



Roger Geffen, CTC,
Charlie Lloyd, London Cycling Campaign,
Dr. Robert Davis, Road Danger Reduction Forum,
Amy Aeron-Thomas, RoadPeace
David Dansky, TABS (The Association of Bikeability Schemes)

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Dear Mr Geffen, Mr Lloyd, Mr Davis, Ms Aeron-Thomas and Mr Dansky

'Cyclists stay back' stickers

Thank you for your letter of 20 February 2014, in which you express your collective concerns regarding the 'cyclists stay back' stickers.

These stickers are just one example of activity that TfL uses to reduce cyclist fatalities and serious injuries. As you are aware we have an extensive programme, using a range of approaches to make London's streets safer. This includes improvements to infrastructure, extensive enforcement and a variety of education, training and lobbying activity.

Although I do not agree with all the content of your letter, you make some good points which I have taken into consideration when writing this response.

TfL encourages all road users to use their vehicles and London's roads safely and we promote and reinforce this message extensively with campaigns and marketing.

I do not agree that the 'cyclists stay back' wording implies that cyclists are second-class road users who should defer to motor vehicle users. Nor am I aware of any evidence that this message removes drivers' responsibility to use their vehicles safely, including checking their nearside mirrors.

Any robust evidence you have however, indicating that lorry drivers are less likely to check their mirrors as a result of the 'cyclist stay back' sticker, would be of great interest and I would be grateful if you could share this with me.

If there are improvements we could make to the 'cyclist stay back' sticker, I am happy for you to discuss this with the Freight Team for future roll-out.


In your letter you make six requests, and my response to each is set out in the attached note.

LCC, CTC, TABS and Roadpeace are active members of the CSWG, and Roadpeace are also represented on the CLoCS working groups. I was surprised to learn that this issue hasn't been brought by your organisations for discussion at these forums in the first instance.

I'm sure you will agree that a reasonable first step in resolving issues such as this would be to table it for discussion at a CSWG, or to highlight your concerns to the Chair of that meeting.

I would welcome your suggestions as to how we could strengthen engagement and make better use of the CSWG forum and CLoCS working groups.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Leon Daniels', written over the 'Yours sincerely' text.

Leon Daniels
Managing Director – Surface Transport

(1) FORS to instruct their members to remove 'cyclists stay back' stickers from all vehicles except high-cab heavy goods vehicles, by the end of March.

TfL will discuss this with our stakeholders on the Construction and Logistics and Cycle Safety (CLoCS) working Groups.

(2) London Buses to instruct operators to remove 'cyclists stay back' stickers from all buses, until such time as a more appropriate design and wording is agreed with cycling organisations, by the end of March.

TfL does not believe this is necessary or cost effective.

Even though only a small number of cyclists are killed or seriously injured in collisions with buses each year, advising cyclists to stay back from buses is sound advice.

We believe that these stickers help in influencing behaviours that may result in injury to cyclists. The time and cost associated with removing stickers would not be an appropriate use of public monies.

The new Cycle Safety Action Plan will set out further activities that TfL undertake to improve the safety of cyclists around London's buses.

(3) TfL to inform all other vehicle operators, such as Hackney carriages (LTDA etc.) that TfL do not want such stickers to be used on their vehicles, by the end of March.

TfL do not supply 'cyclists stay back' stickers to licensed taxi and private hire vehicles and have never requested that they be used on these vehicles.

TfL does supply stickers to be placed on the inside of passenger windows to encourage users to be careful when opening doors and to watch out for cyclists.

These stickers are one activity that TfL has undertaken, in full liaison with the Cycle Safety Working Group (CSWG), to raise awareness of the incidences of 'dooring' of cyclists. As you will know this is the third most common cause of cyclists being killed or seriously injured.

(4) TfL to develop and produce a more appropriate sticker for heavy goods vehicles, similar to the one attached to this statement, and agree the design and wording with cycling organisations, by the end of May.

TfL is happy to discuss this request in more detail, however we feel the current 'cyclists stay back' sticker is considered to be sound advice, and as such it is already an appropriate sticker for use on heavy goods vehicles.

The messaging ties in with the current Cycle Safety Tips Campaign requesting that 'cyclists stay back'. These Tips were developed and agreed with the CSWG.

about a better appreciation of the issues faced by other road users.

(5) TfL to supply the new sticker to freight operators, with instructions only to use it on high-cab lorries. This should be in widespread use by the end of August, with no 'cyclists stay back' stickers remaining after this date.

I refer you to my response to your requests (1) and (4) above.

(6) TfL to invest in designing and promoting use of lorries that do not have blind spots around the cab. Stickers are, literally, a sticking-plaster solution. The long-term solution includes designing out the source of the danger by engineering lorries to reduce or eliminate the possibility of cyclists and pedestrians being crushed in collisions with them, engineering the highway to reduce potential conflict, eliminating lorry driver "blind spots", and by training drivers to check their mirrors properly when turning or changing lane.

As members of the CSWG, you will be aware that TfL has embarked on a significant programme of activities including ground-breaking new research to reduce blind spots on large goods vehicles, and will have been closely involved in the development of this programme.

We feel large vehicles should be designed to be suitable for use within the urban environment and TfL has a comprehensive programme of activity to improve the safety of both new and existing lorries.

This work includes our effective lobbying at UK government and EU level. TfL sits on an 'expert group' to review the vehicle 'Weights and Dimensions' European Directive.

Through this group we are pressing for improvements to vehicle safety features, including minimising blind spots through increased driver direct vision. The work has achieved recent success, with the European Parliament's Transport Committee voting in favour of changes to this Directive.

TfL is working closely with operators of HGVs, industry associations and other UK and EU cities to develop a proposal for vehicle manufacturers to design a 'safer urban construction vehicle'. High vision cabs are already available for municipal waste vehicles. TfL is also partnering with Laing O'Rourke to trial a low entry, high vision cab on a construction vehicle working on a CrossRail contract.

Furthermore, TfL has a programme of work to improve the safety of existing HGV fleets. This includes an evaluation of effective blind spot technologies, and encouraging the uptake of blind spot minimising equipment through procurement contracts and FORS