

Transport Committee inquiry into road freight - June 2012

Submission by: **Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety (PACTS)**

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PACTS welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the committee inquiry. In Great Britain in 2010 (the last year for which data is available) 28 heavy goods vehicle (HGV) occupants were killed, and in total 198 road users were killed in single vehicle or two vehicle collisions involving an HGV. This represents over 10% of the total number of people killed on the roads in 2010 (1850 people), while HGVs made up just over 5% of total motor vehicle traffic volume. We would like to draw the attention of the committee to the following issues surrounding road freight safety.

1. Work-related road safety

- Up to 1 in 3 road crashes involves a vehicle being driven for work.
- Every week, around 200 road deaths and serious injuries involve someone at work.

With freight vehicles falling under the category of vehicles being driven for work, there are a number of existing resources for managing risk for freight drivers and other road users.

- Driving for Better Business¹ - Developed by DfT and run by RoadSafe, Driving for Better Business encourages employers to give a higher priority to road safety for those who drive cars or vans for business purposes.
- Preventing Road Accidents and Injuries for the Safety of Employees (PRAISE)² – A three year European programme where nine thematic reports were prepared covering different work-related road risk topics.
- Freight Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS)³ – A membership scheme offering quality and performance benchmarking to the freight industry.

2. Fatigue and fitness to drive

Fatigue is a significant concern for road safety. It is estimated that driver fatigue may be a contributory factor in up to 20% of road accidents, and up to one quarter of fatal and serious accidents.⁴ Freight drivers are one of the groups who are most at risk of falling asleep. Additionally this group may have a higher tendency to suffer from sleep apnoea, an often undiagnosed sleep condition which means that sufferers are more likely to fall asleep at the wheel.

¹ <http://www.drivingforbetterbusiness.com/>

² <http://www.etsc.eu/PRAISE-publications.php>

³ <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/microsites/fors/>

⁴ <http://www.rospa.com/roadsafety/adviceandinformation/driving/driverfatigue/factsheet.aspx>

3. HGV Fleet Compliance Check

The 12th HGV Fleet Compliance Check⁵ was carried out in the first half of 2010 by the Vehicle & Operator Services Agency (VOSA). Of the 3609 vehicles checked for roadworthiness defects in the 2010 survey 10% of vehicles were issued with prohibitions and 14% warranted an inspection notice. PACTS looks forward to the publication of the 13th Compliance Check.

4. Cycling

PACTS would suggest that practical cycle awareness training for freight drivers should become a compulsory part of CPD training⁶.

PACTS would be happy to give oral evidence on these or any other issues as the committee sees fit.

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⁵ <http://www.dft.gov.uk/vosa/repository/HGV%20Fleet%20Compliance%20Check%202010.pdf>

⁶ http://assets.dft.gov.uk/dsa-bl/dsa_driver_cpc_periodic_training.pdf