

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SAFETY FORUM – 7 MARCH 2001

SAPC ROAD SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE – 7 FEBRUARY

Report By Director of Development Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to inform the Forum of matters discussed at the most recent meeting of the Scottish Accident Prevention Council's Road Safety Sub-Committee which was held on 7 February 2001.

2 SCOTTISH ACCIDENT PREVENTION COUNCIL (SAPC)

- 2.1** The SAPC is a national organisation set up to promote home, road, leisure and water safety. Membership is made up of Elected Members and officers from local authorities, as well as other bodies with an interest in accident prevention. Sub-committee meetings are held 3/4 times a year.

3 ROAD SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE – 7 FEBRUARY

- 3.1** Twenty four members attended this meeting. Business was conducted under the following headings.

3.2 Matters Arising

A leaflet on accident prevention and the role of the SAPC was being produced. COSLA were supportive and would recommend its distribution along with the 2003 rating notice to all households in Scotland.

Sarah Boyack had been asked to give a presentation at the next SAPC conference. She was unable to commit herself at this time but would reconsider once the programme had been settled.

It was hoped that Robert Gifford of the Parliamentary Advisory Committee on Transport Safety (PACTS) would attend the May meeting of the SAPC.

A response from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) on the need to fit head restraints on rear seats had been received. They said that there was no legal requirements to fit these, and as they could occlude the driver's vision most manufacturers did not fit them.

The SAPC representative had been unable to attend the PACTS Westminster Lecture.

It was agreed to write to Martin Papworth, Assistant Chief Constable, Strathclyde Police congratulating him on the award of the QPM.

The AGM on 21 September 2001 may be rescheduled as it is a public holiday in some areas.

3.3 NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY COMMITTEE

A report on the most recent meeting of the NRSC is attached, along with a road safety policy for the Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions. (Annexe 1)

3.4 PARLIAMENTARY ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT SAFETY

A report on the most recent meeting of the Advisory Committee is attached. (Annexe 2)

3.5 ASSOCIATION OF CHIEF POLICE OFFICERS SCOTLAND (ACPOS)

One hundred and ninety nine drivers had tested positive in the recent Festive Safety Campaign. There was a noticeable increase in the number of younger drivers who had been drinking. There were fewer cases of drink driving at Christmas than during the summer holiday period, which indicates that drivers are warier at Christmas.

It was heartening to note that there had been a 17% fall in speeding offences but 7705 seatbelt offences had been recorded which was an increase of 14% from the previous year.

It was noted that Scottish Borders Council would be carrying out a publicity and enforcement campaign on seatbelt wearing in view of the number of drivers not wearing their belts who had been involved in fatal and serious crashes.

A considerable amount of work is being carried out on drugs and driving, including the effect of medicines and driving.

It was noticed that some work is going on with regard to the application on extension of health and safety legislation to drivers.

There was some discussion on whether the next Foolspeed/Speedwatch campaign would be affected by the General Election.

3.6 CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence from the following organisations had been received:

Redrock Publishing	- CD On Cycle Training
T/C	- Newsletter
ROSPA	- Cycle Training Leaflet
SPOKES	- Cycling Leaflet
Aberdeen City Council	- Road Safety Plan
Stirling Council	- Local Transport Strategy
IAM	- Press Releases
CTC	- Cycling Newsletter
BRAKE	- Road Safety Week
SUSTRANS	- Safer Routes To School Newsletter
TRL	- Newsletter
SRSC	- Directions

3.7 ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2001

This will be held at Crieff on 10-11 September 2001. A number of possible topics were discussed, including Safe School Transport, Safer routes to school and congestion at schools.

3.8 SCHOOL TRANSPORT SAFETY

A draft discussion paper was issued. (Annexe 3)

3.9 ROAD SAFETY AUDIT (COSLA LETTER)

COSLA's Road Safety Task Group had been considering this letter which had suggested the need for an audit of road safety provision, throughout Scotland. However, the task group had been disbanded recently which meant that the suggestion for an audit was in abeyance.

3.10 AOCB

It was noted that Dave Rogers, Road Safety Manager for ROSPA, was no longer working for ROSPA.

Legislation was being considered to make it illegal to circumvent radar speed traps.

There was no parliamentary time available to make mobile phone use illegal.

An article from the observer of 14 January 2001 was noted. Concern was expressed about a certain type of bus shelter, which had a design fault.

The heats of the Public Speaking Competition were noted.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The Forum is invited to note the contents of this report.

Stephen Chorley
Director of Development Services

27 February 2001

For further information please contact Gerald Cummins on 01563 555565

ANNEXES

1. NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY COMMITTEE
2. PARLIAMENTARY ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT SAFETY
3. ROSPA PAPER – SCHOOL TRANSPORT SAFETY

ANNEX 1

NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY COMMITTEE

PARK CRESCENT CONFERENCE CENTRE

LONDON

WEDNESDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2000

The following is a brief report on the above meeting which was attended by Bill Smith, Chair of the SAPC Road Safety Committee.

1. Matters Arising from May 2000 Meeting

- a) Mr Howard reported that the Cyclist Training Guidelines had been sent out,
- b) Mr Seaward raised the matter of better training for bus drivers. Conductors should also be trained
- c) RoSPA Comments on the National Road Safety Strategy - Mr Hook felt that the original comments had not adequately reflected the feelings and the concerns of the Committee and he 'stated that he was now happier with the paper that had been sent to Lord Whitty .
- d) Mr Howard confirmed that a letter had been sent to BRAKE and it was suggested RoSPA should co-ordinate a calendar for road safety events. The Committee were informed that AIRSO already fulfil this function.

2. Presentation from Caroline Fosbury and Ian Morley from Concord Child Seats

3. Secretary's Report

Congress -12-14 March 2001- Lord McDonald had agrees to open Road Safety Congress in Glasgow. 30 delegates booked by September, now risen to 65.

Journey Planners for Drivers -will be completed by end of March 2001.

4. DETR - Road Safety Update

Bill Hills presented the DETR Road Safety update report (copy enclosed) .

5. National Safety Education Committee

At the most recent meeting of the NSEC, Dave Rogers gave a presentation about introducing risk education into the school curriculum.

Ms Jean McEntire, RoSPA's new Head of Safety Education, had attended her first meeting.

6. Report from Road Safety Advisory Group

New constitution document presented and approved by committee.

7. Feedback from Road Safety Advisory Panel and the Work Related Road Safety Task Group

Mr Howard reported that the first meeting of the group had taken place. Approximately 30 members had attended and the terms of reference had been established. The decision had been taken to set up two working groups. Mr Hills would chair the Child Safety Group and Professor Richard Alsopp the statistics group. It had been considered that there may be a need to set up further sub-groups. The group met again on the 7 November 2000.

The Work Related Road Risk Group was being chaired by Mr Richard Dikes, Managing Director of the Post Office. Three further sub-groups will look at Intelligence, Enforcement and the development of a consultation document.

8. RoSPA Letter to Home Secretary re: Speed

A copy of letters sent to the Home Office and to Lord Whitty regarding the speeding offence committed by the driver of the Home Secretary's car were provided for information. RoSPA has queried the management of road risk in respect of this offence. Lord Whitty has replied, a reply is still awaited from the Home Office.

9. The Braking Efficiency of Trucks

RoSPA's paper was noted and it was agreed that this item would be discussed at the next meeting

10. Motorcycling Safety: Draft RoSPA Discussion Paper

It was agreed that this paper would be discussed at the next meeting of the Road Safety Advisory Group.

11. Any Other Business

(i) Road casualty data, a request was received from Mr Leeson of the National Association of Local Councillors for RoSPA to take up the issue of the slowness of RTA data being made available. In many cases it was 'too late and too much'.

(ii) The discussion on the matter of "go-peds" was held over due to time constraints.

(iii) The Ministry of Defence asked for more knowledge of road safety projects. Mr Feest (AIRSO) said these could be added to the back of the diary of events.

12. Date of Next Meetings

Wednesday January 31st 2001

Wednesday 23rd May 2001

Wednesday 12th September 2001

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT AND THE REGIONS
ROAD SAFETY POLICY UPDATE

CHANGES TO ROAD SAFETY PERSONNEL

There have been a few changes in Personnel in Road Safety Division in DETR since the last meeting. Attached is an organigram which shows the current staff in post and their responsibilities.

ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY ROADSHOWS

All but two of the regional roadshows have now taken place. The South East Roadshow took place yesterday in Reading. The London Roadshow originally scheduled to take place on 19th September has now had to be cancelled. We are still waiting for a new date.

ROAD SAFETY ADVISORY PANEL (RSAP)

To implement the Government's new road safety strategy. ("tomorrow's roads - safer for everyone" published on 1 March) a special advisory panel, RSAP, has been formed. This is aimed at engaging as many different road safety interests as possible and ensuring effective cross-governmental thinking and action to give a combined effort to reduce road deaths and injuries. RSAP will consider the road safety strategy's 10 major themes: child safety; driver training & testing; drinks, drugs & drowsiness; safer infrastructure, speeds, vehicles, motorcycling, pedestrians, cyclists & horseriders; better enforcement; and promoting safer road use. RSAP will provide advice for Ministers on road safety policies and advise on the three yearly reviews of progress towards the casualty reduction targets. The first meeting was held on 5 July 2000. Papers and action points will be posted on the DETR website in due course.

CHILDREN'S ROAD SAFETY

Pilot network of child pedestrian training schemes

A national co-ordinator is being sought to establish a pilot network of child pedestrian training schemes in primary schools in deprived neighbourhoods. The co-ordinator will be asked to work closely with local authorities and Road Safety Officers to set up schemes in selected schools using trained volunteers.

The project will go to tender shortly and will last for three years. Its effectiveness will be evaluated as a separate exercise. It will be funded this year out of the £5 million allocated to child road safety and information, part of the transport fund announced in this year's Budget.

An important aspect of the project will be to show what can be achieved in terms of child pedestrian training in deprived areas and how such schemes can be sustained in the long term.

Arrive Alive

Arrive Alice: A Highway Code for Young Road Users is to be launched in August in time for the new school year. It replaces the existing A Highway Code for Young Road Users.'

SAFER ROUTES TO SCHOOL

The three Government Departments involved (DETR, DfEE and DH) are already taking action on several of the recommendations contained in the report of the School Travel Advisory Group (STAG) and are looking at ways to take others forward. The road safety strategy published in March sets out the detailed programme for taking action to improve child road safety. Guidance on full local transport plans now also asks local authorities to include in their plans separate targets for modal shift in school journeys having regard to STAG's aim and proposals for monitoring progress. DETR has give a firm commitment to hold a seminar

with bus operators to discuss concessionary fares for children of statutory school age in the Autumn. The increased level of funding announced for the next local transport capital expenditure settlement in December (£1.3 billion) will help local authorities to implement school travel related initiatives. STAG will continue to monitor progress on implementing the recommendations.

STAG was set up 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 main recommendations of the STAG report are the provision of better travel facilities at schools, better and more affordable bus travel to school, better training for bus drivers, improved enforcement of speed, parking and other traffic regulations, developing children's skills, understanding and awareness needed to behave safely and responsibly in traffic, and raising driver awareness of safety issues.

SCHOOL CROSSING PATROLS

An amendment to the Transport Bill was moved by Michael Foster MP in the House of Commons. The amendment was consistent with Government policy to broaden the scope of school crossing patrols, clarifying that patrols can cross children of any age, and extending the powers so that patrols can cross vulnerable adults too. Ministers accepted the amendment as it was in line with our policy. However, the Michael Foster amendment did not embrace all the amendments that the Government is committed to. The full changes decided, and announced in November 1998, were that the existing powers of School Crossing Patrols should be widened to:-

clarify that SCPs can stop traffic for children and not specifically school children;
remove the current time restriction when crossings may be provided (8am to 5.30pm); and introduce a power for SCPs to stop traffic for any adult as well.

The Government has tabled consequential amendments to remove the time restrictions which will be moved, during the Committee Stage in the House of Lords." The Bill completes its statutory procedures when Parliament resumes after the Summer recess.

SPEED POLICY REVIEW

The speed review was published on 1 March 2000, and copies of the report are available free. The title is *New Directions in Speed Management - A review of policy*. It is on the DETR web site, and copies can be requested from DETR publications by phone on 0870 1226 236 and fax 0870 1226 237.

LOCAL TRANSPORT PLANS

Guidance on Full Local transport Plans was published on 27 March 2000. Full, five year LTP's were submitted by the end of July. Once these have been assessed, firm allocations for 2001-02 will be announced, together with indicative allocations for the remaining years of the plan.

More than £1 billion will be allocated for spending in 2001-02. The quality of local safety strategies will be a key consideration in the assessment of TP's.

EXTERNAL VEHICLE SPEED CONTROL/INTELLIGENT SPEED ADAPTATION

The research project, carried out on behalf of the Department by the University of Leeds and the Motor Industry Research Association, examining methods for limiting the speed of the vehicle without any action by the driver, has been completed. The final report has now been received. This indicates that the

introduction of Intelligent Speed Adaptation (ISA) could reduce injury accidents by about one third, with minimal negative side effects. A further project is planned which will explore the long term behavioural adaptation to driving a vehicle with ISA.

EU COMMUNICATION ON ROAD SAFETY

The European Commission has now presented its communication containing an outline of road safety proposals. Key proposals for action are:

Further development of the new vehicles crash testing programme (ENCAP) Speed limits on light commercial vehicles
Higher seat belt and child restraint usage (including on public service buses) Safer car fronts for pedestrians and cyclists
The targeting of accident blackspots
A recommendation for a maximum permitted blood alcohol limit for drivers of 50 milligrammes of alcohol in 100 millilitres of blood

DRUGS AND DRIVING .

The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) rolled out on Thursday, 3 August their training package for drug recognition and impairment testing techniques.

THE HOME OFFICE REVIEW OF PENALTIES

The review of penalties led by the Home Office has been completed to the point where a consultation exercise is to be undertaken. Although the work has been delayed we understand it is the intention to issue a consultation document soon.

S.172 ROAD TRAFFIC ACT AND HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

Section 172 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 applies when the driver of a vehicle is alleged to have committed one of a number of specified road traffic offences. It allows the police to require the keeper of the vehicle to inform them of what he knows as to the identity of the driver.

Two major cases have made headlines -Margaret Anderson Brown in Scotland and Chauhan and Hollingsworth in Birmingham more recently. The first involves arguments about self- incrimination in a drink drive case and has been appealed to the Privy Council (to be heard in the autumn). The second were cases of dangerous driving observed by the police through video camera surveillance. This was wrongly represented in the press as “speed camera case”. Neither of these cases has yet given any indication that the authority of the S:172 procedure for speed (and red-light) cameras is in doubt. Courts are still expected to enforce the law as it stands and they are, for the most part, doing so.

DRIVER TRAINING AND TESTING

The road safety strategy announced that the government would introduce measures to: instil in young people the right attitudes towards road safety and driving; encourage a more structured approach to learning to drive; raise the standard of driving instruction; keep the driving test up to date; and reduce the accident risk for novice, older and professional drivers.

The department will be working closely with the Driving Standards Agency to deliver these commitments. In particular we will consult on proposals to ensure that new drivers gain more experience before they take the driving test, including the introduction of mandatory logbooks, but this is subject to suitable distribution and monitoring arrangements being developed. We will also consult on the introduction of "P" plates for novice drivers. Hazard perception testing will be introduced into the theory test in 2002.

MOBILE PHONES AND DRIVING

Drivers must have proper control of their vehicles at all times and should never use a hand-held phone while on the move. We also believe that it is best not to use a hands-free phone while driving. The police are satisfied that they have sufficient powers to prosecute irresponsible drivers and we consider that there is no need at present to create a new offence of using a mobile phone while driving. The Government is however committed to keeping the position under review. We produce a free leaflet on mobile phones and driving and following publication of the Stewart Report on Mobile Phones we are revising this to give clearer advice on hands-free mobile phones. We hope to make the new leaflet available in the autumn.

WORK RELATED ROAD SAFETY

The road safety strategy announced that the Health and Safety Executive would set up a new inter-agency task group on the prevention of work-related road incidents. Membership of the group has been drawn from a range of interests, including employer and employee representatives. The first meeting was held in May and a number of sub-groups have been set up to take forward detailed consideration of the group's tasks. These groups will meet over the next few months to consider issues such as establishing accurate statistics for work-related road incidents and the causes of them. A discussion document is to be produced as soon as possible to propose ways to prevent work-related road accidents and a major conference will be arranged next year to debate the issues. The next meeting of the main group is scheduled for 2 October.

'SAFER MOTORCYCLING'

In May 1999 the Driving Standards Agency (DSA) published the *Safer Motorcycling* consultation paper, seeking views on proposals to amend the provisional motorcycle licence rules and to improve safety for riders of mopeds and motorcycles. Ministers have now taken decisions and their proposals include: issuing provisional motorcycle licences until age 70 (their use to be dependent on a current Compulsory Basic Training certificate); supplementing CBT with further competence-based pre-test training; introducing voluntary familiarisation training for those returning to motorcycling after a break; setting up a registration scheme for professional motorcycle instructors; and requiring those who pass a car test to undertake some basic training before they are allowed to use their licence to ride a moped. Full details of the new measures can be found on the DSA website at www.driving-tests.co.uk. Many of those are expected to be implemented by the end of the year.

ADVISORY GROUP ON MOTORCYCLING

On 6 May 1999 Lord Whitty established an Advisory Group on Motorcycling. The Group brings together government, representatives of the industry and those interested in the effects of motorcycling to discuss a range of issues which will assist us in developing well informed policies. The AGM has met five times so far and has set up Task Forces to consider research, vehicle safety and security, integration and traffic management, statistics, and environment and fiscal issues.

CYCLING

The Bicycle Helmet Initiative Trust project completed Phase 1 on 29 February. The BmT is a charity that aims to increase cycle helmet wearing among children aged 16 and under. It is providing a national support centre for the development of regionally based schemes to promote helmet wearing.

Phase 1 of the project took place over 18 months and involved two pilot sites, in Derby and Southampton, where promotion, schemes were tested. Phase 2 began on 11 April and involves a rollout to a further six sites in the next 18 months.

The following indicators will measure the effectiveness of the campaign at all sites:

Cyclist head injury rates
Helmet wearing rates

Level of cycling activity

The RoSPA cycle training guidelines are being revised and will be published in June.

PUBLICATIONS

Transport trends: 2000 Edition was published on 30 March and is available from the Stationery Office priced £30.50. It contains articles on travel by older road users, including the implications for road safety, “ and also on the characteristics of journeys made escorting children to school.)

DETR THINK! CAMPAIGN

Drink drive ;:

Advertising on radio runs from 31 July until 13 August concentrating on Thursday, Friday, Saturday. Radio advertisements, like the first run of Think! Radio commercials, are drawn from interviews with traffic police officers.

Advertising posters are appearing in men’s washrooms in selected pubs from 1 to 31 August. They are in the form of a mirror above which are the words ‘Is this the face of a killer’ and below ‘More people are killed by drink driving in August than at Christmas’, thus emphasising that drink driving is a year round issue.

RSO posters in various sizes are available from our distribution warehouse. The message on these is that ‘400 people will be killed this year as a result of drink driving. Don’t drink and drive. Think!’. An order form for this material is attached. ‘Dying for a drink’ leaflets have been rebranded with THINK! And are available from our distribution warehouse.

Driver fatigue

Posters are being designed by AMV. To support our driver fatigue messages. 6-sheet posters will appear by motorway exit sliproads from 14-31 August, with smaller posters appearing in MSA washrooms from 14 August to 10 September.

Radio advertisements will also feature extracts from interviews with police accident investigators and other specialists which bring insights to accidents where driver fatigue had been a contributing factor. The commercials will run from 14-21 August.

RSO posters and fatigue leaflet are available from our distribution warehouse. The posters show a blurred 'view of a motorway from the driver's perspective and carry the message 'Tiredness kills. A short break could save your life'. The new leaflet gives information and advice on how to avoid driver fatigue. An order form is attached. -

We expect to return to the fatigue message again in a few months time.

Rear Seat Belts

AMV are working on radio advertisements drawn from interviews with experts. The commercials will run from 22 to 28 August.

RSO posters are available from our distribution warehouse (order form attached). The posters show an unrestrained rear seat passenger with the words 'There's a killer on the loose. If you don't wear a rear seat belt in a collision you can kill or seriously injure people in the front'. The Seat Belts and Child Restraints leaflet is being rewritten to incorporate information about correct fitting of child seats and rebranded with THINK! And will be available shortly.

Child road safety

Hedgehog television advertising commenced on 15 July and will run until 20 August. A new film is being prepared to run from mid October. This will include a 'Be safe be seen' message. Various private sector organisations are planning initiatives in this area at the same time.

The new Highway Code for Young Road Users Arrive Alive is being launched mid August at Alexandra Palace. RSOs involved in national launch.

Both conspicuity and Arrive Alive will be the subject of syndicated features that we are preparing for regional newspapers

Departmental Objective: To Improve Health and Safety by Reducing Risk From Work Activity, Travel and the Environment
RSD Objective: Reducing Road Traffic Casualties

ROGER PEAL - Ext 2060
 Head of Road Safety

UZO NWOKOLO (PS) - Ext 2061 (Fax 2029)

RSD 1	RSD 2	RSD 3	RSD 4
<p>Robert Davies - Ext 2045 Driver Impairment and Sanctions</p>	<p>Adrian Waddams - Ext 2056 Speed and Safety Engineering Research Programs Management</p>	<p>David Padfield - Ext 2057 Road Safety Representative at UNECE</p>	<p>Kate McMahon - Ext 2040 Economic Advice, Valuation of Safety, Research Co-ordinator, Road Safety Targets, Policy Monitoring Research, DETR Rep. on RoSPA and AA Foundation Advisory Groups</p>
<p>Tim Norman* - Ext 2043 Liaison with ACPO and Police Enforcement, Drugs/ Driving, Fatigue</p>	<p>Chris Quinnell - Ext 2048 Drink/Drive, Rehab of D/D offenders, Penalties and Enforcement, Older Drivers</p>	<p>Caroline Britt - Ext 2023 Local Safety Scheme, Liaison with LAs and Voluntary Sector, LTPs, Highway Code, Summer Time</p>	<p>Shelley Arora (PS) - Ext 2031</p>
<p>David Pearson* - Ext 2046 Seatbelt Wearing, Contact Point for Scotland, Wales, NI, RS Diary, Forward Look, Devolution Issues</p>	<p>Marie Wells - Ext 2232 Speed Policy Review</p>	<p>Keith Hughes - Ext 2041 Pedestrians, Motor-cyclists, Motor-way Regulations, Pedestrian Crossings</p>	<p>Paul Jackson - Ext 2054 Research on Driver Impairment (Drink, Drugs, Fatigue), Medical Factors</p>
<p>Roger Turner - Ext 2055 Magistrates, Dangerous and Careless Driving, Budgets, European Issues</p>	<p>Miles Fishman - Ext 2028 Speed Limits/ Policy, Road Humps and Traffic Calming, Enforcement Cameras and Technology</p>	<p>John Dwyer - Ext 2026 Gloucester Safe City, Road Safety Grants Budgets, Liaison with RoSPA, Our Healthier Nation, Driving on the Right, IP Rap</p>	<p>Deirdre O'Reilly - Ext 2044 Research on Road Safety Education and Child Safety, Vulnerable Road Users</p>
<p>John Gray - Ext 2033</p>	<p>Jan Edwards - Ext 2058</p>	<p>Alice Mwangi - Ext 2027 Tom Hinds - Ext 2024 Road Safety Honours and Garden Party Nominations, RoSPA Care on the Road Articles, Divisional Informational Technology Focal Point</p>	<p>Andrew Kant - Ext 2036 Cyclists, School Crossing Patrols, Animals, Cycle and off-road Motor Racing, Horse riders, Divisional Training Rap</p>
<p>Vanathi Thirugurish - Ext 2052</p>	<p>Marin Sanger - Ext 2042</p>	<p>Alison Mwangi - Ext 2027 Divisional Stationery orders, Distribution of periodicals</p>	<p>Helen Thomas - Ext 2035 Research policy liaison, Dissemination of all research</p>
<p>Madhu Kochhar* - Ext 2037</p>	<p>Kevin Mantle - Ext 2038 (Admin of the Research Budget, Publication of Research</p>	<p>Alison Mwangi - Ext 2027 Divisional Stationery orders, Distribution of periodicals</p>	<p>Helen El Oumani - Ext 2034</p>

* See also RSD 6

RSD 5

Bill Hills - Ext 3481

Child Safety, Implementation of the Road Safety Strategy (as new ES Advisory Panel), Child Road Safety; Policy on Safer Routes to School, Implementation of the Road Safety Strategy, including new Road Safety Advisory Panel

**Charlotte Bradford
Ext 2117**

**Stephen Clark
Ext 2454**

Jan Boddington - 2452

Priscilla Dobson - Ext 2203

RSD 6

Sue Faulkner - Ext 2465

Driver Testing and Training, Driver Behaviour and Mobile Phones, Work-Related Road Safety Task Group

Tim Norman - Ext 2043

Driver Training and Testing Policy, New Driver Safety

David Pengam - Ext 2046

Liaison with DSA, Mobile Phones, "Road Rage"

Madhu Kochhar - Ext 2037

PACTS Advisory Committee Meeting
21 November 2000

Executive Director's Report

Rob Gifford gave an update to Committee on recent PACTS matters.

Westminster Lecture -places still available.

Meetings with MP's -Rob Gifford and David Kidney MP had met with Charles Clarke with a view to standardising Road Traffic Law and Enforcement across the country .At present consideration is being given to appointing a "Techno Czar" who will have cross-departmental authority within DETR, the Home Office and the Lord Chancellor's Office. This would lead to shared aims but unsure if the different Departments IT systems could cope. It was highlighted that after the "Czars came the Soviets".

Working Groups -3 Working Groups have been set up, namely :-

Vehicle Design Working Party -looking at safety of cyclists, safety of larger vehicles and contributory factors in Road Traffic Accidents.

Road Environment Working Party -Barbara Sabey is Chair but group have not met.

Road User Behaviour Working Party -Oliver Carsten is Chair and are present looking at intelligent speed adaptation and a review of penalties.

Presentation by Bernard Jenkin, Shadow Minister for Transport

Mr Jenkin opened by stating that there was no easy answers to safety and road safety would a top issue if he becomes Minister. Tomorrows Roads would be revised to be more specific.

The country should be proud of its road safety record, but it was bottom of the list in the eyes of the public.

The Conservatives would set up a Roads Inspectorate to monitor quality of infrastructure and advise ministers. They would also set up a Crash Investigation Branch of DETR to investigation accidents in greater detail.

A reform after proper analysis of speed policy across the country, making it more rational. Mr Jenkin said the he felt that speed was not the problem!, but lack of knowledge of the limit.

THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF ACCIDENTS
Draft Discussion Paper - Draft Three - February 2000
The Safety of School Transport

1 I INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to:

- a) outline the current situation regarding the safety of vehicles used for school transport and school trips
- b) identify existing problems and concerns
- c) develop RoSPA's policy positions in relation to school transport.

This paper does not address school travel by private car, bicycle or on foot.

N.B. Some of the issues in this paper may also be relevant to trips organised and managed by bodies, organisations and societies other than schools.

1.2 The 1944 Education Act (and in Scotland, the Education [Scotland] Act 1947) introduced the statutory provision of free school transport in order to facilitate wider attendance of pupils at school. These Acts, broadly speaking, still provide the basis from which school transport regulations are determined today. For example, the two and three mile minimum walking distance in the Acts still determine the eligibility for receiving free school transport.

1.3 The Transport Act 1985 introduced a range of measures that influenced school transport, including competitive tendering and the use of 'non-public' transport vehicles, such as minibuses owned and operated by education and social work departments.

1.4 The most recent changes to regulations that affect school transport were the requirement, to fit seat belts to minibuses and coaches used for carrying groups of children on organised trips, and new licence requirements for driving minibuses and vehicles over 3.5 tonnes.

1.5 Today, Local Authorities are required to provide free school transport, to the nearest appropriate school, for children under eight years of age who live more than two miles from the school, or for older children who live more than three miles from the school. Also, LEA's must assess the safety of walking routes used by children who live within two or three miles of the school, and if these routes are judged to be unsafe, free school transport must be provided.

1.6 Authorities are permitted (but not required) to provide free, or subsidised, transport to pupils living within the stipulated walking distances and/or for older students.

2 DUTY TO ENSURE SCHOOL TRANSPORT IS SAFE

2.1 LEAs and all other school transport providers and operators are legally required to ensure that the services they provide are safe. Health and safety legislation requires school transport providers and operators, to take all reasonable care to ensure the safety of children transported on school vehicles and journeys.

2.2 The Road Traffic Act 1991 also makes it an offence to use, cause or permit to be used a vehicle when its condition or purpose for which its being used involves a danger of injury to any person.

3 SCHOOL TRAVEL

3.1 Walking and car use are the most common modes of travel to school for children.

Table 1: Mode of Travel To School

Travel Mode	All Pupils
Walk	49%
Car	29%
Bus/Coach	13%
Cycle	2%
Other	7%

THE ROYAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF ACCIDENTS
Draft Discussion Paper - Draft Three - February 2000
The Safety of School Transport

3.2 The level of 13% of school journeys by bus has remained fairly constant over recent years, but the proportion of these journeys that are by dedicated school buses has declined from 8% in 1981/85 to 5% in 1994/96. Therefore, children who travel to school by bus and coach are now more likely to use public bus services than dedicated school buses.

4 ACCIDENT AND CASUALTY STATISTICS

4.1 In Britain, almost 20% of road accidents involving children occur on journeys to and from school. In 1997, of the 255 children who were killed and the 44,289 who were injured in road accidents, 27 (10%) were killed and 8,344 (19%) were injured travelling to or from school.

Table 2: Child casualties on journey to and from school in Great Britain, 1997

	Fatal	KSI	All
Pedestrian	24	1,002	4,947
Car Occupant	0	85	1,631
PSV Occupant	0	21	687
Cyclist	3	116	1,010
TWMV	0	8	44
Other	0	2	25
Total	27	1,234	8,344

4.2 The most prevalent group of school journey casualties are child pedestrians (59%), followed by children who are driven to school in cars (19%). Although, there were no fatalities amongst child car occupants on school journeys in 1997, 7 such children were killed in 1996 and 4 in 1995.

PSV casualty figures at (8% of school journey casualties) indicate that they are amongst the safest ways for children to travel to school.

5 THE MAIN SAFETY ISSUES

5.1 The safety of school transport depends upon three key issues: .

- The Driver
in particular the type and nature of the training and re-assessment they receive, their driving qualifications, and the level of supervision and management provided.
- The Journey
in particular, the management of journeys; their planning and the use of second drivers and 'escorts'.
- The Vehicle
in particular their age, condition, design, construction; the standards of servicing, maintenance and safety checking; and their overall management.

6 THE DRIVER

Owner/operator Responsibilities

6.1 Owners/operators are responsible for ensuring that everyone who drives their coaches, buses or minibuses is suitable to do so. All legal requirements must be complied with, and appropriate additional best practice procedures for assessing drivers and escorts should be adopted.

6.2 There are two categories of school transport drivers:

- professional drivers
- non-professional drivers

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Professional Drivers

- 6.3 Dedicated school buses and coaches, and buses or coaches hired for school trips will normally be driven by professional drivers with PSV Licences since they are operated for 'hire or reward'. These drivers will necessarily be appropriately trained and qualified. They are also required to comply with either the EC or Domestic drivers' hours rules to ensure that they are not driving for long periods, or when too tired to do so.
- 6.4 However, the rules for drivers' hours are not very restrictive. The Domestic Drivers Hours allow drivers to drive for 5 1/2 hours continuously before taking a 30 minute break, and this can be extended to 8 1/2 driving provided that breaks totalling at least 45 minutes are taken during the driving period and a 30 minute break is taken afterwards.
- 6.5 EC Drivers Hours are slightly more stringent, but still allow long periods of continuous driving. Under EC rules a driver may drive continuously for 4 1/2 hours before taking a 45 minute break.
- 6.6 Both sets of rules have maximum working times, minimum rest breaks and weekly driving limits to reduce the risk of cumulative driving periods.

Non-professional Drivers

- 6.7 Many journeys, especially those undertaken by minibus, are driven by volunteer and teacher drivers, who often only have a full car driving licence and have not taken any additional driver training.
- 6.8 Drivers who gained their full driving licence (category A [B for automatics]) on an old style licence, and category B and D1 on a new style licence) before 1 January 1997 may drive a minibus without passing an appropriate Test. However, upon renewal of the licence, the minibus entitlement (D1 and D1+E) will only be reissued if a special application is made and higher medical standards are met. The minibus entitlement will usually be granted for 3 years.
- 6.9 Drivers who gained their full car driving licence after 1 January 1997 must satisfy higher medical standards and take and pass an appropriate test in order to be eligible to drive vehicles with between 9 and 16 passenger seats (category D1).
- 6.10 However, volunteer drivers are exempt from these rules, and are able to drive a minibus with up to 16 passenger seats, provided:
- the vehicle is used for social purposes by a non-commercial body, and
 - the driver is 21 or over and has held a category B licence for at least 2 years, and the driver is providing his/her service on a voluntary basis, and
 - the weight of the minibus is no more than 3.5 tonnes*, excluding passengers, luggage and equipment, and
 - the vehicle is not used for "hire or reward".

*This may be increased to 4.25 tonnes provided that the additional weight relates only to equipment fitted specifically for disabled passengers.

- 6.11 People who drive for more than two hours after a full day's work are significantly more likely to be involved in an accident. Around half of motorway collisions resulting in a road death during the hours of darkness involve drivers who have fallen asleep. It is vital that clear rules are set out regarding the amount of time a (non- professional) driver may spend behind the wheel, especially if he or she has been working for a period before the drive.
- 6.12 Minibuses being driven abroad must comply with the EC Driver's Hours rules. Minibuses being driven in Great Britain by a paid driver, whether under a permit or not, must comply with the Domestic Drivers' Hours Rules (see Appendix 7). Further information is contained in the Department of Transport's publication "Drivers' Hours and Tachograph Rules for Road Passenger Vehicles in the UK and Europe" (PSV 375).

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- 6.13 Minibuses being driven in this country by a volunteer driver are not required to comply with either of the above Rules. However, RoSPA strongly recommends that volunteer drivers who are not carrying out any work other than driving, follow the guidelines set out in the RoSPA's "Minibus Safety: A Code of Practice" and reproduced in table 3 below.
- 6.14 It is strongly recommended that volunteers who drive in addition to carrying out their normal duties, do not exceed the following driving hours (see section 6.26). A record of driving hours should be kept.

Table 3 Recommended Driving Hours for Volunteers

	Driving Only	Driving + Other Work
Max. Length of Working Day	13 hours	10 hours
Of which spent Driving	9 hours	4 hours
Max Time Driving Without a Break	2 hours	2 hours
Minimum length of Break	15 mins *	15 mins*
Daily Rest Period	11 hours	11 hours

* After 4 112 hours of driving, the accumulated length of breaks from driving should be at least 45 minutes.

- 6.15 In the case of people who are required to drive for several days on long trips, attention must be given to the potential for driver fatigue. This applies both to UK based trips, and to continental journeys.
- 6.16 All Drivers
In addition to being appropriately trained and licensed, RoSPA believes that every driver should:
- Undergo an initial and periodic re-assessments of their ability to drive a minibus.
 - Receive practical driver training, as necessary , in the vehicle and under the conditions in which they are likely to be required to drive.
 - Understand their responsibilities.
 - Have a clean driving licence.
 - Be medically fit to drive (vocational drivers are required to undergo regular medical checks from the age of 45 years).
 - Drive for limited periods to avoid fatigue
 - Be accompanied by a second driver on journeys which necessitate them.
 - Be accompanied by an escort where the needs of passengers require it.
- 6.17 Driver Assessment and Training
Driver assessment and training is essential. Well-trained drivers are safer drivers. Training increases driver awareness, knowledge and skill, reducing the risk to drivers, passengers and other road users. It increases the comfort of passengers and reassures parents that their children are in safe hands. Training will also result in lower running and maintenance costs and possibly, reduced insurance premiums. It should also provide added confidence to drivers that they are not being asked to undertake tasks for which they feel poorly qualified.
- 6.18 Practical training and assessment is by far the best way of ensuring that anyone who drives a school vehicle has the necessary knowledge, understanding, capabilities and attitudes to do so safely. Training need not be stressful for those taking part; its purpose is to help them increase their competence and become safer drivers of minibuses.
- 6.19 Re-assessment
Re-assessment and re-training (if necessary) should take place at least once every three years, and more often if an incident or accident merits it. People who drive infrequently are likely to need more frequent re-assessments. Regular monitoring and re-assessment will ensure that driving and passenger care standards are maintained. It will also demonstrate that the operator is taking reasonable care in the running of the service.

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- 6.20 **Fitness to Drive**
Drivers must be medically fit to drive. Although in some cases it may not be a legal requirement, operators may wish to consider requiring new drivers to undergo a medical check, prior to acceptance as a driver. The Drivers Medical Unit of the DVLA may be able to offer advice. The person judging the medical fitness of drivers must be qualified and competent to do so. Operators should obtain the services of an appropriate medical adviser for this purpose.
- 6.21 Whether the check is effected through a physical examination by a doctor or by the completion and review of a self-declaration form, it is sensible to conduct re-assessments at regular intervals and to keep a record of the process. PSV drivers require a medical every five years at the PSV licence renewal point after the age of 45 years. These standards could be applied to all school bus drivers.
- 6.22 **Normal Sleep Time**
Drivers who drive into the period when they would normally be falling asleep are likely to become sleepy. In any event, the disruption of normal sleep patterns will leave a driver more prone to fatigue. Therefore, journeys should be planned so that, as far as possible, drivers are not driving when they would normally be sleeping; in the early hours of the morning, for example.
- 6.23 **Alcohol**
Alcohol reduces the ability to concentrate and increases the risk of being involved in an accident. Drivers should refrain from drinking any alcohol and driving. Alcohol remains in the body for several hours after it has been consumed and may still affect a driver the morning afterwards.
- 6.24 **Medication**
Drivers should NEVER drive if they feel tired or unwell, or if they are taking medicine (including some everyday medicines, such as cough mixtures) or undergoing any medical treatment which advises against driving. They should under no circumstance drive if they feel affected by medicines or drugs.
- 6.25 **Second Driver**
A second driver is essential on long journeys or for shorter journeys where traffic conditions might significantly lengthen the journey time or create more stressful driving conditions. Ideally, the second-driver should also be trained as an escort.
- 6.26 **Non-Driving Duties**
Drivers, both professional and non-professional, should not be expected to supervise children while driving; this should be the responsibility of the escort (see section 7.6). In addition, drivers should not be required to supervise children during their non-driving times, as this would not be a rest break for the driver. With each additional driving period, the break time should be extended. Drivers should NEVER be expected to do a full day's work (regardless of the type of work), or be awake for a full day and then drive for several hours afterwards.
- 7 **THE JOURNEY**
- 7.1 It is important that the vehicle used is the most appropriate one for the journey to be undertaken. For example, organised school trips would be most appropriately served by coaches, fitted with seat belts, driven by a professional driver, whilst shorter trips to school events in the minibus may be suitably served by a volunteer or teacher -driver .
- 7.2 For home to school journeys, drivers will normally know the route. For longer school journeys, it is essential that proper planning is undertaken, taking into account drivers' hours, journey lengths, traffic conditions, weather, terrain, fitness to drive and rest stops.
- 7.3 It is also important that drivers assess and plan each journey in advance in terms of its time and distance, and their own, and their passengers' comfort. A suitable route should include places for rest, refreshment, comfort breaks and re-fueling if necessary .Drivers should check information on roadworks and weather conditions that may affect their route, before they set out.

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- 7.4 Drivers also need to know what to do in the event of passenger illness, vehicle breakdown or an accident. This will require the driver to have details and a contact number for the relevant motoring breakdown service understand how to deal with the safety of passengers and how to use the emergency phones on the motorway if necessary .It is very useful to have a mobile telephone on the vehicle, which should not be used while on the move; the driver should stop, in a safe place, before making a call. However, drivers should use roadside emergency telephones where they are provided since these enable the police to identify their exact location.
- 7.5 It is essential that a nominated person, not on the journey, knows the destination of the vehicle, its route and its expected time of arrival and return, and that parents and relatives are aware of this person's role and telephone number as well as the driver(s) and vice versa.

Escorts

- 7.6 It is unreasonable and unrealistic to expect drivers to be responsible for controlling the behaviour of children on their vehicle or to ensure children fasten, adjust and continue to wear their seat belts throughout the journey. These additional responsibilities have the potential to distract the driver from managing the vehicle safely. As far as seat belts are concerned' supervising the fastening and adjustment of seat belts in, for example, a 52 seat coach would add a considerable amount of time to a trip, if this had to be done by the driver. Trips comprising multiple pick-ups would take even more time.
- 7.7 The simplest, most effective and efficient means of ensuring that children use seat belts throughout the journey is to have at least one trained 'escort' on board each vehicle, for each trip, whether it be the home to school journey or the organised school trip. Escorts would also be able to supervise safe boarding and alighting, stowage of luggage and appropriate behaviour throughout the journey.
- 7.8 On most organised school trips a school teacher is likely to fulfill the role of 'escort', enabling the driver to exercise total concentration on controlling the vehicle. However, on the shorter home to school journeys there is rarely an additional adult on board to monitor behaviour and seat belt wearing. Assuming then that where additional 'escorts' are required, they might have to be paid, the costs of implementing the proposal might be considerable. However, experience in some Local Authorities suggests that volunteers would be available to be trained as 'escorts' for such journeys and work on a rota basis.
- 7.9 Regardless of the increased costs, all vehicles contracted to transport children to or from school, or on school trips, should carry at least one trained 'escort' to ensure seat belt wearing, safe boarding and alighting, and good behaviour.
- 7.10 Information should be obtained from the relevant country visited. The role of an escort in a minibus includes :
- Ensuring safe boarding and alighting
 - preventing the driver being distracted by passengers
 - supervising children and preventing any behaviour that could create a hazard
 - helping passengers whom the driver may not be qualified to help .assisting in the event of a breakdown or other emergency.
- 7.11 Ideally, the escort should also be able to act as a second driver, in which case he or she should have received the same training and assessment as the main driver. This will not apply to services that use a professional driver.

8 THE VEHICLE

Design (Fitness for Purpose)

- 8.1 In the United Kingdom, school transport is served by a variety of types and ages of vehicles which, when not being used to transport children, are often in use to transport members of the general public. Consequently, they are neither specifically designed nor purpose built to transport children to and from school or on school trips and may therefore be completely inappropriate. Many of the vehicles are not fitted with seat belts and do not have adequate, safe and accessible luggage storage. On some journeys there are more children than seats, and so some children have to stand.

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8.2 It is, therefore, essential that schools, Education authorities and other organisations who hire or contract vehicles for school transport purposes, carefully consider and (specify in the tender documents and contract) the type of vehicle that is most appropriate for their needs. This should include specifying vehicles that are fitted with seat belts, that have enough seats for the number of passengers and that have adequate luggage storage.

Roadworthiness

8.3 The average age of buses and coaches used for home to school transport in the UK appears to be around 10 years. Although the age of a vehicle is not necessarily a reflection on its roadworthiness, it is likely that older vehicles will require more maintenance and although they met the appropriate safety standards at the time of manufacture, construction regulations and standards have developed and are better reflected in newer vehicles.

8.4 Local spot-checks on the roadworthiness of PSVs frequently highlight serious faults. Therefore, it is essential that checks, additional to the annual class VI checks are carried out on PSVs by operators and the Vehicle Inspectorate. It should be noted that PSVs require a Certificate of Initial Fitness, whereas other vehicles do not. PSVs also have a lower MOT fail rate than cars (despite a more comprehensive test): 15% annual test fail rate for PSVs compared to 36% for cars.

Seat Belts

8.5 Minibuses and coaches used to carry groups of children on organised trips must be fitted with seat belts. The law requires that (at least) lap belts are fitted with forward-facing seats. Newer vehicles will have seat belts fitted when they are manufactured, but older vehicles must have them retro-fitted. In the latter case, it is essential that the retro-fitting is carried out by qualified engineers and that the seat belts and seats are securely anchored to the vehicle frame in compliance with the guidance provided by the DETR.

8.6 All seat belt installations in coaches and minibuses are checked by the Vehicle Inspectorate against a legal minimum standard specified by the DETR. Seats and seat belts have to be adequately and regularly maintained in order to pass both occasional (spot) checks and annual tests.

8.7 Despite the requirement for seat belts to be fitted in minibuses and coaches, there is no requirement for them to be used (with the exception of smaller minibuses, with an unladen weight of 2,540kg or less, where all passengers are required to wear the seat belts). The wearing of seat belts is, of course, encouraged by central and local government and by safety organisations, such as RoSPA. However, there are no plans at present to make seat belt wearing compulsory.

8.8 Clearly, seat belts can only protect passengers who are wearing them. A number of practical difficulties are cited in making their use compulsory in coaches and minibuses:

- Who would be legally responsible for ensuring children wear them?
- Who would be committing an offence if a child failed to wear a seat belt?
- Who would be required to ensure that children were wearing the seat belts throughout the journey?
- Who would be responsible for checking that the seat belts were worn correctly?
- What about children who were too small for adult seat belts and should be using child restraints?

Child Restraints

8.9 There is an additional difficulty relating to the carriage of younger children on home to school journeys and school trips. Occupant restraint systems (including seat belts) are designed for the 'average male adult', and it is, therefore, necessary for children to use child restraints to ensure that the seat belts are able to provide the protection for which they are designed.

8.10 The law requires that children traveling in cars, use an appropriate child restraint (baby seat, child seat, booster seat or booster cushion) usually secured by the adult seat belt. The law also require seat belts to be provided for children aged between 3 and 15 years traveling in coaches or minibuses. However, there is no legal requirement for child restraints to be provided or used for children traveling in PSVs.

8.11 To provide the same level of protection for children in PSVs as children in cars, child restraints would need to be provided. However, this would present major practical difficulties:

- Who should provide the child restraints -the operator, LEA or the parent?
- Should the restraints be fitted for each child on each journey and removed afterwards?
- Who should be responsible for ensuring the child restraint are correctly fitted and used?
- Who would be responsible for ensuring that the child restraints were safe (undamaged)?

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- 8.12 These issues need to be resolved, but RoSPA is convinced that the use of seat belts in coaches and minibuses should be mandatory. It is, again essential that schools, Education authorities and other organisations who hire or contract vehicles for school transport purposes, carefully consider and specify vehicles that are fitted with seat belts.

Coach Reclassification

- 8.13 Buses are exempt from the requirement for seat belts to be fitted. In some cases, especially with older vehicles, it may even not be possible to fit adequate seat belts to them. Where the vehicle can be fitted with seat belts, in the main it will be possible to fit only two point (lap-belts). However, the reasons cited for seat belts not being fitted to buses relate to:
- the potential for greater passenger injury in a crash when/if seat belts are used
 - the likelihood of wear and tear, and/or accidental or purposeful damage
 - the reality that passengers would be unlikely to use seat belts in buses
 - the lower speeds at which buses generally travel.

If a coach undergoes permanent modification or adjustment to prevent it from traveling at a speed greater than 60mph the owner/operator may seek to have the vehicle re-classified as a bus. If reclassification is permitted, the vehicle will become exempt from the seat belt regulations which apply to coaches.

- 8.14 Operators and contractors are likely to seek to charge higher rates for coaches fitted with seat belts than those which have been reclassified as buses and can be offered without seat belts, thus encouraging Local Authorities to specify or accept tenders which offer buses rather than coaches. .

Luggage

- 8.15 Schoolchildren have to carry books, games equipment and sometimes musical instruments to and from school. It is therefore essential that appropriate luggage storage is provided within the vehicle. Although there may be under-floor storage compartments in the majority of coaches it can only be accessed from the outside of the vehicle. Whilst this is perfectly acceptable for long-distance journeys it is impractical for the stop-start nature of the shorter distance, home to school journeys. It would certainly not be safe or practical for the driver to leave his seat and assist each child to stow and retrieve their luggage as they board and alight the vehicle.
- 8.16 Experience shows that in the majority of cases school bags are either put on adjacent seats (reducing available capacity), or placed on the floor, frequently in the aisle. The latter is unsafe and probably illegal since it is a requirement that all aisles and exits be kept clear so that, in an emergency, passengers may exit quickly and safely. Such inappropriate storage may leave the operator liable to prosecution. On most buses, an area adjacent to the door is provided for the safe stowage of luggage. Such facilities are rare on the types of vehicles generally used under contract for home to school transport.
- 8.17 In order for the types of vehicles generally contracted and used for home to school transport to provide safe, adequate and easily accessible luggage storage facilities many will need to be modified. This may well necessitate the removal (or adaption) of a number of seats to provide storage space. Appropriate luggage storage should be specified in the hire contract.
- 8.18 In the case of minibuses, similar measures may well have to be taken. There are already other related passenger safety issues which, when combined with the luggage storage issue, may provide ready-made solutions. Specifically, the rearmost seats adjacent to the doors are recognised as 'vulnerable seating positions' for occupants since passengers in those positions are far more likely to be injured in rear-end crashes. The removal or adaption of those seats to provide luggage storage effectively deals with both issues. However, it is vital that the emergency exits are not blocked or restricted in any way.

Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles

- 8.19 In some cases, LEA's find it more cost-effective to hire taxis or private hire vehicles to transport small numbers of children to or from school. These operators, vehicles and drivers are required to be licensed by the Local Authority. Many of the issues discussed in the previous three sections apply here.
- 8.20 However, several specific concerns have been expressed concerning the use of taxis and private hire vehicles. The average age of the vehicles used for this purpose would appear to be quite old (some may not even have seat belts fitted). Older vehicles will not have been designed and built with the benefit of modern safety standards.

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- 8.21 If taxis or private hire vehicles are used it is essential that LEAs ensure:
- vehicles are safe, roadworthy and regularly maintained and serviced
 - vehicles are fitted with proper seat belts at every seat position, and that proper and adequate child safety equipment is both available and used when smaller children are carried
 - drivers are appropriately trained and licensed, LA's may wish to impose higher standards than those required by driver licensing regulations to reflect the special nature of the work undertaken
 - drivers both know how to, and actually ensure that seat belts and/or child in-car safety equipment is fitted, adjusted and used correctly
 - drivers are vetted under the PCRC system

9 CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY STATEMENT

- 9.1 The provision of school transport includes a diverse range of vehicles, not all of which are entirely suitable for the purpose. Almost 20% of child road casualties occur on the school journey. However, casualty statistics indicate that the fewer casualties occur to children traveling to and from school on PSV vehicles than amongst those who walk or are driven in cars.
- 9.2 Improvements have been made to the safety of school transport over recent years. However, much more can, and should, still be done. Some of the vehicles used to transport schoolchildren are unsuitable for this purpose.
- 9.3 All school journeys should be in a vehicle that is 'fit for purpose', fitted with seat belts and which has adequate and appropriate luggage storage. Serious consideration should be given to introducing legislation to make the use of seat belts compulsory in buses and other vehicles where fitted and escorts should be provided to enforce the regulations.
- 9.4 Escorts should be provided.
- 9.5 Drivers should be appropriately assessed, trained and licensed and operators' management systems should ensure that they are providing a safe service.
- 9.6 Journeys should be properly planned.
- 9.7 The provision of safer school transport will reduce risks to schoolchildren, make a positive contribution to the National Road Safety Strategy and Targets and encourage parents not to drive their children to school.

10 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this report the following definitions apply.

Child

A person aged between three and fifteen years inclusive.

Home to school journey

A journey following the same route on each trip, covering relatively short distances, with a number of stops and usually be carried out at the beginning and end of the school day. Whilst the issues raised within this paper are applicable to normal, scheduled bus services (i.e., bus services intended for the general population which school children use, but which would operate regardless of whether or not children were traveling on the service), they are only relevant in relation to the carrying of children.

Organised school trips

These journeys vary from trip to trip. They may be to the local swimming baths or on a field trip requiring greater traveling distance. It is likely that many of the journeys will involve relatively high speeds, possibly on motorways, with few or no intermediary stops. Although it is more likely that school trips will be carried out during the day, it is possible that they might include an element of night-time driving.

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Vehicles

There are many different types of vehicle used for School transport, including coaches, buses and minibuses. In many cases, School transport is not the sole or primary use of the vehicle.

- Coach

A coach is a large bus, i.e. a vehicle constructed or adapted to carry more than 16 seated passengers in addition to the driver, with a maximum gross weight of more than 7.5 tonnes, and a maximum speed exceeding 60mph.

- Large Bus

A bus is a vehicle constructed or adapted to carry more than 16 seated passengers in addition to the driver, and not being a coach. It can either be a single-decked or double-decked motor vehicle designed to carry passengers in addition to the driver. It can be a dedicated School bus, owned and operated by the local authority, or a bus in the local transport system. A wide spectrum of different modes of operation and ownership exist.

- Minibus

A minibus is a motor vehicle which is constructed or adapted to carry more than eight, but not more than 16 seated passengers in addition to the driver. Such vehicles are often owned and operated by the schools themselves or the local authority. Control is usually at local level

- School Bus

A bus, coach or midi-bus that is used for journeys that carry schoolchildren and teachers only and is not available to the general public for that journey. The vehicle may be used for the general public on other journeys or services, when not being used as a school bus.

11

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the Scottish Consumer Council

AGENDA