



The Government's Response
to the Transport,
Local Government and the Regions
Committee's Report

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Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for Transport
by Command of Her Majesty
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THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE TRANSPORT, LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE REGIONS COMMITTEE'S REPORT ON ROAD TRAFFIC SPEED

(a) Illegal and inappropriate speed is a major contributory factor in crashes and casualties in both urban and rural areas.

The Government welcomes the Committee's recognition of the effects of speed on road accidents, fatalities and serious injuries. Those critical of speed management often misquote or selectively quote from TRL Report 323 (*A New System for Recording Contributory Factors in Road Accidents*) to argue that it is wrong to claim that speed is a major crash and injury causation factor. However, this TRL report has been persistently misquoted and used out of context. If the report is read in its entirety, it clearly shows that the factors that comprise driving at both excessive and inappropriate speed effectively confirm the one-third figure of speed being a contributory factor in road accidents. Further published research by TRL and a wide range of other internationally respected institutions confirms beyond doubt that excessive and inappropriate speed are the major causes of crashes on our roads. Much of this research was noted in the bibliography and references accompanying the Memorandum submitted to the Committee by the DTLR.

The proof that excessive speed is a major cause of crashes may be further found when speed management measures have been put in place and significant reductions in fatal and serious casualties occur. For example, in the first year of the trial of the safety camera netting off scheme there was an average reduction of 47% in the number of people killed or seriously injured at speed camera sites. Other interventions such as traffic calming are also highly effective in preventing excessive speed and creating a self enforced speed limit. A TRL study of traffic calming schemes in 20 mph zones showed a 67% reduction in accidents involving children who are amongst the most vulnerable road users, and an overall 60% reduction in all accidents.

(b) Speed may kill more and seriously injure many more people than has commonly been thought. The health service should play a more active part in the collection of data on injuries, and should be funded to do this.

Speed management policy is developed from extensive research. This and previous Governments have commissioned work on seeking the relationships between speed and accident causation. There has also been much international research conducted on speed and accidents. None of this research strays far from the conclusion that excessive and inappropriate speed is a contributory factor in around a third of road accidents. Unless future research suggests otherwise, we must base our policy development on current research findings.

The Accidental Injury Task Force brought together leading experts on accidents from various sectors and Government Departments. Its Report made a number of recommendations for improving data on accidental injury, which the

Department will pursue. One early step will be to involve Regional Public Health Observatories in the surveillance of accidental injuries. This should help improve the quality of local data.

(c) The full cost to the nation of road traffic accidents is very large; a DTLR study has estimated it to be £17 bn in a single year. If drivers travelled at lower and more appropriate speeds, the savings to society would be immense, as the savings to individuals would be. If the measures recommended in this Report were to achieve a reduction of road traffic accidents by a third, the savings to society could be as great as £100 million per week.

The assumptions made in calculating the values shown are based on all accidents resulting in death and injury. The basis for the estimates in the Government's Road Safety Strategy was that measures to curb excessive and inappropriate speed might contribute a saving of up to 10% of KSI casualties by a combination of measures to reduce speeds on rural roads and in urban areas by the year 2010. This would be a major contribution to achieving the KSI target of 40% overall, and 50% for child casualties. Although the Government recognises the enormous burden that road traffic casualties suffer both as individuals and collectively, it is considered unlikely that the one third reduction that is implied here could be achieved within the current target period, since it would require eliminating all speed related accidents. It is therefore over optimistic in so far as the scope of the recommendations of this report are concerned.

(d) Most deaths of car occupants take place on rural roads, but most crashes and pedestrian deaths in urban areas. Compared with several other European countries our child pedestrian death rate is high. Speed causes major health inequalities, especially in urban areas; child pedestrians who live in deprived areas are particularly at risk from road traffic.

Research suggests that about half the differences in child pedestrian fatality rates between Britain, France and the Netherlands can be accounted for by differences in exposure to risk. Although the total time children spend out walking is similar, in Britain fewer crossings are made using designated crossing places, and compared to their French and Dutch counterparts children in Britain spend more of their time on busy main roads, and are less likely to be accompanied by an adult. The Department has commissioned further analyses of the data gathered by the research project.

The Government's Road Safety Strategy acknowledged that children in the lowest socio-economic group are many more times likely to die in a pedestrian road accident than their better-off peers. All types of accident show a similar pattern. Departmental-funded research shows that their specific risk factors include less adult supervision, living in inner urban areas and living on busy through roads. And children from ethnic minority backgrounds are more at risk than their majority-culture peers, even in the same areas, for reasons that are not yet fully understood. The Department published a literature review to highlight this issue in March 2001.

The Accidental Injury Task Force Report also noted the disproportionate effect of road accidents on child pedestrians in deprived areas, and identified child pedestrian deaths and injuries as one of its immediate priorities for more focused effort, particularly in deprived areas. The Report also recommended measures to control traffic, to make the environment safer for pedestrians, and to give children further training in pedestrian skills.

As a result the 2002 Comprehensive Spending Review strengthened the casualty reduction target to highlight the need to tackle the significantly higher incidence of casualties in disadvantaged communities. The Government is committed to this.

Road safety education and training is important in reducing child casualties. The Department produces a range of well-researched resources for parents and children, as well as for use in schools, and is currently working to make the advice more accessible to those whose level of literacy in English may not be high.

Research shows that young children are able to develop the skills necessary to be safer pedestrians if given the appropriate practical (roadside) training and the Department will be spending £10 million over 5 years to pilot a network of pedestrian training schemes for children in deprived areas. We are offering grant to local authorities to fund co-ordinators who will recruit parent volunteers to train the children in groups of two or three, without putting extra burdens on the teachers. The first children began training in the summer term of 2002.

We are asking local authorities to carry out child road safety audits when reviewing their road safety plans so that they know when, where and why accidents are happening and can develop proposals for future action. We expect to fund over 8,000 small scale schemes over the 5-year period from 2001-02 to 2005-06. Authorities have discretion about the exact package of small-scale measures that they introduce, in line with the priorities and objectives set in their Local Transport Plans. But we would expect them to introduce measures to implement their road safety strategy, through, for example, schemes to improve benefits for child pedestrians and cyclists, especially in urban and residential areas.

We are giving separate grant funding of £3.5 million over financial years 2001-02 and 2002-03 to 28 local highway authorities to introduce 20mph Zones and other measures around schools and in residential areas targeted at improving child safety.

(e) There are serious indirect health effects of inappropriate traffic speed. Fast moving traffic plays a part in discouraging physical activity by inhibiting walking and cycling in urban and rural areas. We recommend an increase in the number of dedicated cycle routes. Moreover, vehicles travelling at speed are noisy, sever communities and undermines urban regeneration.

The Government recognises that both motor traffic speed and volume deters cycling. Traffic calming can help, especially in residential areas by both reducing vehicle speeds and getting through traffic on to appropriate roads. Cyclists and pedestrians have much to gain from such measures.

We are committed to the Ten Year Plan target of trebling the number of journeys made by bicycle by 2010. We also support the target in the National Cycling Strategy, of quadrupling the number of bicycle journeys made by 2012 (based on 1996 figures). Improved facilities for cyclists, including dedicated cycle routes, will certainly encourage more people to cycle. We recognise that a key component in making cycling more popular is to make it a safer and more pleasant activity.

The prime responsibility for giving more people the opportunity to cycle rests with individual local highway authorities. That is why we have required authorities to include a local cycling strategy as part of their Local Transport Plans. The strategies should highlight any gaps in the existing infrastructure, and map out a process for improving conditions for cyclists, including the construction of cycle paths and routes. The Government will be providing £1.5bn of funding for local authorities in England to implement their Local Transport Plans (LTPs) in 2002/03. This represents an increase of £200m over the 2001/02 total and is the second instalment of the 5-year, £8.4bn funding package for local transport announced in December 2000.

We certainly hope to see more dedicated cycle routes provided by local traffic authorities, along with other features such as improved cycle parking at key destinations, cycle lanes, advanced stop lines, toucan crossings, cycle-friendly road layouts, and better junction arrangements. Together with wider traffic management measures to ensure that vehicle speeds and flows are matched to the mix of users on each road, these can all help provide a safer and more convenient journey for cyclists.

The Department of Health is addressing the problem of obesity in children, and the effect of inactivity on the incidence of heart disease and other conditions, by encouraging more physical activity. Under the Healthy Schools programme there is a whole-school approach to the promotion of physical activity, including physical education, walking and cycling. A key part of the programme includes the development of strategies for safer and more active travel to school. The Department for Transport with the support of the Department for Education and Skills and the Department of Health is encouraging more walking and cycling to school by promoting the development of school travel plans. These are packages of practical measures tailored to the needs of an individual school and designed to improve safety and reduce car use on the journey to and from school. School travel plans almost invariably involve the development of safer routes to school.

The Department for Transport asks local authorities to include an integrated strategy for reducing car use and improving children's safety on the journey to school in their local transport plans and to set out how they will work with individual schools to develop comprehensive school travel plans.

The Department for Transport is preparing additional guidance to address current physical, psychological and institutional barriers to walking. It aims to increase the range of activities accessible to people on foot and improve the quality of people's experience when they are walking. Home Zones can also improve safety and quality of life in residential streets by reorganising road space

to strike a better balance between the needs of drivers and those of others users such as pedestrians – especially children and older people - and cyclists. The Government welcomes the Committee’s recognition of the value of Home Zones (section s).

(f) Pedestrian railings, barriers and staggered crossings are designed to maintain traffic flows and restrict pedestrian movement. They do not deal with the root of the problem which is that traffic is sometimes moving too quickly. The Government has failed to change this situation; it must advocate a policy which does not create urban areas where cars can speed and pedestrians are corralled behind barriers, but rather places where pedestrians can walk safely because traffic speeds have been reduced. The proposed guidance from Government on designing “pedestrian-friendly environments” should reflect this policy.

Pedestrian guardrails have been placed alongside footways to offer protection against actual or perceived dangers to pedestrians. Guardrailing has also been used in many places to provide a barrier to help deter unlawful parking, loading and unloading. It has been used this way for many years and has left a legacy that can be inconvenient to pedestrians, and lead to an unattractive and cluttered environment.

The policy climate has now changed with more encouragement being given to providing greater priority and convenience to pedestrians and other vulnerable road users. Key elements in achieving this are:

- reducing vehicle speeds;
- making better and safer provision for pedestrians;
- promoting sustainable transport alternatives;
- improving the general street environment.

Changes to highway design practices must be made in a safe way. Removing guardrailing without doing anything else might introduce unacceptable dangers. Changes need to be done in conjunction with measures to deal with the arising concerns.

There are a number of actions that are contributing to creating an environment where guardrail use can be minimised.

The Road Safety Strategy will help by reducing vehicle speeds. The take-up of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement by local authorities will improve the enforcement of parking and waiting restrictions and reduce the need for guardrailing where it is installed for this reason. Research by the Department for Transport into the use of pedestrian guardrails will lead to improved advice on guardrail use so that it is only used where necessary. The development of new advice on walking will also contribute to an improved environment for walking where guardrails are not necessary.

All this is given more impetus by the cross-cutting public realm agenda.

Staggered crossings are recommended for Pelican crossings because of the hazards introduced by a refuge in a straight-across form. This is because drivers tend to regard them as two crossings and fail to give way to pedestrians when they should. A staggered crossing results in two distinctly separate crossings which avoids this hazard. Advice has already been published showing how a Puffin signal-controlled pedestrian crossing can be used to achieve a straight across crossing with a refuge.

There will remain instances where the local highway authority wishes to retain a staggered crossing in order to balance traffic management demands. This would not apply in many cases and so we would expect a reduction in the overall number of staggered crossings with time.

In most cases it is for the local authorities to determine whether guardrailing and staggered crossings are appropriate to the local circumstances. We will continue to encourage effective measures to improve the environment for pedestrians through advice published by the Department or others. For example, we worked with the Institution of Highways and Transportation on their publication *Guidelines for Providing for Journeys on Foot* and will continue to develop the themes outlined above in any future guidance we produce.

(g) The groups most likely to speed excessively are those driving in a work related capacity, members of high income households and young males. Motorcyclists are also a serious problem, and HGV drivers commonly exceed the 40 mph limit on single carriageway main roads.

The Government recognises that certain elements of the driving population have a greater accident risk than others. For example, young drivers and those who drive in a work-related capacity have higher accident rates even after allowing for differences in demographics and exposure. The Road Safety Strategy details how we are addressing these problems. See also the response to recommendation (nn).

The Strategy also includes a number of measures to improve the way motorcyclists ride. These measures include improving training and testing; providing advice for people returning to motorcycling after a break and for people riding as part of their work; and ensuring the quality of instruction through a voluntary (and subsequently statutory) register of motorcycle instructors.

(h) The combination of bad road design, driver ignorance and a belief that speeding is acceptable must be tackled if speeds are to be reduced to safe levels.

The fundamental issues raised here by the Committee are central to the development of an effective speed management policy.

The Highways Agency has a programme of development and improvement of this core network. The objectives of the development and improvement programme are to:

- Ease congestion;
- Ensure strategic roads are efficiently maintained;
- Provide safer travel;
- Provide better information to road users;
- Provide quieter roads for people living within 600m of trunk roads;
- Deliver in partnership with other organisations a more effective road programme;

In short: safe, reliable travel.

When considering options for improvement, full account is given to the severance of communities and the quality of life in assessing what improvement options exist.

The role of engineering, education and enforcement all have a part to play in making inappropriate and excessive speed as socially unacceptable as drink driving has become.

(i) Guidelines should allow local decisions to be taken to site cameras in locations where such a risk has been identified.

Section 38 of the Vehicles (Crime) Act provides the power for payments to be made to public authorities in relation to the prevention, detection and enforcement of speed limits and red traffic light signals. Section 38 (4) allows payments to be made 'at such times, in such manner and subject to such conditions as the Secretary of State may determine'. The Netting off Handbook provides those conditions.

The Handbook of rules for the Safety Camera Netting Off Scheme, which is a living document, provides payment conditions in the form of rules, guidance and guidelines. So far as deployment of cameras is concerned, the guidance has been produced to encourage the available cameras and related resources to be targeted where they will achieve the greatest reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads. Partnerships must produce annual operational cases that aim to enforce at locations that cover between 10 and 20% of the total KSIs in the partnership area in the previous three years. To help partnerships achieve that, the guidelines in the Handbook recommend placing fixed site cameras where there have been at least 4 KSIs over the last three years and 2 KSIs on routes where mobile enforcement is proposed.

Partnerships should follow the guidelines, but these are flexible to take account of local circumstances. The key issue is for a partnership's operational case to anticipate a significant reduction in KSIs as a result of its camera activity and by at least 10% as mentioned above.

In order to do that the guidelines stress that decisions on camera placement should be based on information collected over at least the previous three years and should be a combination of collision mapping and speed surveys. Basing camera deployment on perceived risk rather than where deaths and injuries had actually occurred would be likely to make little impact on reducing deaths and injuries.

It should be noted that safety cameras are but one tool local authorities and the police have available in trying to curb speeding. Guidance on camera deployment has always recognised that there might be sites or routes where casualties have occurred as a result of speeding, but where the placing of cameras might not be the best solution. For these there may be other mechanisms of improving road safety in the area (better signing, lowering of speed limit, use of vehicle activated warning signs, or physical changes to the road layout, etc.)

(j) In the pilot project areas the Safety Camera scheme has been very successful, bringing about a big reduction in crashes and casualties. If police force areas have not joined the Safety Camera scheme by the end of 2004, the Government should consider making it mandatory.

Those responsible for camera deployment and operation, the local authorities and the police, are fully aware of the success of safety cameras in reducing collisions, deaths and serious injuries. It would also make little financial sense for councils and the police not to participate in netting off. As a result all that intend using safety cameras to enforce speed limits and traffic signals are expected to seek to join the scheme over the next few months. It is anticipated that virtually all police force areas will be in the scheme by spring of 2003, a year ahead of the Select Committee's suggested deadline.

Making the system mandatory would be likely to require changes to the primary legislation that governs the use of cameras as well as that for where fine payments are routed. It would also require changes to HM Treasury rules. This would be very complex and potentially difficult. Given these circumstances and the clear willingness to participate, it would be neither necessary nor simple to require compulsion.

(k) The new rules about the visibility and location of cameras are unreasonable. Crashes do not just occur at accident blackspots. There was no scientific research to support this decision. People will die as a result. Police and local authorities should decide where to locate cameras and whether they should be visible. Their decisions should be informed by pilot projects to (1) test whether safety cameras should be overt or covert and (2) identify a series of locations other than severe accident blackspots where the speed of traffic needs to be reduced. The Department of Health should be on the Project Board for the Safety Camera Scheme to ensure that public health issues are fully taken into account in the decisions that it makes.

The key to camera enforcement as a road safety tool that can treat excessive but not inappropriate speed is to make best use of the resources available in a step by step process. The first thing to do is identify the most dangerous places

where there have been the greatest numbers of accidents involving death and injury due to speeding. Unless other remedial measures would be more effective or feasible at such sites, cameras should be placed and it is vital drivers are made aware of the presence of cameras to stand the best chance of deterring their speeding.

Equally important is to identify lengths of road or routes where accidents have taken place but not in a specific cluster. Although this can be the case anywhere, it is more frequently so on rural routes. Mobile units are best placed to enforce the speed limits in such circumstances.

The rules of the scheme allow the use of covert operation in limited circumstances.

As stated above, the objective is to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured. Only when the sites and routes where the risk of death and injury is greatest have been successfully treated would it be justifiable to start to consider using cameras to enforce speed limits for other reasons such as social exclusion, quality of life and environmental impact.

As recommended by the Committee an invitation has been extended to the Department of Health to serve on the Safety Camera Project Board. That invitation has been accepted and the Department of Health is now represented on the Board.

(1) Safety Cameras are of little use in catching or deterring drivers travelling at inappropriate speed or unlicensed drivers. Moreover, cameras paid for under the scheme can only be used at severe accident blackspots. The police must ensure that there are adequate numbers of traffic police to deter:

- **inappropriate speed;**
- **unlicensed drivers; and**
- **drivers who speed at places away from the accident blackspots where cameras will be located.**

There should be no further reduction in the numbers of traffic police.

The importance given to traffic policing should not be measured solely by the number of dedicated traffic officers, and does not depend on increases or decreases in the number of such officers. An intelligence-led approach to road policing can reduce their numbers whilst potentially increasing their effectiveness. Traffic policing may also be integrated with other work and so not be as distinctively evident, and some functions can be taken over by non-police officers.

The increased use of speed cameras and other technology can lead to more effective enforcement of road traffic law, and when properly implemented can contribute to increased road safety. It can also free up officers for more proactive work. Provisions in the Police Reform Act have removed some of the restrictions on traffic wardens' powers so that they can be used more flexibly to

reduce police burdens. In addition, Community Support Officers and accredited persons have also been given powers to stop vehicles in certain limited circumstances. An added visible presence on the streets will help more generally with the oversight of the whole street environment, including traffic.

Evidence from the pilot areas in the Safety Camera Scheme suggests that motorists are slowing down in all the areas where speed cameras are located and not just in the immediate vicinity of camera sites. Across the eight pilot areas as a whole the number of people killed and seriously injured dropped by 18% in the first year of the scheme. There is also no evidence to suggest that police operational priorities have been distorted in any way. In fact, the use of speed cameras which operate at all times – and act as a continuous deterrent to speeding – can free up police resources to deal with other road traffic enforcement issues.

(m) Existing penalties for speeding are inadequate. The Home Office’s dilatoriness in implementing the proposals in its Consultation Paper on road traffic penalties issued 18 months ago is unacceptable. We recommend that the proposals in the Consultation Paper be implemented without delay. There should be legislation in the next session of Parliament.

The report on road traffic penalties was published on 24 July 2002. The report recommends raising the maximum penalty for all causing death offences from 10 years’ imprisonment to 14 years’ imprisonment. The Government also recommends that those convicted of dangerous driving should face a higher maximum penalty of 5 years’ imprisonment. Under these recommendations drivers convicted of non-imprisonable offences such as careless driving and driving without insurance could face tough community penalties rather than or in addition to a fine.

Delay in publication of the Home Office’s response was in part due to ensuring the recommendations were compatible with a number of important criminal justice initiatives such as the Auld Review of Criminal Courts, the Halliday Review of the sentencing framework, and the Criminal Justice White Paper in general.

Some of the recommendations to the proposals in the report do not require any further action. Other recommendations require further work being undertaken where appropriate. This is of course subject to availability of necessary resources and appropriate legislative opportunity.

(n) We recommend that the Home Office and Lord Chancellor’s Department issue clearer guidance about the use of magistrates’ discretion in “exercising special reasons not to disqualify”.

The ‘Magistrates’ court sentencing guidelines’ are produced by a working group comprising representation from the Magistrates Association, district judges, the Justices’ Clerks’ Society and the highest level of legal academia and are published by the Magistrates’ Association. While the guidelines are published with the endorsement of the Lord Chancellor (and the Lord Chief Justice) their

formulation and dissemination is an independent process in which the Government plays no formal role. The Home Office has no involvement in this process.

Discretionary disqualification is always available for a speeding offence. Repeated offending is covered by Section 35 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988. Here, mandatory disqualification is provided for, save where the court satisfied itself that, in all the circumstances, there are grounds for mitigating the normal consequences of the conviction. There is ample case law on what these grounds might include.

We have published the White Paper *Justice for All*, which has issued several proposals which includes the establishment of a Sentencing Guidelines Council, which is to be chaired by the Lord Chief Justice in order to achieve greater consistency in sentencing. The guidelines will cover the full range of criminal offences. With the Lord Chief Justice as the chair, other members of the council will be representatives of all courts involved in the judicial process. Any guidelines drafted by the council will be scrutinised by Parliament before being implemented, thereby ensuring that they have been subjected to Parliamentary debate. The guidelines will cover all courts.

(o) The Government should publish as a priority revised guidance to local authorities on setting local speed limits and principles for speed management. The Guidance should also offer information on the range of interventions available to local authorities to act as preventative measures in advance of crashes and injuries occurring. Local authorities should subsequently be guided by a national framework for determining appropriate vehicle speeds on roads and by a new hierarchy of roads defined by their function and quality in urban and rural areas.

There already exists guidance to local authorities in the form of Circular Roads 1/93 on the setting of local speed limits. This remains good advice but the Department for Transport recognises that we need to build in the new experience gained over the last 10 years or so. As such we propose to revise and publish new guidance in 2003.

Some work has already been undertaken in determining the feasibility of a new road hierarchy. Research was specifically commissioned to consider a rural road hierarchy and a report on this was published in November 2001. The overall assessment of the report found that it would be costly both financially and environmentally. Also given the necessary infrastructure and behavioural changes required, the road safety and quality of life benefits would take too long to realise.

That said the report identified several issues that could be taken forward as individual projects to progress safer roads in both urban and rural areas. This includes work on developing traffic calming measures in rural areas, national speed limit signing and work to identify vehicle speeds in areas where these are currently unknown.

In addition the Government will introduce interventions to reduce the number of accidents, such as vehicle activated warning signs, and will make guidance available to local authorities about where and how to apply them effectively. The guidance on vehicle activated signs is expected to be made available before the end of this year.

(p) We recommend that the following guidance on speed limits be issued to local authorities:

Limit	Type of Road – Urban	Type of Road – Rural
20mph	Many residential areas, some mixed routes, vicinity of schools	Vicinity of schools
30mph	Main roads	Villages
40mph	Major outer urban roads	‘C’ and Unclassified roads*
50mph		Poorer quality ‘A’ and ‘B’ roads
60mph		Good quality single carriageway ‘A’ roads
70mph		Dual carriageway

*Some current ‘C’ road should become ‘B’ roads

The Government notes the recommendations made by the Committee on proposed speed limits for different classes of roads. The maximum speed limits suggested, although not so regimentally defined, are already in existence and indeed we actively encourage 20mph speed limits in the vicinity of schools and 30mph in villages. Other limits particularly in rural areas, we believe, cannot be so easily defined, but work is progressing on assessing vehicle speeds and developing measures to support practical speed management techniques.

(q) Repeat signs should be permitted in 30mph zones where the speed limit is not apparent from the design of the road or cannot be enforced by traffic calming. The ‘derestricted’ sign should be replaced by a sign indicating what the speed limit is.

Repeater signs on street lit roads carrying a 30mph speed limit are prohibited. This rule was laid some 70 years ago and we believe is well understood by the majority of drivers. To require repeaters on all restricted roads would cause enormous sign proliferation and the cost to local authorities would be immense. That said, the Department for Transport will be looking at this issue as part of our work on speed limit signing, but would need to be satisfied that any change would result in a clear road safety benefit.

The national speed limit or ‘derestricted’ sign makes for simplicity of signing and avoids sign proliferation particularly in rural areas. However there is concern that its meaning may not be properly understood by some drivers. The national speed limit sign indicates that *no* vehicle may exceed 60mph on single carriageway roads and 70mph on dual carriageways. The difficulty with

numerical signing is that lower speed limits apply to different vehicles which would make signing difficult and confusing; for example; HGV's over 7.5 tonnes may not exceed 40mph on single carriageway roads.

(r) The Government should encourage local authorities to make more use of 20mph zones, enforced by suitable engineering measures. The measures should be area wide to avoid displacement. They should concentrate on accident prevention and improving the quality of life, and should not be only introduced as an ad hoc response to serious crashes.

The Government has already provided both legislation and funding to allow local authorities to introduce 20mph zones. Because road safety expenditure is no longer prescriptive there is no requirement for local authorities to treat those sites with a proven accident record. The Government expects local authorities to plan cost effective remedies as one element of an overall strategy and this freedom allows them to consider road safety as part of its wider health, social and environmental policies.

(s) We recommend that the Government publish the results of the home zone pilot projects as soon as possible. If successful, the Government should fund them and support their widespread introduction.

The Government recognises the growing interest in Home Zones and the need to publish results from the monitoring of the pilot Home Zones as soon as possible. The monitoring programme is dependent on progress of the individual schemes where active participation has been sought from the local community in their development. The individual scheme reports will be published by the Department for Transport's contractor as and when they are completed. The first such scheme report is expected to be published towards the end of 2002. When all the individual scheme reports are complete, a summary report that draws together the findings from the individual schemes will be published.

The Home Zones Challenge was established to generate a rapid growth in the number of Home Zones in England. It should yield a substantial increase in information about how best to actively involve local community interests in developing home zones that suit their needs and aspirations. It will identify design processes that can lead to successful new ways of using residential streets, and help to identify and expand the range of solutions and constructional techniques available. A Home Zone Challenge website has been established to enable rapid dissemination to the wider community of developing good practice arising from the Challenge schemes.

The Government hopes that Home Zone Challenge schemes, together with the pilot schemes, will encourage local authorities in England to create many more Home Zones using mainstream funding, particularly the Single Capital Pot.

(t) Following the success of the Gloucester 'Safer City Project', the Government should ensure that similar projects are introduced into towns and cities throughout the country.

The Gloucester Safer City project began in April 1996 and ran for five years until March 2001. Its objective was to reduce casualties by at least one third by April 2002 (compared with the baseline average for 1991 to 95). Funding of £5m was made available over the five year period. Although the final Safer City project report is not due until Spring 2003, the results so far are encouraging, with deaths and serious injuries down by 38 per cent.

Not everything tried in Gloucester will necessarily suit the whole country, but we are encouraging local highway authorities to learn from the experiences of the Gloucester team. We produced an interim report on the project in June 2001 and aim to launch the full report in Spring 2003.

(u) Many of the most dangerous urban roads have to be used by both pedestrians and motor vehicles. Guidance to local authorities should recommend that particular care is taken to ensure that these routes are suitably engineered to enforce the speed limit. The Government must now establish the 'Urban Road Hierarchy' which it promised in its Road Safety Strategy in March 2000.

As already indicated (ref: see response to (r)), local authorities now have the freedom to create both 20mph zones and 20mph speed limits which are particularly effective in urban areas. Enforcement of speed limits in these areas also has the benefit of a wide range of traffic calming measures that persuade the driver that a slower speed is appropriate. These measures include road humps, speed cushions, horizontal deflections and chicanes. On higher speed limit roads speed enforcement cameras can also be very effective. The Department has also already provided a substantial amount of guidance on effective engineering techniques specifically designed to help urban areas, these include Circular Roads and Traffic Advisory Leaflets. In 2001 the Department published *A Road Safety Good Practice Guide* that gave practical advice on all aspects of design and engineering for safety on urban roads. This guidance will be a living reference that will be maintained and updated as new research evidence and experience becomes available.

The Government's Road Safety Strategy *Tomorrow's Roads – Safer for Everyone* identified main urban roads with a mixture of frontage use as being amongst the least safe of urban roads. These roads support local shops, schools and community facilities but often carry high volumes of traffic.

We recognise the need to make these areas safer and improve the local environment for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists alike. We are working with a number of local highway authorities around the country to develop and test practical engineering solutions for dealing with these problems. The resulting schemes will demonstrate how councils can work together with residents and businesses to develop successful projects which accommodate the needs of local people, whilst improving safety for all. We will produce good practice guidance based on the experiences gained in introducing these schemes.

The Government therefore believes it is on target to building existing and new urban safety initiatives into an effective urban road hierarchy as set out in the Road Safety Strategy. This hierarchy ranges from Home Zones, through 20mph

zones and speed limits to 30mph roads with traffic calming, and other 30mph and 40mph urban roads with additional signing and engineering measures plus more effective safety camera enforcement.

(v) We recommend that guidance to local authorities indicate that a 20mph limit should be the norm in the vicinity of schools in urban and rural areas during the day on week days, though they should have ability to vary the limits at other times.

The Department already recommends that where appropriate local authorities should install 20mph zones and speed limits in the vicinity of schools.

The concept of varying speed limits around schools is not a new one. The Department undertook trials on the use of variable message signs outside schools. Typically this reduced the speed limit one hour around the start and finish of school. The results concluded that these signs had little effect on vehicle speeds and considered with the high cost of their installation they offered poor value for money.

(w) Guidance to local authorities on speed limits should recommend that there be a 30mph speed limit in villages. Appropriate measures should be taken by the local authority in consultation with the villagers to ensure the limit is obeyed. They should also decide which settlements are villages.

The Government's policy is already for 30mph speed limits to become the norm in villages. Urban enforcement measures such as road humps are not always practical in rural areas and as such we are working with professional organisations to develop speed management measures suitable for the rural community. These will include signing and engineering treatments, such as vehicle activated signs, to ensure that lower limits result in the lower traffic speeds desired.

(x) We recommend that guidance to local authorities indicate that 40 mph be the speed limit on C and Unclassified roads. Research should be undertaken into the best ways of enforcing such a limit. Some of the better quality wider C and Unclassified (where a higher speed is appropriate) might be reclassified as B roads. If a 40 mph limit were introduced on minor roads it may be possible to increase the limit for HGV's on A and B roads from the present 40 mph.

The Government's Road Safety Strategy has already suggested that a hierarchy of roads by function might help in setting speed limits and improve consistency nationally. With this in mind, consultants prepared a report on a rural road hierarchy which was published in November 2001. Following this a working group which included professionals was set up and tasked with building on the recommendations outlined in the report and to work in conjunction with other work already in hand or planned arising from the Road Safety Strategy. The overall aim of this work programme is to develop better speed management measures across the whole of the rural network of A, B and Unclassified roads.

(y) Guidance to local authorities should include advice about which types of single carriageway main roads should have a 60 mph limit and which the lower 50 mph limit. The sign which currently indicates the national speed limit should be scrapped; road signs should indicate what the actual speed limit is.

(See (x) above). The signing conventions for speed limits are to be reviewed and this will consider how clarity to drivers might be improved and how to balance this requirement with the need to minimise clutter and visual intrusion in sensitive environments.

(z) The Government should now make every effort to introduce the Rural Road Hierarchy it promised over two years ago. There are fewer examples of good practice in rural than in urban areas: there should be pilot projects in rural areas comparable to the *Gloucester Safer City* project.

We are continuing the work on developing good practice guidance in rural areas, following publication of the Rural Road Hierarchy report, and there are plans for demonstration projects along similar lines to the Gloucester Safer City Project. These would be used to apply and assess the suitability and effectiveness of the rural road safety measures already under consideration and development. A small working group of experts and practitioners has been established to assist us in this work.

(aa) The Government should make it easier for local authorities to make changes to the speed limit on roads. It should introduce a simplified procedure for making speed limit orders.

The Department for Transport has already commissioned work to look at whether the current method for making speed limit orders can be made simpler. The initial results showed that major changes were probably not required. However, work is continuing and this will be fed into other work being done in conjunction with speed management measures.

(bb) The Government should ensure that guidelines should not be in a form that discourages local authorities from taking appropriate decisions to reflect local circumstances.

Existing guidance on, for example, setting speed limits, signing and using speed management methods allows for and takes account of local circumstances. However, there must be some consistency, and guidance should make clear those treatments that work and those that do not.

(cc) In 1997 the TRL estimated that a comprehensive package of traffic calming measures in urban areas would cost £3bn. We recommend that this estimate be updated and that an estimate be made of the cost of measures to reduce casualties in rural areas be undertaken with a view to providing the funds in the Ten Year Plan. We note that the sum is likely to be less than the funds proposed for safety improvements on the railways, but spending it would save many, many more lives than are lost in the railways every year. Safety should be a priority for all modes of transport.

Improving road safety is a priority. That is why the Government has increased the amount of money made available to local authorities for Local Transport Plans that include a large road safety element. However, The TRL report acknowledged that delivering road safety schemes can be both lengthy and complex. It requires experience and expertise that at times is in short supply. We will continue to encourage local authorities to give priority to developing and completing effective road safety schemes.

(dd) We recommend that type approval for speedometers be amended so as to provide for designs which make drivers more aware of the 30 mph speed limit. We also urge the industry to develop further use of digital speedometers to ensure that more accurate information is given to drivers.

The Government does not see the need for any amendments to speedometer type approval requirements. The ECTA requirements as Annex 2 to EC Directive 75/443EC as amended by 97/39EC do not prohibit a specific speed from being highlighted and provide for designs which make drivers more aware of the 30 mph speed limit. However, it is questionable that a particular speed, 30 mph, should be highlighted as there are other general speed restrictions imposed in the UK such as 20, 40, 50 and 70 mph. It would take much time and effort to make these proposed changes to Europe wide regulations and in the absence of any concrete evidence that they would deliver any benefits this is not a priority issue.

(ee) In the long run Intelligent Speed Adaptation offers the opportunity to put an end to illegal and inappropriate speed. The Government should strongly support this technology by:

- continuing to fund research, including the projected trials from 2002 to 2006;
- encouraging voluntary adoption by fleet managers and providing tax incentives to those who do;
- establishing a Europe-wide requirement that all new vehicles sold from 2013 should have an ISA capability; and
- fund the development of a digital road map to ensure that the information needed to make ISA successful is easily available.

The Government has no plans to discontinue the Intelligent Speed Adaptation research project.

As one of the main aims is to study driver behaviour over time, any discussion about whether or not to encourage adoption and provide tax incentives would be premature without more knowledge of the benefits and negative effects.

The Government is participating fully in European discussions on ISA and similar new technologies but considers it should be left to industry to take this forward in response to public demand and not by introducing any requirement for mandatory fitment of such a device.

(ff) Better publicity and education must play a part in reducing speeds together with more effective enforcement and engineering. We recommend that the Government:

- establish a comprehensive, all-the-year-round publicity campaign, using the television and other media, and co-ordinated with the National Safety Camera Scheme;
- establish campaigns targeted at specific groups;
- ensure that local partnerships support enforcement and traffic calming measures with education campaigns;
- ensure that schemes like the ‘speed diversionary workshops’ in Northamptonshire be copied through out the country if they prove to be successful;
- make speed-related hazards a part of the hazard perception tests to be introduced in the driving test.

The Government’s Road Safety Strategy recognised the importance of strong and effective road safety promotion and education. That is why we have developed the Think! campaign, which was launched in June 2000, to encourage all road users to be mindful of their own and others’ safety. Using TV, radio, press, outdoor posters and other media, the year round campaign covers a range of road safety messages and has gained a high level of recognition among the public, particularly drivers.

Focus group research helps to inform us in the commissioning and designing advertising so that it is effective among the various targets (e.g. drivers, motorcyclists, children, teenagers) of the Think! campaign. For example, research has been key in developing effective ways of addressing drink drivers and in contributing to the success over the long term of that campaign. The Think website at www.think.dft.gov.uk contains a wide range of campaign background and information about the support materials available to campaign stakeholders. Keeping supporters in touch with campaign developments and the materials available to support campaigns is a key objective. We do this via the Think! magazine, campaign newsletters that are cascaded via road safety officer and police contacts, and regular campaign co-ordination meetings. Good contact is also maintained, via the national safety camera liaison group, with local partnerships.

The Government recognises that hazard perception skills are an important part of safe driving and wants new drivers to develop these skills quickly. We are therefore planning to introduce a new moving image hazard perception test into the theory test from 14 November 2002.

Hazard perception is the ability to recognise situations that may require a driver to take some form of avoiding action such as changing speed or position. The introduction of the new test will encourage learners to take the training they need to develop these skills. The Driving Standards Agency has developed a

new training package (RoadSense) to help learners recognise potential dangers as early as possible and adopt appropriate strategies to minimise the risk. With these skills, drivers are more likely to approach hazardous situations at an appropriate speed.

The new test will use film clips of real road traffic situations and will test the ability to recognise hazards. It will not simulate the driving experience to test the appropriate use of speed. This will continue to be assessed as part of the practical driving test.

(gg) The effect of widely applying well-researched and understood measures to improve enforcement, engineering and education would produce very impressive results both in reducing lives and transforming the quality of life of millions of people. Even spreading best practice to all parts of the country would have an enormous effect. Many of the very high total deaths and serious injuries to which inappropriate speed contributes could be avoided. Total deaths could be reduced to under 1,000 per year. The Government's target of reducing the number of people killed and seriously injured by 40% could easily be exceeded. However, progress to date is slow, and the Government's new rules about the location of safety cameras threaten to undermine this target.

The Committee has recognised the contribution the increased and more effective use of safety cameras is having upon reducing fatalities and serious injuries on the roads, and there is already feedback from the netting off partnerships that drivers are responding positively to the greater visibility of cameras.

The Department for Transport has a comprehensive road safety research programme and a good reputation for evidence-based policy initiatives. The Department for Transport published a Good Practice Guide for local authority road safety officers in 2001, and is about to review the practical use to which it has been put before deciding how it might be further improved.

The targets set by the Government are based on extensive analysis. The Government believes that the 40% reduction in killed and seriously injured and the 50% target for children is ambitious but achievable within the timescale. A higher reduction figure at this stage would be over optimistic.

One of the inputs to the first review of progress towards achieving our road casualty reduction targets for 2010 will be a check on how local authorities have targeted their road safety spending in the last few years. We will then be able to gauge the contribution that additional local authority work over the coming years can contribute to further reducing road casualties.

(hh) The failure to take road safety in general and speed in particular seriously has important effects. We would have expected campaigns to be mounted to reduce so tragic and avoidable death and serious injury. There are many opportunities for all parts of the media to do this; unfortunately, some elements in the press do the reverse, they rail against the very measures designed to reduce speed and save lives. The evidence to this

inquiry shows that there are serious concerns about the link between motor industry advertising and journalism. We are also concerned that the BBC has done so little to promote road safety in pursuance of its general public service obligation.

We have been pleased to see a number of programmes on the BBC that encourage safer road user behaviour. For example, the BBC has recently been running a new series of *So you think you're a good driver*. Other one off programmes developed by the BBC and commercial TV companies depicting the causes and consequences of road traffic incidents have also contributed to the education of drivers and other road users. The BBC, and commercial TV stations, also show road safety public information films which we have made available to them. The television airtime used in this way would cost us about £3m a year to purchase at commercial rates.

(ii) However, during this inquiry we have had no opportunity to put the criticisms we have received to representatives of the media or the motor industry. These issues need to be considered in more detail. We hope that the new Transport Committee will investigate them.

This is a matter for the Committee.

(jj) A few local authorities have taken very effective measures which have saved lives and led to major improvements in the quality of life. Others, however, have done much less. All should aim to reach the standards which the best have now achieved. Local authorities do face funding difficulties: there are too few revenue funds (which mean that there are too few skilled staff) and too many obstacles to getting cost-effective schemes approved. Although it is insufficient for the programme outlined by the TRL in 1997, there is more capital available than before. The principal problem is that too few councils have made road safety and speed reduction a priority.

We are aware of the diversity in the levels of casualty reduction achieved by Local Highway Authorities (LHAs). A study into the reasons behind this variation in achievement forms part of the 2002/03 Road Safety research programme. The results will be used to inform best practice. A Road Safety Good Practice Guide was issued in July 2001. Market research with the LHAs, to be started in September 2002, will help shape a revised updated edition.

(kk) The Association of Chief Police Officers has shown an impressive commitment to tackling road traffic speed. Unfortunately, not all police authorities have given it the same priority. The Home Office must make it very clear to all of them that road traffic policing is a priority. The Metropolitan Police was singled out for criticism for its disregard of this important aspect of policing. We recommend that the Greater London Authority review the Metropolitan Police's approach to traffic policing as a priority.

The Government regards it as important that all forces in England and Wales continue to have a commitment to effective traffic policing but that cannot be their only concern, and nor can everything be equally a priority. It is important

that when allocating resources and manpower police forces should recognise the concerns of the public and prioritise accordingly. The ability to respond flexibly and effectively is crucial to the fight against crime.

Allocation of resources must always involve hard choices and resources are not limitless – it is essential that they are used in the most effective way. Offences such as mugging and street crime contribute immensely to the fear of crime that has such a blighting effect on people's lives. It is obviously right that resources are dedicated to tackling them effectively.

(II) The Government should not have accepted the European Commission's decisions to introduce a voluntary scheme rather than a Pedestrian Directive. The voluntary scheme must now be carefully monitored. If it has not been successful by 2005, the Government should press the European Commission to introduce a Directive.

The Government's decision to support the Commission proposal for a negotiated agreement was on the basis of it being the best way forward to introducing worthwhile pedestrian protection features in new cars as quickly as possible. The approach delivers ultimately the same level of benefits as proposed by the EEVC (a European Scientific Committee), with phase 1 starting to deliver these benefits from 2005, which is at least 2 years earlier than would have been likely through a traditional Directive.

The latest research by TRL indicates that phase 1 delivers 60% of the killed or seriously injured benefits compared with the full EEVC recommendations. A delay of 2 years in the first phase would mean an extra 2,300 killed or seriously injured in the UK. This would rise to 3,800 if there were a corresponding delay in the second phase.

The European Commission is currently considering framework legislation to reinforce the requirements contained within the negotiated agreement. They have indicated that this new proposal will be issued by the end of this year. We do not know what this further proposal will include, although it is likely that the broad technical content contained within the negotiated agreement will be unchanged. We await the Commission's proposal with interest.

(mm) Many who live in villages on the Highways Agency's road network endure intolerable conditions. The Agency has made some progress in introducing traffic calming and 30 mph limits, but it has been very slight and very slow. Too few traffic calming schemes have been installed. Insufficient account is given to the severance of communities and the quality of life in assessing the introduction of both schemes and 30 mph limits. The Agency should now establish a programme for installing 30 mph limits and attendant speed reduction measures in all villages along its network.

The Highways Agency regularly reviews the appropriateness of speed limits on its network and adjusts these in consultation with others, including the police, where a change is considered to be beneficial. Traffic calming is used either in conjunction with a new lower speed limit or to help compliance with an existing limit. Not all locations are suitable for the application of traffic calming

and, to help assess whether or not it would be advantageous, the HA uses NATA, the New Approach To Appraisal. This requires projects to be assessed against the Government's five main transport investment criteria of Economy, Safety, Environment, Accessibility and Integration. Appraisal is used to help develop the design of a project and to help determine priorities within a limited budget. Factors which are particularly important in designing a traffic-calming scheme, and assessing whether or not it should proceed include its potential to reduce accidents through a reduction in both average and maximum speeds. A reduction in speed may also help to reduce noise levels. Severance, which is a sub-objective of accessibility, may also be lessened if speeds were to be reduced.

The Agency already has, therefore, programmes of improvement that include traffic calming and speed limit reduction where appropriate. Only certain types of traffic calming measures are appropriate for the trunk road network and the Agency has developed guidance on the use of traffic calming on its network. Publication is expected this year. The HA has over the past three years successfully piloted route treatment measures targeted at delivering speed calming and village treatments along long sections of its rural network in the Peak District. The success of these schemes now means the Agency can move forward with similar projects across other parts of its network. The A38 is another route where examples of similar calming on a route treatment basis have been successfully employed.

Nevertheless, in many circumstances the most effective means of improving safety and lessening the effects of heavy traffic traveling through communities is to construct a by-pass. The HA expects to commence the construction of 18 by-pass schemes by March 2005.

(nn) Crashes which occur while drivers are working are very common, and deaths caused in this way are probably the largest single cause of work-related fatalities. The HSC would be negligent if it failed to extend its activities to this most important road safety issue. The fact that it would cost money is not an excuse for ignoring it. If it does not do so, the Government must demand that it reconsiders the matter. It must provide the money to ensure that the HSE can employ the necessary staff. Clearer guidance to employers on managing road risk is urgently needed. We recommend that the Transport Committee investigates this in more detail.

The Government shares the Committee's concern about the risks faced by those who need to use the road network while at work. In accordance with a commitment in the Road Safety Strategy, the Work-related Road Safety Task Group was set up to assess the scale of the problem and to make recommendations for reducing those risks.

The Task Group published their report in November 2001 and concluded that up to a third of all road traffic incidents may involve someone who was at work at the time. The Group made a total of 18 recommendations, the main one was that health and safety at work law should be applied more rigorously to on-the-road work activities. The Health and Safety Commission (HSC) was asked to consider the implications of the Group's report and a copy of their advice has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses. In this, HSC recognised that more

could be done to secure greater compliance with the law and that, together with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), they could contribute to this. They have therefore agreed to develop a programme of work for this over a 3–5 year period focused on:

- working with the industry to develop and promote best practice;
- raising awareness;
- collecting more information;
- clarifying the investigation and enforcement arrangements between the police, HSE and local authorities; and
- supporting further research and guidance.

We welcome HSC's positive response to the Task Group's report and understand that HSE are planning to produce generic guidance for employers and others on managing road risk by next summer. However, it should be noted that the Task Group recognised that a better understanding of the causes of work-related road traffic accidents was needed and how different management interventions might have an impact on this. The Commission agreed that this is essential to enable actions to be properly targeted. They have not therefore considered it appropriate to seek to change the way HSE and local authorities currently approach investigations. They acknowledge that this will need to be reviewed as more knowledge becomes available.

The Government will continue to work with HSC in taking forward the Task Group's recommendations.

(oo) If any other activity were to cause as many deaths and injuries as car crashes, it would be treated with much more concern and much more vigorous action would be taken. The Department of Health and health authorities should:

- **take road safety and speeding more seriously as a public health issue, and encourage public health officers to do so as well;**

As recommended in the Report of the cross-government Accidental Injury Task Force, the Department of Health is taking steps to advise public health officials of the role they can play in working with local agencies to make roads safer, and to teach children in particular how to use roads safely. The Department of Health will also work closely with the Department for Transport in promoting measures to reduce inequalities in the rate of casualties from road accidents, particularly among child pedestrians.

- **take a lead in major Government publicity campaigns to promote responsible attitudes to speeding; and promote such attitudes in GP surgeries and hospitals;**

As the Committee noted, the Department of Health has funded the voluntary sector to help promote road safety messages. In some cases, GP surgeries and hospitals have been sent literature to display. While it is right that the Department for Transport should lead on road safety campaigns including those on speeding, the Department of Health will work closely with the Department for Transport to consider whether relevant road safety messages would be appropriate in any publicity campaigns it mounts, such as in the use of drugs, alcohol, or mobile phones. The Department of Health supports major campaigns that promote responsible attitudes to driving, but it does not consider it appropriate that it should lead those campaigns.

In addition,

- **partnerships should be established locally between local authorities, police authorities, magistrates and primary care trusts and other health organisations;**

The Government agrees, and intends to encourage such partnerships

- **a national road accident base of the type already working in Cambridge.**

The Department of Health are currently considering a bid for funding from a Cambridge charity that is planning to pilot a new register of aggregated data on local accidental injuries. Our general approach is to encourage Regional Public Health Observatories to become involved in strengthening the local surveillance of accidental injuries, working as far as possible with local hospitals.

- **In preparing Local Transport Plans, local authorities should consult public health departments and primary care trusts, seeking their opinions on the plans at an early stage of preparation; they should also ensure that health improvement programmes are linked with Local Transport Plans.**

The Committee noted that Health organisations are already consulted on Local Transport Plans. We agree that this should be done at an early stage, and that aspects of local health improvement programmes that are concerned with safe travel should synchronise with the relevant sections of Local Transport Plans.

Partnerships with Primary Care Trusts and others are recommended to LHAs. One of the key criteria for the Inner City Demonstration Project (see (x)) will be the extent to which the bidding authorities have secured/are working in partnership.

- **The Department of Health should be represented on the National Safety Camera Project Board.**

The Department has nominated a representative to attend Safety Camera Project Board meetings

(pp) There must be better co-ordination between Government Offices and local authorities, regional planning bodies, and health professionals; and between the Government Offices in the Regions and the DTLR's Local Transport Plan Division and Road Safety Division.

Staff from Department for Transport's Road Safety Division attend each of the Regional casualty reduction working groups, facilitated by the Government Offices. The aim is to promote collaborative working and to ensure good communication between the policy division and the LHAs. This will enhance the development of casualty reduction by providing links between national and regional specialist groups and policy makers within Government, the Police, Local Authorities and other bodies. It will also support, promote and co-ordinate local, regional and national road safety issues in engineering, enforcement, publicity, education and training.

(qq) There also needs to be very significant improvements in the co-ordination between speed management strategies and the Regional Economic Strategies of the RDAs and Regional Planning Guidance.

Speed management strategy is nationally based for consistency and applied locally with sufficient flexibility permitted to accommodate local needs and experience. Future policies on speed management will take greater account of factors such as the economy, the environment, quality of life and social exclusion – as well as address the overall road safety objective of road casualty reduction. This will be reflected in our future guidance to local highway authorities in setting appropriate speed limits on their roads. See (ss) below.

(rr) We recommend that the Home Office emphasise that road traffic policing is a priority and the National Policing Plan contain a commitment to that effect. The best value indicator relating to traffic policing should be retained.

The Home Office fully recognises the important contribution that road traffic policing makes to reducing deaths and injuries on the roads. We want that to continue. Nevertheless, traffic law enforcement cannot be the only concern of the police, nor can all their duties, however important, be equally a priority. In allocating limited resources forces must respond flexibly and effectively, recognising the concerns of the public in addressing the offences that so much increase the fear of crime.

(ss) Local authorities rightly cherish their independence, but this should not extend to neglecting road safety: saving lives should not be a matter for discretion.

There is an obligation under Section 39(3) of the Road Traffic Act 1988 for LHAs to 'carry out studies into accidents arising out of the use of vehicles' and must 'in the light of those studies take such measures as appear to the authority to be appropriate to prevent such accidents...' See (qq) above.

(tt) The Government should establish a National Speed Management Strategy which should:

- highlight the effect of decreases in speed on reducing casualties;
- set targets for reductions in speeds by local authority;
- publish examples of success and good practice; and take measures to get them adopted;
- establish a programme to change attitudes, including misinformation from the press; seek a more responsible attitude to speeding from the media, advertisers and motor manufacturers; and provide a much larger publicity budget to encourage safer driving;
- involve Government, highway authorities, police and motoring organisations in developing the strategy, and
- publish a regular report on success in implementing the measures set out in its document, *New Directions in Speed Management (March 2000)*.

In March 2000 the Government set targets for reducing road accident casualties and published its strategy for achieving those targets. These can only be achieved by working together with the local authorities who are responsible for putting into practice measures to reduce accidents and casualties. This partnership can involve providing finance, as with the mixed priority route demonstration projects, or through the provision of guidance and advice in the form of Departmental Circulars, Traffic Advisory Leaflets and the Good Practice Guide.

Our Think! campaign aims precisely at educating and informing the public in order to promote attitudes that lead to safer behaviour on our roads. Think! Slow Down is a major element in that campaign.

On the issue of car advertising we support the advertising regulators (the ITC and ASA) in their regulation of motor vehicle advertising to avoid the images that might encourage or condone dangerous, inconsiderate or irresponsible driving.

The Department for Transport aims to ensure that the press – and other media – are fully aware of the objectives of road safety policy and the facts and figures that support it, so that their editorial can be well informed (see (ff)). In addition, we aim to correct inaccuracies as they appear and to persuade media of the successes of the road safety campaign, particularly with regard to safety cameras.

Progress on all parts of the Road Safety Strategy, including the chapter on Safer Speeds, is to be measured during the review of the Strategy to be conducted by the Government in 2003.

(uu) Road safety should be given a higher priority in the Ten Year Plan. The Transport Research Laboratory concluded that £3bn would be adequate to make urban roads safer by major changes to their design. This sum will no longer be sufficient. The Department of Transport should now estimate

the total amount which needs to be spent on safety measures. This should be specifically identified in the Ten Year Plan. The DTLR should provide funds for further demonstration projects, including Safety City Projects in each region of the country, and similar projects in rural areas.

Road safety already has a high priority within DfT – as it did in DTLR and DETR previously. The casualty reduction targets are part of DfT's Public Service Agreement with the Treasury that underpins the resources it has been allocated to improve transport, including transport safety, across the board.

While it may be possible to ask local authorities and others to estimate how much they would like to spend on road safety over the next ten years or more, it would have little or no practical benefit. Improvements cannot be made overnight – and compared with many other countries, ours are very much safer already. Local authorities have access to significant spending power through the LTP system. They need to identify what more they want to do to improve safety, develop proposals and plan their implementation.

As to the selection of demonstration projects, wholly funded by the DfT, it is more important to choose schemes that, taken together, present a good mixture of relevant road safety problems and opportunities from which authorities around the country can learn, than to ensure an even regional spread. Britain is a relatively small country and areas of similar character tend to have similar problems. Lessons learnt from projects 20 miles away are just as relevant as ones from 200 miles away – and just as important.

Further demonstration projects are being funded, including the Inner City Road Safety Demonstration project and Mixed Priority Routes (Year 1 launched November 2001, second round bids being assessed). Account has to be taken of the capacity of authorities to deliver such projects.

(vv) The Government should insist that all local authorities introduce Speed Management Plans which give priority to pedestrians in urban and rural areas. If local authorities do not introduce schemes to deal with speed, best practices should apply.

The aim of speed management policy is to make the roads safer for all road users. To help achieve that local authorities, as part of their Local Transport Plans, must identify casualty reduction targets and in doing so take account of best practice. Best practice guidance is issued and will be updated to meet LHA needs (see jj).

(ww) There has to be a consistent approach from the whole of Government, including DTLR, the Home Office, the DfES, the DTI and the Department of Health. Road safety must be a central part of the many strategies which these Departments are drawing up.

Road safety is a cross-government issue and this was a key conclusion of the Report of the Accidental Injury Task Force. It has also been reflected more generally in the Government's work on inequalities in health, which has emphasised the need to work across Government to address the wider determinants of health and tackle the root causes of health inequalities.

Although the Department for Transport has the primary responsibility for delivering the Road Safety Strategy and achieving its targets, *the Government* as a whole is committed to it. The Department for Transport works closely with other departments that have a direct interest and can help it achieve the targets.

One example of joined-up Government in implementing a particular road safety initiative is the Safety Camera Project Board which comprises representatives from Department for Transport, The Home Office, HM Treasury, Lord Chancellor's Department, Crown Prosecution Service, National Assembly for Wales, The Scottish Executive and more recently the Department of Health.

(xx) Finally, and most importantly, the Government needs to give political leadership.

The Government has provided political leadership in making people aware of the dangers of excessive and inappropriate speed through both action and publicity. Awareness can often spring from measures taken to encourage or force drivers to reduce their speeds. In 1999 the law was changed to allow local authorities to make 20 mph speed limits and 20 mph zones without the need to seek central Government consent. This has resulted in a significant increase in the number of roads where drivers must reduce their speeds. In 2000 the pilot of the safety camera netting off system started as a result of a relaxation of long standing Treasury rules. A vital element of netting off is the local publicity and promotion of the scheme to ensure that the public understands the road safety purpose of the cameras. The Government will continue to take these vital decisions in order to meet the 2010 casualty reduction targets, and bring to public attention the importance of effective speed management in reducing the number of people killed and injured on our roads.



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