Tomorrow's roads: safer for everyone

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Foreword

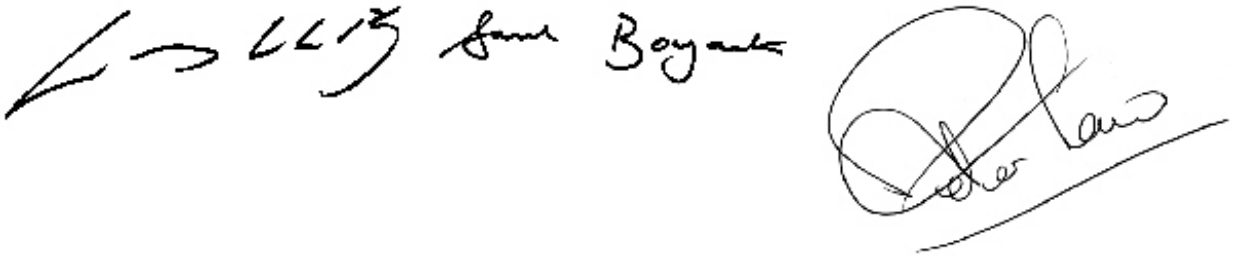
When there were only two million motor vehicles in Britain, they killed more people every year than our 27 million vehicles do today. There is no question that we have had a long, successful period in which the number of serious casualties has gone down and down. And we have held slight casualties well below the increase in traffic. Everybody can take credit for that. Great Britain has the best road safety record in Europe apart from Sweden.

Nevertheless, no one can be satisfied when just under 10 people are killed and 110 people are seriously injured every day on the roads. That is unacceptable and it is not inevitable. We have to make further efforts aimed at eliminating the principal causes of this suffering.

The overall number of children who die in road accidents is also among the lowest, but the number of child pedestrians killed 103 in 1998 is high in comparison with other European countries. This demands and will get specific action.

Safety is the most important responsibility of anyone involved in transport, whatever mode we are talking about. It is no different on the roads. But there everyone has a stake. Government, local authorities, police officers, civil engineers, car makers all have a role in creating the conditions for safe travel, telling us about them and enforcing them to the benefit of all of us. New technology too will continue to play an important role. But we all have a responsibility as users drivers, riders, walkers, all of us.

This document sets out the main ways we plan to improve road safety in the next decade. Many interested individuals and organisations have provided helpful input, including the Motorists Forum and other road user groups. To encourage our collective efforts we are putting forward a target to reduce deaths and serious injuries overall by 40% and by 50% for children and also to keep slight injuries well below the increase in traffic. Government will give the lead, but every user has a responsibility to help us make the roads **safer for everyone**.



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Chapter 1 - Introduction

Road accidents

1.1 Road accidents cause immense human suffering. Every year, around 3,500 people are killed on Britain's roads and 40,000 are seriously injured. In total, there are over 300,000 road casualties, in nearly 240,000 accidents, and about fifteen times that number of non-injury incidents. This represents a serious economic burden; the direct cost of road accidents involving deaths or injuries is thought to be in the region of Â£3billion a year.

1.2 Nevertheless, Britain has had - relatively speaking - remarkable success in reducing road casualties. And this is despite the vast growth in traffic since the beginning of the last century. In 1930 there were only 2.3 million motor vehicles in Great Britain, but over 7,000 people were killed in road accidents. Today, there are over 27 million vehicles on our roads but far fewer road deaths.

Indices of traffic and casualties: 1949-1998

1.3 In 1987 a target was set to reduce road casualties by one-third by 2000 compared with the average for 1981-85. We have more than achieved this target for reducing deaths and serious injuries. Road deaths have fallen by 39% and serious injuries by 45% and we are now one of the safest countries in Europe and indeed the world. However, there has not been any such steep decline in the number of accidents, nor in the number of slight injuries, although improvements in vehicle design have helped to reduce the severity of injuries to car occupants.

The new targets

1.4 There is no reason for us to be complacent. We know we can reduce road casualties still further. That is why we are setting a new 10-year target and launching this new road safety strategy. We need new targets to help everyone to focus on achieving a further substantial improvement in road safety over the next 10 years. By 2010 we want to achieve, compared with the average for 1994-98:

- a 40% reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured in road accidents;
- a 50% reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured; and
- a 10% reduction in the slight casualty rate, expressed as the number of people slightly injured per 100 million vehicle kilometres.

1.5 Although our overall record for child safety is relatively good, our child **pedestrian** record is poor compared with some European countries. We are particularly concerned about child safety and there is therefore a special focus in this strategy on reducing the number of children who are killed or injured in road accidents.

1.6 The new targets will certainly be challenging. Reductions in the last period were helped by marked changes in attitudes to drink-driving and legislation on seat belts. But with sustained effort, we believe that the new targets are achievable by 2010. Reducing road casualties in this way would also contribute to the targets for overall accident reduction set by the *Saving Lives: Our Healthier Nation* White Paper and the equivalent Scottish White Paper *Towards a Healthier Scotland.*

1.7 The targets can serve to focus everyone's efforts on achieving a further substantial improvement in road safety over the next 10 years.

Working in partnership

1.8 The Government cannot achieve such a major improvement in road safety on its own - working in partnership will be essential. The main partners include:

- Government, its Agencies and the devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales. Northern Ireland will have its own road safety strategy [1] ;
- local authorities;
- police forces;
- voluntary groups and road user associations;
- motor manufacturers; and, above all,
- individual road users - drivers, motorcyclists, cyclists and pedestrians.

1.9 We want to engage everyone in the new strategy, committed to the new targets and joining together in a combined effort to reduce deaths and injuries on our roads.

1.10 To improve road safety, there needs to be effective cross-governmental thinking and action.

The wider context
Health: reducing road accidents will help achieve the Government's overall target to cut accidents from all causes, set out in the Saving Lives: Our Healthier Nation White Paper. A pan-Government strategy to tackle alcohol misuse in England is also being developed. A priority area for that strategy is likely to be addressing issues concerned with all aspects of improving community safety, including road safety. It is planned to publish the new strategy early in 2000. The Scottish Executive has established a committee to develop a new national alcohol misuse strategy for Scotland.
Environment: reducing speed and managing traffic better helps wider environmental objectives as well as road safety, for example by cutting CO2 and other emissions and reducing noise.
Education: effective road safety education will help to improve our child road safety record.
Social inclusion: safer roads can help build stronger communities, so improving road safety should be included in measures to regenerate urban areas and marginalised communities. Deprived areas have relatively poor road safety records.
Fighting Crime: tackling road crime such as speeding and dangerous driving is an important part of the wider crime reduction agenda.
Europe: we need to work closely with our partners in Europe on road safety issues, as most standards for vehicle safety and increasingly licensing qualifications are determined at European Union level.
International Development: Britain's good road safety record means that we can offer other countries our expertise on road design and vehicle safety and road safety policies.

The strategy

1.11 The rest of this document sets out the Government's framework for improving road safety. There are 10 main themes:

- Safer for children
- Safer drivers - training and testing
- Safer drivers - drink, drugs and drowsiness
- Safer infrastructure
- Safer speeds
- Safer vehicles
- Safer motorcycling
- Safer pedestrians, cyclists and horseriders
- Better enforcement
- Promoting safer road use

1.12 The strategy contains many specific recommendations, but these should not be seen as strict guidelines for the future. Inevitably in the course of 10 years, new ideas and technology will emerge which will help to achieve the target.

1.13 We must be alive to new thinking and fresh ideas and not be afraid to challenge conventional wisdom. This is why, in addition to keeping a constant watchful eye on progress, we will evaluate progress on our strategy and targets formally every three years. If we can do better, we will, especially if we are able to increase resources. To help us with this, we will set up a Road Safety Advisory Panel which will include representatives of the main stakeholders.

Implementation timetable - Strategy

	Implement now	Implement in the next 23 years	Longer term intentions	Primary legislation required
Set up Road Safety Advisory Panel	Y			
Evaluate progress towards targets every three years		Y	Y	

1 Many aspects of road safety, including national speed limits, driver training and testing and vehicle safety, are reserved to the UK Government. Scottish Ministers and the National Assembly for Wales have concurrent responsibility with the UK Government for the promotion of road safety in Scotland and Wales respectively. Implementation of the strategy will therefore be taken forward by the UK and devolved administrations in accordance with their respective roles and responsibilities. Northern Ireland will have its own road safety strategy.

Chapter 2 - Safe for children

Introduction

2.1 Children should be able to walk and cycle in safety. They need the freedom to use the roads for their social development and the exercise for their general health and fitness. We want to make it safer for everyone to encourage healthy travel choices. Yet road traffic accidents are the leading cause of accidental injury amongst children and young people. Every year, over 130 children die and more than 4,500 are seriously injured while walking and cycling, many of them close to their homes. Another 60 die and over 1,100 are seriously injured travelling in cars.

International comparisons

Child pedestrian fatality rate per 100,000 : 1997	
Country	Children 0-14 Pedestrian
Great Britain	1.21
Austria	0.79
Belgium	0.94
Denmark	0.85
Finland	0.94
France	0.91
Germany	0.64
Ireland	1.31
Italy	0.49
Netherlands	0.66
Norway	0.81
Spain	0.94
Sweden	0.54
Switzerland	0.96

2.2 Our overall rate of serious road injuries to children is better than the European average. But, despite recent improvements, our child pedestrian record is still particularly poor, especially compared with other European countries. We must do better.

Summary of the strategy

2.3 There will be a target for reducing deaths and serious injuries to children of 50% by 2010.

2.4 Children will benefit from the broad range of proposed road safety policies outlined in the rest of this document but, some measures, such as traffic calming, produce greater than average benefits for children. This, combined with a range of child safety specific policies, makes the more stringent target of 50% feasible.

2.5 This chapter provides a summary of actions we will take to improve child safety, many of which are covered in more detail in other chapters, and details of how to equip children with the life skills needed to enable them to travel safely and become responsible road users.

2.6 We have a duty to teach children the basic skills appropriate to their ages and help parents and teachers to get them across. Our action plan below identifies the four key stages in road safety education we aim to tackle:

- babies and very young children - through advising their parents and first teachers on protection in cars and teaching safe behaviour on the road;
- primary age children - through child pedestrian training schemes and, later, cycle training, and alerting parents to the risks of cycling in particular traffic conditions;
- older children - by providing road safety information as they change schools and go on longer journeys on their own; and
- older teenagers - providing advice as they contemplate much more independent mobility.

2.7 Local authority road safety officers play a vital role in education. The police, health promotion officers, health visitors and various charities, such as the Child Accident Prevention Trust (CAPT) and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), also make a major contribution. In Scotland the Scottish Road Safety Campaign is also a key player. We want parents to become more involved; and we must remember we all have a part to play by setting a responsible example.

2.8 We shall continue our programme of research, to understand problems better and to develop solutions.

Background

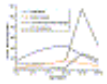
2.9 Research is helping us identify more clearly the groups of children most at risk:

- child pedestrian casualties peak at about the age of 12, and child cyclist casualties at about the age of 14;
- boys are more frequently injured than girls;
- overall, nearly a fifth of child pedestrian casualties happen on the school journey, but this proportion increases for secondary school aged children;
- children in the lowest socio-economic group (SEG) are five times more likely to be killed as pedestrians than their higher SEG counterparts. A similar pattern has been observed for all types of accident;
- children from ethnic minority backgrounds are over-represented in road accident statistics, although we do not know why; and

- children are more likely to have accidents if they travel a lot on main roads; if they go out without adults before they have good road sense; and if they are prone to taking risks.

The graphs below show the current position.

Casualty rate by age group and road user group: 1998



Child pedestrian casualties by age and sex :1998

Activity and travel patterns

2.10 To understand why our children are at more risk than their European counterparts, we compared child pedestrian activity and accident sites in the UK, France and the Netherlands. We found significant differences.

- Children in Britain spend more time near or crossing major roads, wide roads, roads with higher traffic flows, and roads of higher speeds. This is largely the result of different land-use and activity patterns and accounts for more than half the difference in casualty levels.
- In Britain fewer crossings are made using marked crossings than in France and the Netherlands.
- Children in France are more likely to be accompanied by an adult while children in Britain are more likely to be accompanied by other children.
- Traffic calming and special measures to slow traffic are more common in the Netherlands. The action plan addresses these problems.

Action plan

Actions that will specifically benefit children's road safety are:

- rolling out our plans for improving the safety of school travel which will provide good opportunities for getting across the wider safety message;
- asking local authorities to carry out child road safety audits, which will be monitored, with the Road Safety Advisory Panel advising on appropriate measures;
- ensuring through the local transport planning system for 2001/02 that all local authorities, in partnership with the police and residents in their area, will have considered and have plans to: -
-
    - use the powers we have given them to create more 20mph zones with suitable traffic calming and parking restrictions, around schools and in residential areas where most child accidents occur;
    - provide safe crossing facilities on busy through roads where traffic calming is not appropriate;
    - make enforcement more effective especially by the use of cameras on busy roads where many

accidents happen.

- developing and implementing similar child-friendly areas on those trunk roads which go near schools and in residential areas for 2000/01;
- supporting local authorities who will put in place 'Home Zone' schemes. These slow vehicles down and give more priority to walking and cycling;
- proposals in the Safer drivers - training and testing chapter, particularly those relating to the hazard perception test;
- in-car design which takes special account of children - for example in the use of air bags;
- standardising child restraint fittings, making it easier to buy the right type and to install it properly;
- compulsory fitting of seat belts in new buses and coaches other than those carrying standing passengers, subject to consultation;
- a national advertising campaign for seat belt wearing, particularly for older children who have lower wearing rates;
- we want to make it easier to travel to school by bus;
- backing proposals to make car fronts safer for pedestrians and cyclists in an accident, with specific provision for children;
- improving lorry design with better brakes and guards to prevent them crushing cars so easily.

Babies and young children

2.11 For this age group, we need to provide parents with the tools to increase awareness of risks and to teach basic road safety skills.

2.12 Departments have joined together to press home the safety message early with a project called One Step Ahead. We commissioned the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) and CAPT to develop a series of four magazines for parents of children up to three years old. The first two magazines were launched in the autumn of 1999. Our support will continue.

2.13 The magazines explain how to avoid accidents inside and outside the home, and how to deal with them if they do occur. Superdrug and Kimberley-Clark are funding the design, printing and distribution of the magazines. They have been designed to appeal particularly to low income families. This is a part of the Government's policy to fight social inequality.

Child seats in cars

2.14 Child seats and restraints save lives. Many of us, parents or not, find the fitting instructions puzzling. Standard attachment points on both child restraints and cars would make it much easier.
We are taking a leading role in developing a standardised method called the ISOFIX system, and we are pressing for it to be adopted as the European norm.

2.15 Road safety and health groups around the country have co-ordinated some very successful local initiatives. The Gloucestershire Action Group, for example, trained local fire-fighters, who now provide a free fitting check for people carrying children in the car. The magazine 'Mother and Baby' also promotes safe fitting in conjunction with Safeway.

Traffic Clubs

Traffic clubs were first introduced in 1981 following successful trials in Scandinavia.

Health authorities supply the local council with names and addresses of children approaching three years old. On their third birthday, the council sends each child a book introducing road safety ideas and activities which parents can use as a teaching aid. If they choose to join the 'club', they receive a new book every six months for the next three years.
Evaluation suggested many positive benefits:

reductions in child pedestrian casualties;

more carers had taught their child to hold hands when crossing the road;

more carers had shown their child how to cross a road;

more carers always got their child out of the car on the pavement side;

children were more likely to be wearing conspicuous clothing if they went out after dark.

Following the research, the materials and method of registration for the scheme are being revised. The materials will be made more relevant to today's children to remedy the current fall-off in use after book three. The registration process is also being assessed to improve the take-up of the scheme, which has been low apart from in Scotland where the whole series is free through funding from the Scottish Executive, and to target higher risk families more effectively.

Primary age children

2.16 Basic road safety has been introduced into the PSHE (personal, social and health education) curriculum in key stages 1 and 2 (roughly age 5 to 11). DETR and the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) will work together to help schools incorporate road safety effectively into the curriculum. In Scotland a strategy for road safety education in Scottish schools is being devised to guide teachers as to key learning outcomes within a core programme. Central to this strategy will be a partnership role with the Scottish Executive Education Department informed by the Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum. As in England and Wales, the strategy will also target children who are at higher risk of being injured in a road accident and will support appropriate intervention measures in these communities.

2.17 We know that there is no substitute for **practical pedestrian training at the roadside**. We need adult volunteers, parents and others. DETR supplies several training aids.

- *Step Forward*is a video pack to help potential training co-ordinators encourage volunteers. RoSPA developed it with joint funding from DETR and Department of Health (DoH) and it has been distributed to road safety officers and health promotion officers.
- *Kerbcraft* is a manual for road safety officers to enable adult volunteers to train children aged between 5 and 7 in basic pedestrian skills. It is based on a successful training project in Drumchapel (see below). All road safety officers in the UK were sent a free copy.

Drumchapel project
Drumchapel is a housing estate in Glasgow with high unemployment, social deprivation and seven times the national average of child pedestrian accidents. DETR, and the former Strathclyde Regional Council and Drumchapel Community Council ran a road safety project in which parent volunteers taught young children (5-7 years old) basic pedestrian skills, following a programme devised at the Psychology Department of the University of Strathclyde. The children performed significantly better after training, and maintained the improvement over a two-month period after the training ended. **Kerbcraft,** the manual for road safety officers based on the project, is featured in the **Step Forward** video.

2.18 With funding from the Department, RoSPA and road safety officers have developed **National Guidelines** for practical pedestrian training schemes. We are also evaluating computer-based, 'virtual' road safety training through a research project at Strathclyde University.

2.19 We have a database of teaching resources prepared by the British Institute for Traffic Education (BITER). The road safety linked database, ROSALIND, lists over 1,400 videos, books and other aids, including some designed for adults and children with special needs. It is being reviewed to make it more user friendly.

We must meet the need in congested urban areas where children are at relatively high risk of being killed or injured whilst out walking. Drumchapel showed the way. So we shall:

- promote training in deprived neighbourhoods;
- encourage individuals and community groups to run schemes; and
- see if play schemes and after-school clubs could offer practical road safety training too.

We plan to run demonstration projects in partnership with local authorities and voluntary groups to show what can be done and how to sustain pedestrian training schemes in the longer term.

Older children

2.21 As children grow up, they start travelling more by themselves, some by bicycle. Almost all of them have to change schools and will want to start making journeys to see friends who live further away. The number of children killed and seriously injured as cyclists and pedestrians peaks in early secondary school. They and their parents should be aware of the risks, as well as the benefits, of cycling.

2.22 We will target this age group with the help of parents, schools and the pupils themselves in order to prepare them for safer independent travel. We are looking for support from the private sector to get safety messages across.

2.23 Road safety needs to be reflected in the school curriculum. The new guidelines for teaching PSHE (personal, social and health education) at key stage 3 level (about 11 to 14) state that pupils should be taught to recognise and manage risk and make safer choices about healthy lifestyles, different

environments and travel.

'Smart Moves' is a CD-ROM produced for the Scottish Road Safety Campaign. Aimed at 10-14 year olds, in both urban and rural schools, it is a fully interactive package for pupils and teachers offering a colourful mix of computer graphics, text video, sound and animation. Four main characters take the user through topics such as route planning, dangerous behaviour, communication, conspicuity, hazards, peer group pressure, cycle safety, responsibility and decision making. It also provides signposts to other resources, teachers' notes and pupil worksheets, and suggests extension teaching activities. Scottish schools have found this useful.

Cycling safely

2.24 Around 30% of cycle casualties are children under 16, even though that age group accounts for only an estimated seventh of cycling mileage. A child cycling is estimated to be almost 50 times more likely to be injured than a child travelling in a car and 3 times more likely than a child walking.

2.25 About a third of children receive some kind of cycle training, usually when they are 9-10 years old. The best courses are held over a number of weeks, rather than a couple of days, and take children on the road so they learn to deal confidently and safely with real traffic conditions. Younger children (7-9) should be taught the basic skills required to handle a bike safely off-road.

2.26 The best courses for 9-10 year olds cover the safety benefits of wearing reflective and fluorescent clothing and a helmet, regular cycle maintenance, using lights and using a bell.

2.27 Practical cycle training is effective and all children should have the opportunity to take it. We are working with cycling groups and interested commercial organisations to make training more widely available.

2.28 Following a review of the Scottish Cycle Training Scheme, the Scottish Road Safety Campaign is revising the written training materials and has made a new training video. The new training pack will be launched early in 2000. It will be distributed to all Road Safety Units in Scotland and its use promoted in schools throughout Scotland.

2.29 We supply a *Highway Code* for Young Road Users to support training programmes and the Driving Standards Agency produce the *Road Code*. RoSPA also issues a *Code of Good Practice for Practical Cycle Training* which is being revised.

2.30 We are in partnership with Disney, using their Recess gang characters to promote safer cycling for children through a comic, poster and sticker which cover a wide range of cycle safety issues.

Cycle helmets

2.31 It is sometimes difficult to persuade fashion-conscious children to wear helmets, but the potential benefits are enormous. Half the casualties involve a head injury, and many are caused simply by the child falling off the bike. Cycle helmets offer significant protection in this type of accident. The chapter on Pedestrians, Cyclists and Horseriders deals with this in more detail.

2.32 DETR and the Department of Health are supporting a Bicycle Helmet Initiative Trust (BHIT) project to promote cycle helmet wearing amongst children and young people. In January 1999 BHIT received a grant from the National Lotteries Charities Board.

Travel to school

2.33 Well over a third of primary pupils and a fifth of secondary pupils now travel to school by car. As well as increasing congestion and local pollution, this has disadvantages for the children themselves.

- They lose opportunities to learn risk assessment and safe behaviour on the road.
- Their freedom and independence is restricted.
- They need the exercise that walking and cycling can offer.

2.34 Children are generally less fit nowadays. The Department of Health and the Department for Education and Employment have launched the National Healthy Schools Programme to address the growing health and safety problem.

2.35 Of course there are places where there is no alternative to driving, but many more children could walk, cycle or travel to school by bus. The Government wants schools to develop travel plans.

School travel plans are packages of simple, practical measures to tackle safety concerns and reduce dependence on travelling by car to school.
Measures can include:

- escort schemes;
- walking buses;
- adjustments to the time of the school day;
- improved transport services with more convenient bus routes at times that fit in with the start and end of the school day;
- traffic management initiatives;
- better facilities for walking and cycling, such as controlled crossings and cycle paths; and
- car sharing on the school run.

DETR has funded safer routes to school schemes in Surrey, Oxfordshire, Staffordshire and Hertfordshire. We also supported the Sustrans Safe Routes to School demonstration project (including schools in York, Leeds, Colchester and Hampshire), and other school travel initiatives in West Sussex, Manchester, Warwickshire, Birmingham, Bedfordshire and London.

2.36 The Government established the School Travel Advisory Group (STAG) in 1998 to find ways to encourage walking, cycling or taking the bus or train to school and to help schools to create safe and practical alternatives to the school run by parents. The role of STAG is to lead the dissemination of best practice and raise the profile of school travel issues; and to identify practical means of influencing behaviour and develop a coherent approach to school travel. STAG members include representatives of parents, teachers and governors bodies; public transport operators; business; road safety, school health and school transport experts; local authorities; and DETR; Department of Health; Department for Education and Employment; Scottish Executive, National Assembly for Wales and Northern Ireland Assembly.

2.37 STAG presented its first report in January 2000. Their recommendations, focusing on giving children greater travel choices and on improving safety on the journey to and from school, include:

- provision of better travel facilities at schools;
- better, more affordable and better targeted transport to school - including a minimum standard for concessionary child bus fares;
- more road safety education for children;
- better training for bus drivers;
- improving enforcement of speed, parking and other traffic restrictions;
- raising driver awareness of school travel issues.

Wales

2.38 The National Assembly for Wales is funding, this financial year, safer routes to schools schemes in 14 local authority areas in Wales at a cost of Â£800,000. The Assembly has recently announced that it is allocating a further Â£1.4 million towards this initiative for 2000-2001.

Scotland

2.39 Scotland's road safety research programme recently included a study into the road user behaviour of teenagers and their attitudes to road safety. Research on safer routes to school and ensuing guidance was published in December 1999 and sent to all Scottish road safety officers and schools for reference when considering the development of such schemes. Also, in Scotland several local authorities have taken the initiative of employing staff who have a remit to address and support safer routes programmes.

School Crossing Patrols
School crossing patrols - lollipop men and women - do a vital job in seeing children across the road at often the last and most vulnerable point of their school journey. DETR and the Scottish Executive want to make school crossing patrols more flexible. Both propose changes to the law to: extend the hours they can operate; and clarify that they can legally help adults and children below school age across the road.

Older teenagers

2.40 We encourage schools to fit road safety into the secondary school curriculum. It can provide a relevant context to teach decision making skills, language and listening skills and personal responsibility, and to help develop an awareness of the local environment. It is an opportunity to encourage positive attitudes to, for example, wearing seat belts and cycle helmets, and using pedestrian crossings. Later on, we can encourage responsible attitudes towards other road users, drinking and driving, and speeding.

2.41 The Driving Standards Agency (DSA) send driving examiners into schools to talk about learning to drive, the driving test and responsible attitudes to driving. Students and teachers also receive resource materials and are encouraged to undertake follow-up work to reinforce the messages. This has proved popular and effective, particularly in promoting the idea that passing the test is not the end of the learning

process. We will expand the DSA programme. We have also commissioned road safety study material for vocational courses.

2.42 Increasingly, teenagers use electronic information and so must we. We will put more material on the DETR and Scottish Road Safety Campaign (SRSC) websites and we will explore the opportunities for further road safety education through the internet. As a result of a recently completed research project, the SRSC is reviewing its website to maximise its potential in schools.

2.43 We will publish Good Practice Guidelines for primary and secondary schools on how to develop effective road safety education both in the classroom and throughout the school. Guidance has already been issued to schools in Scotland.

Parents and professionals

2.44 The role of parents is vital in keeping their children safe, teaching them to be safer road users and providing a good example. We are developing tools to help parents to train their children to be safer road users.

2.45 We will continue to encourage road safety professionals to deliver high quality and well targeted effective road safety education, through advice, provision of resources, research and the promotion of National Vocational Qualifications in road safety.

Research and development

2.46 Our research programme has helped us understand problems and develop effective counter-measures. But there are many important areas we need to investigate further, including:

- exposure and travel patterns;
- high risk groups.We will continue to monitor high risk groups, specifically children from deprived backgrounds, ethnic minority children and children with special needs. We will work out ways to counter these risks; and
- behaviour, skills and competencies. We will establish what children are capable of at different ages and in different environments, and how their skills can be improved through training.

Chapter 3 - Safer drivers - training and testing

Introduction

3.1 Better driving skills and better driving behaviour would make an enormous difference to reducing the number of road casualties. Driving is an acquired skill, and a demanding one. As well as the right skills, drivers need the right attitude - towards speed, other road users, alcohol, drugs and fatigue. We want to make learning to drive more relevant to today's road conditions, and those of the future.

Summary of the strategy

3.2 We are introducing measures to:

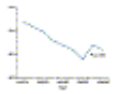
- instil in young people the right attitudes towards road safety and safe driving;
- guide learner drivers to take a more structured approach to learning, to prepare them for their driving career, not just to pass a test;
- raise the standard of tuition offered by driving instructors;
- improve the driving test in the light of better understanding about what needs to be examined and effective ways to do it;
- focus on the immediate post-test period for novice drivers;
- enhance the status of advanced motoring qualifications;
- address the needs of professional drivers; and
- bring safety benefits for all categories of motor vehicle.

Background

3.3 Despite a 55% growth in traffic, we have made huge improvements in drivers' safety since the first casualty reduction targets were set in 1987. In 1998, 29% fewer car users were killed and seriously injured than the average for 1981-85. But the number of slight injuries has increased by 67%. Our task is to prevent the accident happening in the first place, as well as lessening its effects.

3.4 There is ample evidence that the way many new drivers learn is unsatisfactory. Too many people are taking the test ill-prepared. Fewer than half of drivers pass the test first time and the pass rate for the practical test has fallen over the last 10 years. A recent survey found that in around one in every ten tests, driving examiners had to intervene physically on safety grounds - by grabbing the handbrake or steering wheel, or using dual controls.

Car practical test pass rate: 1990-1998



3.5 Even after passing the test, young and newly qualified drivers have a poor safety record compared with older, more experienced drivers:

We are determined to improve the safety record of novice drivers.

3.6 We shall encourage everyone to value safe driving as a life skill. Up to three million people regularly drive cars as part of their job. Research indicates that, mile-for-mile, company car drivers have accident rates 30-50% higher than for comparable private drivers.

3.7 We must also expect the highest standards of safety from the professional drivers of lorries and buses. Accident rates per mile are low, but when they happen, the consequences can be very serious.

Action plan

A safer start

3.8 A full driving licence has been increasingly seen, particularly by young men, as a rite of passage to adulthood: part of personal independence and mobility. The link with social responsibilities towards fellow citizens, particularly those who are more vulnerable, has not been emphasised enough.

We must take a better understanding about road safety into schools and colleges. A few years ago, we introduced an initiative called Drive, a video and teaching pack well targeted for a teenage audience. More recently, the Driving Standards Agency (DSA) developed an education package for 15-17 year olds about the driving test and the wider issues of safe driving. During 1999, driving examiners made some 800 presentations to schools and colleges, reaching 125,000 students. We shall expand this initiative in partnership with the police and road safety officers.

A more structured approach to learning to drive

3.10 n the past, the agenda for training has tended to be the minimum needed to pass the driving test. But the test cannot examine everything that a new driver needs to know.

3.11 We need to foster a culture that values continuing driver education. Skimping on the learning process and attempting the test too soon is a false economy. In addition to the safety implications, learners have the inconvenience and expense of further tests.

3.12 Practically everyone who learns to drive a car has some professional tuition. Recent surveys suggest an average of 30 to 35 hours of lessons. But a third to a half take no extra practice. On average, novice drivers cover perhaps only 650 miles during supervised driving before passing the practical test. And some will have much less experience than that.

3.13 When learner drivers practise thoroughly they gain more experience of varying types of road and traffic conditions. They therefore make better test candidates and have a safer driving record. We want to encourage people to get more driving experience before they take their test, in the relative safety of a supervised environment.

3.14 The establishment of a more structured pre-test training requirement of itself implies a minimum period before taking the test. The Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Select Committee, following their inquiry into the standards and training of young and newly qualified drivers, recommended that the Government should set a minimum period between drivers obtaining their provisional licence and first attempting a practical car driving test.

3.15 Our objective is to establish a more structured approach to pre-test learning which will ensure new drivers have a broader and more extensive experience of driving conditions before they take their test. We will be consulting on various measures to achieve the necessary level of driving experience.

3.16 Training programmes must teach the right range of skills. This is particularly important for those matters such as night and bad weather driving, where weaknesses can be fatal but where learners focusing on a test are likely to be inexperienced. We shall encourage learners to practise and gain sufficient experience to be safe before trying for a full licence.

3.17 We can learn from good educational practice, such as clearly establishing what is to be learned and the standards to be achieved. We have introduced a voluntary training logbook for learner car drivers, covering a modern driving syllabus relevant to today's conditions.

3.18 The logbook gives learner drivers a structured approach to learning to drive. It provides driving instructors with a framework for training, and gives trainees a checklist to monitor their progress and a guide for practising. As well as car control skills and manoeuvres, the logbook covers wider areas such as night driving, adverse weather, and environmental issues.

3.19 We designed the logbook in association with the driving instruction industry. DSA has made over 250,000 copies available.

3.20 We will evaluate the pilot scheme and develop suitable distribution and monitoring arrangements. Subject to that, we intend to make the use of logbooks mandatory.

3.21 Many novice drivers' accidents happen at night and it is possible to pass the driving test without ever having driven in the dark. New drivers should practise driving in the dark. Night driving should be one of the aspects of the mandatory logbook, undertaken prior to being able to take the test. We will consult on how to introduce such a scheme.

3.22 Training to a syllabus, supported by a logbook, can work for other types of learner too. We shall work in partnership with interested parties to develop logbooks for learner lorry and bus drivers and learner motorcyclists too.

Raising the standard of tuition offered by driving instructors

3.23 The contribution of skilled and motivated driving instructors is central to delivering higher driving standards. This contribution extends beyond teaching learner drivers. Professional instructors have a role providing developmental training courses, both to private individuals and to companies, and providing remedial training for drivers who offend.

3.24 A learner car driver taking 35 hours of lessons is making a significant investment - probably over Â£500. They should be able to have confidence in both the technical competence and the conduct and business practices of the driving instructors they employ. In turn, hard-working professionals deserve the reassurance that their industry is being effectively and fairly supervised, and that standards are being maintained.

3.25 We want to raise the quality and expertise of all driving instructors to that of the best. Following consultation with the industry, we are updating the qualification arrangements for those entering the profession and the way qualified instructors are supervised. This includes switching to a screen-based theory test for instructors.

3.26 We have also launched longer-term research into the way car driving instructors are trained, tested and supervised. This will help establish what makes a good instructor and will look at continuing professional development. We will publish findings later this year.

3.27 Any changes will need to fit with our broader plans to modernise driver training for the different sectors. Currently there is an assortment of statutory and non-statutory arrangements.
When the legislative opportunity arises we shall rationalise the arrangements for training, testing and supervising car driving instructors, with detailed provisions for the different sectors.

3.28 We see empowering customers as key to encouraging intelligent use of driving instruction. Improvements in data-processing technology will allow the DSA to detail information about different types of training offered by registered instructors, plus data on the pass rates of their trainees. DSA could post the information on the internet allowing customers cheap and easy access. We believe openness will bring consumer benefits, and we favour making performance measurement and other consumer information available to the public. DSA will continue to work closely with the Data Protection Commissioner to address any privacy implications.

Standards of conduct

3.29 We want to ensure that the supervision arrangements provide a timely and effective remedy when the behaviour or standards of an instructor are unacceptable, whilst ensuring that enforcement action is fair - and seen as fair - by all parties. Current arrangements have been criticised because instructors guilty of serious misconduct can continue to instruct whilst an appeal concerning instructor registration is considered. On the other hand, some have expressed concern about the independence of the appeals process. We shall consult with the industry on proposals for suspending instructors when there is a risk to public safety, and putting appeals in the hands of an independent tribunal.

Keeping the driving test up to date

3.30 The format of our driving test has strengths. Candidates have to demonstrate their competence on the road. As traffic conditions become more demanding, the examiner's assessment takes place in that more demanding environment. But the driving test itself must also develop.

The theory test

3.31 In 1996, a separate written theory test was introduced. The test allows for a balanced assessment of knowledge and understanding which was not possible by asking a few *Highway Code* questions at the end of a practical test.

3.32 The training agenda for the theory test is set by the scope of the question bank, which is reviewed annually. The number of possible questions for car candidates has increased from around 400 to over 800. We shall develop the theory test to promote our responsible driving agenda, such as:

- awareness of the risks of speeding;
- attitude to vulnerable road users; and
- parking near schools, etc.

We will upgrade the question bank and keep the number of questions per test paper under review.

We have switched the theory test to a screen-based system, as part of the Government's commitment to deliver public services electronically. The screen-based test will allow important service improvements. It offers:

- audio support through headphones - for people with reading difficulties in English, and in 15 other languages for those for whom English is not their first language;
- sign language support;
- same day results as the standard service;
- the possibility of creating a test paper for each candidate which they could take away with them at the end to research any questions they got wrong.

Hazard perception testing

3.34 Hazard perception skills are an important part of safe driving and we want to encourage new drivers to develop these skills quickly. The Transport Research Laboratory is researching a hazard perception test for DETR, and DSA has developed supporting training material. A screen-based theory test would allow the use of digitised video clips to help test topics such as motorway driving and hazard perception with moving images. We will introduce hazard perception testing as part of the theory test in 2002**.**

3.35 A joint research project by the Scottish Road Safety Campaign, Tayside Police and the University of Stirling is also exploring ways of enhancing hazard perception and reducing risk taking amongst young drivers.

The practical driving test

3.36 We are also modernising the practical test. Since May 1999, car tests have included about ten minutes extra general driving, plus driving on higher-speed dual carriageways and rural roads where possible. Candidates for any type of practical test who commit more than 15 less serious driving faults now fail the test. We shall review the threshold of 15 less serious faults in the light of research and experience.

3.37 These changes will set higher standards, encouraging more thorough training - particularly looking ahead, scanning and anticipating the behaviour of other road users, demonstrated in a wider range of road and traffic conditions. We shall monitor the effects of the recent changes, and developments in the European Union, to see whether further adjustments to the test content would be sensible. At the same time as improving the driving test, we must also ensure that there is an effective system of monitoring and cracking down on unlicensed and uninsured driving. This is dealt with in Chapter 10, *Better enforcement.*

Post-test driving improvements

Novice driver plates

3.36 There have been calls for compulsory designation for drivers in their first year of holding a full licence, along the lines of the R plate in Northern Ireland, or the green P or L plate used on a voluntary basis in Great Britain. In Northern Ireland the R Driver Scheme also restricts speeds to a maximum of 45 mph for the first year after passing the driving test.

3.39 There are questions about the effectiveness and acceptability of a compulsory scheme. Voluntary take-up in Britain has been low. However, because of the continued high accident rate amongst novice drivers, we shall encourage greater take-up of the voluntary P-plate schemes and consult on introducing a compulsory probationary P-plate scheme in the longer term.

Advanced driving

3.40 A lot of people for personal or professional reasons wish to promote their driving skills by taking advanced driver training or an advanced driving test. Several organisations offer these services. Until now there has been no generally accepted industry standard. We believe there could be a wider role for these services as part of developing a safe driving culture - particularly if there was recognition of the standards by employers and insurance companies. DSA, in co-operation with interested parties - such as the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM), fleet managers and insurance interests - will be working to set a benchmark for accreditation of advanced driving, and register the organisations and specialist instructors providing the training.

The older driver

3.41 As Britain's population ages, there will be an increase in the proportion of older people who are driving on the roads. Older people generally drive less than others and this is reflected in their overall lower involvement in car accidents. However, their injuries tend to be more serious and their chance of surviving an accident is much lower.

3.42 Our aim is to find ways of helping older people to drive safely for as long as they are fit to do so, rather than taking measures to prevent them from driving at all. Devon County Council, the Saga Group and the British Institute of Traffic Education Research have been conducting important work in this area with refresher courses for older drivers. They use a variety of different methods, including observed drives with pre- and post-drive briefing sessions by trained driving instructors. Some courses have also included complementary non-driving activities such as aerobic exercise and physiotherapy. Participants ranged from the age of 55 and those who attended the courses found them both instructive and enjoyable.

3.43 We shall provide more information and advice, and encourage refresher courses for older drivers. Specifically, we shall issue a revised version of an advice leaflet within the next year.

Better driving standards for lorries and buses

***Killed or seriously injured**			
Numbers of casualties in 1998 (GB)			
	KSI*	Slight	Total
Lorry occupants	560	2,884	3,444
Total casualties in accidents involving lorries	3,268	15,430	18,698
Bus and coach occupants	631	9,208	9,839
Total casualties in accidents involving buses and coaches	1,678	14,555	16,233

3.44 We want training and testing for people who drive goods and passenger carrying vehicles to support safe, economically efficient and environmentally conscious1 driving practices. We have launched a two-phase programme to raise standards.

3.45 From April 1999, we have upgraded the theory test for learner lorry and bus drivers. We added new topics, including hazard awareness, fuel economy, noise and exhaust pollution. The question banks each now contain over 600 items, rather than the 200 they originally started with in January 1997. Test papers now have 35, rather than 25 questions. We have also introduced an experience requirement for anybody supervising a learner driver in a large vehicle.

3.46 We want to give drivers the right skills for driving the largest vehicles on our roads, and participating in two of our important economic sectors. This means ensuring that drivers are taught the right syllabus, as well as supervising the quality of instructors. DSA is working with the representative bodies in the road and passenger transport industry and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to develop a scheme.

3.47 We will also build on the existing non-statutory scheme for lorry driving instructors, introducing accreditation of training centres plus a theory test as part of qualifying to be an instructor. DSA will promote a companion scheme for bus and coach driving instructors. This will help smooth the transitional arrangements when the statutory scheme is introduced.

When the opportunity arises we shall legislate to establish a statutory scheme for prescribing:

- training courses;
- the training providers who may deliver them; and
- the registration of professional instructors.

Work-related road safety

3.48 Many of the vehicles on our roads are being driven for work purposes. The range of vehicles is extensive, from buses and lorries, vans and cars, emergency service vehicles, specialist construction and agricultural vehicles, to mopeds and bicycles. Other workers are on the roads as pedestrians, such as highway maintenance workers, refuse collectors, motoring organisations including vehicle breakdown operatives, school crossing patrol workers and police officers. All of these people are exposed to risks from traffic. Their activities in turn expose others, notably vulnerable road users, to risks. The Health and Safety Commission (HSC) and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) have considered their role in the prevention of work-related road incidents. They concluded that they wanted to do more in this area of risk, but recognise that they need to work with others, to discover the best way to reduce work-related traffic risks.

3.49 We do not have reliable statistics about casualties connected with work-related traffic incidents. But company cars are more frequently involved in accidents and the number of people killed as a consequence of work activities, including driving, on our roads, could be significant. We want to consider how best to prevent these incidents by building upon the recent initiatives and campaigns aimed at improving the management of work-related journeys (for example, much has been done in this connection on lorry fleets). The HSC has therefore agreed with Ministers that an inter-agency task group is set up with the mandate to:

- establish accurate casualty and incident statistics for work-related activities on or near our roads;
- establish the main causes and methods of preventing work-related road incidents;
- promote a public debate on best practice in relation to prevention of work-related road incidents;
- agree minimum standards for employers and others in managing the road safety implications of work-related journeys and other work activities on the highway;
- propose mechanisms that will help dovetail road traffic law and its enforcement with health and safety at work law and its enforcement; and
- propose mechanisms for effective liaison between those who enforce road traffic law and those who enforce health and safety at work law.

The Highway Code

The Highway Code explains to all road users what rules to follow on the road and what constitutes safe behaviour. Yet most people consider it only as a tool to pass the driving test. We have had a thorough review of the Code, updating it and making it more relevant and accessible to all road users, not just learner drivers.

The new edition was published in February 1999 and its overriding message is one of safety and considerate driving. There is a new section on vulnerable road users explaining drivers' responsibilities towards motorcyclists and horseriders as well as pedestrians and cyclists, especially children.

There is also new advice for drivers on:

- how to deal with fatigue;
- driving safely along country roads; and
- how they should deal with in-car distractions, especially mobile phones.

The Highway Code may be the best selling non-fiction book in the country but there is still a long way to go before we can be confident everybody who should be is familiar with its advice. DSA will look for more ways to promote the Code beyond learner drivers.

3.50 The new group will work under an independent chairperson. The make-up of the new group will be drawn from:

- those with policy responsibility for road transport including road safety and driving standards;
- those with policy responsibility for the police and the courts;
- the police and other enforcers, notably the HSE;
- those representing employers' interests;
- those representing employees' interests; and
- those representing public interests.

3.51 As soon as they are able, the new group will launch a *Discussion Document* on preventing work-related road casualties. They will follow this with a major conference to debate the issues raised in the *Discussion* process. An important task for the group will be, we think, to consider the possible development and production of an Occupational Highway Code.

DSA is also working with employers, risk-managers, insurers and trainers to improve fleet driver safety, and will introduce a register of car driving instructors specialising in this area.

A new role for the driving standards agency

3.53 Improvements in driver training, testing and behaviour offer the prospect of significant reductions in deaths and injuries, less vehicle damage and a healthier environment for all. We have therefore decided to recast the role of DSA more broadly.

DSA will contribute to improvements in road safety through:

- establishing, developing and disseminating high standards and best practice in driving and riding on the road; before people start to drive, as they learn and after they pass their test;
- ensuring high standards of instruction for different types of driver and rider;
- conducting the statutory theory and practical tests efficiently, fairly and consistently across the country;
- providing a centre of excellence for driver training and driving standards.

DSA's expanded remit will encompass:

- delivering pre-driver road safety education in schools;
- developing training syllabuses and logbook schemes for different classes of learner;
- improving the register of car driving instructors, and developing equivalent registers for other classes of instructor;
- promoting higher standards of driver training both pre- and post-test;
- encouraging greater take-up of post-test opportunities to develop driving skills;
- assessing the standards of driving of professional drivers and assisting their employers to achieve high safety standards;
- developing the range of publications and other publicity material designed to promote safe driving for life;
- promoting the sustainable development agenda within driving;
- providing a source of expertise and advice on road safety policy in the field of driver training, testing and behaviour on the road.

Mobile phones

Mobile phones can be of great assistance to drivers and especially vulnerable road users - the disabled, the elderly and women - for their personal security or in the event of an accident or emergency.

But they are also a real risk to road safety. Too many drivers are using their phones while on the move. While conversations in cars and listening to the radio are not necessarily distracting, use of hand-held sets reduces both control and attention. A review of international research found that even with hands-free phones, the distraction caused can have an impact on safety.

We launched a publicity campaign in 1998 and reinforced that at the beginning of this year. We will continue to publicise the dangers.

Drivers must by law have proper control of their vehicles at all times. If they use mobile phones they can be charged with:

- failing to exercise proper control of a vehicle;
- careless and inconsiderate driving; or even
- dangerous driving.

It has been argued that using a mobile phone should be made a specific offence. At present we do not believe that it warrants legislation. The police believe they already have sufficient powers of prosecution. However, if we fail to persuade drivers not to use mobile phones while driving, we will review the case for taking specific legislation.

Chapter 4 - Safer drivers - drink, drugs and drowsiness

Introduction

4.1 To drive safely we need to be physically and mentally alert. Drink, drugs and tiredness contribute to driving accidents.

4.2 Over 16,000 casualties in 1998, including 460 deaths, were caused by accidents where at least one driver was over the legal alcohol limit. Even a very small amount of alcohol affects driving. Drugs too, both illegal and medicinal, can impair driving skills. And according to the latest research, fatigue may be the principal factor in around 10% of all accidents.

4.3 This chapter sets out the background to the drink, drugs and fatigue issues in turn, and describes the measures to reduce the number of accidents in which they are a factor.

Summary of the strategy

4.4 The Government will:

- introduce new measures to reduce drink-driving further;
- develop more effective ways to tackle drug-driving;
- carry out research to improve understanding of drug-driving;
- strengthen and enforce laws on driving time for lorry, bus and coach drivers; and
- make people aware how much tiredness contributes to road accidents and advise drivers and employers how to cut the risks.

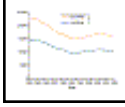
Drink-driving

Background

4.5 Since the late 1970s, the number of people killed in drink-drive accidents each year has reduced by two-thirds. National and local anti drink-drive campaigns have helped to change public attitudes and people now have a much better understanding of the risks and consequences.

4.6 There is now a much greater chance that drink-drivers will be caught, since the police have increased breath testing substantially. In England and Wales alone, 815,000 breath tests were carried out in 1998 of which 95,000 were positive or refused. This is double the number carried out in 1988. The publicity will also have helped prevent some drivers from offending.

Estimates of accidents involving illegal alcohol levels and the consequent casualties adjusted for under-reporting: 1988-1998



4.7 The graph above shows drink-drive accidents and casualties over the last 10 years. There was a sharp drop which levelled out in the early nineties, but numbers fell again in 1998.

4.8 Despite the reduction, one in seven road deaths is a result of a drink-drive related accident and there is no cause for complacency.

Action plan: measures to reduce drink-driving

4.9 Despite recent progress, drink-driving still leads to too many deaths and serious injuries on our roads.

4.10 We want to make sure that the penalties for drinking and driving match the seriousness of the offence and act as a powerful deterrent. The Home Office is carrying out a review of road traffic penalties (see Chapter 10 - Better enforcement), which will examine the whole range of penalties for drink-drive offenders.

Penalties for 'high risk offenders'

4.11 Special arrangements apply to 'high risk offenders' who:

- are found with alcohol levels of at least 200mg per 100ml of blood (the limit being 80mg);
- re-offend against drink-drive laws within 10 years; or
- refuse to provide a sample for analysis.

They have to have a medical examination before they are allowed back on the road after being disqualified.

4.12 The Home Office review of penalties mentioned above will cover specifically an increase in the minimum disqualification period from one year to two years for first time high risk offenders. Other measures might include re-testing and further rehabilitation training.

Rehabilitation courses

4.13 Experimental rehabilitation courses for drink-drivers have been successful. People who attended them were almost three times less likely to commit a further drink-drive offence within three years than those who had not.

4.14 With effect from 1 January 2000, we have set up a nationwide scheme for courts to send drink-drivers on rehabilitation courses. These will be with the offenders' consent, and at their own expense. Successful completion of a course can reduce the period of disqualification by up to 25%.

Drink-drive publicity

4.15 There is overwhelming support for continuing high profile publicity campaigns and plenty of evidence that they are effective. There may be a case for running them at varying times of the year, rather than concentrating on Christmas and summer, and for refining the targeting.

Targeted breath testing

4.16 At present the police can stop any driver but can carry out a breath test only if there has been a road traffic offence, an accident, or if they suspect that the driver has been drinking. We are looking at rationalising the law because the current practice is too restrictive. We want the police to have powers to breath-test people driving at locations where it is reasonable to assume an amount of drinking may have taken place**.** Intelligence-led policing is commonplace in dealing with other crime. We would expect public support and understanding from people stopped in such situations. All drivers involved in accidents are routinely breathalysed and there is now no stigma attached to being asked to take such a test. Procedures will be developed to ensure that the rights of the individual will be safeguarded.

Evidential roadside testing

4.17 At the moment, drivers who fail a roadside breath test have to be taken to a police station for a second test of the alcohol level in their body. Breath test results taken at the roadside are not admissible evidence in court.

4.18 Modern, roadside breath testers could provide admissible evidence. They could streamline the process and allow the police to test more suspects for the same level of resources. Primary legislation would be required.

The Home Office and the police are currently examining the procedural and legal implications of evidential roadside breath testing. The Government will then seek an early legislative opportunity to implement it.

The drink-drive limit

4.19 In February 1998, the Government consulted on whether to lower the drink-drive limit from 80mg alcohol per 100ml blood, to 50mg (which is the limit in most other EU countries). Lowering the limit could save around 50 deaths and 250 serious injuries a year. A report on the consultation is available from the Department [1] .

4.20 The consultation document indicated that the Government was minded to lower the limit and the response was supportive from a range of organisations. However, there is a European context to this debate. The European Commission is currently reviewing its existing proposal for a Directive on the drink-drive limit. Though we do not yet have details, it is likely there will be continued pressure for a harmonised 50mg overall limit in Europe, and possibly even lower limits for specific categories of driver. If the UK acted unilaterally, we could end up having to readjust to new European regulations soon afterwards.

We therefore intend to deal with proposed reductions in the European context.

Drugs and driving

Background

4.21 Driving whilst impaired by drugs is a serious criminal offence with penalties similar to those for drink-driving. The law does not make a distinction between illegal or misused drugs and over-the-counter or prescription drugs taken as directed by a medical practitioner. Drivers can be convicted if there is evidence that:

- their driving was impaired; and
- the impairment was due to drugs.

4.22 The causal relationships between drugs and driving accidents have not yet been established, and we do not know how much drug-driving is taking place. We will be finding out more through the research described below.

4.23 Studies have shown that compared with ten years ago, five times as many people killed in road accidents had a trace of an illegal drug in their body. Cannabis was by far the most common illegal substance found. However, whilst it is likely that shortly after use the active ingredient of cannabis impairs driving, traces of the drug can remain in the body for up to four weeks, long after it has ceased to have any effect. This can present difficulties for enforcement until we have further research findings.

4.24 Class A drugs are most likely to have an adverse effect on driving. According to interim survey results, they were found in 6% of cases (compared with 12% for cannabis). This was a small increase compared with 10 years ago.

4.25 In the studies of road accident fatalities referred to above, it was found that there had been no change in the incidence of medicinal drugs over the period. There is scope, nevertheless, to improve enforcement and to make people more aware of the risks of driving while their ability is affected by drugs.

Action plan: Tackling drug-driving

4.26 We need to improve the way drug-driving is identified so that existing laws can be enforced more effectively.

4.27 At present there is no equipment for screening drivers for drugs at the roadside. Devices are being developed for roadside use. These devices will need to be able to detect the presence of Class A drugs and also the ingredient in cannabis that could impair driving.

4.28 Improved training will be introduced for police officers, in techniques for recognising and testing drivers who may have taken drugs, and in tests of co-ordination to help assess whether a driver's behaviour is impaired by drugs. These techniques have been successfully trialled by a number of police forces.

4.29 The police will be given the power to undertake tests of co-ordination and, when suitable equipment is available, to require suspected drivers to give samples for screening. This will need primary legislation but will create an effective regime to control drug-driving to operate alongside the drink-driving one.

4.30 Research is essentially in three strands: first, to identify the prevalence of drugs among drivers; second, to examine the nature of the effects which different drugs have on driving behaviour; and third, to devise techniques to address the problem by enforcing the law.

4.31 A report will be published later this year on a three-year survey of traces of drugs - illegal or medicinal - found in fatal accident victims. Another project, due to be completed in May 2000, examines evidential blood samples taken from drink-drive suspects for traces of drugs. On the second strand, the Government is investigating the effects of cannabis on driving, using a highly sophisticated driving simulator. For enforcement purposes, research and development will continue on the devices and techniques which police will need, as mentioned above. In Scotland, research has recently been commissioned by the Scottish Road Safety Campaign into the prevalence of recreational drugs and driving in Scotland. In addition to all this, through an extensive network of collaboration, we shall continue to monitor others' research worldwide.

4.32 Illegal drugs cause far wider social problems and their effect on road safety has to be seen in the context of wider Government policy on drugs. New powers proposed under the Crime and Public Protection Bill would make it a requirement for people charged with property crime, including the taking of a vehicle, to be drug tested. The Government will look for the most effective way of making these powers work in conjunction with powers under road traffic legislation.

We also need to raise the profile by targeted public information advertising to highlight the risks of driving under the influence of drugs.

4.33 In the UK, all medicines have an authorised Patient Information Leaflet explaining how the medicine acts, how it should be used and any side effects that might be experienced, including any influence on the ability to drive.

4.34 All medicines licensed in the UK are supplied with an authorised Patient Information Leaflet at the point of dispensing. Based on information integral to the granting of the medicine's licence, this explains how the medicine acts, how it should be used and any side effects that may be experienced. Where the medicine is likely to affect a patient's ability to drive, this information will appear in the patient information leaflet.

4.35 In 1999, the UK Medicines Control Agency (MCA) updated the driving warnings in the patient information provided with benzodiazepines. Recommendations have also been made to update the standard warnings for pharmacists in the British National Formulary.

4.36 The issue of a European-wide symbol on the labelling of medicines known to affect driving is currently being considered by the European Pharmaceutical Committee. The Committee, chaired by the European Commission, consists of representatives from all EU States and is consulted on any legislative changes.

4.37 The Committee concluded that they are in favour of introducing a harmonised symbol in all Member States for medicinal products that may affect an individual's ability to drive. A consensus on what symbol should be used, or how such a policy might be implemented, has not as yet been agreed.

Strengthening of penalties and enforcement in the drug field should reflect the changes foreshadowed above in relation to alcohol, including higher penalties and longer disqualification for high risk offenders, requirements to re-take the test following disqualification, targeted enforcement and extended rehabilitation options.

Drowsiness

Background

4.38 Most people know that it is not safe to drive when they are tired, but too often they carry on instead of taking a break. The full effect on casualty figures is only now becoming clear. For car drivers, fatigue may be the principal factor in as many as 10% of all accidents.

4.39 It can affect any driver, but people driving as part of their job may be more at risk. Research has found that people driving company cars fall asleep at the wheel more often, and are more likely to be involved in accidents than private car drivers.

4.40 People who drive occasionally at night are more likely to have problems than those who work a regular night shift and whose body clocks adjust.

Action plan: work-related driver fatigue

4.41 The most consistent efforts to tackle driver fatigue have been by regulating the working hours of HGV drivers and bus and coach drivers, and setting minimum requirements for breaks and rest periods. European laws and tachographs have helped to control driving time.

4.42 Separate, and different, UK drivers' hours rules apply to certain HGV and bus operations that are exempt from the EU rules. The Government proposes to consult on the repeal of these rules in favour of the EU rules when we know the outcome of the current discussions in the EU of the proposed extension of

the 48-hour Working Time Directive**.** This would impose working, as opposed to driving, time limits on mobile transport workers.

4.43 It would be difficult to enforce similar regulations if they applied to people driving smaller cars or vans as part of their work, as they do not have to have tachographs. But employers should be alert to the risk of fatigue and put simple systems in place to reduce that risk. Our proposals for improving work-related road safety are set out in Chapter 3, *Safer drivers - training and testing*.

Publicity and advice on drowsiness

DETR will continue its programme of research into fatigue and will work on improving ways of getting the message across through publicity.

Current research is looking at:

- sleep-related accidents and road design;
- in-car fatigue warning devices;
- drivers' perceptions of their driving skills when tired; and
- developing and publicising advice.

The research will be completed in autumn 2000.

4.45 If drivers were more aware of their limitations and accepted the need for rest, most fatigue-related accidents would not happen. We need to counteract the belief that it is something beyond their control. It is extremely rare for a driver to fall asleep without warning.

4.46 The new *Highway Code* advises drivers who realise they are becoming overtired to take a break, a nap and two cups of strong coffee.

[1] A copy of a report on the drink-drive consultation is available from RS1, 2/13 Great Minster House, 76 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DR or on the DETR website at www.dft.gov.uk

Chapter 5 - Safer infrastructure

Introduction

5.1 The White Paper *A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone* made clear that simply building more and more new roads is not the answer to traffic growth. The emphasis is now on making best use of the existing highway network, giving priority to treating the places with the worst safety, congestion and environmental records. In England there is a new role here for the Highways Agency as well as new responsibilities and funding for local authorities. Key elements of the approach in England include:

- a recognition that good engineering reduces the risk of accidents;
- on national roads, a strategy focused on better maintenance and a targeted, seven-year programme of road improvements. Twenty-one of the 37 schemes have as their primary objective 'safer and healthier communities' and the other 16 are in part designed to help prevent road traffic casualties. Route Management schemes and use of electronic information and signing has also helped safety;

- on local roads, the introduction of longer-term, more co-ordinated local planning and improvements for walkers and cyclists as well as motor traffic through local transport plans.

The devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales are taking a similar approach. Hence safety is now 'mainstreamed' into all road engineering.

Summary of the strategy

5.2 The Government will:

- ensure safety is a main objective in designing, building, operating and maintaining trunk and local roads;
- ensure safety continues to be part of the planning framework for main and local routes;
- publish guidance about engineering for safer roads based on sound research and experiment;
- use local transport plans to promote safer neighbourhoods; and
- monitor progress on local efforts to reduce casualties.

Background

5.3 Most accidents happen on local roads. This is not surprising because it is where people live, work and shop; and where motor traffic, walkers and cyclists mix. Over the years, engineers have found better ways of catering for the mix. The basic road markings, lighting, signs and crossings which help responsible motorists drive safely are now often supplemented with traffic calming features such as humps and chicanes. These measures can be very effective at reducing road deaths and injuries, particularly for children, cyclists and pedestrians.

5.4 Well-designed, effective traffic calming measures can range from the relatively cheap to install to quite expensive, but these costs are minimal when compared with the cost of the accidents and casualties that have been prevented. It will nevertheless be some time before local authorities can treat all the roads prone to safety problems, let alone those where there is a perception of danger. Central Government issues guidance on traffic calming measures, listed in *Traffic Advisory Leaflet 4/99 - Traffic Calming Bibliography*, which is updated every year.

5.5 In Great Britain, local authorities now receive a single block allocation for all of their services, and resources for road safety schemes are allocated by authorities themselves according to locally determined priorities.

5.6 Motorways and trunk roads carry over 30% of traffic generally and over half of lorry traffic. But less than 10% of deaths and serious injuries happen there. Safety is 'mainstreamed' into all trunk road improvements and maintenance systems. In the next 10 years, technology will bring increasing benefits through controlling traffic, mainly to make the flow smoother and to avoid accidents. For example, incident detection and warning systems will be progressively introduced to the most congested sections of the motorway network. Such systems have been shown to reduce accidents by 18%, by giving drivers warning on variable message signs of the need to slow down in advance of queues, and also enabling emergency services to respond faster to incidents. Other systems work by reducing speed limits at the most congested periods, or by controlling the entry of traffic onto motorways using traffic lights on slip roads. Experience of these systems from the UK and abroad suggests that they make traffic flow smoother

and so reduce accidents. We shall continue to pilot innovative approaches using new technology and, provided the results are successful, use such systems more widely.

5.7 DETR and the Scottish Executive issue planning guidance to local authorities. The Urban Task Force report *Towards an Urban Renaissance* also draws attention to the importance of the planning system in allowing the creation of sustainable movement patterns.

Action plan

Planning for safety

5.8 The professionals' approach to safety planning is changing. The old emphasis on curing accident hot spots is giving way to whole route and area treatments. For through routes engineers look at the route as a whole to reduce the incidence of random accidents and to provide a consistent guide to drivers and riders about road geometry and the location of junctions and accidents. In Scotland these are known as 'route accident reduction plans', but similar plans exist elsewhere. Similarly, urban traffic engineers are now more likely to look at a whole area rather than concentrating solely on specific problems. We will work with the professionals to support guidance on best practice in this area. We are already supporting a project in Gloucester to explore the area technique (see below).

We have consulted in England on a revision of Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG) 13, which provides guidance on land use with a view to transport issues. When PPG13 is finalised it will highlight the need to take the safety of all road users into account in the planning of new development.

Gloucester safe town
The Department has funded a Â£5 million project to try out a strategic approach to safety in an average sized local authority. Work began in Gloucester in 1996 and is due to be completed in 2001. The objective is to cut casualties by a third by treating the city as a whole, not just tackling accident sites. Accidents to walkers and cyclists do not tend to 'cluster' in identifiable hotspots, so this approach will benefit them as much as other road users. There are already promising results. Casualties are dramatically down by 60% in the areas so far treated.

5.10 Local authorities in England, outside London, are producing new five-year local transport plans which will be the basis for government capital funding. Plans must include a local target for reducing road casualties which will need to:

- reflect the national target; and
- be consistent with other parts of the plan, for example for encouraging walking and cycling.

The new flexibilities given to local authorities in being able to use their single block allocation will help them to achieve better road safety. It gives them more scope for determining the appropriate package of measures depending on local circumstances, with less emphasis on one-off individual schemes. While local safety schemes have been very successful, authorities are also particularly asked to say how that capital expenditure will be complemented by their education, training and publicity work. This is

undertaken by road safety officers. They play a vital role in promoting road safety. Much of this is directed at the education and training of our children (see *Safer for children* chapter). But their role is more extensive than that. For example, they can also involve themselves in adult driver training, including schemes for young and older drivers, advanced driving and Driver Improvement (training as an alternative to prosecution for minor traffic offences). Their publicity drives can include local material and direct campaigns with the public, for example at supermarkets and DIY stores. The contribution that road safety officers can make should not be underestimated.

5.11 Local authorities must exercise the new flexibilities we have given them responsibly, putting together the right package to meet the local targets they set themselves so that they play their part in the delivery of the national road safety targets.

5.12 Local transport plans cover all authorities in England outside London. In London, the Mayor will produce a transport strategy and the borough councils will produce plans to implement it. In Wales local transport plans will be required from all local authorities in August 2000 and should include a five-yearly local casualty reduction target and a local road safety strategy to achieve it. The plans will be used to support bids for major road schemes, integrated transport packages and safe routes to school projects.

5.13 Local Transport Strategies (LTS) in Scotland are broadly similar to local transport plans. LTS should set out how authorities plan to reduce the number and severity of road traffic casualties in their area by examining where accidents and accident casualties are concentrated and the extent to which low cost engineering measures may be available to tackle them [1] .

5.14 In Wales, local safety scheme groups have been set up, centred on the four Welsh Police Authorities. Their duties include the monitoring of accident cluster sites, the priority ranking of local safety schemes and monitoring the benefit of the implemented schemes.

5.15 Health authorities will also have regard to road safety in their Health Improvement Programmes. These were introduced in 1999 and fully developed versions will be in place for 2003. Health authorities will be expected to work with local authorities over targets and implementation.

5.16 In Scotland, Health Boards are also expected to have consideration for road safety issues when developing their Health Improvement Programmes. These were introduced in 1998 and cover a 5-year period. Health Boards are expected to work in collaboration with NHS Trusts, clinicians, GPs, local authorities and others and should take account of local council views on road safety targets and actions to meet them.

5.17 We know from long experience that improving road safety is not just about engineering. We have to educate people about safe behaviour and enforce the law. Local transport plans will set out what local authorities and their partners will do in these areas, too.

The Highways Agency

5.18 The Highways Agency has published its Safety Plan reflecting the new role given it in the Integrated Transport White Paper. The new plan sets out its proposals for reducing casualties and improving safety on England's trunk roads. The Highways Agency safety plan sets them a target for reducing deaths and serious injuries on the national road network by one-third. This is less than the national target because these roads are safer than average so there is less scope for reducing casualties. It is subject to the same

review process as the national target. If, for example, investment in safety measures rises, the target may become more demanding. The national target for reducing slight injuries will apply to the Highways Agency network.

5.19 Safety permeates the Agency's plans. Its major schemes have safety as a significant objective which figures prominently in the New Approach To Appraisal (NATA) used to appraise all new road schemes. An example is the new generation of motorway signalling that automatically detects incidents and warns following motorists. The Agency will work closely with other parties to achieve this, building strong links at the local and national levels (see below).

Encouragement

Supporting safety initiatives by others

Infrastructure

Addressing accident sites
Upgrading existing routes
Traffic coming through villages
Trialling innovative ideas
Introducing high tech equipment

Management and monitoring

Ensuring that others are aware of their roles in supporting the safety strategy
Providing quality data for monitoring
Providing regular progress to Ministers and user groups

Education

Disseminating research findings
Supporting local road safety officers

Partnerships

Strengthening links with other organisations
Encourage users to play their part in safety improvement

Enforcement

Improving liaison with the police
Exploring use of high tech equipment

5.20 The Agency is increasing its efforts to help all users of trunk roads and motorways. Its proposals are set out in detail in the plans but they include

- for all drivers and passengers: better designs of road layout particularly at junctions to assist safe driving, planning for places to stop and rest;
- for cyclists: measures to promote cycle safety and co-operation with those developing the National SUSTRANS Cycle network;
- for walkers: more crossing facilities. Traffic calming schemes in villages;
- for motorcyclists: ways to improve the road environment for their particular needs;

- for horseriders: advice for route managers on equestrian facilities;
- for children and parents: working with others, in particular to provide safe routes to school to help achieve the 50% target for reduction in child casualties;
- for people with reduced mobility: working with support groups to ensure there are facilities to meet their needs;
- for freight and passenger vehicle drivers: roadside features to minimise effect of collision;
- for enforcement agencies: places from which safety regulations can be enforced;
- workers on the road network: promoting good working practices with the Health and Safety Executive.

5.21 The Scottish Executive, in its recent report on the Scottish Strategic Roads Review, has emphasised its commitment to improving safety on Scotland's trunk road network and has explained the steps it is taking to achieve this.

5.22 The Scottish Executive Accident Investigation and Prevention (AIP) team is responsible for introducing safety schemes involving engineering measures on trunk roads. The team's 'Moving Cursor' programme identifies accident cluster sites which meet or exceed the threshold criteria of three injury accidents within three years. This information is disseminated to the various local authorities via the respective Management Agent for them to investigate and draw out any common theme from the accident types at each site. Where appropriate, further investigations are carried out and proposals for remedial measures prepared for the AIP team's consideration.

5.23 Since 1989 the AIP team has been responsible for more than 550 Accident Remedial Schemes on the trunk road network, costing over Â£16.9m. These schemes offer an estimated saving of 600 accidents per year, worth approximately Â£38.8m in accident savings and equivalent to a first year rate of return of 229%. A programme of schemes for the current year costing approximately Â£2.5m, is now being carried out.

5.24 The National Assembly for Wales, in its efforts to improve safety and reduce casualty levels on the trunk road network, is allocating at least Â£1.5 million each year to small-scale engineering measures at accident sites.

5.25 The Highways Agency identifies a specific allocation of funds each year for safety schemes within its local network management schemes programme. These schemes remain top priority within the programme and account for the largest investment category (Â£50m in 2000/01). Many are low cost accident remedial schemes; it is anticipated that for every Â£10m spent the programme will achieve an accident reduction of 24 KSIs delivering a Â£3.9m return on the investment.

Design and construction

5.26 Government departments in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have made substantial contributions to design standards on major and local roads through funding research and publishing guidance. This work continues with the Highways Agency which is responsible for publishing design standards and advice for the construction, improvement and maintenance of trunk roads.

5.27 The standards we recommend are highly regarded by engineers and have the support of the professional institutions.

5.28 DETR also issues advice about safety treatments on local roads, which we will continue to update. It makes sense for the Department to fund programmes of research and to conduct experiments in partnership with local authorities, so that engineers get to know what works best.

5.29 We shall continue our system of safety audits at national level and encourage local authorities to adopt it. This will ensure that safety for all road users is a primary objective for all new or improvement schemes that are implemented on the trunk road network.

Monitoring

5.30 We are taking steps to improve the way we collect statistics and evaluate traffic safety schemes.

5.31 Casualty reports are based on information recorded by the police at the scene of a crash. We are refining the form of the report to give more details on the cause of accidents.

5.32 In their local transport plans councils are required to monitor casualties. They will report on progress every year.

5.33 The Transport Research Laboratory is collecting data on all safety schemes so we can see which are the most effective measures. We want local authorities to put the results of their schemes on a database to share information and best practice.

5.34 Our proposals for a local authority best value regime, beginning in April, include an indicator to measure road safety performance. Best value requires local authorities to:

- set clear standards for delivery of services;
- use the most efficient means available to achieve them; and
- improve them continuously.

5.35 The road safety indicator would measure the number and type of casualties per 100,000 population and allow comparison between similar authorities.

5.36 Best value is currently being applied by local authorities in Scotland on a voluntary basis. Consultation on the long-term arrangements in Scotland has been completed and the final report of the Joint Best Value Task Force is being prepared.

Accident investigation
A New Deal for Transport announced we would review the arrangements for transport safety, across all modes. This was a response to the recommendations of the Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Select Committee for the establishment of an 'independent transport safety authority'. We carried out a consultation during 1999, seeking views on the organisational framework for ensuring safe transport, and on the relationship between transport accident investigation, public inquiries and prosecutions. The review is due to be completed shortly.

British Summertime
The Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) published a report in October 1998 about the effect of changing British Summertime. At the moment clocks follow Greenwich Mean Time from October to March and are set forward one hour to Summertime from March to October. TRL investigated the potential effects of clocks being set forward a further hour over both periods (known as Single/Double Summertime - SDST). The conclusion was that this might save over 100 deaths per year and taken together with serious injuries save well over 400 such casualties. For fatalities, this could represent a saving of the order of 3-4% compared to 1998. A saving of this magnitude is something we must take seriously. But a change to SDST would have much wider ramifications which need to be considered.

[1] All references to LTPs should be read as covering LTSs in Scotland.

Chapter 6 - Safer speeds

Introduction

6.1 Too many people take a cavalier attitude to speed. Yet research has shown that speed is a major contributory factor in about one-third of all road accidents. This means that each year excessive and inappropriate speed helps to kill around 1,200 people and to injure over 100,000 more. This is far more than any other single contributor to casualties on our roads.

6.2 We have carried out a complete review of speed management policy to establish where the problems lie, what measures work and what don't, and what additional information we need to develop some policy recommendations more fully. In a number of areas we need to carry out studies to develop our policies further. The main findings of the review are summarised in this chapter, but a more detailed explanation of these and the supporting evidence is published separately in the report of the speed review.

Summary of the strategy

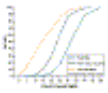
6.3 We will:

- publicise widely the risks of speed and the reasons for limits;
- develop a national framework for determining appropriate vehicle speeds on all roads, and ensuring that measures are available to achieve them;
- research a number of speed management problems to gain the necessary information to develop and test new policies; and
- take into account environmental, economic and social effects of policies when assessing their ability to reduce casualties.

Background

The speed review has confirmed a strong link between vehicle speeds and the risk and severity of collisions. If a pedestrian is hit by a moving car, the likelihood of being killed rises dramatically with a small increase in impact speed. We have also found that the risk of collisions increases significantly when some drivers go much faster than the majority of others on the same road.

Impact speed and severity of injury. Based on Ashton and Mackay (1979)



6.5 In urban areas, pedestrians and cyclists are the majority of speed casualties, but the largest group overall is car passengers and drivers themselves, especially on rural roads. It is in everyone's interests not to exceed the appropriate speed for the conditions.

6.6 Yet surveys show that almost all drivers and riders exceed speed limits at some time. Observation of vehicle speeds in Great Britain in 1998 showed that 69% of cars exceeded the 30mph limit and 29% exceeded the 40mph limit in free flowing traffic. Car drivers are not the only culprits. Offenders include a large proportion of all other vehicle drivers.

6.7 Speed limits are a maximum, not a target. Even speeds within the limits can be too fast and lead to crashes, especially when driving conditions are not perfect.

6.8 Drivers often do not take notice of what the limit is, understand the reasons for it, or respect it anyway. They will drive faster down a clear straight road even where limits are set to protect pedestrians and cyclists, especially children. Opinion polls show that causing death by drinking and driving is now regarded as a serious crime, but many people do not regard breaking the speed limit as a criminal act at all.

6.9 Even some people who express concern about speed around their homes or when they are walking or cycling still drive too fast themselves.

6.10 Public attitudes must change. We must explode some of the myths that people believe: for instance that experience, or anti-lock braking, or empty roads at night somehow make speeding safer. They don't.

6.11 We must explain the risks of speed and the reasons for limits properly, and persuade drivers to behave responsibly all the time, not just when they think they might get caught.

Action plan

6.12 These are some of the main recommendations for action which the speed review report explains in full, with supporting evidence.

Increasing awareness

6.13 We will continue to publicise the dangers of excessive and inappropriate speed and the effect it has on other people's health and quality of life. We are planning more research into drivers' motives and perceptions to help refine the approach.

Appropriate vehicle speeds

6.14 On roads where it is possible to drive faster, speed limits are intended to let drivers know the maximum safe speed in good conditions. Sensible limits should be appropriate both to the location and function of the road and thus the safety of all people who use it - pedestrians, cyclists, horseriders, as well as motorists. Badly set or inappropriate limits, on the other hand, are often ignored and make drivers less willing to comply with the system generally.

6.15 The 70 mph and 30 mph limits are well established and well understood and there is no case for a blanket change on safety or environmental grounds. The range of limits between those levels are less well understood, and often less consistently applied, and there is a case for greater flexibility for local authorities to introduce lower limits, particularly in urban areas and villages, where there are more substantial numbers of pedestrians and cyclists. There may also be situations where raising the limit may be appropriate if other safety criteria are satisfied, and existing limits are inappropriate.

6.16 We will revise our guidance to local authorities on the setting of local speed limits to achieve appropriate and consistent standards nationally to reflect, as far as possible, the needs of all road users on different classes of roads. The guidance will help authorities to take sensible measures, including lower speed limits where necessary, to achieve safer vehicle speeds.

6.17 We will also provide better information to help drivers choose appropriate speeds, including:

- more effective speed limit signing;
- speed activated signs at hazards; and
- additional signing for speed cameras.

We will draw on the experience of innovative local authorities like Suffolk and Norfolk when developing new speed management policies.

High speed roads

6.18 On motorways and dual carriageways the safety record is significantly better than on other types of road. The main improvements here will come from better compliance with existing speed limits. We will be using cameras and other targeted enforcement activity to encourage compliance and improve safety where:

- there is a 70 mph limit on road sections where we know traffic speeds are in excess of this, and there is a higher risk of injuries; and
- where lower limits are in force for reasons of road maintenance or traffic management.

Rural single carriageway roads

6.18 The national speed limit of 60 mph remains appropriate for many stretches of high quality rural roads. But it is clear that on some rural single carriageway roads and country lanes, vehicle speeds of 60 mph are too fast. At present the law does not distinguish between them.

6.20 Using the normal classification of roads (A, B, C and Unclassified roads) is not appropriate for speed management purposes since those designations define routes rather than the nature or function of the road or its relative safety.

We need to make distinctions before a new national speed limit could be applied. However, a local targeted approach is possible. Some authorities using their existing powers have already attempted to treat the problem by setting 50 or 40 mph speed limits, and we will learn from their experience. On the other hand, we do not want to develop a complex system of different speed limits which would not only cause confusion, but would also involve substantial signing and marking with the associated costs and visual intrusion. This would be particularly inappropriate on those roads where vehicle speeds are already at an appropriate level.

6.21 We are therefore proposing to develop a new hierarchy of roads defined by their function and quality, which would combine flexibility at local level with consistency nationally.

The County Surveyors' Association and the Institution of Highways and Transportation have been aiming towards this for some time and we would seek to encourage and build on this work.

6.22 Among the features resulting from a new hierarchy would be:

- in villages a normal speed limit of 30 mph; and
- lower speed limits on country lanes, where needed, to achieve appropriate vehicle speeds.

In both cases there are definition problems to address and further research will be needed. Usually these issues are best dealt with locally. Local authorities will need to consider the application of this new hierarchy to their roads as part of future local transport plans (LTP). This will take time and has both resource and procedural implications. We will also need to make use of the DETR *New Approach to Traffic Appraisal* (NATA) as a basis for developing an assessment framework for setting speed limits. This would take into account the economic, environmental and social effects as well as the primary objective of safety.

6.23 These changes will require corresponding changes to legislation to simplify the making of speed limit orders by local authorities, including some form of overall package, possibly within the LTP, rather than the individual road by road approach required at present.

6.24 At the same time we will continue to develop speed reduction measures through route treatment on rural roads using road markings, signing and road engineering, in addition to targeted interventions at speed-related accident sites.

Urban areas

6.25 The speed review concluded that a 30 mph limit should remain the norm in urban areas, but with improved compliance. To introduce lower speed limits over the whole urban area, as well as being too general, would have a negative environmental effect by increasing CO2 emissions and reducing air quality. Although these environmental effects are linked to vehicle characteristics, driving style can have significant impacts on fuel consumption and gaseous emissions. Even at low speeds, smoother, more careful and less aggressive driving styles can do a great deal to improve the environment, and also save drivers money with no loss of their time.

6.26 However, there are residential urban areas where speed limits lower than 30 mph are appropriate for safety reasons. Last year the Government gave local authorities powers to make 20 mph limits without recourse to the Secretary of State. Traffic calming where necessary will make these lower speed limits self-enforcing. We support the home zone concept and are establishing pilot schemes to evaluate the role they can play in improving the quality of life in some residential areas. There are also strong reasons for reducing speed and parking in the vicinity of schools. As well as making the sort of improvements in safety and the environment which are needed, these developments would improve the quality of life in our urban areas - very much in line with our policy for improved quality of urban living as exemplified in *Towards an Urban Renaissance*.

6.27 High streets with mixed traffic and diverse use present a unique combination of safety problems, and are among the least safe of urban roads. We are therefore planning further research to develop and test practical solutions to improve safety on such roads.

6.28 In urban areas, therefore, we would wish to encourage more local authorities to use the increased powers they now have to introduce 20 mph zones and speed limits in residential areas, where appropriate. This should be a priority, particularly in areas where there is a large number of children such as in the vicinity of schools (where parking restrictions can also play a part in enhancing safety).

6.29 It would be intended in the longer term to develop an urban hierarchy of roads to provide clearer guidance in this area, in a similar manner to that proposed for rural roads.

Speed management

6.30 Government policy is to reduce congestion and its effect on the environment and the economy. But, in free flowing traffic, a significant proportion of drivers and riders choose to speed. At night, particularly, freer flowing traffic usually leads to higher speeds and increased casualty rates. Speeding at night creates noise nuisance as well as doubling the accident rate. This argues for retaining the same limits during both night and day and for action to make sure that speed management strategies are developed to maintain safe speeds in free flowing traffic.

Self-explaining roads

6.31 We believe there would be real benefit in designing roads which clearly indicate by their appearance the speeds which are appropriate. Combined with the new hierarchy of roads we propose to develop, it would be another aid to explaining speed limits and persuading motorists to observe them.

Signing

6.32 On all roads there is a need for better driver information which requires:

- more effective speed limit signing;
- more speed activated signs to warn of hazards and speed limits;
- additional signing for speed cameras.

6.33 National speed limits make for simplicity of signing. However, there is a clear indication that the so called 'derestricted sign' is not properly understood. It indicates entry into an area covered by the national speed limit applicable to the road, normally 60 mph on a single carriageway and 70 mph on motorways and dual carriageways. Any change of signing would take time and be costly, but we will consider how to clarify the message to drivers and whether the speed limit could be displayed as a number.

6.34 We want local authorities to set limits which suit the road, particularly rural roads, within consistent guidelines.

6.35 We will be looking at alternative speed limit signing conventions for rural areas. One example is the way village name signs in France and some other continental countries are used as implicit signs of a change in the speed limit. Work will also assess the need for supporting educational and publicity activity to inform road users of the changes.

Appraisal

6.36 The DETR has adopted a New Approach To Appraisal of road schemes which takes account of economic, environmental and safety effects. We will collect information to assess policy and measures to reduce speed in a way that is consistent with this new approach. A similar approach has been taken in Scotland.

Enforcement

For those who refuse to modify their speed voluntarily we will seek to change their behaviour through enforcement and penalties. We look at enforcement in detail in Chapter 10. As speed is our biggest challenge, we propose some important changes including:

- developing a new financial system using part of the fine revenue to pay the operational and administrative costs of speed camera activity incurred by the police, courts and local authorities;
- evaluating new speed and traffic signal enforcement cameras;
- evaluating rehabilitation courses; and
- as part of the Home Office review of penalties for road traffic offences (see Chapter 10):
- aim for more effective penalties for speeding offences; and specifically,
- consider how to punish those who drive far in excess of speed limits, possibly by creating a new offence.

Report of the review

6.28 The full report of the speed review is published separately.

Chapter 7 - Safer vehicles

Introduction

7.1 Modern vehicles are overwhelmingly better than they used to be in every area, and not least safety. Improvements in vehicle safety have contributed significantly to reducing road deaths and injuries and will continue to do so. We see technology as a vital ally across our transport policy, and particularly in safety issues. The newly constituted Motorists' Forum, made up of a wide range of motoring interests and including manufacturers and managers of the road network, has been asked to advise on safer, smarter, cleaner innovations driven by new technology.

Vehicles that are designed well are:

- easier to control in normal driving;
- reliable and predictable in emergency situations; and
- protect against injury in a crash.

7.2 These improvements reflect the significant achievements of manufacturers, their engineers and designers. It is because vehicle design can influence such a broad area of road safety that it is worth making continuous improvements, either through regulation or by other means. We need to work in partnership with the industry to ensure the improvements in safety continue.

7.3 It is also vital that cars already on the road are fit to be there. It is in everyone's interests that owners maintain their vehicles to avoid unnecessary safety risks.

Summary of the strategy

The Government is determined to improve vehicle safety further, by encouraging:

- improvements which prevent accidents happening in the first place;
- improvements which protect car occupants in the event of an accident;
- improvements which protect other road users;
- better information for consumers, helping them to choose safer vehicles;
- better standards of vehicle maintenance; and
- renewed emphasis on new vehicle safety inspections by manufacturers and dealers.

7.4 We are also pursuing a number of longer-term technological developments which could lead to substantial reductions in casualties in the future.

Background

7.5 Recent developments in vehicle safety have included:

- **computer-aided vehicle design**, enabling engineers to tune vehicle structures to provide better protection for occupants in a crash and to improve vehicle handling;
- **improved materials and design**, which have transformed vehicle interiors, reducing the risk of injury;
- **advanced technologies**, which, for instance, allow airbags to operate in the tenth of a second duration of a crash;

- **more sophisticated suspension and braking systems** at affordable cost;
- **antilock brakes**, which are becoming the norm on many vehicles; and
- **improved rubber compounds and tyre construction**, which have increased reliability and road surface adhesion.
- These improvements will continue to filter through the vehicle fleet and bring safety dividends.

7.6 The motor industry is highly competitive. Unless there is a consumer or other demand for a safety feature it is unlikely to be offered. Better information on safety is now available, and as consumers become better informed, they are starting to choose vehicles with a better safety record. We are keen to see this continue, by encouraging the industry to provide further improvements, and regulating where necessary.

7.7 The motor industry operates worldwide and regulations are usually agreed in Europe or internationally. The UK is at the forefront in pressing for improvements in vehicle safety and is supported in this by high quality scientific research. We have a reputation within the international research community for technical excellence.

This is an exciting time: modern technology is constantly pushing back the frontiers of vehicle design, offering innovative approaches to age-old problems. These new technologies are already delivering many improvements to new vehicles. In the next few years we expect to see vehicles that are 'intelligent' in their own right, helping to avoid accidents and to protect road users.

Action plan

Accident prevention

Improved braking systems

7.9 Anti-lock and electronic braking systems offer substantial safety benefits. We will implement an EU directive during 2000 making anti-lock systems compulsory on all new buses, coaches and large goods vehicles; and to prevent the use of sub-standard brake linings on cars and light vans, subject to consultation. We are investigating the effectiveness of braking systems on heavy articulated vehicles and this may lead to further improvements.

Daytime running lamps

7.10 Evidence from other countries suggests that if all vehicles had their lights on all the time (daytime running lamps) there would be significant safety benefits. We will examine the evidence on daytime running lamps, which has to be weighed against the costs, including the increased environmental cost (in CO_2 terms) of the energy to power the lights. This work is being progressed on a European-wide basis where these issues will be explored fully.

Better protection for vehicle occupants

Seat belts

7.11 Wearing a seat belt, or child restraint, saves lives and reduces the severity of injuries in crashes.

7.12 Wearing rates for back seat passengers are one area of concern (see below). Another concern is the poor wearing rate amongst drivers and passengers in vans. Legislation exempts people carrying out 'local rounds of deliveries' but this broad definition makes enforcement very difficult. We will look for an early opportunity to make the exemption more tightly defined.

7.13 We also plan to make the fitting of seat belts compulsory in new buses, coaches and minibuses which may not carry standing passengers, and in new goods vehicles over 3.5 tonnes, subject to consultation.

Side and frontal crash protection in cars

7.14 New EU directives have introduced more realistic crashworthiness tests, resulting in designs that offer greater protection in front and side impacts. They have applied to new models since 1 October 1998 and will apply to all new cars registered after 1 October 2003. DETR is supporting research into further improvements in side and frontal crash protection.

HGV cab design
The casualty figures for 1998 show an increase in HGV fatalities, which suggests this is an area that requires more attention. HGV occupants would be better protected by three-point seat belts and by stronger cabs, to provide survival space in roll-over accidents and protection in frontal impacts. We are completing research into protection for HGV occupants, and proposals for new European Standards will follow.

Seat belt wearing

The UK has long had one of the highest wearing rates in Europe for drivers and front seat passengers, undoubtedly one factor in our good overall casualty record.

But the wearing rate for back seat passengers has always been much lower. Just over half of adults are belting up, in spite of legislation. Yet these unbelted passengers put others as well as themselves at risk. They can seriously injure - even kill - other people in the vehicle.

In summer 1998, DETR launched a series of hard-hitting media campaigns and there are signs that attitudes are changing. Wearing rates for adult rear seat passengers rose to a high of 59% by April 1999 - a 12% increase in a year - though they had fallen back slightly by October 1999. More advertising is planned.

Airbags improve the protection offered by seat belts in a frontal crash. Whilst airbags themselves can cause injuries, these may be minor compared with the injuries that would have occurred had an airbag not been present. In order to minimise the risk of injury, it is important that the occupants always wear their seat belts and do not sit too close to the steering wheel or dashboard. There have been a number of tragic cases in the US where children have been killed when they were too close to an airbag when it inflated - there have been no such cases in the UK. Manufacturers generally recommend that children travel in the rear. If children are carried facing forward in the front seat, they should always be properly restrained and the seat should be pushed as far back as possible. Never use a rear facing child restraint in a seat which is protected by an airbag.

Better protection for other road users

Car front design

7.16 The UK is backing proposals for the European Commission to bring forward a Directive in early 2000 to make car fronts safer. This would be a challenging initiative which could ultimately reduce fatalities and serious injuries to pedestrians by up to 20%. Such a Directive would also be the best way of preventing particularly dangerous bull bars being fitted to vehicles.

Front underrun guards for HGVs

7.17 These can help prevent cars being crushed in a collision with an HGV. The European Commission has recently proposed a directive to make HGV front underrun guards compulsory, which we are supporting. The earliest this could come in would be 2003. There is also scope for stronger rear underrun guards and, for larger HGVs, stronger side guards.

Better consumer information

European New Car Assessment Programme (Euro NCAP)

7.18 Euro NCAP involves crash testing groups of similar cars to see how well the drivers and passengers would be protected in front and side collisions. The tests also assess the likely severity of injury to a pedestrian if hit by the car and the tests have proved that there is room for considerable improvement here. The results of the tests are published widely.

7.19 Euro NCAP is a flexible tool in which the test criteria can be changed to reflect technical developments. Currently it tests only those safety features which give protection in the event of a crash, but we support expanding Euro NCAP to test features which help prevent the accident happening in the first place.

7.20 We are also considering whether a similar test to Euro NCAP could be developed for vehicles other than cars.

Euro NCAP is a test programme which assesses the crashworthiness of new cars available in Europe. Over 50 models have been tested since it started in early 1997.

The former Department of Transport initiated this programme, which has been joined by other European governments, European motoring and consumer organisations and the Federation Internationale des Automobiles (FIA). It also has funding from the European Commission.

Vehicles are crash tested in model size groupings. Categories tested so far include super minis, small family cars, family cars, executive cars and, most recently, multi-purpose vehicles (or people carriers). Euro NCAP is testing all the most popular new cars in the UK. There is a great deal of public and media interest in the results, so manufacturers take the testing seriously. In a number of cases, manufacturers have modified designs and brought forward system improvements to get a higher rating.

Quality control and detection of faults

7.21 Despite many improvements to the design, manufacture and quality of new vehicles, many cars are subject to a safety-related recall by the manufacturer during their lifetime. Over one million cars were affected by a recall during 1999 and there seems to be a worrying trend developing which has seen numbers rise by over 47% since 1997.

Once notified, vehicle manufacturers liaise closely with the Vehicle Inspectorate (VI) under a voluntary code of practice to ensure that the defect is rectified quickly with the minimum disruption to motorists. However, more needs to be done to halt the increasing trend and to avoid defects occurring in the first place. We will consider with manufacturers and representative organisations what more can be done to reduce the current high level of safety recalls.

Better standards of vehicle maintenance

7.22 Safety also depends on how well vehicles are maintained. Here the burden of responsibility falls mainly on the individual vehicle owner. The amount of information available from manufacturers and retailers on the safety aspects of maintenance has improved over recent years and we are keen to encourage further improvement.

7.23 Cars over three years old and all buses and HGVs have to pass an annual roadworthiness (MOT) test overseen by the VI. About 40% of vehicles fail each year.

The Vehicle Inspectorate

The Vehicle Inspectorate (VI) aims to prevent road accidents from happening and to protect drivers and passengers when an accident occurs, by checking that vehicles are roadworthy and through other road safety enforcement measures.

The VI's work involves:

supervising the car MOT test scheme and conducting annual roadworthiness tests on buses, coaches, and HGV lorries and trailers;

checking that the operators of heavy lorries, buses and coaches are meeting their licence conditions;

carrying out a programme of spot checks on heavy commercial vehicles and their drivers to check drivers' hours, licences, roadworthiness and vehicle weights;

checking and certifying the safety standards of certain vehicles eg buses and coaches and personally imported cars and vans; and

inspecting vehicles as part of accident investigations and considering, with manufacturers, reports of safety defects.

A new direction for the VI

The VI will increasingly:

focus more on its preventative, educative role and lighten the burden of enforcement on the best operators;

target its enforcement on serious and serial offenders and come down hard on those who deliberately choose to break the law;

make maximum use of new technology to improve standards, for example by linking MOT garages with VI through a national computer network;

communicate better with motorists, vehicle operators and MOT testing garages, and share intelligence with the police and other enforcement agencies;

facilitate electronic re-licensing and improve MOT compliance for cars, thereby reducing MOT certificate theft and fraud and other car crime such as the sale of unroadworthy used cars; and

focus activities on improving compliance with drivers' hours requirements whilst not neglecting roadworthiness.

Detailed information is available in the VI's business plan.

7.24 The MOT is backed up by some 320,000 roadside and other spot checks through the year. Drivers and transport operators whose vehicles fail the most important standards can be prosecuted.

7.25 Three periodic national checks, codenamed Operation Tourist (coaches), Coachman (school buses) and Mermaid (lorries) are an increasingly important and high-profile part of the enforcement programme.

7.26 The objective of all these checks is to persuade drivers to pay more attention to the condition of their vehicles. The real road safety benefits will come through education and persuasion, rather than by detecting offences.

The role of the Traffic Commissioners
Road safety is a key aim of the six Traffic Commissioners who license bus, coach and heavy goods vehicle operators. When they apply for a licence, operators must prove they have a good reputation and the technical competence and financial standing to keep their vehicles in a roadworthy condition. The Vehicle Inspectorate checks their fleet. Under new European legislation, operators will have to prove a higher level of financial standing and face a tougher examination, the Certificate of Professional Competence. The Commissioners take disciplinary action against PSV and HGV drivers who have committed road traffic offences and operators who have not observed the conditions of their licence. They can revoke or suspend an operator licence, reduce the number of authorised vehicles, or impose other conditions. They will have new computer systems by December 2000 which will make it easier to keep track of rogue operators who fail to maintain their vehicle fleets.

'Joined-up' services from government agencies

7.27 Between 1988 and 1990 DETR set up four executive agencies to deliver its services to road users (Driving Standards Agency, Vehicle Inspectorate, Vehicle Certification Agency and Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency). In 1998 it was decided to draw them closer together at a strategic level, along with the Traffic Area Network, to improve the co-ordination of services in line with 'Modernising Government'. This 'Driver Vehicle Operator (DVO) exercise' has the specific objective of facilitating 'joined-up' services to improve road safety, the environment and consumer protection. A Strategy Board, accountable to Ministers, was set up to formulate the strategy for achieving this and a task force was appointed to plan and help co-ordinate a programme of work - with particular emphasis on IT development, including electronic delivery and customer service generally. The effectiveness of the DVO exercise will be reviewed in autumn 2000.

Longer-term developments

'Intelligent' seat belts and airbags

7.28 'Intelligent' seat belts and airbags could reduce serious and fatal injuries by automatically adapting their settings to maximise protection in different types of accident. For example, sensors could adapt the airbag inflation according to the size and position of the people in the vehicle and the speed of the impact. Technological development is already under way and intelligent systems are beginning to emerge.

Vehicle compatibility measures
7.29 The extent to which car occupants are injured in accidents depends on many factors, including the size of the vehicles involved. Steps could be taken to minimise the effects on drivers and passengers of smaller cars that collide with something bigger like a four-wheel drive vehicle.

Compatibility is being researched collectively by the international scientific community and DETR is actively involved.

Vehicle radar and reducing the risk of accidents
7.30 Vehicle manufacturers are developing advanced systems using radar and other electronic sensors to detect surrounding vehicles. These systems may either warn the driver of the presence of other vehicles or even take intervening action to reduce the risk of an accident.

7.31 One type of system currently being fitted is known as Adaptive Cruise Control (ACC), which uses a radar mounted in the front of the car. With the ACC system activated, the car will maintain the speed set by the driver unless a slower vehicle ahead is detected by the radar.

7.32 The ACC system will then automatically reduce the speed of the vehicle using the throttle and brakes to maintain a pre-determined distance behind the slower vehicle. Whilst these systems may provide a useful aid to driving, they cannot be relied upon to prevent accidents because of their limited capability. They may also encourage lack of proper vigilance.

7.33 Collision avoidance systems are being developed, but they are still a number of years away and are therefore not a factor in our policies for casualty reduction.

Intelligent speed limiters

7.34 Although speed limiters are already widely used in coaches and heavy goods vehicles, consideration of any wider applications is still at an early, exploratory stage. It would further require widespread consultation and is therefore not an option in the medium term. But given sufficient public support, in the future, speed limiters could make a contribution to preventing accidents or reducing their severity.

The Government will continue to support research into both the technology and the likely impact on drivers' behaviour of these new devices.

Chapter 8 - Safer motorcycling

Introduction

8.1 Mopeds and motorcycles can present environmental advantages on some journeys. They are a sensible means of transport for many journeys where public transport is limited and walking or cycling unrealistic.

8.2 However, motorcyclists represent a large proportion of road casualties in relation to their numbers. They make up less than 1% of road traffic, but suffer 14% of deaths and serious injuries.

8.3 We believe we can influence the casualty figures through better training and testing for both riders and drivers and through better engineering construction and design, which will help to make motorcycling safer than it is now.

Summary of the strategy

8.4 Our strategy is:

- to improve training and testing for all learner riders;
- to publish advice for people returning to motorcycling after a break, and people riding as part of their work;
- to ensure the quality of instruction;
- through training and testing, to help drivers become more aware of how vulnerable motorcyclists are;
- to promote improvements in engineering and technical standards which could protect motorcyclists better; and
- to work with representatives of interested organisations, in an advisory group, to look at issues of concern.

Background

8.5 The three graphs below show the safety record for motorcyclists over the last few years. It is poor compared to car users and even to pedal cyclists.

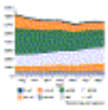
KSI rate per 100 million vehicle kilometres (GB)

8.6 There was a real and very necessary reduction in the number of casualties in the early '80s and the mid-90s, but the trend seems to have reversed, and we must be careful to guard against increased casualties should congestion encourage car drivers to shift to motorcycles.

8.7 Motorcyclists account for one in seven road deaths. Killed and seriously injured (KSI) casualties are highest in the 2029 and 3039 age groups (see graph). Although the trend is downward for younger motorcyclists, they remain a concern. They cover much less mileage than older riders, so their risk measured per mile or kilometre is higher.

Motorcycle and moped user casualties: GB 1992 to 1998

Motorcycle and moped user (KSI) casualties by age group: GB 1992 to 1998



8.8 Looking at older motorcyclists, KSI casualties in age groups between 30 and 59 have gradually increased. This could reflect the bigger total distance they travel or could be caused by riders returning to motorcycling after a long break. Whatever the reasons, we clearly need to address this worrying trend.

Action plan

Advisory group on motorcycling

8.9 In May 1999 we set up an advisory group on motorcycling which includes riders, manufacturers, retailers, instructors and other interested bodies. The group will provide expert advice to inform the development of future policy. The group has set up several task forces to study issues such as vehicle safety, traffic management and behavioural research.

Improving basic training and testing

8.10 Following consultation last summer, we propose to abolish unnecessary licensing restrictions while introducing better training and testing.

Training and licensing for learners

8.11 At present, a provisional motorcycle licence is valid for two years. If the holder does not pass the test by the time it expires, it cannot be renewed within twelve months.

8.12 There is little point in this arrangement. The majority of learner riders hold provisional motorcycling entitlement via a full car licence and are not subject to the two-year rule. In any case, the candidate's riding skills are likely to decline, rather than improve, if they cannot ride for a year. We think a further training requirement is preferable to a one-year disqualification.

8.13 We propose to develop the compulsory basic training (CBT) course for all learner riders and possibly introduce different courses for different types of motorcycle. We shall work closely with motorcycle instructors, safety experts and rider organisations to get the training package right.

Untrained riders

8.14 At the moment, anyone passing a car driving test is granted a full moped licence without any relevant training or testing. But riding a moped requires different skills from driving a car. We consulted on whether to end the granting of a full moped licence when issuing a full car licence and the results of that consultation were mixed. Some respondents agreed with the logic of recognising the different skills through different licensing regimes. Others pointed out that this could be a disincentive to use a moped where doing so would reduce congestion; and that there is not a significant road safety problem arising from the automatic entitlement of car drivers. We therefore do not propose to proceed with ending the entitlement but will adopt a different approach. We propose that newly qualified drivers should undertake a form of Compulsory Basic Training (CBT) in order to ride a moped.

Theory test
8.15 Although people with full car driving licences do have to take a separate practical test to ride a motorcycle, they are exempted from the motorcycle theory test. Around 90% of candidates are exempted this way. Originally, the differences between the two theory tests were not very significant, but this is no longer the case and we propose to end the exemption.

Guidance for qualified motorcyclists
8.16 We are concerned about the recent rise in numbers of casualties amongst older riders. We shall work in partnership with instructors and riders to publish advice and guidance and to establish a voluntary register of accredited motorcycle instructors. We want those returning to motorcycling, and people riding as part of their work, to have a reliable source of training and refresher courses.

8.17 In the longer term we want motorcycle instructors to be trained, tested and supervised to the sort of high standards we propose for car driving instructors (see Chapter 3, *Safer drivers training and testing).* We also want to make the register of instructors statutory.

Other road users
8.18 Motorcyclists themselves often attribute the high casualty rate amongst riders to inconsiderate driving by people in cars, lorries and buses. We are concerned about their vulnerability and are addressing the issue through training and testing (see Chapter 3, Safer drivers) to make drivers more aware of how vulnerable riders are.

Occupational risk
8.19 We are considering whether we need additional measures to protect people who ride motorcycles or mopeds as part of their jobs. An inter-agency task group is to be set up to advise Ministers and the Health and Safety Commission on prevention of work-related road incidents.

8.20 One thing in particular they will look at is how road traffic law and health and safety law could dovetail to protect the road safety of pizza delivery motorcycle riders. These riders are often learners on mopeds who can get a provisional licence at the age of 16.

8.21 DETR has produced two voluntary codes of practice:

- the Courier Code, in conjunction with the Despatch Association; and
- the Code of Practice for Home Delivery Operators and Drivers, in conjunction with the Pizza and Pasta Association.

They advise on good practice and set out both riders' and employers' responsibilities.

Engineering and technical measures

Motorcycle construction
8.22 Motorcycles, unlike cars and trucks, have not been subject to a UK type approval system, verifying design and construction to appropriate safety and environmental standards. We have relied on manufacturers or importers to self-certify that they conform to relevant domestic law.

8.23 From June 1999, new motorcycle types or models became subject to a new system of 'European whole vehicle type approval' (EWVTA) which:

- harmonises construction requirements and standards throughout the EU; and
- requires independent approval and verification through government agencies.

8.24 This is a positive step. The EC is also considering whether to include secondary safety features, such as leg protectors and air bags, in future EWVTA requirements (see below).

Anti-lock braking systems (ABS)
8.25 Anti-lock braking improves stability and makes it possible for riders to use full braking power more safely. ABS is not as widely available on bikes as on cars because of the cost, but this is changing. Two manufacturers are now offering small motorcycles with optional ABS and a third will shortly follow suit. The Government would like to see ABS become standard fitment on all bikes.

Reducing the effects of accidents

8.26 There has been a lot of research into secondary safety features which would reduce the severity of injuries in a crash. DETR believes leg protectors and air bags are sensible, worthwhile measures, although the proposals are not universally popular with riders.

Safety helmets
8.27 Based on a study of injuries sustained by motorcyclists in the Strathclyde region, the Transport Research Laboratory estimates that improvements in helmet design could save up to 100 lives a year in Great Britain: that is, a 20% reduction in motorcycle fatalities. Given this potential, DETR is leading a European collaborative research project which we hope will lead to a new helmet standard in around five years time.

Accident investigation
8.28 We are keen to see standard methods of accident investigation adopted worldwide. It would generate a huge amount of information on which to base safety improvements in future. We have initiated a study, through the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), of which the first phase, a common methodology, was completed at the end of 1998. Work continues.

Chapter 9 - Safety for pedestrians, cyclists and horseriders

Introduction

9.1 Making it easier for people to walk or cycle short journeys is a key part of integrated transport strategy and of wider Government objectives. It is also consistent with the aims of the Urban Task Force report Towards an Urban Renaissance. As well as reducing car dependency, congestion and local air pollution, walking and cycling can improve people's health and fitness.

9.2 Our guidance to local authorities makes clear that we want higher priority for walking and cycling, as well as public transport, in their local transport plans. We know that both pedestrians and cyclists are vulnerable road users so improving their safety will be an important element in the plans.

9.3 The proportion of journeys made on foot or by bike has fallen in recent years. It will be a challenging task to increase levels at the same time as reducing casualties, but we do not believe it is impossible.

9.4 There are over three million horseriders in the UK and they all have to use the roads from time to time. Riders are especially vulnerable to inconsiderate drivers and they need well developed skills to ride safely on the road.

Summary of the strategy

9.5 Local transport plans are the key to improving conditions for walkers and cyclists. Local authorities must set out how in their traffic layouts and urban design they are to encourage more people to walk and cycle instead of drive, and what safety measures they propose in support. They will need to work in partnership with the police, residents and interested groups.

9.6 Our strategy is both to improve conditions for vulnerable road users and to encourage them to protect themselves. As well as the measures outlined in this chapter, all other aspects of the strategy should improve the safety of vulnerable road users.

9.7 We will work with voluntary bodies to improve training for cyclists and horseriders; to promote use of protective clothing, including cycle helmets; but, most importantly, to help drivers become aware of just how vulnerable these groups can be.

9.8 This includes:

- help drivers become more aware of their responsibilities towards all vulnerable road users through better training and testing
- working with the CTC to develop cycle training courses for adults;
- schemes to promote cycle helmets;
- supporting training schemes for horseriders through the British Horse Society; and
- improving victim support systems.

9.9 Our research programme includes evaluating pilot home zones; monitoring cycle helmet wearing rates, and improving data on horse riding casualties.

Background

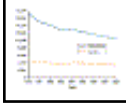
9.10 Most accidents occur when pedestrians are crossing the road or walking along the carriageway. Motor vehicles are the biggest danger, but collision with a bicycle can also kill or injure.

9.11 Casualty numbers have fallen in recent years (see graph below), but this is partly because people have been walking less. Encouragingly, though, there has also been a small reduction in risk when measured in terms of casualties per kilometre walked.

9.12 Cyclists are also vulnerable road users. Where there are no cycle tracks, they have to share road space with motor traffic and often have little protection against it. They are especially vulnerable at junctions. Again, there has been a decline in the actual numbers of casualties, shown in the graph below, but this is possibly because fewer people are cycling regularly. Parents in particular should be aware of the

heightened danger to children.

Pedestrian and cyclist casualties by number and year



9.13 Our data on the total mileage walked or cycled each year is not as robust as our figures for motor traffic. We need better data before we can develop targets for improving casualty rates. We shall continue to monitor casualty rates based on the data we have and will try to improve the quality of data. The proposed Road Safety Advisory Panel could consider rate-based targets for improvement.

9.14 There are European countries, like the Netherlands, which have more cycling casualties by volume; but they have far more cycling than we do. We need to have an eye on cycle accident rates and we will work on producing better figures than we have available. There is no question of increasing the amount of cycling without a decrease in accident rates.

Action plan

Pedestrians

9.15 Local transport plans should make it easier, safer and more pleasant to walk short journeys.

9.16 Practical guidance has been published for local authorities on the sort of measures they should consider. These include:

- well-planned pedestrian routes, such as footpath networks linking housing to schools, shops and public transport;
- pedestrianisation schemes for town centres;
- adequate lighting for safety and personal security;
- well-designed and positioned crossings;
- improved signal-controlled junctions; and
- traffic calming to reduce vehicle speeds in key areas.

'Home zones' have been introduced in several European countries. A 'home zone' is where a whole residential area is treated with a combination of traffic calming and other measures to make a safer, quieter neighbourhood. Existing legislation allows us to achieve the same objectives. We are firmly in favour of developing home zones and similar concepts in Britain. We will be evaluating a number of pilot home zones in the UK. If the pilot schemes are successful, we foresee home zones being introduced on a large scale. Monitoring will take place over three years, with studies of the situation before, during and after the implementation of the home zones. Aspects to be examined include traffic volume, speed and displacement, environmental improvement and street activity. Monitoring will also look at the way people feel about the area they live in. By doing this, we will be better able to judge how home zones can best improve the quality of life for residents.

9.18 Pedestrians themselves need to take sensible precautions, like crossing the road at pedestrian crossings. Local publicity campaigns should raise awareness of, for instance, the need to be visible to traffic. We recommend children in particular wear or carry reflective material at night.

9.19 The chapter on safer vehicles describes how improvements to car design can help reduce pedestrian casualties.

Cyclists

9.20 Local authorities will be expected to produce or update a cycling strategy as part of their local transport plan.

9.21 There is a good deal of published advice to help them, such as DETR's traffic advisory leaflets. The planning of safe, convenient cycle networks is covered in *Cycle-friendly Infrastructure*, produced jointly by the Institution of Highways and Transportation, the Bicycle Association, the CTC and the Department. This guidance sets out a comprehensive range of best practice in providing for cyclists. The National Cycling Forum has also published two useful references, *A Safety Framework for Cycling* and *Promoting Cycling: Improving Health*, and the Institution of Highways and Transportation publishes guidelines on *Cycle Audit and Cycle Review*. In Scotland, a comprehensive manual *Cycling by Design* was published by the Scottish Executive in December 1999. We would expect local transport plans to cover:

- engineering techniques such as cycle lanes, advanced stop signs and improved junctions;
- reducing vehicle speeds in key areas;
- enforcing speed limits;
- measures to reduce traffic in towns and cities; and
- local publicity campaigns promoting considerate driving and safer cycling.

In York, around 20% of trips are made by bike. Over the last 10 years, casualties have reduced by 30% while peak-hour cycling has increased by 10%. York has consistently invested in traffic calming, measures to reduce traffic and in facilities for cyclists, and has a good road safety record as well.

9.22 Like pedestrians, cyclists must take some responsibility for their own safety and their behaviour towards other road users. They should observe traffic rules, use adequate lights at night and they should not cycle on the pavement. Pedestrians often feel unsafe with cyclists around, yet many cycles do not have a bell to warn others of their presence. Introducing legislation to make it compulsory for all new adult bicycles to be fitted with a bell at the point of sale will mean greater safety for pedestrians and cyclists alike.

9.23 DETR and the CTC are discussing developing national cycle training courses for adults.

Cycle helmets

9.24 Cycle helmets can reduce the severity of head injuries. Research by the Transport Research Laboratory in 1994 provided international evidence of their worth. More recently, a report by the British Medical Association (Cycle Helmets, June 1999) strongly recommended them and urged government, health and cycling organisations to promote them.

9.25 The wearing rate in Great Britain is about 18%. At this level making helmets compulsory would cause enforcement difficulties and without greater public acceptance could have an effect on levels of cycling. We will monitor wearing rates and review the option of compulsory wearing from time to time but strive to advance through persuasion.

9.26 We recommend cycle helmets in the *Highway Code*, the *Highway Code for Young Road Users* and the National Cycling Forum's leaflet, *Safety Framework for Cycling*.

9.27 Together with the Department of Health, we are supporting the Bicycle Helmet Initiative Trust pilot project and promoting helmets to children in our own publicity campaigns (see Chapter 2, *Safer for children*).

9.28 Helmets designed and marketed for children are zero-rated for VAT.

Road safety grants
There are lots of specialist and community groups doing excellent work in the road safety field. DETR has a road safety grants budget to help support worthwhile projects. The Bicycle Helmet Initiative Trust and British Horse Society training scheme (see below) are two examples. Small grants are primarily for one-off initiatives or for long-term projects which will become self-financing. We will consider any projects which promote road safety, but priority will go to those which directly support our strategy. Contact Road Safety Division (3), Zone 2/14 Great Minster House, 76 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DR. Telephone 020 7944 2026.

Horse riders

9.29 There are over three million horseriders in the UK and a large proportion regularly ride on the road. Horses can easily be unsettled, especially by inconsiderate drivers and other road users. Most incidents arise from a lack of understanding, so educating motorists and horseriders is important.

9.30 We have included more references to horses and riders in the new *Highway Code*, published in February 1999, and in the theory tests for car, lorry and bus drivers.

9.31 We fully support the British Horse Society's 'Safety 2000' campaign and have worked with them to produce a leaflet and video called *Horse Sense for Motorists*.

9.32 At the moment we do not have a complete picture of the number and type of horse-related accidents, because the forms used to record details do not distinguish them from other 'non-motorised vehicle' accidents.

9.33 According to 1997 statistics there were 411 'non-motorised vehicle' accidents. Fourteen were fatal. But the British Horse Society believes there are 3,000 horse-related traffic accidents every year. This huge discrepancy must result from under-reporting or misreporting.

9.34 From January 2000, we are changing the accident report form and it will identify accidents involving a ridden horse as a specific category.

9.35 Horseriders and drivers of horse drawn vehicles themselves should be:

- able to control their horse safely;
- aware of the dangers on the road; and
- competent enough to avoid them.

9.36 The British Horse Society administers a road proficiency test which sets a high standard for road riding. We have provided money to help publicise the test and encourage more riders to take it. There was a 15% increase in take-up in the first three months of the publicity campaign.

Drivers

9.37 We shall make sure that drivers are better trained to be aware of vulnerable road users. The chapter on safer drivers explains what we are doing.

Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA)
RoSPA is one of Europe's largest and oldest safety organisations. It is involved in all aspects of safety and safety training. One of its objectives is to contribute to the Government's road accident reductions targets and RoSPA provides advice to schools, organisations and the general public on road safety issues. RoSPA also undertakes road safety project work for DETR, the Scottish Executive and the National Assembly for Wales, all of which pay grant-in-aid to RoSPA for this work. Their future work will be closely aligned to the priorities in this strategy.

9.38 We must not forget the victims of road accidents and their relatives. While police officers are trained to deal sensitively with tragic events, the effects can be long lasting. The victim support charities do a very good job in producing advice for people their members often have personal experience.

Chapter 10 - Better enforcement

Introduction

10.1 Road traffic law sets the framework for using the roads safely. It provides clear standards based on experience and analysis. Enforcing the law is an essential part of reducing road casualties and the police have a central role in improving road safety.

10.2 Traffic offences range from minor, careless errors to extremely serious, deliberate offences with devastating consequences for other road users and the drivers themselves. There has to be a correspondingly wide range of penalties.

10.3 But road policing is not only about traffic offences. It will be easier to persuade people out of their cars to walk, cycle and use public transport if roads are largely free from crime as well as danger from motor traffic. Road policing is an important element in reducing crime, the opportunities for crime and the fear of crime and it must be recognised as such.

Summary of the strategy

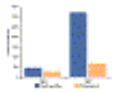
10.4 Together with the police, other enforcement agencies, and our partners in other government departments, we want to maximise the contribution that road traffic law can make to reducing road casualties. As far as possible, we want this to be achieved through persuasion and deterrence. But we need to have more effective penalties which are properly enforced and, especially for the more serious cases, that may mean increasing them. We want to see:

- more effective road traffic law enforcement;
- better public understanding of and respect for road traffic law;
- penalties more appropriate and proportionate to the seriousness of offences;
- more emphasis on education and retraining; and
- maximum use of new technology.

Background

10.5 The sheer number of road traffic offences is staggering. In England and Wales alone in 1997, 2.2 million motoring offences went to court, and a further 1.6 million offences were dealt with by official police action or fixed penalty notices, excluding parking and obstructions offences. More go undetected, some of them serious. A great many, though not all, affect road safety directly.

Motoring offences detected by automatic cameras: England and Wales



10.6 The general trend over recent years is that the number of court proceedings for motoring offences has been gradually falling, whereas the number of fixed penalty notices for offences other than parking has steadily risen. Cameras have increased the number of fixed penalties and prosecutions for speed and traffic light offences. The Home Office has recently consulted on increasing the penalty from Â£40 to Â£60.

Action plan

Effective road traffic law enforcement

10.7 Road policing is one of the established aims and objectives of police forces. There have been calls for it to become a 'key priority' and we are developing the performance measures which would be necessary.

Two recent police initiatives lay the foundations for improving road traffic law enforcement.

The ACPO national road policing strategy
10.8 In 1997, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) adopted a national road policing strategy, 'to secure an environment where the individual can use the roads with confidence, free from death and injury, damage or fear'. In Scotland, a national road policing strategy is being prepared by the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland. ACPO's traffic committee also produced a more detailed good practice guide, Effective Road Policing. The significance of these documents is that they recognise the link between road traffic offences and other criminal acts, particularly vehicle theft. They have adopted the principle that policing the roads means policing crime.

HMIC report: Road Policing and Traffic
10.9 In 1998, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) published a report *Road Policing and Traffic* which emphasised the need for greater attention to road safety and road policing and contained detailed recommendations for the police. Broadly, these proposed that: Chief Constables, when determining the level and structure of resources for local road policing, should take account of the need to achieve a reduction of road casualties and crime; they should also involve service deliverers in the development of their strategies, and negotiate formal partnership strategies with other agencies; the police should also aim to ensure that prosecution policies are applied consistently; and ACPO should monitor and evaluate the implementation of its road policing strategy and traffic policies.

Understanding and respect for road traffic law

10.10 It is a serious problem facing the Government and the police in this field that road traffic offences are not regarded by society with the same degree of condemnation as other crimes. This is partly a question of social attitudes but is also affected by a lack of understanding. Road traffic law is complex and the reasons for regulation are not always obvious. Greater clarity in road traffic law will improve deterrence and lead to a better acceptance of the rules of the road.

Speed limits
10.11 We want to improve public understanding of the reasons for speed limits. As explained in Chapter 6, *Safer speeds*, we will continue to publicise the dangers of excessive and inappropriate speed, and we will investigate other ways of promoting the message through partnerships with others.

10.12 We will also consider how to encourage car and motorcycle advertisers to promote safe speed choice and road safety.

10.13 To ensure drivers adopt more appropriate speeds we need to introduce clearer speed limit signing to remove any confusion, with additional signing for speed cameras, speed activated signs at hazards and more effectively targeted education and publicity campaigns.

The Crime and Disorder Act
10.14 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires police and local authorities to produce joint strategies which are firmly rooted in the issues of concern to local people.

10.15 Consultation is revealing a demand for greater emphasis on making roads safer. Some police forces and local authorities are responding by producing a joint road safety strategy. We will continue to monitor the way in which road safety is represented in these strategies.

Appropriate penalties

10.16 Penalties should fit the offence. Serious road traffic offences merit strong penalties.

The Home Office Review of Road Traffic Penalties
This review will consider a range of offences including the following major issues: • penalties for all speeding offences; • dealing with worst cases of speeding; • the maximum penalty for careless driving; • penalties for driving while unfit through drink/drugs; • minimum disqualification period for high risk drink-drive offenders; • unlicensed and uninsured driving; • abuse of bus lanes.

Road traffic offences represent a distinct area of criminal law in which penalties for the various offences are closely related. It is important to look at this regime as a whole to avoid the risk of anomalies or inconsistencies arising in sentencing law and practice. To this end the Government is now undertaking an urgent review, led by the Home Office, of penalties for road traffic offences. We believe that a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach will produce the best policy options for reform.

Dangerous and careless driving

10.17 Ideally, a driver whose behaviour is grossly irresponsible should be found guilty of dangerous driving, and one who is simply negligent or incompetent, of careless driving. But in practice, the two can be hard to distinguish. There is currently public concern that the definitions of dangerous and careless driving are not quite right. Under the Joint Charging Standards agreed by the police and the Crown Prosecution Service in 1996, 'careless driving' is that which 'falls below the standard of a reasonable, prudent and competent driver'. 'Dangerous driving' occurs when the driving 'falls far below what would be expected of a competent and careful driver and it would be obvious to a competent and careful driver that driving in that way would be dangerous'.

10.18 We are currently reviewing the present system by means of research which involves interviews with parties in the judicial process (including victims and their families) and tracking the progress of cases through the courts. This review is due to be completed in October 2000. Meanwhile in the case of *R v. Simmonds* (22nd January 1999) the Court of Appeal has said that the consequences of an offence can be taken into account when sentencing the offender.

10.19 In the shorter term, however, the Government believes that the maximum penalty for careless driving should be increased from a fine of up to £2,500 to a fine of up to £5,000. That is the highest fine that can normally be imposed by a magistrates' court in England and Wales [1]. The Home Office review of penalties, referred to above, will consider the implications of this change.

Retesting of offenders

10.20 Since 1992, motorists disqualified for dangerous driving offences have had to pass an extended driving test before getting their licences back. The courts can also require a retest for other endorsable offences.

10.21 It is a sound principle that a driver who has been banned for a considerable time should have to take a further test. There are already powers in the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988 to extend obligatory retesting. The Government intends to use this power and will shortly consult on how to do so.

Cutting speed

10.22 One of the greatest challenges to the Government and the police alike is to change the cultural attitude that regards speeding as a trivial offence. Our efforts to publicise the dangers are being matched by an increase in enforcement, mainly through speed cameras and moves to increase penalties.

10.23 The Magistrates' Association issued their current guideline penalties in 1997 and are now working on new guidelines which are due to be issued in April 2000.

10.24 The Home Office has recently consulted on increasing the fixed penalty for all endorsable offences (including speeding) from '40 to '60. The Home Office review of penalties for road traffic offences will determine the best way to make penalties for speeding offences more effective. And, in particular, it will consider how to punish those who drive far in excess of the speed limit, including the possibility of creating a new offence.

10.25 Cameras have proved their effectiveness in enforcing speed limits and reducing speed-related accidents and casualties at accident hot spots. They are costly to install, operate and maintain, but these enforcement costs cannot be directly recovered by the police and local authorities where a fixed penalty notice is used. Only where cases are heard in court may the police and others claim their costs. To address this funding problem the Government now accepts that those responsible for installing and operating cameras should be able to retain some of the fine revenue from offences detected by camera, to cover their costs. This would enable better use to be made of existing cameras and for additional cameras to be introduced for road safety purposes. The next generation of cameras will be digital, offering greater capacity and flexibility at lower cost.

We are developing a funding system with effect from April 2000 to enable local authorities, the police, magistrates' courts committees and other agencies involved in the enforcement process to have some of their camera enforcement costs refunded from a proportion of the fine revenue. A scheme to pilot a new funding system is being planned and, if successful, will become available country-wide.

10.26 Following the success of rehabilitation courses for drink-drivers, we want to develop similar schemes for habitual speeders.

Bus lanes

10.27 The introduction of bus lanes on key roads in recent years has made a valuable contribution to improving public transport services, particularly in London and other urban areas. However, the benefits for bus users of shorter journey times and more punctual services may be lost altogether due to the irresponsible or thoughtless behaviour of drivers who drive or park in bus lanes. Such behaviour can also have serious road safety implications. For example, vehicles parked in or close to bus stop bays may prevent a bus driver from stopping close to the kerb, thus exposing boarding or alighting passengers to risks from other road users, particularly motorcycle riders and cyclists but also in some situations larger vehicles.

10.28 Bus lane abuse may also create unnecessary hazards for both passengers and pedestrians where bus drivers are forced to manoeuvre to avoid parked vehicles or those entering or leaving a bus lane. Both the police and many local authorities have powers to enforce offences in bus lanes.

10.29 The police, for example, retain responsibility for enforcing the law on dangerous parking, which is an endorsable offence. In London, the Government has made additional investment in bus demonstration projects. These have improved safety features through good design and traffic management. Enforcement has a higher profile with the increased use of on-bus and roadside cameras, and of tow trucks to remove vehicles.

10.30 In the Home Office review, we will look at the possibility of increasing penalties further for bus lane offences, together with alternative sanctions and measures to improve enforceability of bus lanes, particularly in respect of persistent offenders.

Unlicensed and uninsured driving

10.31 We are concerned about the extent of unlicensed and uninsured driving and we are carrying out research to find out more about the size of the problem and how it can best be tackled. We also want to make sure that penalties for both offences are adequate and act as a powerful enough deterrent. The Home Office review of penalties will also look at options for raising the penalties for unlicensed and uninsured driving.

Emphasis on education and retraining

10.32 For minor road traffic offences or as part of the penalty for speeding and other more serious offences, retraining may well be appropriate.

Driver improvement schemes

In recent years, the police have developed schemes which offer retraining rather than prosecution to drivers who have committed careless errors. The drivers themselves pay the costs. One of the earliest was introduced by Devon and Cornwall Police in 1991, in association with Devon County Council. The *National Driver Improvement Scheme* has been adopted by over 30 forces. (Similar schemes are being considered for Scotland.) Research has shown that attending the courses can improve drivers' attitudes but further research is needed to evaluate the effects on accident involvement and re-offending.

10.34 The police and course providers are working together to ensure that there is consistency between the schemes on such matters as criteria for deciding whether a driver should be offered a course or prosecuted, and explaining the reasons to anyone injured by a careless driver. We welcome this and hope that the scheme will become available nationwide.

More retraining of offenders

10.35 We are considering how the courts might be able to send convicted offenders on retraining courses (such as Driver Improvement Schemes) as part of their sentence. This would require primary legislation.

10.36 We will also examine ways of extending retraining to other penalties involving retesting, now that a fairly standard training package is available. To include training would emphasise that retesting is a safety measure, not simply another punishment.

New technology

10.37 Technological developments can make enforcement more efficient and effective. The areas we are investigating include:

- **better sharing of information**
  The police already have access to vehicle records held by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA). Legislation to allow the police to have bulk access to DVLA's driver records will be brought forward when a suitable opportunity arises.
- We will also explore further the scope for jointly analysing data of road casualties and data of driving offences, to give us a better understanding of the connection between road traffic offences and casualties.
- **smart driving licences**
  'Smart-card' driving licences could offer significant advantages for enforcement and road safety, as information about the driver and vehicle could be stored and downloaded electronically. DVLA is represented on a European Commission working party which is examining the issues.
- **evidential roadside breath testers**
  Readings from evidential roadside breath-testing devices could be used as evidence in court, so offenders need not be taken to a police station for a second test (see Chapter 4, *Safer drivers - drink, drugs and drowsiness)*. The Home Office and the police are currently examining the procedural and legal implications of evidential roadside breath testing. When these are resolved, the Government will seek an early legislative opportunity to implement it.
- **digital speed cameras**
  The Home Office has recently approved a new generation of speed camera which can record offences digitally, removing the need to process film. They can also be linked together to monitor vehicle speeds over set distances, using software that can read number plates.
- **roadside drug screening devices**
  The Home Office is working on a roadside drug screening device and a detailed technical specification is being developed.

PACTS report on road traffic law and enforcement
10.38 In July 1999, the Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety (PACTS) published a report *Road traffic law and enforcement: a driving force for casualty reduction*, which made recommendations for improving enforcement. The Government's response is being published separately.

[1] In Scotland the maximum fine that can be imposed by a District Court is Â£2,500. The higher fine of Â£5,000 could be imposed only by the Sheriff Court.

Chapter 11 - Promoting safer road use

Introduction

11.1 Publicity campaigns can change attitudes and behaviour and create a climate where people understand and accept road safety measures. There have been many notable successes - our powerful drink-drive advertising has helped make drinking and driving socially unacceptable, and we have seen a substantial fall in drink-related casualties. Thanks to 12 years of clunk click advertising in the '70s and

early '80s, over 90% of drivers and front seat passengers now wear their seat belts, saving some 370 lives a year. More recently, high profile publicity campaigns have led to an increase in the number of people wearing rear seat belts.

11.2 We now need to build on our reputation for strong and effective road safety promotion, and target those areas where we most need to change attitudes and behaviour. The motor manufacturing and retail industry with its marketing expertise and shared interest in safer, smarter vehicles and roads should be a natural and powerful ally in promoting safety generally.

Summary of the strategy

We will:

- run a programme of high quality, well-researched and evaluated advertising and promotion; and
- build partnerships to carry through a wide, co-ordinated and sustained road safety 'crusade'.

Background

11.3 We want to develop a more strategic approach to road safety publicity so that while continuing to target the many individual issues, we start to build a new understanding of everyone's social responsibilities.

11.4 Research shows that advertising on individual issues also raises public awareness of road safety in general. We want to build on this effect with a more co-ordinated approach.

11.5 Advertising is the most visible part of our campaigns, but it is a small part of the whole effort which involves much local promotion, largely through road safety officers and police. We want to develop wider partnerships and harness the energy and enthusiasm of many more individuals and organisations to the cause.

Action plan

Government advertising and promotion

11.6 We will develop effective advertising and publicity campaigns to support the road safety strategy. We will target areas where there are high numbers of casualties and where publicity can have a positive effect on behaviour. Key priorities will include:

- speed;
- child road safety;
- drink driving; and
- driver fatigue.

11.7 Motorcycling, drugs and driving, mobile phones, pedestrian and cyclist safety, novice driver safety and company car drivers will also be the subject of campaigns.

11.8 The detailed programme is set out at the end of the chapter.

Wider partnerships

11.9 We need to engage national and local businesses, media and voluntary groups as well as specialists, in a wide-ranging sustained publicity programme. Local authorities in particular value the opportunity to reinforce national publicity campaigns with local initiatives, and their Road Safety Officers focus on these, together with complementary education and training measures. The gains to be achieved through Education, Training and Publicity (ETP) are difficult to quantify, but we know that good programmes deliver results. We recognise the value of ETP in the local transport plan guidance given to local highway authorities, which specifically requests that the local safety strategy must include ETP proposals (see Chapter 5, *Safer infrastructure for Local Transport Plans* and Chapter 2, *Safer for children* for ETP applying to children).

11.10 We need to get the most from the resources we have with help from national and local news, in-store promotions, distributions, schools activity, complementary advertising, mailings and radio phone-ins.

11.11 We will keep abreast of new media, especially the Internet, and of new ways of reaching our target audiences. We will ensure that we get the best ideas from the advertising and promotions industry to help us develop the programme in an imaginative, efficient and effective way.

11.12 Our publicity should generate support for the measures outlined in this strategy and persuade people to accept personal responsibility and change their own behaviour. We will measure the effectiveness of what we do by research into recall, attitude changes and claimed behaviour - and ultimately by lower casualty figures.

We will:

- invite all the major stakeholders to a conference to discuss emerging publicity plans;
- hold regular campaign co-ordination meetings with representatives of the key organisations;
- take full advantage of information technology to exchange ideas and keep stakeholders up to date with campaign news and good practice plans;
- produce a campaign planning guide to help activists at local level to stimulate maximum news cover and business support;
- involve the regions more closely with a programme of regional meetings; and
- support the advertising regulators in cracking down on irresponsible speed-related advertising of cars and motorcycles.

Publicity in Scotland and Wales
Scotland and Wales are involved in the development of national advertising and will develop complementary publicity campaigns to address particular issues. For example, in November 1998, the Scottish Road Safety Campaign launched 'Foolsspeed' - a major initiative aimed at improving driver behaviour, with the reduction of inappropriate and excessive speed as its primary objective. 'Foolsspeed' is based on a psychological theory of behaviour change. A series of television adverts challenges beliefs commonly held by drivers. Partners in both the public and private sectors are also working to promote the campaign. There are encouraging indications of the effectiveness of the campaign.

Commercial advertising

11.13 Advertising is a powerful tool and this is recognised in the codes of practice enforced by the regulators (the Independent Television Commission, the Advertising Standards Authority and the Radio Authority). There has hitherto been too much speed-dominated car advertising. While effective regulation helps to deter irresponsible advertising, we would like to see a lower level of infringement of the codes in the area of road safety. Recent decisions of the regulators have indicated that they will clamp down on irresponsible advertising. We believe too that many advertisers can do more to encourage responsible, safe and considerate behaviour among road users. We intend to work with the industry to this end.

Indicative programme of publicity activity 2000-2002			
Topic		**Medium**	**Timing**
Child road safety	new road safety classroom aids	classroom aid	Sep 2000
	promote safer routes to schools.	advice to local authorities and schools	ongoing
	A Highway Code for Young Road Users	booklet, posters	ongoing
	primary to secondary school transitional material	under review	Sept 2000
	materials for older secondary pupils	under review	Autumn 2000
	cycle helmet promotion	under review	Sep 2000
	advice for parents aimed at different life stages	leaflets, booklets, etc	August and other times
	advertising for children	TV and other media	and ongoing
Young adults/pre-driver	promoting responsible road user and pre-driving attitudes	various	and ongoing

Speed	advertising supporting the speed review measures	TV, radio and other media	Spring and Autumn
Drink-driving	new publicity and information to explain the new measures	TV, radio and other media	all year: especially summer and Xmas
Drugs and driving/driver fatigue	new publicity	radio, leaflets, posters	Year 2000 and ongoing
Motorcycling	promote training and safe riding styles and publicity aimed at drivers new publicity initiatives	advisory films, promotions with the industry	Year 2000 and ongoing
Cycle helmets	promotion to adults as well as children	advisory films, posters	Year 2000 and ongoing
Mobile phones	new publicity initiatives	various	Year 2000 and ongoing
Company car drivers	publicity aimed at employers as well as employees	specialist press, advisory pub'ns	Year 2001 and ongoing
The Scottish Road Safety Campaign will continue to produce annually a report and business plan setting out in detail its forward programme for the development of road safety educational and publicity materials.			