

## **Supplementary written evidence submitted by Logistics Ltd (RDF0032)**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide oral evidence to the Transport Committee on 24 November 2021 as part of your inquiry into the road freight supply chain. Following Baroness Vere's recent oral evidence to the Committee, I wished to write to you on the topics of lorry parking and training in more detail.

As the Committee rightly noted, our members have a responsibility to both their own drivers, and those that work for other companies, to provide adequate facilities to help support driver welfare. This should be at their own depots or sites, as well as at distribution centres. For those drivers that work shifts that then require an overnight stay, there must be adequate provision of dedicated lorry parking or Motorways Service Areas (MSAs) that mean all drivers can find somewhere safe and suitable to take their overnight rest.

It is important to note that not all overnight driving or logistics operations will need overnight lorry parking. It will be dependent on the drivers' hours and the distance being travelled – some drivers will be driving short distances from distribution centres to the delivery point, for example, and will do shifts that will not require an overnight rest. This was raised by Tesco during the evidence session on 8<sup>th</sup> December in which they highlighted that they route drivers through their own sites and therefore will not rely on lorry parks or MSAs.

In 2018, the National Survey of Lorry Parking found the number of HGVs counted making overnight stops on a typical mid-weeknight had risen from 13,708 in 2010 to 18,670 in 2017. This represents a 36% increase (4,962 vehicles). This was, however, out of a population of over 300,000 HGV drivers in 2017<sup>1</sup>. It also found 25% of vehicles counted making overnight stops were foreign registered, in contrast to the 3.3% of total UK HGV vehicle kilometres that is by foreign vehicles. This means that while overnight parking is essential for drivers that need it, it is not universally used across the industry.

Despite the urgent need to resolve the shortfall of overnight lorry parking, it is not the responsibility of the logistics sector to build and run truck stops, nor

should they be funded via a levy on the industry. However, that does not mean we are asking for Government to provide the entire solution either. It has been demonstrated through the work the Government has undertaken to date that there is commercial appetite to build and run these sites, but it is lack of land and planning approval that has led to a market failure in this area<sup>2</sup>. Once these barriers are overcome, we expect this to lead to commercially viable private sector provision of parking where Government intervention should no longer be needed. We were pleased the need to reform planning law was highlighted by Baroness Vere, as was the local opposition that is faced by local authorities when a lorry park is proposed.

It is also important to remember that the needs of general motorists are delivered through MSAs, via private sector investment, rather than through any other funding means. Commercial drivers will also use these facilities, but feedback has suggested these facilities often do not meet their needs. Some MSAs will have little security, increasing the risk of theft. Research from Transport Focus<sup>3</sup> highlighted drivers concern about the lack of security for lorries at MSAs. Some report experiencing thefts from their vehicles and point to the lack of floodlights, security fencing and CCTV.

As Highways Circular 02/2013, which sets out policy on the provision, standards and eligibility for signing of roadside facilities, is being reviewed, Logistics UK would like to see a revised version include more prescriptive requirements for safe lorry parking and adequate facilities for MSAs to adhere to. Coach parking bays could also be designated for use by HGVs at night, when they are not used by coaches, helping increase capacity quickly with no other changes being needed.

In summary, we do not support any blanket proposal, such as a levy, for the logistics industry to fund the general provision of overnight lorry parking, although we support payment by those who use them. A blanket levy would be disproportionate and would lead to further costs on an industry which already works on tight margins (1% in 2020<sup>4</sup>) and is predominately made up of SMEs. It would also result in the Government having to distribute long-term funding and potentially running lorry parking.

On the subject of training to become an HGV driver, we noted concern over drivers who need to self-fund their training and the industry not investing in its people. It is important to note that our members are fully committed to investing in their people, and as has been noted during some of the Committee's evidence sessions, many are looking to grow pipelines of talent from within their own businesses.

Our Freight Council members report that they fund HGV driver training, but for the 95% of our sector that are SMEs funding this training can be incredibly difficult, particularly on the very tight margins they operate on. It is also important to note such a diverse sector also needs a diverse range of skills, so it is not helpful to make comparisons with other, very different sectors. Self-funding vocational training is not unique to logistics: data from HMRC published in 2018 showed that self-funded training happens across a variety of professions, with nearly 2 million in total<sup>5</sup>.

To help inform this debate, Logistics UK is seeking the Government's assessment of the proportion of training that is self-funded, compared with training that is paid for by industry. To date, the Department for Transport has informed us that it does not record information relating to the source of funding for drivers that take the HGV driving test. It is therefore not clear what is the evidence base behind Baroness Vere's implication that the sector does not fund the training of drivers.

We strongly welcome the steps the Government has taken to help address the shortage of HGV drivers and recognise the HGV drivers' skills bootcamp has helped overcome the financial challenge for some, but as Baroness Vere noted, the initial cost of training can be offset quickly given the high rates of pay across the sector.

We look forward to continuing to work with the Committee and Government as we launch our Year of Logistics, which we hope will help to address some of the issues around the image of the industry identified and attract a more diverse talent pool.

If we can provide any additional evidence to the Committee, please do let me know.

February 2022

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> FTA Logistics Skills Report 2019

<sup>2</sup> Lorry Parking Review: Position at November 2020, DfT

<sup>3</sup> [Take a break, Road users' views about roadside facilities, July 2016](#)

<sup>4</sup> Logistics Report 2021, Logistics UK

<sup>5</sup> [HMT and HMRC, Taxation of self-funded work-related training consultation, March 2018](#)