



## The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Trailer and Towing Safety

**Wednesday 24 February 2021**

**14.00 – 15.30**

**Virtual meeting via MS Teams**

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### **Present**

**Members:** Karin Smyth MP, Richard Fuller MP, Roger Gale MP, Sharon Hodgson MP, Jason McCartney MP, Nigel Mills MP, Lord Bassam of Brighton.

**Secretariat:** Alicia Dunne (NCC).

**Invited:** Tim Booth (NaVCIS), Freddie Cambanakis, DfT, Cheryl Campsie, (DVSA), Douglas Hannah, DfT, Ian Hewlett (Camping and Caravan Club), Donna and Scott Hussey (Parents of Freddie Hussey), Jill Hewitt, (National Association of Agricultural Contractors), Jane Gurney (Tilly's Trailers), John Lally, (NCC), Stuart Lovatt (Highways England), Amanda Lowe (Highways England), Peter Newton, DfT, Des Payne (British Horse Society), Ray Pinder (NTTA), Adam Poulson, DVSA, Michael Sedgwick (DfT), Katharine Slocombe (Office of Karin Smyth MP), Sarah Smithurst, MBE (NTTA), Martin Spencer (Caravan and Motorhome Club), Robert Webb, (DVSA), Sarah Wigmore (Approved Workshop Scheme), David Wood, (DVSA) David Whitehead (NCC).

### **Apologies**

Simon McGrath, Camping and Caravanning Club.

### **1. Election of officers**

Karin Smyth, MP was re-elected Chair of the APPG.

The following were elected to serve as officers:

Richard Fuller MP, Sharon Hodgson MP, Jason McCartney MP, Nigel Mills MP and Lord Bassam of Brighton.

### **Welcome and introduction from Chair**

Karin Smyth MP welcomed all to the meeting and thanked them for their continued support.

Despite the continuing challenges of COVID-19, the Chair was pleased with the overall progress of the work plan so these important safety issues can remain on the Minister's agenda.



## 2. **Update Reports**

a) Department for Transport and Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency  
Michael Sedgwick (DfT) and David Wood (DVSA) gave an interim update on trailer and caravan roadside checks performed between September 2020 and January 2021. A total of 2282 checks were carried out (2132 trailers of 3.5t or less) and 150 caravans which was clearly compromised by the pandemic. Details of the encounters and prohibitions by enforcement area, commercial -v- privately owned trailers, trailer types and the prohibition defects were listed in a slide presentation (see attached). Overall defects requiring rectification included lighting, tyres, brakes, insecure loads and breakaway cables with lighting and tyre defects presenting the most common areas for caravan owners. Compared with similar checks carried out in 2018/2019 the compliance rate was improving. Next steps – Dft/DVSA plan to continue and increase the number of checks through to September 2021 so that a set of data is available for each season to assist in any future policy development.

The Chair thanked DfT and DVSA for their work to date.

### b) Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

Steve Simmonds-Jacobs from HSE reported that in relation to the enforcement of 03 and 04 trailers in the agricultural sector, HSE can only take action when they are made aware of non-compliant issues. At present a small number of checks are being carried out by HSE.

Jane from Tilly's Trailers reported that work she is involved with in the sector indicated that up to 95 percent of agricultural trailers are failing in 7 or more safety areas with the lack of maintenance presenting as a major issue.

The Chair expressed her concern and confirmed that she intended to work with fellow parliamentarians in rural areas to raise awareness amongst their constituents.

### c) National Vehicle Crime Information Service (NaVCIS)

Tim Booth gave a short overview of the roadside checks conducted with local enforcement officers in Norfolk between August and October 2020. The checks revealed insecure loads and breakaway cables as the main issues for commercial trailers stopped. There were no caravans involved in this series of checks.

### d) British Horse Society (BHS)

Des Payne reported that the Society had planned a safety message campaign on social media for horse owners and users to start in March. In response to the programme of roadside checks he confirmed that he would share information and details of the campaign with enforcement community, DVSA and NaVCIS.

### e) Towing for Business, Highways England (HE)

Stuart Lovatt reported on the following points:

Towing for business as part of Driving for Better Business – DfBB campaign has now attracted over 1000 companies with 2.5m drivers. Raising awareness continues. NTTA has joined DfBB as a strategic partner.



Project Edward – Stuart thanked the group for support and involvement specifically in relation to the towing element of the campaign. The impact and reach of the campaign via media and social media exceeded Highways England expectations.

Roads Policing Review – HE together with the Home Office and DfT support the Review and gives HE an opportunity to pick up on safety issues and criminal behaviour as part of a collaborative approach. The forthcoming *Breakdown Campaign* to be launched by HE will also focus on checks on trailers, and as part of their regional work with local police forces and highways will feature a programme of checks on regional roads. These are planned to be conducted at appropriate times in the day and locations to maximise the resource and ensure a balance between commercial and leisure trailers.

f) Work Programme and DVSA Summer Campaign

Cheryl Campsie from DVSA gave a presentation on early ideas for a [summer campaign](#) building on the established #towsafe4freddie campaign. A copy of the presentation is attached for reference. The aims of the campaign are to target trailer audiences – business and leisure – and reflect additional activity with trailers in line with lockdown roadmap relaxations from mid-May. The first phase is intended to focus on drivers new to towing taking the B+E test, those new to towing with grandfather rights (pre-1997 licence holders) and those who haven't towed for some time. The second phase will work on business and sector specific targeted messages.

The campaign tag-line is "whatever your journey make it safe". The group were encouraged to feedback ideas and opportunities for working together on the campaign.

#### 4. **Any other business**

##### Towing A-frames.

Following written representations to the APPG regarding perceived safety issues relating to 'towing A-frames' the DfT representative, Douglas Hannah, was invited to comment. He confirmed that a vehicle (such as a car) towed with an a-frame becomes a trailer and as such is classified as a O2 trailer and should comply with the requirements for an O2 trailer. The only exception to this is when the vehicle has broken down otherwise it must meet the requirements of the regulations. Tim Booth commented that in Europe this interpretation of the regulations have not been accepted and gave an example that in Holland a car is type approved as a car, not as a trailer.

##### Clarification of guidance relating to caravan servicing workshops and current COVID restrictions - England

The Chair confirmed that she had written to the Secretary of State for clarification on whether caravans and other trailers can be taken to closed workshops for annual servicing during the non-essential travel prohibition. A copy of the letter was available to view on the [APPG website](#). She confirmed that the Roadmap for the end of the current lockdown published on 22 February did



not provide detailed guidance. DVSA confirmed that they were unable to assist further but if additional guidance came forward they will inform the Secretariat.

The Chair drew the meeting to a close and confirmed that the next meeting would take place in the autumn. In the meantime, she encouraged everyone to contribute ideas to the DVSA summer safety campaign. Together with the Group's officers she would continue to raise awareness of the group with her fellow Parliamentarians.

The Chair thanked everyone for the attendance. The date of the next meeting will be circulated shortly. The meeting closed at 15.30.

