



Transport Committee

Oral evidence: Cycling safety, HC 852

Wednesday 4 December 2013

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Written evidence from witnesses:

- [Department for Transport](#)

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Members present: Mrs Louise Ellman (Chair), Mrs Louise Ellman (Chair), Sarah Champion, Jim Dobbin, Jim Fitzpatrick, Jason McCartney, Karl McCartney, Miss Chloe Smith and Martin Vickers.

Questions 73-112

Examination of Witness

Witness: **Robert Goodwill MP**, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport, gave evidence.

Q73 Chair: Good afternoon, Minister, and welcome to the Committee. Do you want to give us a statement?

Mr Goodwill: I have a very brief opening statement. I send my condolences to the friends and families of those who have been killed, not only in recent accidents but in all accidents on the roads of our country. Any death on our roads is one too many.

I welcome the fact that you are doing this report. I would be slightly critical of those who have criticised the Committee. It is absolutely right that you should be carrying this out at this time. There is a lot of public concern out there. At the same time as allaying people's fears about the safety of cycling on the roads in London and elsewhere, I hope you can ensure that we do more to promote cycling and get more people on two wheels.

Q74 Chair: Thank you. In view of those comments could you tell us why the national traffic model predicts that cycling mileage will peak in 2015 but decline after that? Why does the model show that?

Mr Goodwill: The national traffic model is our way of trying to predict different modes of transport. Indeed, I had a meeting with Stephen Joseph, whom the Committee knows well, who was criticising our forecasts for motor transport. It is a good guess. In cities

throughout the UK where we have put money in—places like London, Cambridge, Oxford, Brighton and Bristol—we have seen an increase in demand for cycling. These cities are leading the way.

The national transport model is used to show the range of likely future demand for transport and to assess the national future impact of both national transport policies and widely applied local transport policies. The forecasts made in July were of course made before the Prime Minister put his weight behind the campaign and, could I humbly add, before I became the Minister for cycling and the champion for cycling? I hope that with the additional impetus, enthusiasm and money that the Government are providing we will see a much greater emphasis on cycling and getting more people on two wheels.

I have to say that the recent publicity has probably not helped. The perception among many people may be that cycling is more dangerous than it actually is. I am not predicting what might be in your report, but I hope that it will contribute to the debate about the actual dangers of cycling.

Q75 Chair: Is the model wrong?

Mr Goodwill: The model was based on information available to it at the time, which was in July. Since then we have seen particular announcements to do with money going into cycling—the cycling cities. Because of the recent interest, we are looking with even more interest at how we can improve signage and make other vehicles more aware of cyclists. To an extent we can improve the design of vehicles. Over and above the figures we have published, the assumption is that if we introduce these new, smarter measures we expect that cycling trips could increase by 5% in 2015, 7.5% in 2025 and 10% in 2035. We need to be more ambitious and make sure that cycling is promoted as not only a very green and environmentally friendly way of getting around—a way of beating the traffic jams in London—but also a very sustainable way of travelling.

Q76 Chair: A lot of the measures that are being proposed to make cycling safer would be the responsibility of local authorities. As the cycling champion, what is it that you, as Minister, could do to promote cycling and make it both safer and perceived as safer?

Mr Goodwill: I was in Leeds on Monday cycling around the streets looking at some of the good things and bad things. I was in London cycling on Friday, as you probably saw, and we saw some terrible provision of cycle facilities, but also some very good provision. As the Minister responsible for cycling, I can get round the country, see good practice and make sure it is spread around.

I think I can provide a leadership that captures a vast range of experience and expertise across cycling stakeholder groups, and develop the best policies based on their advice and input. I have already met a number of cycling groups who have given me their input. It is important that the Government should promote cycling as a good, safe activity through profile building, press activity and campaigns and so on, and respond to the media, because often media interest in this does not go to an individual local authority—it tends to come to the Department. As a person who has enjoyed cycling for a number of years in North Yorkshire, and who for six or seven years has been commuting by cycle to Parliament, I hope people will appreciate that I am not just a Johnny-come-lately to the cycling fraternity.

Q77 Jim Fitzpatrick: Minister, it is very good to see you here this afternoon. As well as being a cyclist, I remember you also have a background in road haulage, which obviously is a key issue for the cycling community. On Monday, we heard from the Freight Transport Association, the Road Haulage Association and Mayor Johnson's cycling tsar, Mr Gilligan. They said that, whereas there are some companies like CEMEX, who have been pioneering sensors, extra mirrors and best practice, and spending a lot of money on their vehicles, it was quite clear from the Vauxhall initiative that almost every single HGV stopped was infringing the regulations in one way or another. The RHA and the FTA both said that there were cowboy outfits operating in the road haulage industry and that the regulations were being flouted by some.

Forgive me that preamble. Do you think the Department or the Home Office, through the police, are doing enough to enforce safety regulations on the road haulage industry? There are good companies like Crossrail who require their contractors and their supply chain to demonstrate that safety is a huge issue on the roads. Can you comment on that general area about the road haulage industry, and whether it can and should do more, or whether there should be more regulation and more enforcement?

Mr Goodwill: I am also the Minister responsible for VOSA, who are the people who do the roadside checks. As you say, I have worked as a lorry driver, driving chemical tankers on the motorways, generally keeping out of city centres, as they were not necessarily good places to drive a truck, but I am aware of the difficulties that truck drivers face in spotting cyclists. I am very pleased that a large number of cyclists have had the opportunity to sit in the cab of a truck and see what they can actually see through the mirrors. In the compulsory basic training that truck drivers need to take, many of the courses and many of the haulage companies that promote these courses and put their drivers through them look at how they can help their drivers understand the problems that cyclists face.

Personally I think it would be no bad idea to get truck drivers on cycles, although judging by the physique of some of them that might not be as easy as it may sound. It is important that truck drivers understand the problems that cyclists face and cyclists understand the problems that truck drivers face. Indeed, if you have driven a truck you will know how dangerous it is to ride down the inside of a lorry that is waiting at traffic lights. There is a blind spot on an articulated truck round about where the drive wheel is, where it is very difficult to see where people are. We can do more in terms of forward stop zones for cycles, and maybe also look at how we could have an advance signal so that cyclists can get away before trucks start.

In relation to VOSA enforcement, it was very disappointing to see that so many trucks were picked up for faults. It seems that the construction sector was particularly to blame. The worst types of trucks were carrying scaffolding; a lot of their loads were not properly fixed to the lorry. I know that VOSA will continue to enforce that particular issue.

Without the need to go for tougher regulation, we have the opportunity to do something, in that many large construction contracts, some of which are Government schemes—Crossrail, for example; we are also going to be digging some very big tunnels for HS2—can stipulate higher levels of vehicle specification that take into account the need for trucks to operate in an urban environment.

What might be helpful—the Committee might agree with me—is that it would be quite useful to have an agreed higher specification, so that a truck that was operating on Crossrail would be improved to the same standard as one operating on another contract. At the moment, we seem to have discrepancies between them. It would be a very good idea if we

had an elevated agreed status that could then be put into bids for contracts without the need actually to have regulation; it would be part of the contract.

Q78 Jim Fitzpatrick: That is very interesting. Given your last comments about the higher specification for particular contracts, and given that VOSA generally operate outside urban areas, dealing with heavy goods vehicles on motorways coming out of ports and so on, do you think there is a differential between HGVs in the safety requirements on those within urban areas as opposed to motorway traffic? Is that something you might want to look at?

Mr Goodwill: The vast majority of trucks on the roads of this country are articulated trucks that operate on the motorway network. We have seen a lot of construction in London with Crossrail, the Olympics and the super sewer, and there is a lot of development around places like King's Cross as well, so we have seen large numbers of construction trucks, cement mixers and other similar vehicles around London. As these contracts are negotiated it would be a good idea if we could have a higher spec.

Some construction trucks need to operate off-road in quarries, and I am told that the side rails that would be fitted would possibly not be appropriate, but certainly construction vehicles operating in an urban environment could well be fitted with those. We need to think very carefully before we start specifying movement detectors. We do not want a situation where the truck driver is being constantly distracted by pictures on his camera or by detectors, which may be set off by street furniture or other things. Any moves to improve the specification across the board on vehicles needs to be based on actual research that shows that these are not only effective but also practical and do not cause distraction to the driver.

Q79 Chair: Minister, you are talking about addressing this very major issue of the lack of visibility of cyclists from people in heavy goods vehicles and other vehicles by specifications in contracts, but isn't there some ministerial responsibility? What can you, as a Minister, do to make business act more in this area? It is an issue that was raised a lot in our hearing on Monday and it is clearly a very major issue. In your own evidence to us in the memorandum you sent, you talk about discussions taking place at European level about regulation on better visibility, but it is unclear from your memorandum what is actually happening with that. Isn't there something that you can do as a Minister to make this happen, instead of putting the onus on business?

Mr Goodwill: Having lived in the European Union as an MEP for five years, I understand how frustratingly slow the process can often be. If we can make progress at a European level, we should certainly do so. It is often down to the timetable of the Commission as to when we next revisit this, but if we are going to improve the European regulations we possibly need to base that on experience with our higher specification, which I referred to, to see whether it would be a good idea to extend it across the whole sector.

Q80 Chair: But in changing those specifications, what can you do, as a Minister, to make that happen? You have put forward an idea—a proposal—but what can you actually do as a Minister to make that happen?

Mr Goodwill: Obviously, as a Minister I am a member of the Council and can therefore raise it with other members of the Council. Most importantly, the Commission is the initiator of these sorts of changes. Liaison with the Commissioner himself, Mr Kallas, and also with his Cabinet, who deal with that sort of issue, would be good. I will be looking very

carefully at your report to see if there are any aspects that we can feed through to the European Union and the Commission to see if we can get some of them adopted.

I know that you have taken evidence from the Road Haulage Association. They no doubt have their own views as to what would be practical and effective. What we must not do is have a knee-jerk reaction—something must be done; therefore let's fit cameras; let's fit detection sensors. Everything needs to be based on scientific evidence and research.

Q81 Chair: But is this something that you will take forward as a ministerial initiative?

Mr Goodwill: Certainly. In my response to your report, I will make clear what steps I will take following that report. They may well include making representations to the Commission to look at incorporating some of your suggestions and recommendations.

Q82 Chair: I am also thinking of things that could be done here that do not require the Commission to agree.

Mr Goodwill: It is often difficult to go over and above what regulation says. It could well be that any regulations we introduce would apply not only to vehicles used in London but to those which operate across borders. We already have one non-sea border with the Irish Republic. It could well be the situation that, if we were trying to enforce a higher UK specification, we would have trucks coming in from continental Europe that would not comply, and that would put us in a very difficult situation. In London there is good scope for contractual and voluntary agreements and codes of practice, as well as using the good offices of the Traffic Commissioners to try to spread good practice. We could easily move forward in London without the necessity of waiting for the slow and tortuous process of getting agreement across the European Union. Who knows, what we propose in London may be a serious problem in Greece, where they take their trucks on to rubbish tips, for example. Who knows what other problems may be brought up, but I will certainly look very carefully at the recommendations and, if necessary, make representations to the European Commission to see if we can move the regulation forward at a European level.

Q83 Sarah Champion: I would like to take you back to the subject of local authorities. Are you concerned that the Local Government Association has told us that “resources for new cycling initiatives or overhauls of road layout and signage are extremely stretched” because of funding cuts?

Mr Goodwill: We are spending twice as much as the previous Government on cycling: £94 million has gone into our cycling ambition grants for cities and national parks. Cities such as Manchester, Leeds, where I was on Monday, Birmingham, Newcastle, where I am tomorrow, Bristol, Cambridge, Oxford and Norwich, and the New Forest, Peak District, South Downs and Dartmoor have benefited from that money. They will have resources. We have had £30 million for cycling infrastructure at rail stations and in communities. Indeed, I was at Shipley railway station on Monday this week and saw very good facilities for cycle parking and also a Yorkshire version of the Boris bike scheme, which seemed to be operating very well. We will be adding about 13,500 new cycle parking spaces at stations, which will double cycle parking at stations.

With regard to cycle infrastructure in communities, we will fund 76 new and improved cycling and walking links. I am sorry to list all these, but this is all happening: £35 million will improve safety at junctions, £15 million was allocated to TfL and £20 million was allocated to England, outside London, and will fund schemes in 78 locations. Ninety-four of the 96 projects being funded through the £600 million local sustainable transport fund schemes include a cycling element. This fund has been boosted by a further £100 million capital and £78.5 million revenue funding to 2015-16.

As part of the High Speed 2 project, we are looking at how we can use the corridor that is being created to have opportunities for walking and cycling. I am not talking about a trackside cycle path; some of the land that is being acquired would be available not only to have recreational cycle routes but also to develop better links for cycles, which are separated from other traffic, to get to urban destinations.

Q84 Sarah Champion: Does that mean that you are not concerned at the Local Government Association's concern over lack of funding?

Mr Goodwill: I am well aware of the problems faced by local authorities. North Yorkshire, my own area, has had to cope with quite savage cuts. I will not bore the Committee by explaining why this Government have had to make cuts in public spending; we all know the reasons. I also understand that local authorities have a number of statutory obligations to do with social services, education and the pensioners' concessionary bus scheme, which they have to fund. That means that the discretionary part of their spending is being squeezed, which is why I was so pleased that the Prime Minister was able to announce particular funding for cycling projects around the country. I do understand that local authorities are under an increasing amount of pressure. That makes the challenge to ensure that we can get money into cycling even greater. A number of local authorities in North Yorkshire employ cycling and sustainable transport officers, and so far the cuts have not extended to cutting them.

There are some quick gains to be had from some less expensive schemes. Having looked at a number of locations in London and elsewhere, it is not necessarily the most expensive scheme that is the best scheme. Some of the very cheap schemes can be very cost-effective. To give you two examples from London, when I was in Camden I saw the use of armadillos—small cycling segregation street furniture that can be fastened on to the road. That is very cheap and effective compared with an expensive separation scheme between cycles and cars. I saw the roundabout at Lambeth where a lot of money had been spent putting a cycle path through the middle, but the signalling was so confusing that no cyclists were using it. It is important that we look at how we can come up with cheap and cost-effective measures that local authorities can adopt. It does not always involve spending very large sums of money on some of these all-singing, all-dancing schemes.

Q85 Sarah Champion: On Monday, some of the groups said that when a blackspot was identified they would make recommendations to a local authority to get some structural infrastructure changes made, but the response they got from local authorities was very patchy. How do you oversee that local authorities are spending their money wisely?

Mr Goodwill: Probably the best way to do that is by ensuring that we share best practice. We also need to look at signage. I do not know whether you have had any evidence on signage, but there are particular problems with some of the very prescriptive rules that local authorities have to apply. I will give you just one example, from Leeds. Members

will be aware of the bumpy paving stones—I am sure there is a technical word—that blind and partially sighted people can use to detect where there is a crossing. The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions, which is the thick tome that all highway engineers use, say they should extend across the pavement to the edge. In the particular location, the edge of the pavement was about 8 or 10 metres away, but they had extended them right across because that is what it said in the rules.

I think we need to revisit some of those regulations and, in particular, look at how we can better facilitate contra-flow cycling down one-way streets. I was in the City of London last Friday and there was an area where we could not get through because it was a one-way street. There was plenty of room to have a cycle lane going the opposite way. Indeed, we got off our cycles and wheeled them. Because I am a Minister I thought I might be spotted, but I suspect that a lot of cyclists might have cycled the wrong way up a one-way street, which is something we do not want to encourage.

We need to look at how we can have better signing and branding for cycle routes. I cycle on the blue superhighways every morning. That is a brilliant way of being able to recognise them, but across the country there is no particular branding that can easily be recognised by people—“This is a cycle route and this is where I need to be.” We need to look at the design of advance stop lines. It is not expensive; it is paint on the road. We need to look at how Trixi mirrors can be used more at junctions to help lorry drivers and others see vehicles. There also needs to be greater flexibility for local authorities in installing 20 mph zones.

We are reviewing the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions bible—for want of a better word—and looking at how we can encourage a little more innovation from local authorities and make the rules a little bit less prescriptive. I will give you one example which I think is crazy, and I hope my officials are listening. Members may well have seen the traffic lights with a little green bicycle on and a little amber bicycle, but we are not allowed to have a little red bicycle, for some strange reason. If you are waiting at a junction and you see it is red, you are not quite sure whether or not that is a cycle signal, until it turns green and then you know it is. Similarly, we need more low-level signals so that cyclists can see them up close rather than having to look somewhere on the other side of the junction. There is a lot we can do with signalling and signage that is not necessarily very expensive but will make it easier for cyclists to understand where they need to be and easier for traffic engineers to delineate better cycling provision on our roads.

Q86 Chair: Are you giving local authorities guidance on these issues? Are you following the different practices of different local authorities?

Mr Goodwill: The current state of play is that we are reviewing the regulations in the book. They really do seem to be fundamentalist in the way that traffic engineers apply them. Maybe they are frightened to death that, if something goes wrong when they put the sign 10 cm further away than it should be, they will get into some sort of legal mix-up or be held responsible. We are looking at how we can review this.

I have had feedback from local authorities and London that it is impossible to trial things and that they are not allowed much flexibility. In some cases, there may be good reasons for it; if something dangerous is trialled and somebody gets killed, the local authority or the Department could be held responsible. I want to see how we can more quickly adopt some of

the best practice and get better signage. The signs that were designed 10 or 20 years ago were not designed particularly for the large numbers of cyclists using our roads. We need to revisit how we can have better signage for cyclists so that people are in less doubt about where they need to be. Perhaps we can encourage cyclists to comply with red lights, for example. If they know they are going to get an early green light for cycles only, to get away from the traffic, they will not be tempted to go through on a red light, as some occasionally do.

Q87 Sarah Champion: Could DFT's duty on local authorities to keep traffic flowing be reviewed for urban areas?

Mr Goodwill: I am not sure. I have had conversations with officials in the past, particularly in relation to 20 mph zones and the application of blanket 20 mph zones. It is important to recognise that, in cities that are not served well by ring roads and where it would not be appropriate or possible to have shared-space schemes or more segregation, it is difficult to have 20 mph zones for through routes. Of course the opportunity for having 20 mph zones in more residential areas may allow us to put in more cycle routes that are not down the side of the main road but can make their way through some other residential or quieter areas. There is a lot to be done and some local authorities have taken the lead, such as Cambridge and Bristol. Others have probably not thought about it too much. We can share best practice.

Certainly if Members would like to suggest places where I can go to see best practice, which could then be shared round the country, I would be delighted to do it. By the way, could I extend an invitation to the Committee to cycle the route that I cycled last Friday with my officials? They were showing me the good, the bad and the ugly. They would be more than happy to do that so you could see what I saw, which was some very good practice, where money had been spent very effectively, and some absolute nightmares—for example, a cycle path on a pavement but there was no way of getting on to the pavement. It was just on the pavement and meant to be a cycle path.

Karl McCartney: Mr Vickers is getting his lycra ready.

Mr Goodwill: I will even lend him my Brompton. If anyone doesn't have a cycle down in London, I'll lend them my Brompton.

Q88 Miss Smith: I am a cyclist who does indeed own lots of lycra and uses it regularly in anger and in peace. I know that you, Mr Goodwill, are also a cyclist and we have discussed some of these problems many times. I ought to say first that my own city, Norwich, is gratefully enjoying part of the fund that you referred to earlier. We are very much looking forward to some improvements, including some of the things that need to be ironed out, such as problematic cycle paths. I have experienced them myself. That is to the positive.

I would like to ask questions about data and how you know what works. We heard from our session on Monday, and in other evidence, some concerns, particularly about the STATS19 dataset. First, what do you know about the causes of accidents and the causes of some of the recent tragic accidents? I would then like to ask you how you know what works within the spending that you are planning to do.

Mr Goodwill: The main source of information about road accidents and their causes comes from the details of accidents reported to the police that involve injury to at least one person. As you say, that is commonly known as the STATS19 data. These reports contain detailed information relating to, first, the accident conditions and circumstances, such as

the road type and the weather conditions. About 40 pieces of information are recorded for each of those accidents.

It also records the number and types of vehicle involved, including information about the drivers or riders of each vehicle. That is about 25 pieces of information per vehicle. It lists the casualties in an accident—about 15 pieces of information—and the factors the reporting officer suspects may have contributed to the accident. I have a very detailed annex which contains a lot of information and perhaps it would be helpful to make that available to the Committee rather than reading it out. I have some pretty good information along those lines that may well assist you in terms of that particular side of it.

Chair: It would be helpful if you could do that.

Q89 Miss Smith: The second half of my question is how do you intend to use such data as you have—and which we will no doubt see—to be sure that your proposed schemes are going to achieve an effect? What effect do you expect; when will you know if it has been achieved; and how will you know if it was good value for money?

Mr Goodwill: We know, for example, that in 2012, 23 cyclists died in two-vehicle accidents with HGVs in Great Britain. This represents 24% of all cyclists killed in two-vehicle accidents. Pedal cyclists injured by HGVs are more likely to be killed or seriously injured than those injured by other vehicles, and almost one third of pedal cycle casualties in accidents with HGVs were KSIs compared with 16% of pedal cycle casualties in accidents involving other vehicles. If you are involved in an accident with an HGV and you are on a bicycle, you are much more likely to be killed or injured than in an accident with another vehicle.

HGVs are disproportionately involved in fatal accidents with cyclists. HGVs account for about 5% of motor vehicle traffic in Great Britain, yet were involved with 20% of cycling fatalities in the last five years. In London, HGVs are even more disproportionately involved in fatal cycling accidents. HGVs account for just 3% of motor vehicle traffic in London, yet they were involved in 37% of cycling fatalities in the last five years. They are quite chilling statistics and underline why we need to concentrate on what we can do to improve the safety of cyclists who are cycling in the vicinity of HGVs, and how we can improve the safety record of the haulage industry on the streets of London.

Q90 Miss Smith: What do you expect to achieve, by when and how will you know if the schemes are value for money?

Mr Goodwill: Obviously the headline data is the number of accidents. The good news, as I am sure you have probably heard, though it is difficult to describe it as good news, is the fact that fewer people have been killed. Ten years ago, 21 people were killed on the streets of London. Last year there were 14, and this year we were doing very well until the recent two-week period when six people were killed. We are up to 14 now, so if there are no more fatal accidents we will maintain the level at 14, which is still 14 too many.

Some people who have read recent media coverage of this imagine that there is carnage on the streets of London. In terms of the risk per billion kilometres cycled or walked, both cycling and walking are equally as safe or equally as dangerous, depending on how you want to describe it. Given the increase in cycling traffic on the streets of London, cycling is about 25% safer per kilometre than it was 10 years ago, so we are improving. That may

be due to a number of factors, including better cycling provision on the streets and better and more experienced cyclists, as they have had longer to cycle.

A good argument is the safety in numbers argument. If you have a lot of cyclists on the streets, drivers look out for them because they expect to see them. In Leeds, where I was on Monday, there were very few cyclists out on the streets, and therefore motorists and lorry drivers might be tempted not to look out for them all the time. In London you look out for cyclists all the time because they are there, everywhere. The safety in numbers factor is one that I hope we can build on. The more cyclists we have on our streets, the more chance there is that motorists and other road users will look out for them all the time.

Q91 Miss Smith: We all share many of those sentiments. Would you perhaps be able to come back to us with some examples among your list of schemes of places where you expect to be able to lay out a quantifiable result and, where relevant, how quickly you expect to be able to get to them and what the kind of costs to the public purse are of doing so?

Mr Goodwill: Yes. Certainly we know about the Bow roundabout, which is probably the best known blackspot in London. Work is going on there to improve the situation. Over time, with luck, I hope we will discover that the improvements have yielded a safer road.

It has to be said that we have a lot to learn from the continent—places like Denmark and Holland; they have roundabouts in Holland that are particularly easy for cyclists to use. I hope that we can share some of the best practice we have seen on the continent to further build on that. A lot of minds are being bent to try to come up with solutions to some of the road safety issues in terms of cyclists. This Committee is in an excellent position to try and pick some of the better ideas and maybe discard some of the worst or more impractical ideas. It would be very easy to say, “Let’s ban lorries from London.” That is fine, but who is going to empty your bins? Who is going to bring the bottled water that we use here? Who is going to bring the papers that we have in Parliament? They come on trucks. It is tempting to go for some of those quick fixes without looking at the practicalities.

I cannot see that banning trucks from London is particularly practical. Apparently Paris has, but it is only as big as the area of zone 1 and I think there are a lot of exemptions. It would need a lot of changes to the way that people do their business. For example, if we banned construction traffic from London it would mean that all construction would by and large take place at night. That would have implications for neighbourhoods. It is tempting to be beguiled by some of these quick fixes, but we need a joined-up approach, looking at trucks, road design, cyclist training and other factors that together can give us continued improvement. We have had improvements and, if we can look at some of the best practice on the continent and here, we can continue to make improvements and encourage people to get on their bikes on the roads. The health benefits of cycling far outweigh the risks of going on the roads.

Q92 Miss Smith: I have one further question about joined-up data, which you quite rightly hinted at there. One issue that begs for joined-up work across Government is enforcement. I could draw on a constituency example where some residents are begging the police to take more enforcement action on a particularly difficult junction. I would like to know how well you work—and indeed how you work—with your Home Office colleagues on patterns of enforcement that may, when applied with the right evidence-based approach, produce results.

Mr Goodwill: In terms of trucks, VOSA tend to work in conjunction with the police on checks. It sounds to me as if it is the case that VOSA have not been as active on the streets of London as they have been on the motorways and main roads of the country in pulling up trucks. That has changed. We have seen a lot more activity. We have seen police pulling up trucks and we have seen a lot of trucks that have not been compliant—and, dare I say, we have also seen a lot of cyclists who have had to have advice about complying with the rules of the road. In some ways it is a London issue. Up north, cyclists tend to stay behind a red light. In London, there is almost a culture of going before it changes to green to get out of the way.

VOSA have a very good risk-alerting scheme where they give particular hauliers an amber or red designation. That is based on a number of factors, including lorries that have been stopped and found defective; they look at the defects that are found at MOT tests and other factors. With the automatic number plate detection systems that the police have, they can single out vehicles that are likely to be non-compliant because they have previously had a bad record.

The Traffic Commissioners also have a part to play. Obviously hauliers are given operators' licences. If they are found to be repeatedly non-compliant in terms of the condition of their vehicles, infringement of drivers' hours regulations or other infringements to do with the record-keeping and financial standing that they need to demonstrate, the Traffic Commissioners are very robust in the way they deal with errant hauliers. In fact, I recently had a meeting with Beverley Bell, the lead Traffic Commissioner, and she made it quite clear that they have very low levels of tolerance to that type of cowboy operator, who can present a risk on our roads to other people. From the reports that I am getting, it looks very much like VOSA are much more active on the streets of London; they are targeting construction traffic.

As we have seen from the figures on non-compliance, there are disappointingly low levels of compliance. Some operators in London need to up their act and make sure that they are compliant. To be fair to the haulage industry, I am also told that not all the defects found were considered dangerous, but they were defects and would have meant MOT failures had they been presented at test.

Q93 Jason McCartney: Minister, this is one of quite a few evidence sessions on cycle safety. We have certainly found out since our session on Monday that there is a lot of advice and suggestions available from various groups, governing bodies and charities. I am interested in exploring how you engage with those bodies, charities and groups on this important issue of cycle safety. How aware are you of the "Get Britain Cycling" summary and recommendations? That was a report done earlier this year by the all-party parliamentary group on cycling. Mr Fitzpatrick and I sat on that panel and we took much evidence. In fact, the first message in the summary of the inquiry is "the need for vision, ambition and strong political leadership, including a national Cycling Champion". That has already been achieved, which is good, but there are other recommendations about redesigning roads—which we have already talked about—safe driving, safe speeding limits, training and education. I want to explore how you are engaging with all the wealth of excellent experience and advice that is coming at you from all directions.

Mr Goodwill: Even before the recent press interest in the problems of cycling safety I had a number of meetings. Some of the very first meetings I had as a Minister were with cycling groups. Chris Boardman, of whom I think you are aware, was at one of the meetings, together with other members. Before I was appointed to the Government I was a

member of the all-party cycling group. I know Adam Coffman very well and was pleased to engage with that group. I would be more than happy to engage with them.

On Tuesday of this week, we had a road haulage forum, including the Road Haulage Federation, the Freight Transport Association and a number of other stakeholders in that area. We discussed one or two issues involving cycle safety at that meeting. The point was made about local authorities, but as a Government Minister I have the opportunity to engage with the cycling interest groups, who I hope not only represent the lycra cyclists but also the basket-on-the-handlebars cyclists. We need to be very careful to ensure that the group we meet actually represents the whole cycling fraternity. There are very large numbers of cyclists who are not represented by anybody. For example, children who cycle tend not to be represented by anybody. We need to be careful that, yes, we make sure we listen to all the stakeholder groups but also that we bear in mind that there are a large number of people who would not consider themselves as campaigning cyclists who want to change anything. We need to ensure that we engage with them.

If anyone wants to describe me as a cycling champion, I would be delighted to adopt that epithet.

Q94 Jason McCartney: In terms of recommendations, will you and your officials once again cast your eyes over this report and see what evidence and advice you can take from it?

Mr Goodwill: We certainly will. I hope that this Committee might pre-filter it to give us the benefit of your experience during this investigation to try and pick which ones you think we should prioritise. I have been a member of this Committee, though only one member now was a member when I started—Madam Chairman. Having seen how Select Committees can work, I would want to listen to what you have to say, having filtered what is in there and picked what you think might be the best aspects. Certainly I engage with all groups and will be very happy not only to have a look at it myself but to get my officials to look at the recommendations.

Q95 Jason McCartney: As an MP for a Yorkshire constituency where a lot of cycling is leisure cycling as a result of the Tour de France coming through our area in July next year, I am particularly pleased that you mentioned the fact that it is not just commuting cycling that we are talking about. We had a bad accident in my constituency in the summer when a cycling champion was left in a coma for three months, so I am glad you mentioned that.

On Monday, I think there was a general feeling from the witnesses that there were rules and regulations in place, both for motorists and cyclists, but that these were not being enforced. Is this something that you have picked up on when looking at cycle safety?

Mr Goodwill: Yes. As a cyclist who obeys the rules of the road, I always feel a bit like the dog owner who cleans up and then gets blamed for what other people do on the pavement. It is an issue. Funnily enough, when I was out last Friday—I do not know whether it was a coincidence—there were police officers at junctions reminding people of the need to comply with signals. People are putting themselves at risk by ignoring signals. Cyclists are putting pedestrians at risk because often when a cyclist goes through on red it is during the green-man phase when the pedestrians are crossing. A better level of compliance generally between all road users would improve safety.

We also need to understand to some extent why some cyclists feel they need to get away from a junction before the light turns green. We cannot condone that, but maybe we should look at having an early start green bicycle signal to allow the cyclist to get away legally. We are looking at how that can be delivered in a way that has been correctly tested by our traffic engineers to make sure that we are not putting people at risk by doing it.

There is a real issue, and it is a London issue, with non-compliance. I was reading that some taxi drivers put a camera on a junction and found very large levels of non-compliance with red signals. That is not good, and the police, from what I have seen, are advising people. I do not know how many people they have fined; they have powers to fine. I hope that we will manage to improve general levels of compliance by cyclists, with the police and other agencies working together.

Q96 Jason McCartney: And motorists as well?

Mr Goodwill: Yes. Motorists have number plates on their cars. If they run a red light, they always risk the fact that a camera might catch them, or if they go where they are not meant to in a bus lane. Cyclists can go in bus lanes. Motorists have a number plate and therefore they feel a little bit more vulnerable to being prosecuted, whereas cyclists think they can get away with it. I am certainly not advocating that bicycles have number plates, but a police presence at junctions where we have seen problems in the past has been happening in the last few weeks and days. If we can improve levels of compliance, that would be good. The police have powers to prosecute, and in some cases they may well feel that would be appropriate.

Q97 Chair: We heard a suggestion that the police have been given instructions to target cyclists. When we put this to the police commander who came to our session on Monday, he denied it. Do you have any information on that? There was a feeling that cyclists were being targeted and that perhaps bad behaviour by car drivers was being taken less seriously.

Mr Goodwill: I have certainly not had any communication from the Met Police that they are targeting cyclists, but I have seen police officers and PCSOs at junctions, with a fairly visible presence. I understand that a number of cyclists have been advised as to what their responsibilities are under the law. Policing is a matter for the police, and I would not seek to interfere with their activities, but I have noticed that there has been a bit more of a police presence at certain junctions. I have seen it myself.

Q98 Chair: Some of the figures we have seen, and indeed some of the things you said this afternoon, about the connection between accidents for cyclists and collisions with heavy goods vehicles, are really very stark. Do you think there is a proper safety culture in the road haulage business?

Mr Goodwill: The vast majority of road haulage companies have a very responsible attitude to safety. They probably adopt the mantra that, if you think health and safety is expensive, try having an accident. We need to ensure that there is a culture of safety across the industry. Certainly the advice I have from officials is that the large transport companies adopt a very responsible attitude to driver training. We now have the CPC training, which has elements of awareness of cyclists and road safety. The problems we picked up on the streets of London are with some of the smaller operators—they could be

described as cowboy operators—who are not as aware of their responsibilities in terms of vehicle defects, drivers' hours regulations and the rest.

Where there are accidents and HGVs are involved, we need to see exactly what factors have come to bear. We need to know whether the vehicle was defective, whether the driver was not looking or whether the mirrors, the signalling on the road or the street furniture were not right, so that we can look at how we can improve that. The vast majority of those who operate in the road haulage industry are responsible and do take safety very seriously. The Traffic Commissioners themselves, who can issue and withdraw operators' licences, are very aware of their responsibility to ensure safe road haulage operations on our roads.

Q99 Chair: As a Minister, would you be asking questions about road safety training in relation to cyclists, coming from within the road haulage industry? Would you be asking questions about what is going on?

Mr Goodwill: Yes. Certainly the CPC driver training is a very good opportunity. I am sure you are aware that drivers have to have five days' training, which will have to be completed by September of next year, and thereafter they need to do one day a year training. Particularly for vehicles that operate in urban environments, I would wish to see modules produced that include cycle awareness training and other road safety-type training.

It is important that we do not try to be too prescriptive. There are other operators who operate solely on the motorway network, and other aspects of operation may be more important to them. There are operators in the chemical industry, for example, where it is important to concentrate on particular aspects of safety to do with the carriage of dangerous goods. It would not be a good idea to have a national curriculum for the CPC training that did not take into account the different types of operations that a haulier engaged in. For example, if you are transporting hay and straw it might be very important to learn how to stack a load of hay on a lorry and rope it properly so that it does not fall off, but if you are transporting containers that is not something that should be there.

I am certainly looking forward to getting a bit of feedback from the industry as to how they want to continue to develop the CPC training. I have heard some horror stories about some courses—not organised by the operators themselves—where basically the driver just turns up, goes into the upstairs room of a pub and looks out of the window, because there isn't an exam to pass; you just have to attend the course. I hope they are isolated incidents. In fact, I am pretty confident that they are isolated incidents. At the start of the CPC process, there were one or two courses which were more about ticking the box than about delivering good training. I can promise the Committee that I will be taking a personal interest in how these types of courses evolve and develop and how they can be seen as a useful contribution to safety in the road haulage industry, and not just, "I went into the room, sat there for a day, looked out of the window and ticked the box." It is important that we make sure that the opportunity is not lost.

Q100 Jim Fitzpatrick: Can I take you back, Minister, to the important point you made about signage? For motorised vehicles, drivers will know, if they are approaching a motorway, a dual carriageway, an A road or a B road, what to expect in terms of the type of surface they will be driving on. Is there any guidance for cyclists from the Department as to

how local authorities should describe cycle routes? We have cycle paths, cycle routes, cycleways and segregated cycleways, and in London we have the cycle superhighways. Some of them are excellent, because they are completely segregated and very safe, but some are no more than a lick of paint on a main road and are very dangerous. Some of us think they are a complete misnomer and should not be called cycle superhighways because they are not super by any description. Is there any guidance from the Department to local authorities as to how to advise cyclists? I am not suggesting for a second that there should be a regulated, prescriptive recipe, but is there guidance to say to local authorities, "If you have something for cyclists, describe it this way so that cyclists will know what kind of environment they are cycling into"?

Mr Goodwill: The cycle superhighways work fine until you get to a junction or zebra crossing, or until a vehicle parked on the road is blocking the superhighway, in which case you have to go round. As part of the general reform of the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions, which I referred to earlier, we need to see if we can have some consistency in the way that cycle routes are marked on the road and signed. Never mind different parts of the country; in different parts of London one sees completely different types of signage. It is something that we certainly need to do further work on, to make sure that we review the regulations in a way that not only provides some consistency but also, if you can do the two at the same time, gives more flexibility for local authorities to use a bit of common sense. At the moment, it seems that common sense goes out of the window as long as you adhere to the actual letter of the regulation.

Q101 Jim Fitzpatrick: Will you be asking your officials to look at this to try to get the consistency you are seeking?

Mr Goodwill: In 2011, we made some amendment to traffic signing to allow a range of new measures. For example, there was contra-flow cycling; new cycle route signing and branding; new designs of advance stop lines; the use of Trixi mirrors; and greater flexibility for installing 20 mph zones. There has already been some progress made, but certainly the impression I get is that the whole General Directions manual needs to be revised or made cycle-friendly. My officials, without being told to, have said, "We are looking at this and doing it so that we can get a more joined-up way of letting cyclists know where they can and cannot go and where they should and should not go." That will enable more local authorities, for example, to have cycle routes the wrong way up one-way streets, properly signed. In the past, there were some rather bizarre road markings that you had to put on the road at the start of that particular area. There were far too many signs, which were confusing in many ways. We need almost to go back to first base, to see how we can make sure that signage for cyclists is logical, easy to install and easy to use.

Q102 Martin Vickers: In view of recent tragedies, it was perhaps inevitable that our session on Monday focused more on London. In part, that was because of the range of witnesses. You have broadened it out by speaking in particular of North Yorkshire and so on. Your constituency, like mine, will have smaller market towns where the problems are the same inasmuch as, yes, clearly we want to avoid conflict between an HGV and a cyclist, but it is of a different order, and different measures may be more suitable for a small market town than for London or a larger city. Are you satisfied that local authorities are suitably innovative in that? In some towns, the problem exists only or mainly at school times, and there are particular initiatives that could be taken to get children to school more safely.

Mr Goodwill: The gold standard cycle route is one that is not mixed up with other vehicles. One of the advantages of rural areas is that there are often opportunities for corridors to be used. In my own constituency, we have the redundant rail track-bed from Scarborough to Whitby, which is now a walking and cycling route. Cyclists can use that without fear of encountering vehicles.

Maybe I should plead guilty, because one of the worst bits of cycle infrastructure I have seen is a Highways Agency one just outside my own constituency on the A64 Malton to Scarborough road. They put in a cycle track at the side of the main carriageway which, on more than two occasions, crosses the carriageway to the other side. You have a busy main A road with a cycle track on the left, and then you are expected to cross to the right for a few miles and then cross to the left again. As Members will probably have worked out for themselves, most cyclists just go on the carriageway and do not try crossing the road.

There may have been a bit of box ticking. “We have 30 miles of cycle route there and we can report back to our Ministers that we have delivered something really effective.” The problem is that the majority of people who would be cycling in that part of the country, where you are probably 15 miles from the nearest town, are recreational cyclists. Recreational cyclists do not want to cycle on the main road; they want to go on the back routes, enjoy the countryside and stop at a pub. You get very few cyclists using that road but, bizarrely, it is the one road in my constituency where they have a pretty good cycle track along the side—which nobody uses.

To be realistic, the types of cycle routes where we need to make more progress are the less than four-mile travel-to-work or travel-to-school routes. I know that local authorities are keen to do this. I know that they are a bit tight for money in some instances, but there are real opportunities. In a rural area, you do not have the same pressure for development or building. I am certainly looking forward to seeing some schemes that I have been told about and which work very well, sometimes using redundant transport corridors and sometimes managing to get cyclists away from cars. There are tremendous opportunities in rural areas, but we need to decide where people actually want to cycle. They want to cycle to work and school. We should not decide, “Because we have a road with a big wide verge, let’s put a cycle route along the side of it because it’s easy and cheap.”

Q103 Martin Vickers: Turning to the actual cost of infrastructure, which we know is escalating all the time, what is your Department doing to find different approaches that might reduce the cost? We heard from one witness on Monday that one particular scheme was £1 million per kilometre. It is hard to visualise why that should be the case. What action is being taken to try to secure better procurement and better methods?

Mr Goodwill: As you probably know, we are delivering a large number of infrastructure schemes—pinch-point schemes and major schemes around the country. We are spending three times as much as the previous Government did on road schemes. We are determined to make sure that where we deliver these schemes we make them cycle-friendly.

It is a challenge, particularly on the main road network where you have roundabouts and flyovers. It can be very expensive, but we are determined to make sure we can do that. We are also determined to make sure that opportunities on the HS2 corridor, as I mentioned, can be developed to provide cycle routes that are segregated from other vehicles.

There is still a lot to be done. Other countries are way ahead of us on this. We need to learn from what has happened in other countries to make cycling a more appealing transport choice. Certainly, as we deliver schemes up and down the country, we need to be intelligent

in the way we ensure that not only do we not discourage cyclists but we put in infrastructure that will encourage cyclists to use it.

Q104 Sarah Champion: Minister, I would like to get a bit of clarity from you on the answer you gave to Mr Fitzpatrick. Given that many cycle routes will obviously cross different local authority boundaries, who is responsible for co-ordinating that coherent joined-up strategy? Are you saying that the Department for Transport would take that on?

Mr Goodwill: Obviously local authorities are responsible for their own highway schemes.

Sarah Champion: But it is the joining-up bit of the route so that you do not have different marking systems and different investments. How is that co-ordinated?

Mr Goodwill: It is basically through the Transport Signs Regulations and General Directions tome that highway engineers use. We need to look at how we can particularly address the needs of cyclists in that document. For example, we have given Cambridgeshire county council permission to trial an early start signal for cyclists as an alternative way of allowing cyclists priority at traffic lights. Manchester is looking at a similar scheme. If the results are good, we would seek to spread good practice around the country.

In October 2012, Transport for London commissioned trial measures including low-level mini signals, new roundabout designs and new ways of helping cyclists turn left at traffic lights. We have been working closely with them on this. We are working with TfL and other steering groups on those trials. We are trialling particular types of infrastructure that we think will be an advantage. If those work as we hope they will, we can spread them round the country.

As I say, we are working on delivering even more changes by revising the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions book. These changes have been developed in conjunction with cycling stakeholders over the last five years. Measures being considered include, as I think I mentioned, removing the requirement for a lead-in lane for cyclists at advance stop lines; making it easier for highway authorities to install advance stop lines at junctions; having new traffic lights to give cyclists a head start at junctions; options for joint crossings for use by both pedestrians and cyclists; options for bigger cycle boxes or advance stop lines, to accommodate the growth of cycling and make it safer for cyclists at junctions; and removing the requirement from traffic orders for mandatory cycle lanes and exemptions for cyclists such as “No right turn except cycles”. This will all make it easier for local authorities to install cycle facilities.

In addition, we are looking at how armadillos—the bolt-on street markings—can be used. There are elephant’s feet—large square markings on the road—which indicate that a cycle route can be used. There is also the possibility of looking at Dutch-style roundabouts, where cyclists can circumnavigate the roundabout in a safe way. There are a number of areas we are already looking at, some of which are being trialled and some of which are being used now on the streets of London. As we continue to develop these initiatives and learn lessons from their application so that we are absolutely certain that they will deliver real safety improvements, we can try to ensure that we spread best practice around the country by putting them in the regulations.

I was at a meeting in Leeds with a lot of cycling groups and other groups on Monday. They were sharing best practice. A lot of local authorities were there from all over the

country, learning from each other about what does and does not work. The Department has a part to play in disseminating that type of best practice.

Q105 Jason McCartney: British Cycling’s policy adviser, Chris Boardman, is going to be giving evidence as we continue this inquiry. I want to try and pin you down on this issue of a national cycling champion, which was in the “Get Britain Cycling” report. Did you say that you are the national cycling champion, or are you going to look to appoint another figure to champion these issues and causes?

Mr Goodwill: I think we have a lot of cycling champions in this country. As a Minister, I will be one of them. People like Chris Boardman are already championing cycling around the country. I would have to give it some thought before deciding whether it was advisable to have a champion as such. We have had in the past an awful lot of tsars and champions, and various people being appointed with varying success. I had a meeting with Chris and many of his colleagues and other stakeholders. The Secretary of State was at that meeting, so we are certainly looking at it at the highest possible levels.

I suspect that, if this Committee recommended we should have a cycling champion, it would be very hard to say no.

Jim Fitzpatrick: You would accept the nomination?

Mr Goodwill: That may be a step too far.

Q106 Jason McCartney: But that is something you would consider?

Mr Goodwill: In the past politicians have often said, “Here is a problem. What shall we do about it? Let’s appoint a tsar or a champion.” It has sometimes ended right there and the tsar or the champion has suddenly thought, “What is my role?” Before you appoint a champion you need to ensure that that champion’s role is specifically laid out. Is that champion going to be the person who looks at regulation, cycle lanes and all the technical stuff? Is that person just going to be somebody who goes to the media and talks about cycling to encourage people to do it? Before we appoint a champion we need to be absolutely sure what the role of that champion is.

As Minister for cycling, among one or two other things that I have in my portfolio, I see my role as ensuring that the interests of cyclists are represented, that cycling is made safer and that we ensure that in the capital projects we are delivering we take account of cyclists in as many schemes as possible. Obviously on the motorway network we do not have cyclists.

I look forward to reading your report and seeing how we can move forward. I am just cautious that we do not just think, “This is a quick fix. We will appoint a champion,” but then we do not give that person the resources or the role to do what they want to do. Personally, I think that every single person who has a cycle in this country should be a cycling champion. I have always encouraged other people to cycle. I hope that other people do the same. I hope that we will not have a situation where we appoint a champion and say, “That is dealt with and we can move on to other things.” We have had a number of tsars appointed over the years—Mr Fitzpatrick is smiling—and sometimes that has not been followed through with the delivery of what that champion was meant to produce. I look forward to your conclusions.

Q107 Chair: It was suggested to us in our first session that HGV operators with a poor safety record should be held corporately responsible for road deaths and serious injuries,

as they would be for accidents in the workplace, and with the same consequences. Do you agree with that proposal?

Mr Goodwill: It is already the situation that companies are corporately responsible for their drivers. Indeed, in order to be granted an operator's licence, operators must undertake to abide by legislation governing the proper maintenance and driving of HGVs and PCVs. The operator is liable for any roadworthiness defects of the vehicle and any overloading. As I mentioned, VOSA have been on the case in London in recent days, and picked up a lot of defective lorries. Operators are responsible for scheduling work to ensure that HGV drivers comply with their permitted driving and working-time hours. They are also required under health and safety at work legislation, so far as is reasonably practical, to ensure the health and safety of their employees while at work, and others who may be put at risk by their work activities. Operators are also liable under corporate manslaughter legislation. However, individuals are required to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions.

I have asked officials working with the Health and Safety Executive to explore whether the HSE should take a greater role in relation to some road accidents. Certainly, in terms of the Traffic Commissioners, they are already aware of their responsibilities.

I would mention one area where I think we need to take some action in terms of the safety of goods vehicles on our roads. It has been brought to my attention that the regulations, which are quite rightly there to allow some plant such as mobile cranes to be operated outside the regulations, also apply to volumetric mixers. They are an alternative to the normal ready-mix concrete truck that would bring your ready-mix and put it on your shed or wherever. They bring in the material separately, so you would get sand, cement and what have you. Because these are classified as plant and not goods vehicles, they are exempt from drivers' hours, the MOT test and a whole variety of testing.

Having had this drawn to my attention about three weeks ago, I noticed that there is an increasingly large number of these vehicles on our roads. They compete on what many would describe as an unfair basis with the traditional ready-mix trucks, and, because they do not have to comply with all the regulations, I am concerned as to the safety and operation of these vehicles. We are looking at how, and if, we should bring these vehicles, many of which operate on the streets of London, within the other regulations that apply to HGV vehicles. This is not a mobile cement plant that goes to a site and stays there for a few weeks making cement and then is moved to another site—we have concrete pumps, cranes and a number of vehicles that are specifically plant vehicles; these are vehicles that are used to transport the cement ingredients to the site. They then mix it and go to get more ingredients. I am very keen to see how we can bring these vehicles within the regulations. Many of the non-compliant vehicles on our roads will be vehicles of this type, which are exempt from the MOT, from drivers' hours and a whole variety of regulation. I believe we should look at bringing them within the regulations.

Q108 Chair: There are some interesting proposals. It looks as if your answer to the question is “possibly” or “maybe”. How long will it be before the changes you are talking about are put in place?

Mr Goodwill: In terms of the volumetric mixers, we need to ensure that the regulations are drafted in a way that actually does bring them within the regulation. As I am sure Members know, any change like this tends to have a consultation period. We then bring forward some draft recommendations and we need to look at whether it can be done

through a statutory instrument and modification of existing law or whether we need to bolt a clause on to some other piece of legislation.

Q109 Chair: Could you guess at a time scale?

Mr Goodwill: I am not going to guess as to the time scale, but I am certainly determined to make sure that it is done as quickly as is reasonably possible. We have identified a loophole that needs closing, and I am sure that any operators of volumetric mixers who are following this Committee's deliberations will be very disappointed to hear what I have just said.

Q110 Chair: Is enough appropriate training available for young people and also for adults in relation to cycling?

Mr Goodwill: For young riders, the Bikeability programme is being delivered around the country. The Department for Transport provides funding to local highway authorities and school games organisers to host schools for the delivery of Bikeability training to children between school year ages five to nine. Indeed, £24 million is available between April 2013 and March 2015, which will allow a minimum of 600,000 children to be trained, based on a maximum contribution of £40 per head. This is to levels 1 and 2. Level 3 is training on the road, which goes above and beyond the cycling proficiency test that people of my generation would have known. Indeed, 293,000 children took part in Bikeability training in 2011-12.

We also need to look at how Bikeability can be extended to adults. Bikeability is not only for children. There is a range of training available to suit all requirements, from the complete beginner wanting to boost their confidence to those wanting to develop more advanced skills. The Bikeability website contains information for those wishing to find a suitable cycle training provider. Indeed, some local authorities also provide free or subsidised adult cycle training.

The training of cyclists, particularly young cyclists, is very important. I think many people do not understand how to cycle in traffic. If you intend to turn right at a junction, the most dangerous place you can be is on the left-hand side of the road near the kerb. You need to take possession of your lane. If there is an advance stop area, you need to go into that advance stop area. You may even want to look round and see if there is a car behind you and look them in the eye and make a signal, because all too often the people who do not understand the safe way of riding in traffic are the ones who are most at risk. Training that can be made available to both children and adults has a vital part to play.

Q111 Jim Fitzpatrick: On Monday, Mayor Johnson's cycling tsar, Mr Gilligan, said that their assessment of Bikeability training was that too much was being delivered to tier 1, adequate to tier 2 and not enough to tier 3, simply because of the reasons you described, Minister. Tier 3 is roadway training and how to perform on the road. Who determines how funding is allocated for Bikeability levels 1, 2 and 3? Is that very much down to local authorities? Do they judge it for their own area? Do you give any guidance to say it should be a third, a third and a third and you have to take people through the whole lot, or is it entirely arbitrary?

Mr Goodwill: I would need to find that out. I rather suspect, given that tier 3 takes place on the public road, that some schools may have engaged in a health and safety assessment

and found that they do not particularly want to get involved in having their students cycle. I may be wrong but I just suspect that might be the case. I believe that delivering tier 3 training, which is on the public road, is the best way of preparing people for cycling on the public road. If you have a cycle and you want to get to your destination, you are not going to be riding round cones in the playground; you are going to be on the public road. I would be as interested as you to find out why that is not happening, but I suspect it could be that some schools are rather worried about the health and safety aspects of having their students out on the public road supervised by teachers standing on the pavement. I hope I am wrong but I suspect I am not.

Q112 Chair: Thank you very much for answering our questions, Minister. If you have any further information on that particular question we would be pleased to receive it. Is there anything you want to add?

Mr Goodwill: I have just been passed a note which says that local authorities bid to the DfT for level 2 and 3 training. Indeed levels 2 and 3 are on the road, so it is not just level 3. I was led to believe it was only level 3. Those who undertake level 2 training have actually had some on-road experience, but level 3 is the gold standard training.

Chair: Thank you very much.