

Boris Johnson
Mayor of London
Greater London Authority
City Hall
London SE1 2AA

14 November 2013

Dear Mr Johnson

Cyclist safety

As you will be acutely aware, the past few days have been tragic ones for cyclists in London, with the death of five cyclists in nine days. Although this is not typical of the year as a whole, it is hard not to agree with the Evening Standard's description "nine days of carnage on the streets."

You have championed cycling in London and set a target to increase cycling by 400% by 2026 from a 2001 baseline. PACTS very much supports efforts to encourage cycling because of its health, environmental and other benefits and because more cycling tends to make cycling safer with a reduction in the casualty rate. But more cycling must not be at any price.

You have also set a target to reduce the total number of people killed or seriously injured by 40% by 2020 from a 2005-2009 baseline. There is not, it appears, a specific current target for cyclist casualties. PACTS supports the overall target and was pleased to have contributed to your *Road Safety Action Plan for London 2020* published this year, which is based on an evidence-led safe-system approach.

2020 is, however, a long way off and the events of the past nine days show that there is a present and urgent problem regarding cyclists. It is chilling to think what might happen in the next nine days. We therefore call on you to urgently convene a cycling safety summit, bringing together key stakeholders including TfL, the police, bus companies, freight operators, London boroughs, cycling groups and others to see what action can and should be taken immediately. We fear that if there is not an adequate, rapid and evidence-based response, there will be pressure for action which may result in measures that are ineffective or counterproductive, or which divert resources from more useful measures.

We do not ignore or have any less concern for other road user casualties – mainly pedestrians and motor cyclists – that occur regularly and in greater numbers but with less media attention. The spotlight, however, is currently on cyclists and there is an opportunity to use these recent tragic incidents to bring about some good – and quickly.

We believe that something must be done and done urgently. If you call a cycling safety summit as we have suggested we will do all we can to assist.

Yours most sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David G Davies', followed by a stylized flourish.

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