

# MAYOR OF LONDON

**Coroner M E Hassell**

Senior Coroner, Inner North London  
Poplar Coroner's Court  
127 Poplar High Street  
London E14 OAE

**Our Ref:** MGLA221013-9679

**Date:** 16 DEC 2013

Dear Senior Coroner Hassell

I am writing in response to your Prevention of Future Deaths Report.

First, I would like to express my sincere condolences to the family and friends of Brian Dorling and Philippine de Gerin-Ricard. Every death on London's roads is one too many and I, together with TfL, will continue to do everything we can to reduce the risk to all users, and we are redoubling our efforts to improve safety for cyclists. This is why I am spending almost £1bn to provide for cycling, including two fully segregated highways through the heart of central London, remodelling dozens of the most dangerous junctions and a network of back street 'Quietway' routes. In my cycling vision, published earlier this year, I also committed to upgrading all existing superhighway routes, introducing full or semi-segregated cycle lanes where possible and committed to complete all new Cycle Superhighways to the same standard.

Your report raises three matters of concern. I deal with each of these below:

**1. Use of unbordered blue strips on the Cycle Superhighway**

The acknowledgement in your report that the current use of unbordered blue surfacing may have consequences in terms of the perceptions and behaviours of cyclists and other road users is noted. You refer to the fact that possible confusion (the existence of which is neither substantiated nor negated by any existing research) has "potential" consequences, without stating definitively that these consequences arise, or have arisen, in practice.

As was included in the evidence from [REDACTED] TfL had commissioned research into the use of unbordered blue on the Cycle Superhighways. Further research is needed into the use of coloured carriageway surfacing on cycle routes (and in particular Cycle Superhighways) and the interaction of road users with regards to that colour. That research will be commissioned, managed, reviewed and acted upon by TfL. TfL anticipate that it will take six months to conclude and we will let you know the findings of this work once complete.

Pending the completion of this further research TfL will consider what actions, if any, should be taken with regards to the current design of Cycle Superhighway extensions and upgrades as well as on new Cycle Superhighway routes.

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## Unbordered blue through signal controlled junctions:

There is evidence provided through existing research, commissioned by TfL, that there are safety benefits from the use of unbordered blue surface through signalised junctions. However there is currently no evidence to address the observational claims of a 'false sense of security' for cyclists. Such use of unbordered blue therefore becomes a balance between an established benefit and a potential risk.

Until the potential risk can be properly assessed through further research, no new applications of unbordered blue surface through signal controlled junctions will be implemented. Unbordered blue surface may be adopted and applied again in the future if a net safety benefit is concluded as a result of consideration of the further research.

In the meantime, where unbordered blue surface was to be used across signal controlled junctions, it will be replaced by appropriately sized and placed 'logo patches' which will comprise a square patch of blue colour with a cycle and the Cycle Superhighway route number logo marked in white on top. Where a junction contains a yellow box, the white logo markings will not be used, but the blue patches will be retained. This will retain some of the demonstrated benefits of the blue surface strips, but will not provide any opportunity to be mistaken as any form of continuous cycle lane marking.

## Unbordered blue surface at priority junctions

In addition, pending the further research, the use of unbordered blue surfacing across priority junctions (side roads) will be minimised, with blue surfacing with dashed white line lane markings used wherever possible.

## Unbordered blue surface on the approach to and exit from signalised junctions

The use of any unbordered blue surfacing on the approach to, and exit from, signalised junctions, or on link sections of the route, will also be minimised, where appropriate being replaced by logo patches or (where lane width safely allows) the inclusion of an advisory line marking.

## Retention of unbordered blue surface at specific locations

In a limited number of circumstances, where there is insufficient lane width to formally mark an advisory or mandatory cycle lane, the unbordered blue will be retained where there is no potential conflict with left turning vehicles and there is considered to be benefits to cyclists as there is sufficient room for most motorised traffic to avoid overrunning the blue surface.

## Bus lanes

A 1.5m wide blue surface will be retained in bus lanes as the enforcement of the bus lane itself (at the minimum operating during peak usage times for commuting cyclists, and sometimes for longer) provides a formally protected space for cyclists, with a mandatory line at the edge of the bus lane.

The following will apply with regard to the extension of Cycle Superhighway 2:

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## Blue colour through signal controlled junctions

Owing to the segregated nature of the majority of the route, blue surfacing through signal controlled junctions is marked out as advisory cycle lanes using dashed white lines. This approach will continue and these lanes will be implemented.

## Unbordered blue surface across the entry and exit slip roads at Bow Roundabout

For the same reasons as set out above when considering unbordered blue surfacing for signal controlled junctions on new routes, unbordered blue surface will not be applied across the North East and South East entry and exit slip roads at Bow Roundabout. This has been replaced by blue logo patches, and may be revisited on conclusion of the further research.

In order to avoid the confusion of having two different types of arrangement on the same roundabout, the existing unbordered blue surface material at the North West and South West entry and exit slip roads on the roundabout has been removed and replaced with patches.

## Retrospective changes

Until further research is concluded, and any risk is demonstrated to outweigh the safety benefits, TfL will not take any retrospective action to remove any other existing applications of unbordered blue surfacing on current Cycle Superhighways. This decision will not preclude upgrading the existing cycling facilities at any location on the current Cycle Superhighways in line with my Cycling Vision.

If you would like further details on the planned research, or any additional information relating to the information above, please do let me know and I would be happy to put you in touch with the relevant team at TfL.

## **2. Improving cycle/HGV safety – including education of cyclists in safe riding techniques.**

You poignantly pointed out at the inquest into the death of Philippine De Gerin-Ricard that she had no awareness of the danger she had put herself in. And as you acknowledged at the inquest into the death of Brian Dorling, both Mr Dorling and the HGV driver had gone through a red light. I remain absolutely committed to providing education and training for road users in the Capital. Alongside substantial investment in improving infrastructure and funding the MPS Task Force, TfL also organises and funds an extensive programme of safety training and marketing campaigns, aimed at both drivers and cyclists. Details of this are outlined below.

TfL recognises the need for educating cyclists in safe riding techniques and conduct extensive cycle safety advertising campaigns on TV, in the press and on roadside posters; for example a poster campaign warning cyclists that passing a goods vehicle on the inside at junctions can be fatal. TfL's safety advice to cyclists which runs through these campaigns is simple: 'stay safe, stay back'. This applies to cyclists when cycling near to a moving HGV or approaching any stationary HGV on the road, at junctions, traffic lights or in slow moving traffic. The advice stresses that it is important for cyclists to get into a position where the lorry driver can see them.

To support these campaigns, TfL holds regular Exchanging Places events, run with the Metropolitan Police, where cyclists sit in the cab of a lorry and watch for a police cyclist riding up the left side of the vehicle.

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This shows a cyclist just how little the driver can see from the driver's seat. However, TfL is also looking at long-term solutions and is working with the EU and the motor industry to design vehicles that give drivers good visibility without relying on technology.

TfL is also working to educate cyclists of all ages. TfL enables cycle training for all primary school children in London, with 37,500 children trained in 2012. Cycle training for the staff of London workplaces is also available and TfL has recently worked with a number of London universities to raise awareness of cycle safety among students.

In June 2013 a driver/cyclist safety tips campaign was launched to educate and inform both motorists and cyclists about the correct and safe way to drive and ride in London. It gives cyclists and motorists a better understanding of the common causes of road related incidents where cyclists have been killed or seriously injured in London and a better appreciation of the issues faced by other road users.

Educating cyclists is only one part of TfL's approach to cycle safety. TfL's campaigns are designed to reach all road users and as part of this TfL discusses cycle safety with road user organisations such as the Freight Transport Association, the Taxi and Private Hire trade, the Royal Automobile Club, and the Institute of Advanced Motorists, who cascade information to their members.

TfL has developed professional driver training initiatives such as the 'Safer Urban Driving' training module that is accredited as part of the Certificate of Professional Competence training that all HGV drivers must undertake. TfL has also developed cycle awareness training as an integral part of the training given to every bus driver in London and this is backed up by road shows at bus garages, further increasing bus driver awareness about cyclists.

More than half of the cyclists sadly killed or seriously injured in London over recent years were involved in a collision with a goods vehicle and a high proportion of these collisions are with construction vehicles. Although the construction industry has made great strides in reducing serious incidents and fatalities within construction sites, it sadly remains the case that too many construction-related vehicles are involved in fatal collisions involving cyclists in London. TfL has been working closely with the construction logistics industry, vehicle manufacturers and enforcement and regulatory bodies since the beginning of 2013 to tackle this issue and create a step-change in the way work-related road safety is managed within the construction industry.

More than 45 organisations, led by TfL, are now working together to improve vehicle safety through design and manufacture of safer new vehicles and retrofitting of appropriate equipment to existing vehicles. TfL also wants work related road safety to be considered as important as health and safety on a construction site. Finally, this group is encouraging wider adoption of best practice across the construction logistics industry, developing a common set of standards for the management of work related road risk to be adopted by the construction industry and working to create a new safety 'cultural norm'. Since work started in May 2013, considerable progress has been made, including developing national common standards for use by the construction and logistics industry to ensure best practice in the management of vehicles, drivers, operations and construction sites.

This is part of TfL's wider two-year programme, "Delivering a road freight legacy", that ensures freight can continue to be delivered safely and efficiently across London. Part of this programme is working with the industry and other stakeholders to try to reduce the number of freight journeys made at certain times of the day.

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Reducing both freight journeys at the busiest times and the number of larger vehicles reduces the risk of collisions with other road users, especially cyclists and pedestrians. By encouraging better compliance and higher safety levels TfL can also reduce the risk of collisions involving goods vehicles. This work also includes updating TfL's Delivery and Servicing Plans/Construction Logistics Plans, which encourage best practice in all types of freight vehicle movement to and from buildings and construction sites. Alongside TfL's work with the construction industry TfL will be working to encourage developers and boroughs to include them in all relevant planning applications and construction plans.

TfL also has standard provisions in all contracts requiring its contractors to fit specified safety equipment to certain types of vehicles and to ensure that their subcontractors also comply with these obligations which are in excess of current minimum legal requirements.

On 9 December 2013 I hosted an event at City Hall with the capital's construction industry to launch a common set of standards to help make London's roads safer for all road users. The construction industry led standard will ensure that safety considerations no longer end at the construction site boundary but extend to all parts of the construction process. Along with a number of major UK developers, TfL, the GLA and Crossrail and their supply chains have all signed up to the standard.

In the New Year, I will launch a consultation on a Safer Lorry Scheme to ensure HGV vehicles driving in London meet basic safety requirements, such as ensuring that side bars and blind spot safety mirrors are fitted.

TfL have also announced that it will be trialling a new construction lorry with vastly improved driver visibility and safety equipment. The Laing O'Rourke vehicle, which will be used to transport commercial waste away from the Crossrail project, has a cab with larger front and side windows, significantly reducing the blind spot compared to similar vehicles. TfL will also be working with the industry to identify other models of vehicles with similar high-visibility cabs to help the construction industry further adopt them into their fleet and press manufacturers to adopt these designs for vehicles.

I am committed to taking action against bad operators and unsafe vehicles through the recently created Industrial HGV Task Force. Since the task force was launched in September 2013, more than 800 vehicles have been stopped and checked, with less than a quarter being satisfactory. Over 250 Fixed Penalty Notices have been issued so far for a variety of offences including mobile phone use, insurance and driving license offences and unsecured loads, with 14 vehicles seized for being unfit to operate on the UK's roads.

I, together with the Transport Minister, Stephen Hammond MP, will continue to press hard for improved vehicle design through active engagement with vehicle manufacturers and the EU. This will look to improve the visibility of cyclists from lorry cabs, including cyclists at the front and on the nearside of lorries. We will press the EU to improve vehicle safety designs as soon as possible. Clearly this is also an issue which is of concern nationally and not one confined to the streets of London but TfL is doing all that it can in improving cycle and HGV safety. In addition, TfL has, and continues, to provide funding for both cyclist and driver safety training.

If you require additional details on any of the initiatives outlined above, please do not hesitate to contact me for further information.

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## **3. Junction of Whitechapel High Street and Commercial Street**

Full segregation and cycle-separated junctions are planned to be installed on Whitechapel High Street to reduce the risk of conflict with general traffic. This is a fully funded project on which work has already started and is part of the Cycle Superhighway 2 upgrade.

TfL anticipates announcing plans for an innovative layout for consultation in early 2014. In the meantime, TfL is working with key stakeholders on these designs which will also be used at other junctions. In view of the innovative nature of the design, TfL will also oversee rigorous off street testing to ensure that the design meets safety requirements.

Thank you for illustrating the example of the York cycle alert system. TfL continues to pursue innovative cycle detection solutions, although fully recognises it is important that every cyclist is detected and not just those fitted with tags. Therefore, TfL is currently carrying out further technical reviews of available systems and once these are completed, will invite participants to further trials.

In addition to addressing the three matters of concern, I would like to take this opportunity to outline my future plans for Cycle Superhighways, as detailed in my Vision for Cycling.

### The future for Cycle Superhighways

As I mentioned earlier in my letter, I have promised to upgrade all the existing superhighway routes, with an emphasis on full or semi-segregation, and to complete all new superhighways to the same standards. The first fully-segregated section of Cycle Superhighway has been launched with plans for similar improvements elsewhere on the road network. There is also a commitment to an upgrade of existing Cycle Superhighway routes.

The new section of Cycle Superhighway 2, between Bow and Stratford, has just under 2 miles of new cycle lanes physically separated from traffic, along with "bus stop bypasses" to protect cyclists. Two more substantially-segregated cycle routes will be built through the heart of central London with a north-south route from Elephant and Castle to the London Borough of Islington complementing the east-west route previously announced in my Cycling Vision.

The inner section of Cycle Superhighway 2, between Aldgate and Bow, will be the first existing Cycle Superhighway to be substantially upgraded. Work to design the upgrade has been underway since March 2013.

The cycle-separated junctions, which are proposed to be used at all the busy junctions on the route, are the first in Britain. They are planned to be trialed as part of TfL's cycle safety research being undertaken at the Transport Research Laboratory before being implemented on street. They will include segregated approaches and special cycle-specific traffic lights with a cyclist phase to guard against conflict with turning motor traffic.

The traffic lights, also the first in Britain with a full cyclist red-amber-green phase, have been approved for on street trials by the Department for Transport following extensive TfL-sponsored investigations over the last ten months at the Transport Research Laboratory.

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Similar junctions will also be installed at other locations on the network as part of future work. Not all existing Cycle Superhighways are capable of full segregation, but there will be a number of further improvements using a combination of better junctions, segregation, semi-segregation and other measures to reduce exposure to road risk.

I can assure you that cycling is, and will remain, at the heart of my administration. It is, and will remain, one of my highest priorities. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Boris Johnson', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

**Boris Johnson**  
Mayor of London