

FOR IMMEDIATE USE FEBRUARY 2 2012

FACTS COMMENTS ON DfT ROAD CASUALTY FIGURES

Commenting on the figures for road casualties in Quarter 3 (July to September) 2011 published today by the Department for Transport, Robert Gifford, Executive Director of the Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety (PACTS), said "The best that can be said for these figures is that after two quarters of increases in road deaths, the figures show a small fall of 2%, a figure that is still far lower than in the previous three years where we saw an average quarterly reduction of 14%. This fall in deaths of just 2% suggests that overall road deaths will rise in 2011 – the first time this has occurred since 2003.

"Of particular concern – on the day that The Times launches a campaign to improve cycle safety – is the steady rise in killed and seriously injured cyclists. KSI rose 7% compared to the same quarter in 2010. The policy aim must be to see more people cycling more safely. At present we are a long way from achieving this.

"Overall these figures show that you cannot take road safety for granted. What is needed is consistent political leadership supported by a vision to improve our roads for all road users. Society should not tolerate deaths and injuries that can be prevented, especially when we have the means to prevent them at our disposal: slower speeds, investment in road engineering, maintaining a focus on vehicle design and effective enforcement of the law. Through the approach known as Vision Zero, Sweden has shown that you can continue to drive down death and injury. The British government needs to develop its own version of this."

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