



## Department for Transport

Department for Transport  
Great Minster House  
33 Horseferry Road  
London  
SW1P 4DR  
Tel: 0300 330 3000

Web Site: [www.gov.uk/dft](http://www.gov.uk/dft)

Our Ref: 131893  
Your Ref: A.T.DF 1605.14

5 June 2015

Andrew Tweddle LLB  
HM Senior Coroner for  
County Durham and Darlington  
HM Coroners Office  
PO Box 282  
Bishop Auckland  
County Durham  
DL14 4FY

Email: [hmcoroner@durham.gov.uk](mailto:hmcoroner@durham.gov.uk)

Dear Mr Tweddle,

### **Regulation 28 Report - Andrew James Peacock Deceased**

Thank you for your letter of 9th March, enclosing a Regulation 28 Report on the ongoing investigation into the death of Andrew James Peacock in which you highlight your concerns about the requirements to the use of flashing warning beacons on agricultural vehicles. I am grateful that you kindly provided an extension to permit a reply by 5 June 2015.

I am replying as Head of International Vehicle Standards Division of the Department for Transport. This division has responsibility for road vehicle safety standards.

Your report indicates that criminal proceedings are being brought against the tractor driver. You also indicated that there may be a question concerning the speed of the motorcycle and the nature of the visor that Mr Peacock was using when the collision happened. I will not comment on these points.

Your understanding that there is no mandatory requirement to fit and operate an amber warning beacon on single carriageways in the UK is correct. Although the regulations do allow for optional fitment of amber warning beacons on all slow moving vehicles with a maximum speed less than 25 miles per hour.

If we were to recommend to Ministers a change in the rules to make a mandatory provision for the use of amber beacons then we would need to determine the casualty benefits that might result. I have reviewed the data concerning agricultural vehicles in the police collision statistics (STATS19) for the period 2009 to 2013. Single carriageway collisions account for 87% of those recorded but this is perhaps not surprising given that one might expect a strong exposure bias on these roads.

There are 80 fatal collisions involving agricultural vehicles recorded in the database, however none involve motorcycles. In 2013, of the 1713 road user fatalities 17 involved an agricultural vehicle.

STATS 19 also indicates the manoeuvre being undertaken at the time of collision. For agricultural vehicles that are towing a trailer collisions are most likely when the vehicle is being driven straight ahead (51%). The statistics also show that turning right (leaving a carriageway) is a hazardous manoeuvre (25%). The specific circumstances of a vehicle having a collision when entering a main road are not identified in the statistics.

STATS19 does not record whether warning beacons were fitted or operational on the agricultural vehicles involved in collisions, but they do record the contributory factors that the Police officer investigating considered to have influenced the collision. While there is a certain amount of subjectivity involved, the most prevalent factor identified in collisions involving agricultural vehicles is driver/rider error.

Overall the statistics do not suggest that a mandatory requirement for agricultural vehicles to be fitted with, and use, warning beacons on all roads would deliver road casualty reductions. It appears unlikely that an impact assessment would support introducing such a requirement.

Nevertheless, I would like to assure you that the Department for Transport takes the safety of all road users very seriously. The vulnerability of motorcyclists is recognised given that they typically represent 19% of fatalities while being only 1% of road traffic. You may be interested to know that 30 motorcyclists are killed or seriously injured every day at road junctions.

Initiatives such as the *Think! Bike* road safety campaign (website link <http://think.direct.gov.uk/motorcycles.html>) has targeted messages for both motorcyclists and other drivers. The campaign aims to encourage motorists to consider the all too often tragic consequences of a collision with a motorcyclist and encourage them to take longer to look for bikes.

In addition, the award winning Safety Helmet Assessment and Rating Programme (SHARP) provides objective safety information about the relative performance of differing safety helmets to help riders make an informed purchasing decision. (website link <http://sharp.direct.gov.uk/>)

I hope that you can accept that the Department for Transport is committed to reducing road casualties and I am grateful to you for raising this particular incident with me. I will retain the information you provided for future consideration.

I would appreciate you conveying my condolences to Mr Peacock's family.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A4' or similar, with a horizontal line underneath.

  
Head; International Vehicle Standards Division.