

# Roads policing review: future methods to improve safety and reduce casualties

RoSPA's Response to the Department for Transport's Call for Evidence

Date: September 2020



Response to Department for Transport's call for evidence: Roads policing review: future methods to improve safety and reduce casualties

## Introduction

This is the response of The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) to the Department for Transport's Roads Policing Review call for evidence. It has been produced following consultation with RoSPA's National Road Safety Committee.

The Department for Transport is conducting a review of roads policing in order to identify which current methods of roads policing work best alongside how the capability and capacity of enforcement services can be enhanced. The review calls for evidence on the current situation in regards to road casualties and what can be done to reduce them, driver compliance with road traffic law and enforcement and the structure of traffic law enforcement in the future.

## About you

### Question 1

Your name and email address.

#### RoSPA Response:

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
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### Question 2

Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

#### RoSPA Response

On behalf of an organisation.

### Question 3

Organisation details:

#### RoSPA Response



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|--|--|
| Company/Organisation Name  | The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA)    |
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| Your role/position   | Road Safety and Evaluation Officer                           |
| Please tick one box below that best describes your company or organisation |  |
|  | Micro business (0-9 employees)                               |
|  | Small business (10-49 employees)                             |
| X  | Medium business (50-249 employees)                           |
|  | Large company (250+ employees)                               |
|  | Representative organisation                                  |
|  | Trade Union  |
|  | Interest group   |
|  | Local government   |
|  | Central government   |
|  | Other (please describe):                                     |



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**If you are responding on behalf of an organisation or interest group how many members do you have and how did you obtain the views of your members:**

This response has been produced following consultation with RoSPA's National Road Safety Committee. The committee comprises of 30 members. The committee consists of representatives from a wide range of organisations, including central and local government, police, fire and rescue, trade bodies and road user groups. It meets three times a year and also communicates regularly by email.

## Consultation questions

### Question 1

#### Why do you think road casualties have remained fairly constant since 2010?

#### RoSPA Response:

Prior to 2010, the UK had seen year on year reductions in the numbers of people killed and seriously injured on our roads. Since then, the number of casualties has plateaued and further reductions have not been achieved.

The number of dedicated roads policing officers has declined, while their responsibilities for supporting general policing have increased. RoSPA believe that the decline in roads policing has contributed to the plateau in road casualty numbers. As the recent HMICFRS report<sup>1</sup> states, the decline in roads policing could lead to a reduction in forces' ability to enforce the law and educate those who, due to their behaviour, increase the risk of death or serious injury on the roads, exchange information and intelligence with relevant organisations about dangerous roads and road users, work effectively with vulnerable road users and evaluate the effectiveness of police initiatives intended to make the roads safer.

The style of policing has also evolved, with greater emphasis on targeted enforcement using technology. An effect of this is that the general deterrence of visible policing is lost, with some road users left with the knowledge that only some forms of road traffic offences are monitored and other behaviour being less effectively enforced than previously. Research<sup>2</sup> suggests that increasing levels of traffic policing reduces the number of road accidents and

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<sup>1</sup> HMICFRS (2020) Roads Policing: Not optional, An inspection of roads policing in England and Wales  
<https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/roads-policing-not-optional-an-inspection-of-roads-policing-in-england-and-wales.pdf> Date Accessed: 26/08/2020.

<sup>2</sup> Davis, A. (2019) 'Essential Evidence on a page: No. 184 How methods and levels of policing affect road casualty rates'  
<https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/travelwest/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Essential-Evidence-on-a-page-184-Levels-of-policing-affect-road-safety-casualty-rates.pdf> Date Accessed: 04/09/2020.



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traffic violations. Stationary and highly visible policing appears to be the most effective method of reducing violations and accidents. However, sustained police presence is required to produce such large effects.

RoSPA believe that the reduction in roads policing has been detrimental to road safety, and that targeted enforcement is vital. The Government should consider the road safety implications of the reductions in funding for Police services around the country, and seek to ensure that sufficient resources are available for road policing.

Despite the greater emphasis on safer systems and the realisation that road users will make mistakes, hence the need for a road infrastructure which reduces the forces involved in impact to a level where death is unlikely, the traditional 3 E's of education, engineering and enforcement are still important. Where the effectiveness of one is diminished it will have a wider detrimental impact as has been witnessed since 2010.

RoSPA also believe that a lack of targets could be contributing to the plateau in road casualty numbers. RoSPA would urge the DfT to adopt national targets for England as has been the case in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, all of which have seen good progress unlike England where casualty reduction rates have stalled.

## Question 2

**What does the evidence suggest has the most impact on reducing deaths on the road?**

### RoSPA Response:

Around 90% of road crashes involve some element of human error. Although educating road users can reduce the number of road crashes that occur, human error cannot be eradicated. Therefore, road users will still sometimes make mistakes that can lead to collisions. One way in which the number of road users killed or seriously injured can be reduced is by adopting a Safe System approach, so that crashes are less likely and when they do occur, it is less likely that the road users involved will be killed or seriously injured.

Safe System is the generic term for approaches such as 'Vision Zero', 'Sustainable Safety' and 'Towards Zero'. It is based primarily on Vision Zero, recognising that human beings' lives and health should never be compromised by their need to travel. Vision Zero states that any fatal or serious injuries that occur within the road system are unacceptable. The Scottish Government<sup>3</sup>, Highways England<sup>4</sup> and Transport for London (TfL)<sup>5</sup> have, or are, introducing the Safe System principles in their strategies. As this vision will take much time to achieve, interim targets are set.

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<sup>3</sup> Scottish Government (2009) Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2020.

<sup>4</sup> Highways England (2015) Highways England Delivery Plan: 2015–2020.

<sup>5</sup> Transport for London (2013) 'Safe Streets Plan for London: Working together, towards roads free from death and serious injury' <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/safe-streets-for-london.pdf> Date Accessed: 04/09/2020.



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RoSPA recommend the further adoption of the safe system approach throughout Great Britain, but believe that there needs to be stronger guidance on this. Vision Zero is discussed a lot, but outside of London, few Highways Authorities have adopted local targets. The new Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy would be an ideal opportunity to ask local highway authorities to set local targets as a way of achieving a national reduction in the number of road deaths and casualties.

Despite the preferred Safe System, the traditional three 'Es' of education, enforcement and engineering remain vital. In an ideal world, all road users would take on board road safety education, comply with road traffic laws and use the roads safely. Unfortunately, this is not the case.

Almost 1,800 people die on UK roads each year and a further 25,000 people are seriously injured. Many of these casualties result from a failure to comply with traffic laws. Clarke et al. (2010) studied a sample of 1,185 fatal vehicle occupant cases from 10 UK police forces between the years 1994-2005 and found that over 65% of the accidents examined involved driving at excessive speed, a driver in excess of the legal alcohol limit, failure to wear a seat belt by a fatality, or some combination of these<sup>6</sup>. This does not take into account other offences, such as drug driving or hand-held mobile phone use. Therefore, it is clear that road traffic law enforcement remains a crucial tool in road safety.

Despite this, over the past decade, the number of roads policing officers has decreased substantially. Between 2010 and 2014, there was a 22% reduction in the number of dedicated roads policing officers and there has been a further reduction of 18% since 2015. In 2019, dedicated roads policing officers made up around 4% of the total force<sup>7</sup>. The number of motoring offences detected has fallen as the number of dedicated roads policing officers has decreased. However, in some areas of enforcement, such as the detection of speeding offences, there has been an increase in the number of speeding offences recorded with the rise of technology.

The roads policing report recently published by PACTS presents clear evidence that an increase in enforcement will lead to a reduction in both fatal and serious injury collisions. For example, a meta-analysis by Elvik (2001) explored the effects speed camera enforcement, stationary speed enforcement, drink drive enforcement and seatbelt law enforcement had on the levels of road injury. These meta-analyses estimated that an increase in enforcement in these areas would result in a decrease in fatal and injury accidents. The study concluded that speed law enforcement had the most substantial effect on reducing the number of fatal accidents<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> Clarke et al. (2010) cited in PACTS (2020) 'Roads policing and its contribution to road safety'  
<https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Roads-Policing-Report-FinalV1-merged-1.pdf> Date Accessed: 10/08/2020.

<sup>7</sup> Home Office (2020) cited in PACTS (2020) 'Roads policing and its contribution to road safety'  
<https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Roads-Policing-Report-FinalV1-merged-1.pdf> Date Accessed: 06/08/2020.

<sup>8</sup> Elvik (2001) cited in PACTS (2020) 'Roads policing and its contribution to road safety'  
<https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Roads-Policing-Report-FinalV1-merged-1.pdf> Date Accessed: 10/08/2020.



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Enforcement works alongside education and engineering measures. The United Kingdom has a well-developed law framework designed to reinforce sensible behaviours by road users. It creates offences for actions that are dangerous or potentially dangerous or where vehicles are poorly maintained. These laws are underpinned by the Highway Code, which is a comprehensive source of guidance to all road users. These measures are supported by a large number educational initiatives that intend to raise the awareness of road safety matters, for example, the well-known THINK! Campaigns. The UK also has a wide-ranging driver training and testing regime.

RoSPA supports the new sentencing reforms which have been proposed to deter dangerous driving, however unless drivers feel that there is a risk of being caught more severe sentences will have little impact.

### Question 3

**What evidence led initiatives demonstrate what could be done to help reduce road traffic casualties?**

#### RoSPA Response:

An evaluation<sup>1</sup> of the Operation Radar initiative undertaken by the Metropolitan Police, suggested that increased enforcement influences driver behaviour, at least in the short term. Self-reported surveys and the national speed survey both indicate there has been an increase in levels of compliance with speed limits, and the proportion of deaths where speed was reported as a contributory factor has declined<sup>1</sup>. This suggests that enforcement has helped to raise compliance with speed limits and reduce fatalities in speed-related collisions.

### Question 4

**Can you provide examples or empirical evidence demonstrating a relationship between road traffic law enforcement and compliance with road traffic law?**

#### RoSPA Response:

Academics have established that there is a theoretical relationship between law enforcement, compliance and the number of road casualties. This implies that there is no level of enforcement that would have no effect on offending rates and that an increasing level of enforcement will eventually result in a reduction in offences and collisions<sup>9</sup>. However, they also suggest there is a saturation level, at which point the increase in enforcement will have a diminishing effect on compliance and casualty reduction<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> Smith et al (2015) cited in PACTS (2020) 'Roads policing and its contribution to road safety'  
<https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Roads-Policing-Report-FinalV1-merged-1.pdf> Date Accessed: 10/08/2020.

<sup>10</sup> Goldenbeld (2011) cited in PACTS (2020) 'Roads policing and its contribution to road safety'  
<https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Roads-Policing-Report-FinalV1-merged-1.pdf> Date Accessed: 10/08/2020.



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This theory assumes that at a zero enforcement level, offending, as well as accidents and casualties, will be at the highest level<sup>11</sup>. With a high level of police enforcement, offending, collisions and casualties would be substantially lower. Where there has been a reduction in the level of enforcement, compliance with road traffic law appears to reduce and the number of casualties increase.

It is thought that as the visibility of road traffic police has reduced, so has the "fear of being caught", leading to an increase in offending. The RAC Report on Motoring 2018<sup>12</sup> reported that 68 percent of people who took part in its survey believed there were "not enough police on the road to enforce driving laws", and 28 percent believed that it "was not very likely that they would get caught if they broke most motoring laws. A year later, in its 2019 report, the Foundation found that one in five drivers thought that they had driven while over the alcohol limit in the previous 12 months.

Two examples that demonstrate the relationship between law enforcement and compliance with road traffic law are the enforcement of speed limits and seatbelt wearing.

Operation Radar, an initiative undertaken by the Metropolitan Police, was designed to increase the visible presence of police on a stretch of the A23 in Surrey and focused on mobile phone, seat belt and speed offences. An evaluation<sup>13</sup> of the initiative suggested that increased enforcement influences driver behaviour, at least in the short term. 32% more fixed penalty notices for speeding offences were issued in 2018 than in 2011, likely due to the increased use of speed cameras to enforce speed limits. Self-reported surveys and the national speed survey both indicate there has been an increase in levels of compliance with speed limits, and the proportion of deaths where speed was reported as a contributory factor has declined<sup>14</sup>. This suggests that enforcement has helped to raise compliance with speed limits and reduce fatalities in speed-related collisions.

An evaluation of the West London Camera Demonstration project<sup>15</sup>, which involved the installation of 21 speed cameras, concluded that there had been an 8.9% reduction in all accidents and a 55.7% reduction in fatal

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<sup>11</sup> Elliot and Broughton (2005) cited in PACTS (2020) 'Roads policing and its contribution to road safety'  
<https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Roads-Policing-Report-FinalV1-merged-1.pdf> Date Accessed: 10/08/2020.

<sup>12</sup> RAC (2018) cited in HMIcFRS (2020) 'Roads Policing: Not optional: An inspection of roads policing in England and Wales'  
<https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/roads-policing-not-optional-an-inspection-of-roads-policing-in-england-and-wales.pdf> Date Accessed: 03/09/2020.

<sup>13</sup> Walter (2008) cited in PACTS (2020) 'Roads policing and its contribution to road safety'  
<https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Roads-Policing-Report-FinalV1-merged-1.pdf> Date Accessed: 10/08/2020.

<sup>14</sup> PACTS (2020) 'Roads policing and its contribution to road safety'  
<https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Roads-Policing-Report-FinalV1-merged-1.pdf> Date Accessed: 11/08/2020.

<sup>15</sup> London Accident Analysis Unit (1997) cited in PACTS (2020) 'Roads policing and its contribution to road safety'





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accidents which were directly attributable to the presence of the speed cameras. The study also found that the speed cameras led to accident reduction across the wider network.

However, it is thought that speed cameras result in 'halo effect', meaning that behaviour is modified within 500m of the camera site, but reverts after this point. TRL found that the minimum distance 'halo' associated with physical policing to be around five times larger than for speed cameras alone<sup>16</sup>, therefore providing a case for visible roads policing to further improve compliance and reduce the number of road casualties.

Seatbelt enforcement also demonstrates this relationship. There has been substantial reduction in enforcement of seatbelt laws in particular since 2013, with the number of fixed penalty notices for not wearing a seatbelt falling from 86,300 in 2013 to 21,600 in 2018, a 75% decrease<sup>17</sup>. Recent fatality data obtained by PACTS suggests that the number of people who have died in cars not wearing a seatbelt has increased in recent years<sup>18</sup>, from 20% of car occupants in 2013 to 26% in 2018. There is also a belief amongst the public that those not wearing a seatbelt will not be detected, with a 2018 survey showing that 86.1% of car drivers believe they are unlikely to be checked by the police for wearing their seatbelt<sup>19</sup>. There is a case for more enforcement, as a meta-analysis<sup>20</sup> showed that enforcement increases wearing rates by 21% during the enforcement period and by 15% afterwards.

## Question 5

**Can you provide any examples or empirical evidence identifying a causal relationship between enforcement and road collision casualty numbers?**

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<https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Roads-Policing-Report-FinalV1-merged-1.pdf> Date Accessed: 10/08/2020.

<sup>16</sup> Elliot and Broughton (2005) cited in PACTS (2020) 'Roads policing and its contribution to road safety'

<https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Roads-Policing-Report-FinalV1-merged-1.pdf> Date Accessed: 10/08/2020.

<sup>17</sup> HMICFRS (2020) 'Roads Policing: Not optional: An inspection of roads policing in England and Wales'

<https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/roads-policing-not-optional-an-inspection-of-roads-policing-in-england-and-wales.pdf> Date Accessed: 03/09/2020.

<sup>18</sup> PACTS (2019) Seat belts: the forgotten road safety priority

<https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Final-Full-Web-Version-16.05.2019.pdf> Date Accessed: 06/08/2020.

<sup>19</sup> ESRA (2018) 'Country Factsheets- United Kingdom 2018'

<https://www.esranet.eu/storage/minisites/esra2018countryfactsheetunitedkingdom.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> Kallberg et al. (2008) cited in PACTS (2020) 'Roads policing and its contribution to road safety'

<https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Roads-Policing-Report-FinalV1-merged-1.pdf> Date Accessed: 10/08/2020.



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### RoSPA Response:

There is some evidence of the relationship between enforcement and road casualty numbers, particularly in the case of speed and drink drive enforcement. Whilst there is good evidence to show that enforcement can have a casualty reduction benefit, disappointingly, there is a lack of evidence of the effectiveness of specific enforcement practices or tactics.

The recent PACTS report<sup>21</sup> demonstrates that enforcement of speed limits has the largest impact on reducing fatal and serious injury collisions, followed by enforcement of drink-driving laws. Evidence included in the report suggests that the average effect of police interventions can be between a 23 and a 31 percent reduction in the number of collisions that cause injuries.

The Police Enforcement Policy and Programmes on European Roads (PEPPER) project<sup>22</sup> involved a systematic review of evaluation studies of speeding, drink driving and seatbelt wearing by applying meta-analysis to assess the best estimates of the effects of enforcement measures on accidents and behaviour. The meta-analysis showed that speeding enforcement led to an 18% reduction in the number of accidents. In terms of drink driving enforcement, patrolling led to a reduction in the number of accidents of 8% and checkpoints resulted in a 15% reduction in the number of accidents.

Although the number of breath tests carried out by the police has fallen, the proportion of them that are positive, failed or refused increased from 11.9 percent in 2015, to 15.2 percent in 2018. This suggests that underlying offending behaviours may have increased<sup>23</sup>. In a 2016 report<sup>24</sup>, the Transport Committee noted that the number of road traffic offences had fallen but: "the number of 'causing death' (which includes causing death while under the influence of drink or drugs) offences, which will always be recorded where they occur, hasn't fallen. This is significant as it suggests that the reduction in overall offences that are recorded doesn't represent a reduction in offences actually being committed."

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<sup>21</sup> PACTS (2020) 'Roads policing and its contribution to road safety'

<https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Roads-Policing-Report-FinalV1-merged-1.pdf> Date Accessed: 06/08/2020.

<sup>22</sup> Kallberg et al. (2008) cited in PACTS (2020) 'Roads policing and its contribution to road safety'

<https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Roads-Policing-Report-FinalV1-merged-1.pdf> Date Accessed: 10/08/2020.

<sup>23</sup> HMICFRS (2020) 'Roads Policing: Not optional: An inspection of roads policing in England and Wales'

<https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/roads-policing-not-optional-an-inspection-of-roads-policing-in-england-and-wales.pdf> Date Accessed: 03/09/2020.

<sup>24</sup> Transport Committee (2016) 'Road Traffic Law Enforcement'

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201516/cmselect/cmtrans/518/51802.htm>

Date Accessed: 03/09/2020.



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The PACTS report concluded that there is less evidence of the relationship between enforcement of seatbelt, drug driving and mobile phone laws and casualties. However, the evidence available does suggest a safety benefit of enforcement<sup>25</sup>.

### Question 6

**Can you provide any evidence or examples that road traffic enforcement can disrupt or detect other (non-motoring) criminality?**

#### RoSPA Response:

RoSPA is not in a position to comment.

### Question 7

**What else alongside enforcement (such as education or examples of use of technology and signage) has been evidenced to increase compliance?**

#### RoSPA Response:

Evidence<sup>26</sup> suggests that enforcement works best when it is supported by communications messages. Police publicity and enforcement campaigns are an important way of engaging with road users. They help the police and partners educate the public about the behaviours that cause road collisions, especially the fatal four, and the potential consequences of breaking the law<sup>27</sup>.

Police social media accounts have multiplied in recent years. Some of these accounts represent entire force areas, some particular units, and some individual officers. Some forces use Facebook or Instagram, but Twitter accounts are seemingly the most popular way of attempting to engage with large numbers of the road users. Some of these roads policing accounts have proven very popular, with over 100,000 followers.

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<sup>25</sup> PACTS (2020) 'Roads policing and its contribution to road safety'

<https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Roads-Policing-Report-FinalV1-merged-1.pdf> Date Accessed: 06/08/2020.

<sup>26</sup> PACTS (2020) 'Roads policing and its contribution to road safety'

<https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Roads-Policing-Report-FinalV1-merged-1.pdf> Date Accessed: 25/08/2020.

<sup>27</sup> HMICFRS (2020) Roads Policing: Not optional, An inspection of roads policing in England and Wales

<https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/roads-policing-not-optional-an-inspection-of-roads-policing-in-england-and-wales.pdf> Date Accessed: 03/09/2020.



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The growth of social media has meant that there are more opportunities for sharing messages and advice relating to road safety and operations and campaigns. Some accounts also highlight examples of poor road user behaviour. These accounts in general promote the value of roads policing. However, there are now a large number of these accounts and a consistent approach is needed to ensure that the environment does not become noisy and uncoordinated.

The introduction of dash camera footage as evidence is now being used to great effect and helps the police to collect evidence from the public.

Despite the effectiveness of campaigns alongside enforcement, the recent HMICFRS<sup>28</sup> report showed that promotion of national campaigns, such as those in the NPCC campaign calendar were not very effective because forces are not obliged to take part in them. Roads policing officers in one force told researchers that they do not participate in national road safety campaigns and had not for some years. Although senior officers made them aware of the campaigns, they were unable to dedicate any time to the campaign due to competing demands elsewhere.

Enforcement and education work well together, and certain types of educational message are more likely to succeed than others. Different types of messages work well for different groups, for example, what messages work well for young male drivers will not necessarily work for an older target audience<sup>29</sup>.

## Question 8

### How have improvements in design and technology of vehicles (such as collision avoidance systems) impacted upon road safety?

#### RoSPA Response:

In recent years, vehicles have become inherently safer with more warning systems alerting the driver to maintenance issues and growing safety focused automation and driver assistance systems. At the same time, advances in car infotainment systems and mobile phone technology mean that there are increasing sources of potential distraction for drivers.

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<sup>28</sup> HMICFRS (2020) Roads Policing: Not optional, An inspection of roads policing in England and Wales

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/roads-policing-not-optional-an-inspection-of-roads-policing-in-england-and-wales.pdf> Date Accessed: 26/08/2020.

<sup>29</sup> PACTS (2020) 'Roads policing and its contribution to road safety'

<https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Roads-Policing-Report-FinalV1-merged-1.pdf> Date Accessed: 06/08/2020



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Technology has the potential to drastically reduce the number of crashes with the introduction of highly autonomous vehicles. The effects of more recent technologies such as automated emergency braking systems have yet to be quantified. RoSPA welcomes the EC announcement to make it mandatory for all vehicles sold in Europe to be equipped with speed limiting technology from 2022, alongside other safety features like electronic data recorders, automated emergency braking (AEB) and improved visibility installed into lorries to help drivers look for vulnerable pedestrians and cyclists around the vehicle. However, it will be several years before the existing fleet of vehicles is replaced and all vehicles on the road have this technology available. RoSPA wonder whether the reintroduction of a scrappage scheme would encourage the replacement of older vehicles with safer and lower emission vehicles.

However, some systems installed in vehicles can become a source of distraction, such as increasingly complex infotainment systems. In-vehicle infotainment refers to vehicle systems that combine entertainment and information delivery for drivers and passengers. These systems typically use audio and video interfaces, touchscreens and keypads<sup>30</sup>.

In 2018, there were 2,647 road crashes in Britain in which distraction in the vehicle was deemed a contributory factor, making up 3% of all road accidents. This included 68 fatal accidents and 540 accidents in which someone was seriously injured<sup>31</sup>.

RoSPA recognises that while using infotainment systems, drivers may take their eyes off the road for a sustained period of time to look at the screen and select which icons they should touch, devoting significant mental resources to this task, when screens are often well below the driver's eye-level. Drivers may also become distracted by interacting with the system vocally or manually.

## Question 9

**In respect of commercial vehicles can you provide any evidence or examples that current levels of enforcement by police and/or DVSA and the sanctions that follow are an effective deterrent to encourage compliance?**

### RoSPA Response:

RoSPA are not in a position to comment.

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<sup>30</sup> Techopedia (undated) 'In-Vehicle Infotainment (IVI)'

<https://www.techopedia.com/definition/27778/in-vehicle-infotainment-ivi> Accessed: 04/09/2020.

<sup>31</sup> DfT (2019) 'Table RAS50001: Contributory factors in reported accidents, by severity, Great Britain, 2018'

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/ras50-contributory-factors>



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#### **Question 10**

**If not, can you provide any evidence or examples of how enforcement or sanctions could be changed to achieve improved compliance?**

#### **RoSPA Response:**

RoSPA are not in a position to comment.

#### **Question 11**

**Can you provide evidence or examples of where enforcement of road traffic law can benefit congestion management and air quality?**

#### **RoSPA Response:**

RoSPA is not in a position to comment.

#### **Question 12**

**Is there evidence to show how prosecutions contribute to road safety?**

#### **RoSPA Response:**

During the COVID-19 lockdown, many forces reported seeing an increase in drivers excessively speeding. For example in London 163mph was recorded in a 70mph speed limit area, 134mph in a 40mph area, 110 mph in a 30mph area and 73mph in a 20mph road.

#### **Question 13**

**Can you provide evidence or examples (in particular the use of technology) of what could be done to better enable and equip those charged with enforcing traffic laws?**

#### **RoSPA Response:**

It is essential that law enforcement is suitably equipped with the right capabilities to meet demand and deliver against the challenges ahead. To be able to enforce the more difficult to detect traffic offences the police need to be trained in specific ways of working and given additional equipment not only to do the work required of them but to do it safely in specific environments.

RoSPA would like to see more visible roads policing. This enforcement should be targeted and intelligence-led. Effective analysis of information and intelligence helps to make sure that resources are deployed in the right place, at the right time, and on the right activity. The first National Policing Plan stated that forces should



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increasingly be adopting intelligence-led strategies for reducing death and serious injury on the roads and achieving a safe environment for all road users. Increasingly in policing, and in roads policing in particular, forces are adopting new approaches which aim at better use of intelligence<sup>32</sup>. Examples of this include the targeted enforcement of drink and drug driving over the festive period or during major sporting events. Intelligence should be enhanced and more widely shared.

There is clear public support for enforcement of traffic laws and a desire for more visible roads policing. In the RAC 'Report on Motoring'<sup>33</sup>, 'insufficient enforcement by the police of safe road use' is consistently ranked as one of the top concerns of motorists. Since 2011, the report has shown an increase in those who believe that there is an insufficient number of roads policing officers active on the road. The report also states that the single most widespread concern among respondents was hand held mobile phone use by other drivers.

At the same time there is evidence of public disquiet about levels of enforcement and there is some public perception that offenders will not be caught. The National Travel Attitudes Survey<sup>34</sup> showed that in 2019, 63% of the public believe that the laws on driving while impaired by illegal or legal drugs are not properly enforced. 76% believe that the law on using mobile phones whilst driving is not properly enforced.

Technology, such as speed cameras, also have a role to play in enforcement. There has been a reduction in the number of roads policing officers, but the number of speed cameras continues to rise, and there may be opportunities to deploy more. Speed cameras have been proven to improve compliance and reduce the number of collisions and casualties<sup>35</sup>.

Research by the RAC Foundation in 2018 found positive public opinions of increasing automated road traffic enforcement in the future. Out of those surveyed, 49%, said they supported its greater use in principle, while only 19% were against<sup>36</sup>. Similarly, Research by IAM RoadSmart found that 80% of drivers find the use of speed cameras acceptable or very acceptable, and 79% of drivers believe that speed cameras have contributed to reducing deaths in recent years.

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<sup>32</sup> PACTS (2020) 'Roads policing and its contribution to road safety'

<https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Roads-Policing-Report-FinalV1-merged-1.pdf> Date Accessed: 25/08/2020.

<sup>33</sup> RAC (2019) 'RAC Report on Motoring 2019'

<https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/features/report-on-motoring-2019/> Date Accessed: 06/08/2020.

<sup>34</sup> DfT (2020) cited in PACTS (2020) 'Roads policing and its contribution to road safety'

<https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Roads-Policing-Report-FinalV1-merged-1.pdf> Date Accessed: 06/08/2020.

<sup>35</sup> PACTS (2020) 'Roads policing and its contribution to road safety'

<https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Roads-Policing-Report-FinalV1-merged-1.pdf> Date Accessed: 25/08/2020.

<sup>36</sup> RAC Foundation (2018) cited in PACTS (2020) 'Roads policing and its contribution to road safety'

<https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Roads-Policing-Report-FinalV1-merged-1.pdf> Date Accessed: 25/08/2020.



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Other technologies, including automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) systems, are also shown to have applications in roads policing which can support intelligence-led policing and help target the drivers that pose the greatest risk to other road users. The recent PACTS report also suggests that technology could be used more widely to gather information, monitor and encourage compliance, for example in relation to seatbelt wearing<sup>37</sup>.

Due to public support for enforcement, schemes such as Operation Snap, that allow members of the public to submit video evidence of motoring offences have proved popular and effective. Officers and policing experts interviewed by PACTS showed a great deal of support for these kinds of schemes, suggesting that they not only lead to more penalties and prosecutions but also provide a deterrent to would-be offenders, who are made aware that other road users may have dashcams and are able to submit footage of offences being committed<sup>38</sup>. Schemes such as Community Speedwatch can also be drawn upon to assist with the enforcement of speed limits. This support and participation from the public should be encouraged.

#### Question 14

**Can you provide evidence of existing approaches to enforcement or available technologies that could inform the future shape of road traffic enforcement by police and other agencies?**

#### RoSPA Response:

RoSPA echoes a call for increased visible roads policing with a targeted enforcement approach.

Working with other agencies is also key. Collaboration in the delivery of specialist functions such as roads policing is common amongst forces and is often considered to be a highly effective and more affordable method of delivering road traffic law enforcement. The police work with partner agencies in road safety partnerships. These are intended to co-ordinate the work and bring together resources to make roads safer and reduce the number of people who are killed or seriously injured.

Interviews with roads policing officers conducted by PACTS highlight that collaboration and partnerships are vitally important. Those interviewed referred to the need for collaboration in two areas. These were collaboration between themselves (i.e. with other forces) and collaboration with other road safety stakeholders, primarily the associated road safety partnership (or equivalent).

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<sup>37</sup> PACTS (2020) 'Roads policing and its contribution to road safety'

<https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Roads-Policing-Report-FinalV1-merged-1.pdf> Date Accessed: 25/08/2020.

<sup>38</sup> PACTS (2020) 'Roads policing and its contribution to road safety'

<https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Roads-Policing-Report-FinalV1-merged-1.pdf> Date Accessed: 25/08/2020.





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In the interviews conducted by PACTS, road safety partnerships were identified as key organisations in the delivery of road safety throughout force areas. These partnerships bring together road safety stakeholders and facilitate the sharing of resources and expertise to achieve shared goals.

Collaboration with other government organisations, such as the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA), Highways England and local public health bodies was also seen as being invaluable to effective roads policing. Collaboration with the private sector, such as the Motor Insurance Bureau, was also seen as important.

The evidence demonstrates that, from providing assistance on specific issues on a day-to-day basis to broader collaboration on campaigns and targeted operations, these other organisations have a key role to play in the road traffic law enforcement process. Forces should be encouraged to continue to seek out means of collaborating further with partners<sup>39</sup>.

Despite some evidence of collaboration, the recent HMICFRS report<sup>40</sup> shows that in some forces, partner agencies, particularly local authorities, are often not involved in police road safety initiatives, which can result in a disjointed, and inefficient approach to road safety. Some forces inspected were unable to demonstrate that their enforcement activity was based on a comprehensive understanding of the causes of deaths and serious injury on the roads in their area. The report suggests that in some instances, best practice, such as problem-solving approaches to reducing serious collisions, is not being shared effectively.

RoSPA has no further comments to make on the consultation process, other than to thank the Department for Transport for the opportunity to comment. We have no objection to our response being reproduced or attributed.

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<sup>39</sup> PACTS (2020) 'Roads policing and its contribution to road safety' <https://www.pacts.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Roads-Policing-Report-FinalV1-merged-1.pdf> Date Accessed: 25/08/2020.

<sup>40</sup> HMICFRS (2020) Roads Policing: Not optional, An inspection of roads policing in England and Wales <https://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmicfrs/wp-content/uploads/roads-policing-not-optional-an-inspection-of-roads-policing-in-england-and-wales.pdf> Date Accessed: 26/08/2020.

