



Dr Andrew Walker
Her Majesty's Coroner,
North London Coroners Court,
29 Wood Street
Barnet
EN5 4BE

Transport for London
Buses Directorate
Surface Transport

Palestra, 10th Floor
197 Blackfriars Road
London SE1 8NJ

tfl.gov.uk

1st August 2016

Dear Dr Walker,

We were very sorry to hear of Mr Islam's fall on one of our buses on 23 October 2015 and his subsequent death and wish to pass our condolences to his family.

We have reviewed your Regulation 28 report dated 6 June 2016 and your recommendation that we should consider introducing a system that alerts passengers that the bus they are on is about to move.

We were not present at the inquest and therefore were not able to provide you with information about the actions we take to ensure the safety of our passengers generally and specifically when buses move.

Your report refers to the past in which you say that the bus conductor signalled to customers when the bus was about to move by saying hold on tight and sounding a bell twice in rapid succession. The traditional role of a bus conductor was to collect fares, maintain the safety of the open platform and signal to the driver that it was safe to move away from the stop. The number of bus conductors significantly reduced during the 1990's and early 2000's as the use of the traditional routemaster was phased out of service. Bus conductors did not indicate to customers when the bus was to move and the use of the bell was to advise the driver that customers wishing to board or alight from the bus had done so. The bell was not used as a method of warning customers that the bus would be moving.

With the dominance of one person operated buses bus drivers have been trained to look out for customers boarding and alighting the bus, ensuring that elderly and disabled customer and those who are less able or mobile are seated safely or have taken hold of a hand hold before moving off. Most of our buses also have a warning signal when the centre doors are about to close and a visual display and automated voice system informing customers of the approaching bus stops along the route. Our drivers are also able to speak directly to passengers to ensure that they are secure on the bus before they move should they see anything that concerns them.

Much work has been done over the last few years to ensure that safety for our customers on buses continues to improve. We have installed a large number of appropriately positioned and designed hand holds throughout our buses enabling customers to hold on whilst the bus is moving and departing. We have ensured that there is appropriately positioned priority seating available supported with suitable signage for elderly and disabled customers and those less able to stand or mobile. Also through the engine management system of our buses, we limit the acceleration of the bus, which means that drivers cannot move forward quickly, and gives more stability for customers whilst the bus is transitioning from a stationary position either at a bus stop or in traffic. As mentioned above, we have an ongoing training programme for our bus drivers to ensure that before they leave a bus stop or accelerate, elderly and disabled customers have found seats or hand holds. We are also currently investing in a 2 year programme for all bus drivers to enhance their customer service skills with particular focus on understanding and empathy for customers' needs which includes allowing time for elderly customers to be securely positioned prior to moving from a stationary position.

TfL is also developing a Bus Safety Standard for London Buses which involves the consideration of a range of innovative and new technologies to continue to improve safety on buses. Such technologies could include collision avoidance systems which utilise sensors to warn bus drivers of potential dangers and trigger Automatic Emergency Braking systems, and Intelligent Speed Assistance. Other potential design innovations to be considered include improving wing mirror design and windscreen glazing to reduce the impact of any collision. Part of the work of the Bus Safety Standard for London involves

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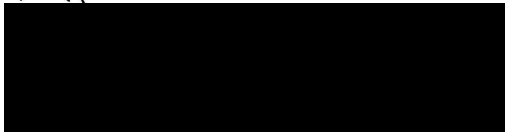
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considering the nature of accidents and collisions on or involving buses and identifying measures which can be taken to either avoid such accidents and collisions or mitigate their impact. TfL recently held a seminar with all the bus manufacturers who supply London's buses to ensure that they are also fully engaged and contribute proactively with the Bus Safety Standard and lead the trials of both new technology and bus design to identify the most appropriate solutions. Your recommendations will therefore be considered as part of the Bus Safety Standard for London to find the most appropriate solution.

We strive to provide an excellent service for our customers and safety is paramount. We continue to consider and implement ways in which to improve our customers' experience of using buses in London, ensuring that they are safe and comfortable.

Yours sincerely

 Director of Operations

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