. That is quite an important aspect, and it applies to a lot of different elements of road safety. My understanding is that the recommendation is being taken forward in a meeting that the working group is having in a few days' time.

Andrew Gilligan: Can I add something else to the debate about compliance? In our recent police operation in London and in the precursor operation to it—a sort of try-out of it that took place at Vauxhall a few weeks ago—we saw really striking levels of non-compliance with existing regulations by HGVs. The majority of the lorries stopped at Vauxhall failed to comply with one regulation or another. It was not necessarily a safety-critical regulation—it might be something about drivers' hours—but there are very, very high levels of non-compliance, so enforcing existing regulations better may be something we need to do as well.

Christopher Snelling: On the HGV ban, colleagues have addressed the direct impact on sectors such as the construction sector, but at the moment it is often talked about as if it is just an HGV ban. I want to stress the enormous increase to the cost of living of residents of the city if you start banning HGVs in any period. There are businesses not just in the construction sector but in retail and in the food industry that require deliveries at that time of day, because that is when they are going to serve their customers. If they have to do it through a larger fleet of smaller vehicles, it will substantially increase the costs while also

massively increasing the number of vehicles on the road, with impacts for congestion and air pollution, as well as—as has been pointed out—unintended consequences for safety.

Jack Semple: In the context of London, usually we talk about deliveries in. What is very important—this is an issue that came up in planning for the Olympics—is that there are also collections for movement out. Not only would the costs be increased, but potentially the service level that companies based in London were able to offer—for example, on palletised freight—would be reduced, so they would be disadvantaged on both cost and service levels.

I will add very briefly to what Mr Gilligan was saying; it is a small but very important point. My understanding was that the enforcement effort was targeted on trucks. It was not a random stop of vehicles.

Q56 Karen Lumley: I have just bought a bike. Driving in Redditch is pretty difficult, and the thought of having to bring my bike to London would probably terrify me, but, if I wanted to, what sort of training and preparation would I need? Where would I or any cyclist get it?

Andrew Gilligan: We fund free or very low-priced training for anyone who wants it in the vast majority of the boroughs. One or two boroughs do not offer it. The vast majority—25 of the 33—offer it free. A handful charge a small amount, simply to ensure that the person turns up. You should approach your borough council, but it is mostly mayoral, TfL money that pays for that training.

It is quite useful and gives you more confidence. There are a few little tricks that people can use. It is about things like riding position, particular places to watch out and particular things not to do. Lots of reasons why accidents happen are that people are doing things that are not illegal but are not necessarily advisable, such as going up the inside of a lorry. The lorry driver cannot see you. It is astonishing how little a lorry driver can see of part of the area around his vehicle. In the training, you get to know where those blind spots are and where you should not place yourself. That is the sort of thing.

Q57 Karen Lumley: When I was a youngster many years ago, they used to have cycling proficiency tests at school. Does that still happen?

Andrew Gilligan: We have Bikeability now. Again, we fund that for any child who wants it. Lots and lots of them do it. There are three levels. At level 1, you do not leave the playground; basically, it is like the old cycling proficiency. At level 2, you go out on minor roads. At level 3, you go out on busy roads. My concern about the Bikeability we fund at the moment is that not enough of it is being delivered to level 3. Some of it is delivered only to level 1 and the majority is delivered to level 2. I have started a review of the training we fund to ensure that all of it is delivered to at least level 2, and more of it is delivered to level 3.

The other thing about kids is that a lot of the time it is about the confidence of the parents. This comes back to perceived danger. I grew up in suburban south-west London—in Teddington—and cycled to school. At my school each morning, there were 150 bikes parked in the racks. I went back there a few years ago; there was the same number of racks, but virtually nobody cycling. The traffic conditions in Teddington and Ham, where I went to school, have not changed all that much in 30 years. What has changed is the level of fear, of

the parents in particular. Part of what we would have to do is get parental confidence up to allow them to let their kids cycle to school. One of the things we are going to do is have the parents train alongside the kids, for instance.

Q58 Jason McCartney: In our previous session with the earlier guests, we kept coming back to the issue of larger vehicles, including tipper trucks and construction vehicles. We have explored that. Could you give me your perspective on a scheme that we heard about called changing places, where cyclists go and spend some time in the cab of a truck? When I have done that I have been completely shocked by the eye lines and what you can actually see. Also, do you represent firms that are bringing in proximity sensors and things like that? I will start with Mr Semple.

Jack Semple: Exchanging Places is a superb scheme. A number of our members have taken part in the scheme in London. The RHA had a very similar event at the start of the Isle of Wight festival of cycling this autumn, which went down very well; a member, Steve Porter Transport, put on a superb demonstration. I think there were a number of lessons. For the cyclist in particular, there was understanding of what it is like to drive a vehicle. We heard from Mr Dobbin about what it is like to drive a car in London, so you can imagine that driving a large vehicle is a real challenge. Cyclists have an appreciation of what it is like to look at six different mirrors, in a way that they do not unless they see that.

If I can broaden it out, the haulage industry is refreshing its view of the risks associated with cyclists. As you know, it has improved its mirror arrangements. We have a number of initiatives; the construction industry standard is a further initiative. The clear view my members asked me to pass to the Committee today was that unless we see an improvement, a change and development in behaviour and an appreciation of risk—because one issue is attitude and a second is appreciation of risk—among some cyclists, as part of a holistic approach to improving cyclists' safety, no matter what the haulier and driver do, we are not going to see the reduction in deaths and serious injuries involving HGVs and other vehicles that we are looking for.

I was very struck by the comments of the previous panel along those lines. I think we are starting to see that. It is not the only issue. Ten thousand cyclists have gone through the Exchanging Places process in London, but there are many more cyclists. We have to get out some key messages. That is very much what the haulage industry and its drivers are asking me to communicate. For example, one simple message is “Don’t go up the inside of an HGV.” The HGV has to look out for the cyclist as well, but if there is one message as far as trucks are concerned it is “Don’t go up the inside.” We had an advertising campaign that was agreed by TfL, the haulage industry and the cycling campaign: Stay safe, stay back. The road infrastructure does not always encourage that, but really to get the road safety improvements we are looking for we all have to do our bit.

Q59 Jason McCartney: Dr Jones, have you done any research on how effective the wholesale introduction of proximity sensors would be?

Dr Jones: Recently we did some work for TfL. It looked at two kinds. The first was a tag-and-beacon system, where cyclists would have an RFID-type tag on them that would be picked up by a computer in the lorry. That has the obvious disadvantage that it requires 100% participation by both cyclists and vehicles. We did some trials, but it did not perform that well in detection, so it is probably not particularly helpful.

We did some quite promising work with more sophisticated optical recognitions—combinations of video and radar—which appeared to be more effective. It is certainly worth the industry developing that. The automotive industry more broadly is looking at automating sensors for drivers, and assisting the driver.

We have to be very cautious there because it is not clear what the response will be. There is the issue known as risk compensation, where people may assume that they are protected and that the driver has received a signal, but the driver might be distracted. There are questions about the load on the driver, with lots of different information coming at them—lots of different messages being pinged from different directions—so further work is needed there.

We also need to consider that detecting cyclists at the point where they put themselves in danger is very much looking at the problem down quite a long chain of factors. It is getting a bit late there, really. We need to be looking more fundamentally at why we are getting these dangerous situations in the first place. The point was made about cyclists' behaviour—why are they putting themselves in these dangerous positions? Part of that is because the road layout as it currently stands often encourages them to do that. An unintended consequence of early attempts at segregation has been to put cyclists on the left-hand side of vehicles as they approach junctions. That is something that needs to be taken into account when planning segregation.

We are often referred to overseas experience when looking at what we should do for cycling. One bit of useful information that emerged from Copenhagen's experience was that when they started bringing in massive use of segregated lanes there was a relocation of accidents to junctions, in particular the equivalent of vehicles turning left clipping cyclists going straight ahead. That is a factor we have seen in London with HGVs. That has forced them to look at junction design. We really need to look right back, not at how we detect a cyclist once they have put themselves in the wrong position but at what the road layout is like and how that encourages them. If the road layout encourages the behaviour that we want by all parties, we have solved an awful lot of our problems.

Jerry McLaughlin: These sensors and nearside cameras do work. In our sector, if you talk to a driver who has this equipment fitted and say, "Right, you have had this for a couple of months. Shall we take it away?", they say no. It does work. It may be secondary, but it does have some effect. In terms of giving a driver extra assistance, we think that either a camera or a sensor is really valuable.

Andrew Gilligan: We are funding those trials at TRL and spending quite a lot of money on them. There is another thing, which is a sort of 360° camera view. It is a little bit as if you are looking down on the vehicle from space, and the driver can see all round it. I have seen a demonstration of it, as have the top people at TfL. That is another interesting avenue.

Q60 Jason McCartney: Mr Snelling, are your members aware of this research?

Christopher Snelling: Yes, absolutely. We have been fully engaged with TfL in the work they are funding and the TRL stuff that is being done. Obviously our members themselves are doing a lot of research all the time, because they do not just go out and buy the latest thing off the shelf and put it on their vehicles; they go through intensive trials themselves to assess what works.

That raises a fundamental point about technology. Sometimes there is a belief that there is one magic fix out there and that, if you just required everyone to have this, everything would be solved. Within the general logistics sector, I think there is still debate about the current quality of sensors and whether they work well enough. If they pick up street furniture as well as anything moving, how much use are they? If you are driving down Victoria Street, it will go off all the time you are there. Do you then just start to ignore it? Is it a good thing?

If we get a next-generation sensor that is better at motion detection, maybe it will come in. It is all of these things. How do you use cameras to avoid having four screens to look at as well as six mirrors? All of these things have to be looked at holistically and carefully, which is why we are always very nervous about any simplistic regulation that might come in. Safety is not a simple process to improve.

Q61 Jason McCartney: Do you think there are widespread calls for legislation and bureaucracy to bring in compulsory sensors?

Christopher Snelling: There are some calls from campaigners, and there are certain things that the Mayor is looking at where we are not yet quite clear what is being suggested. They appear to be looking at a regulatory route, so we are waiting to see what is in some of those proposals. We are bit concerned about that.

Much more productive from our point of view is the approach that is being taken over the construction logistics standard, which is again something sponsored by TfL and is a very good piece of work. That is going to be launched next week. It is a detailed standard for what construction logistics should be working to specifically, and it has been worked up through some very good industry sessions. Several of us here have participated in those and contributed to exactly what outcomes we are going for. It is a standard designed specifically for construction traffic, because that area was identified as a particular challenge. The point was made in the previous session that it is not necessarily HGVs as a whole that are the issue. What we need is a much more intelligent response that targets the specific causes. There seems to be a factor that certain construction vehicles are highly represented in the figures.

Andrew Gilligan: What Mr Snelling meant when he talked about the regulatory moves we were taking is something called the safer lorry charge, on which we intend to consult next month. At the moment, certain classes of HGV are exempt from the legal requirement to fit basic safety protection—certain mirrors, and side bars to prevent people from being rolled under the vehicle and crushed, which is typically how many cyclists die. Typically, they are construction vehicles. As I understand it, the reason for the exemption is that construction vehicles sometimes have to go up hillsides to construct electricity pylons and so on. There are not all that many hillsides and electricity pylons in London, so we propose essentially to extend the legal requirements for protective equipment that already apply to most HGVs to those exempt ones, which are overwhelmingly disproportionately represented in cyclist deaths.

Q62 Jason McCartney: Is there any resistance to that from the industry?

Andrew Gilligan: It is fair to say that the FTA was not terribly keen when we announced it. I hope to bring them round—

Jason McCartney: Come on, Mr Snelling, be keener on that.

Andrew Gilligan: Essentially, we do not have the power; we do not think we have the power to ban them, anyway. What we do have the power to do is charge them a lot of money to go about their business—enough money to be prohibitive.

Q63 Chair: But you will be consulting on that.

Andrew Gilligan: We are consulting on it in January. Essentially, the Mayor has announced that he does not want any lorry that is not fitted with pretty basic equipment, which costs a few hundred pounds per vehicle.

Q64 Jason McCartney: Mr Semple, what does the RHA think about that?

Jack Semple: As I understand it, I do not see TfL's proposals on mirrors and sideguards for London as particularly problematic. I do not see it as a big issue for us.

Q65 Jim Dobbin: I wanted to put the questions that I put to the first panel, but I have been listening very carefully to what is being said. Mr Gilligan talked about non-compliance of some HGV contractors and so on. We have to accept that HGVs, motor cars and motorcycles all have some regulation that applies to them. I listened to what Mr Semple said as well. This afternoon's discussion is about cycling safety. I will not put the two very point-blank questions I put last time, but what about having some regulation that should apply to cyclists as well? It has to do with safety. More and more cyclists are coming on to the road—you can see every week that the number is increasing. I think that, if we are to try to protect cyclists, we must have some rules for them.

Jack Semple: A lot of our members would agree with you. They would like to see a mandatory test, probably insurance, and possibly an MOT. It is not the RHA's policy. A generation ago, I believe we had a more positive appreciation of what cycling should entail; our members are really looking for us to find that again.

The haulage industry is very heavily regulated. The key points are to ensure that cyclists have an appreciation of risk and that you can see them at night. When we did our event on the Isle of Wight, we handed out high-vis vests, for example, which went down very well with everybody, especially the cyclists. On basic standards in terms of whether you can see the cyclist at night, I think that there are issues for regulators about what cyclists' lighting should look like. The biggest thing is to be able to see the cyclist at night and for the cyclist to have an appreciation of risk.

This is part of a holistic view. It is not the golden bullet. All the other issues—not least the infrastructure issues and the haulage industry issues—are important as well. There are a lot of people in the haulage industry who would like to see what you are suggesting, although it is not our view. What we are after is a higher success rate on these issues.

Jerry McLaughlin: There are regulations for cyclists. I think the key issue is enforcing them better than is currently the case. I do not think we need new regulations. We are responsible for delivering or subcontracting delivery of about 200 million tonnes of material to construction sites every year. Our objective is to look after our corner—to deal

with our vehicles and our drivers. It then becomes a kind of political decision about what action you take with cyclists beyond enforcing existing regulations.

Q66 Jim Dobbin: I am not likely to do this, but, if I got my bicycle out tomorrow and started cycling around London, where would I find out about the regulations?

Jack Semple: The Highway Code says you should be visible and you should wear a cycle helmet. The cycle helmet issue was discussed in the last session. It is involved in more than 50% of accidents. A lot of people are already wearing cycle helmets; I think that speaks for itself. The Highway Code is there and covers most of the safety issues we are looking at, but what is important is the appreciation and enforcement of it.

Andrew Gilligan: As Mr McLaughlin mentioned, cycling is not unregulated. For instance, there is a legal requirement to carry lights at night. There is, in fact, a legal requirement to keep your bike in good repair.

Regulation has to be proportionate to the danger presented. The main danger presented by the cyclist is essentially to themselves. They are not a gigantic danger to other road users. They are nothing like as big a danger to other road users as a motorised vehicle, particularly a heavy motorised vehicle. In 2011, the last year for which I have the figures, the number of serious injuries caused by cyclists in London was nine, and the number of serious injuries caused to cyclists was 555.

Q67 Jim Fitzpatrick: It has been really interesting to hear about the bits of equipment, the supply chain requirements—I know Crossrail is very hot as one of the organisations making those—the regulation gap from the Vauxhall inquiry and the fact that there is poor practice in some of the industry. We need the best practice in all of the industry, and we need better enforcement.

Mr Gilligan, London buses got some very bad publicity last week because of the incidents they have been involved in. We heard from Ms Shawcross earlier that she has spoken to bus drivers and many of them are very worried. They are actually sharing bus lanes and cycle lanes; CS2 is a very good example. What efforts are you making to try to make it better for the bus drivers, in terms both of their awareness training and of assisting them to be able to recognise the risk to cyclists?

Andrew Gilligan: Buses and coaches are responsible for three of the 14 deaths we have seen so far this year and two of the 14 last year, so it is a problem. Obviously they do not go as fast as HGVs. With buses, we are doing a programme of education for the drivers. Earlier on, when we were talking about devices to fit to lorries, I mentioned the 360° sensor that essentially lets the driver see all round the bus, as if he were looking down on it from above. We are testing those on buses. We have some fitted on buses in the Bexleyheath garage of Go-Ahead, one of our contractors. That is one of the other things we are doing on buses.

Q68 Chair: Could you all tell me very quickly whether you support the idea of more segregation of road space for cyclists and motor vehicles? I want very quick answers, because we are running out of time.

Jack Semple: Yes, I think we could use more imaginative approaches. I am sure that is happening, particularly at junctions. On the Embankment, you see very wide pavements either side that are little used. Can we take some of that?

Q69 Chair: You want to see that. Mr McLaughlin, could you tell me what you think?

Jerry McLaughlin: Yes, but I think we need to bear in mind, particularly with construction traffic, that construction will often take place in areas where it is difficult for that to happen, so we will have to co-exist with cyclists.

Q70 Chair: Mr Snelling, is that something your association agrees with?

Christopher Snelling: Yes, in principle. Ideally we would like to see more segregation on the road. We think that physical segregation is a good thing. There are two points: the essential users, such as freight, still need to be able to get through; you also need in particular to have access to deliver to businesses. You cannot block them off, because otherwise businesses on the high street will not be able to trade.

Chair: But if you could address that, you would—

Christopher Snelling: It is a balance.

Q71 Chair: Dr Jones, do you want to say anything on that particular point? I am looking for very brief answers, because I have to finish now.

Dr Jones: There is a long answer and a short answer. Segregation is desired by a lot of cyclists. However, we have to avoid the unintended consequences of loss of priority and directness, and relocating accidents to junctions. With that qualification, it is very, very important that space is provided for them that is not detrimental to pedestrians, that there is continuity and that junctions are sorted out. That is crucial.

Q72 Chair: Mr Gilligan, is there anything you want to add?

Andrew Gilligan: My answer is yes, emphatically, and we are going to do a great deal of it, but it is not the be-all and end-all of cycle schemes. One other thing I would very much like to recommend is what is called filter permeability, which is essentially backstreet routes blocked to through-traffic to make them through-routes for cyclists and pedestrians only. We are doing a whole network of those things; they will be called quiet ways. They are side-street routes that allow you to avoid the main roads and the main junctions altogether.

Chair: Thank you very much, all of you, for coming to answer our questions.

