



The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Trailer and Towing Safety

Monday 6 July 2020

12.00 – 13.00

Virtual meeting via MS Teams

Present

Members: Karin Smyth MP, Nigel Mills MP, Lord Bassam of Brighton, Sir David Amess MP

Secretariat: Alicia Dunne (Deputy Director General, NCC).

Invited: Ruth Cadbury MP, Lord Dubs, Christopher Matheson MP, Tony Lloyd, MP, Tim Booth (NaVCIS), Ian Hewlett (Camping and Caravan Club), Donna Hussey (Parent of Freddie Hussey), Jane Gurney (Tilly's Trailers), Stuart Lovatt (Highways England), Amanda Lowe (Highways England), Jonathan Moore (SMMT), Antony Ovens (Department for Transport), Des Payne (British Horse Society), Ray Pinder (NTTA), Thomas Price (National Farmers Union), Michael Sedgwick (Department for Transport), Katharine Slocombe (Office of Karin Smyth MP), Sarah Smithurst, MBE (NTTA), Martin Spencer (Caravan and Motorhome Club), Sarah Wigmore (Approved Workshop Scheme), David Whitehead (NCC).

Apologies

John Lally (NCC)

1. Welcome and introduction from Chair

Karin Smyth MP gave a warm welcome to everyone joining the first 'virtual meeting' of the APPG and thanked them for their patience at the outset while a number of technicalities were tackled so that all invitees could join the meeting. The impact of COVID-19 has had a significant impact on all our lives – our usual freedoms and activities. But with the wonders of technology, and a change to the APPG rules, we are now able to meet again, and especially before Parliament rises for the summer recess later this month. Karin gave a very short overview of the items of business on the agenda before welcoming Des Payne from the British Horse Society to give a presentation on some of the transportation and safety issues his members have reported, together with an insight into the recent survey conducted on this important issue.



2. Presentation on Equine Transportation and Safety – Des Payne, British Horse Society

Some of the key issues from the presentation included:

- Concerns with detachable tow-bars
- Unsteady loads – getting the right balance between horse and trailer
- The importance of safety checks
- The theft of trailers
- The welfare of horses and ponies whilst in transit
- Dealing with unattended horses
- Tail-gating from other motorists
- Emergency procedures and
- The impact of carrying additional kit on the nose weight of the trailer

Snapshot of BHS Equine Transport Survey. Des reported that: BHS had received 3,042 responses to their survey which was extremely encouraging. Of these 1,963 reported as owning or hiring a horse trailer. Following the safety concerns raised by members, the Society would now focus on a targeted education and awareness programme across a number of communication channels including printed media (Horse and Hound Magazine etc), horse conventions including the Royal Hickstead Show on 25th July, social media and a range of new handouts and guides which gave simple messages in four key information areas; breakdown, legal, security and horse care.

Des concluded by asking to be included in future vehicle-stop operations run by NaVCIS and DVSA so that he could observe and collate data related to the equine sector.

A copy of the presentation is appended to these minutes.

3. Presentation on Trailer Safety Report

Michael Sedgwick from the Department for Transport (DfT) gave a short interim update on trailer checks performed since the last meeting in February 2020. Unsurprisingly, the volume of checks has been severely compromised by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Between September 2019 and 23 March 2020, 759 checks were carried out on the Strategic Road Network in England. Of the vehicles checked:

- 40% were legal with no prohibitive issues
- 13% were legal but required some attention
- 11% had major defects but were permitted to continue their journey
- 29% had major defects and were deemed not safe to drive.

Michael advised that most DVSA sites remain closed and are not in a position to resume regular checks.

In addition, COVID-19 policy work is taking precedence over other work streams and as a consequence, the resource demands on vehicle testing mean that a full 12 months of tests have not been carried out and significant gaps in the data remain.

The group was asked to consider 3 options in relation to progressing the data collection:

- 1) To finish the DVSA trailer checks as planned in September 2020 – which would produce a smaller amount of data – and mostly leisure trailers such as caravans
- 2) To re-establish DVSA trailer checks for the same number of months lost at the beginning of 2020 due to COVID-19 and when DfT and DVSA can provide the necessary resource. This would produce 12 months' worth of data but not consecutive.
- 3) To conduct a further full 12 months of DVSA trailer checks re-starting in October 2020 through to October 2021 which would delay the programme by one year.

It was agreed that the individual views of the group should be fed back to DfT directly. A separate reminder email would be circulated to all members of the group immediately after the meeting giving a short two-week deadline for responses.

The Chair asked the Department to comment on the clause in the recent Business and Planning Bill which will amend existing legislation to enable more heavy goods vehicles to travel on the roads by altering the timeframes required for testing, and lift current restrictions on driver licences. The Bill has been fast-tracked, received cross party support and passed all House of Commons committee stages. Antony Ovens responded that the department will provide a written view on the impact of the clause for circulation to the Group in due course. The Chair thanked the Department for sharing the data statistics.

4. Project EDWARD

The Chair invited Stuart Lovatt from Highways England (HE) to give an overview of Project Edward and how towing for business can be incorporated into this important annual road safety initiative.

Project EDWARD stands for *European Day Without a Road Death* and was established in 2016 by the European Traffic Police Network (TISPOL). As part of HE's Work Related Road Risk (WRRR) initiative HE takes the view that work related towing accidents are avoidable. Therefore, the 2020 Project Edward will have a focus on WRRR issues and include opportunities to raise awareness of safer vehicles and include issues related to towing for business.

The initial draft programme for the event which will run over week commencing 14th September is to stage a road-trip for 3 vehicles travelling from three towns in England; Exeter, Maidstone and Carlisle.

The event will have a different theme each day as the vehicles progress on their journey converging on a central location in the Midlands at the end of the week.

The event will provide opportunities to raise awareness of the importance of towing safely with businesses and reiterate the safety messages in the 'Three to Tow' campaign launched in 2018. It will also allow stakeholders to participate in a series of media events and webinars to share top tips for towing safely.

In response, the Chair gave her support to the initiative overall and welcomed the opportunity to be involved in the event on its forward journey through the south-west of England. She also welcomed the opportunity for stakeholders and officers of this Group and Parliamentarians generally to become involved.

Ian Hewlett (Camping and Caravanning Club) reported that the club was continuing to support the programme of roadside checks on the Strategic Road Network (SRN) and encouraged others in the group to lend their support too.

It was agreed that further information about the event would be circulated to the Group.

Post-meeting note:

Highways England has provided the following update in respect of the draft workplan for Project EDWARD in September. It is understood that the event will no longer feature a road-trip outlined previously, but focus activity in agreed locations where media, stakeholders and interested participants can gather:-

Edward is progressing very swiftly with 2 or 3 project meetings weekly, hence the regular changes to plan. The next project meeting is scheduled for Tuesday afternoon so the attached outline will of course be subject to change as the plan evolves and develops. I have attached the *provisional working outline* for the weeks activity which is subject to change as plans develop, and also below the outline of possible events during the week.

What is Project EDWARD?

Project EDWARD (Every Day Without A Road Death) is an initiative first devised for TISPOL, the European Traffic Police Network, in 2016. A single day in mid-September was chosen, and a wide range of activity, engagement, social media and publicity was organised around the day to maximise awareness.

In the years since then, Project EDWARD has grown its social media reach and has attracted considerable attention from beyond the road safety sector. From 2020 onwards the aim is to help Project EDWARD grow into a movement that supports Vision Zero.



This year we are looking to align with the campaigns and efforts of UK roads policing during the week beginning 14 September as we focus on 'One road, one week'.

There will be particular attention paid to **driving for work**, and we plan to work closely with Highways England and Police and Crime Commissioners to present a week of high-profile activity, engagement, action and results.

Project EDWARD

14-18 September 2020 **DRAFT ACTIVITY PLAN**

Activities tied to HE Safer Roads Group Objectives including: DfBB plan, Van Framework, SRN Compliance, plus actions enforceable by the police

Day	Theme	Specifics	Resources	Compliance Areas	Location
W/c 14/09/20	WRRR	N/A	Participant list Website Build-up campaign Post event campaign Evaluation & report	N/A	N/A
Monday 14 th	Safer Drivers	WRRR – a shared responsibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KSI stats, odds, tramline, BLA • 2/3 fatalities non-compliance Grey fleet compliance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business insurance cover Driver behaviour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OpSnap – dashcams • Van speed limits • Close following • Red X 	3 x videos Web page Social media assets	Op Tramline Insurance Van speeds (APTRs)	
Tuesday 15 th	Safer Journeys	Distraction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile phones • Satnavs Seatbelts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31% of driver deaths unbelted Road types <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban/rural • Motorway/Smart Motorway 	3 x videos Web page Social media assets	Mobile phones Seatbelts Speed	
Wed 16 th	Safer Vehicles	Tyre safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tread, pressure and condition • Part-worn tyres AEB/ADAS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of system benefits Towing & Loading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct hitching • Overloading/load security 	3 x videos Web page Social media assets	Tyres Towing Loading	

Thursday 17 th	Driver Wellbeing	Fatigue/sleep apnoea Mental health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lone worker, stress, anxiety • Post COVID-19 scenarios Drugs and alcohol <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drug driving > drink driving 	3 x videos Web page Social media assets	Drivers hours D&A Impairment	
Friday 18 th	Sustainability	Fuel efficient driving Hybrids & electric vehicles Emissions	3 x videos Web page Social media assets	Emissions notices	

In a separate meeting between the Chair, Karin Smyth, the Secretariat and Stuart Lovatt at Highways England it was also agreed that Katharine Slocombe (Karin Smyth's office) agreed to act as the point of contact for Project Edward and to write to all elected officers (MPs) and Parliamentarians during the summer recess to make them aware of the event and to encourage them to lend their support.

5. **AOB**

The Chair thanked everyone for the attendance. The date of the next meeting will be circulated shortly. The meeting closed at 13.00.