



June 2011

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Improving the safety of cyclists around commercial vehicles

Cycling in London has doubled in the last 10 years and the Mayor's objective is to see it increase fourfold in the next 10. Road space will not increase at all over that period so measures to promote harmonious sharing of the road are essential.

As operators of commercial vehicles regularly making tens of thousands of journeys every day to deliver essential goods and service to London residences and premises, we are acutely aware of the risks posed to other road users, especially cyclists.

As responsible businesses we wish to take the initiative to promote a Cycling Code of best practice to be followed by vehicle operators and their drivers, cyclists themselves and their employers.

The code developed by FTA in full co-operation with the London Cycle Campaign, the Metropolitan Police, the Institute of Advanced Motorists and Transport for London (TfL), sets out reasonable expectations of all road users and provides a standard for on-road behaviour that if observed by all would lead to a material and enduring reduction in collisions and casualties.

FTA is inviting other operators and cyclists' organisations to add their support to the Cycling Code and will be working with TfL and other local authorities around the country to promote awareness of the code widely in London and across the UK.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stewart Oades'.

Stewart Oades
President, FTA

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Purpose of the Cycling Code

The Cycling Code is a strategy to reduce the number of collisions between commercial vehicles and cyclists.

The approach of the code is to identify areas of risk in the shared use of road space by cyclists and commercial operators, particularly heavy goods vehicles (hgv), sometimes referred to as large goods vehicles (lgvs).

The Cycling Code provides a toolkit for three specific groups of stakeholders; cyclists, drivers/operators and employers.

Cyclists

Cyclists are very vulnerable road users. They are less well protected and tend to occupy a position on the road that makes them particularly vulnerable to sideswiping and left turn manoeuvres. The nature of collisions with hgv means that the outcome is often 'serious' or fatal (reported as Killed or Seriously Injured – KSI) – more than a dozen cyclists are killed each year in London, with around half of those fatalities involving an hgv.

Drivers/operators

Drivers and operators (ie the driver's employer) have responsibilities to all road users. Operators also have responsibilities to the drivers themselves, as well as needing to identify and mitigate potential risks arising from the use of vehicles.

Employers

Employers have a duty of care to their employees and need to make certain that they have properly appraised the business impacts of losing a member of staff either for a long period or permanently. There are strong, positive messages conveyed when employers take an active interest in promoting the safety and well-being of their staff. Employers are also 'freight clients' and should consider how they can plan deliveries to minimise peak-time trips.

Key messages

FTA's approach is threefold.

- Aim to reduce KSIs to zero
- Promote investments to reduce casualties
- Work in partnership with others

Our message varies depending upon the audience and is summarised as follows.

Summary of FTA objectives and messages

Goals	Cyclists	Drivers/operators	Employers
Zero KSI Zero collisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Save your life ■ Get to work safely – and home again 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Avoid the trauma to drivers of a serious collision ■ Be aware of 'duty of care' ■ Avoid the financial and reputational risks ■ Promote CSR image ■ Promote a health and safety culture ■ Demonstrate commitment to workforce ■ Avoid prosecution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure business continuity and productivity ■ Promote positive CSR image ■ Show commitment to staff ■ Avoid the financial and reputational risks
Invest for safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Be seen – Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) ■ Bicycle lighting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ See/hear the cyclist – mirrors ■ Keep them away from your danger zone – sideguards, proximity sensors ■ Sponsor street furniture, eg Trixi mirrors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Training courses – eg bikeability ■ Appropriate proper facilities ■ Provide PPE
Work in partnership	CTC/London Cycling Campaign (LCC)/Sustrans/TfL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Freight Councils/Cycling Working Group/Road Haulage Association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ London Chamber of Commerce/ Federation of Small Businesses/ other UK chambers

Future development of the code

Develop reporting and investigation process for KSI and slight injuries

In order to monitor progress FTA needs to gather company-level data about collisions and near misses. If such data is not available

then FTA should be encouraging members to record it. Data can also be shared with the Freight Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS) Silver scheme that gathers this data. Processes should cascade to include sub-contractors.

Journey planning (route planning tools)

FTA will work with a mapping company to develop routeing tools to avoid the Cycle Superhighway network – could be done in partnership with London Councils (like LLCS) or added into TruckNav algorithms. Also link to TFL Journey Planner.

Governance group for developing the code

A governance group has been established to oversee the future development of the code and further actions needed to deliver the code's objectives. Early outcomes will be a review of the 'Ignorant Cyclist; Ignorant Driver' leaflet and a stakeholder plan to broaden the participation in the code.

Develop training offer (supporting FORS DCPC and developing FTA DCPC module)

The FORS Driver CPC module focuses on driving safely in London. As long as FORS training is available, FTA should continue to direct operators towards it.

Support Met Police in developing enforcement and awareness activities ('Exchanging Places')

This is a key opportunity for promoting safety messages that FTA can support by encouraging members to provide vehicles for events.

Develop agreed position on vehicle engineering/street furniture (and funding pot)

With the tightening of TfL and Greater London Authority (GLA) budgets there are opportunities to sponsor the installation of Trixi mirrors and other street furniture. There is a large amount of 'evidence' to support vehicle modifications – this needs to be appraised by a third party, eg TRL to get an agreed position.



Annex I

Top tips for cyclists

1 Know the law and observe it

The law is clear that as road users, cyclists are bound by all the same rules as motorised vehicles. Whether this relates to alcohol, roadworthiness or traffic signals, failure to observe the law puts both cyclists and other road users in harm's way.

2 Leave that lorry alone

Never undertake a lorry on the left, especially if you are at a junction. Don't do this even if there is a cycle lane. Remember if you cycle on the left-hand side of a lorry you are in the driver's blind spot and if the lorry turns, you will have no escape. It is difficult for drivers of large vehicles to see you, so don't hide by the side of the vehicle.

3 Make eye contact

Make eye contact with other road users, particularly at a junction, coming out of side roads and at roundabouts; this may tell you if the driver has seen you or not.

4 Look behind you

Regularly look over your shoulders to see what is happening all around you. Check behind you when moving away from the kerb, before you signal to manoeuvre and at regular intervals to communicate with other road users.

5 Look ahead

Look well ahead for obstructions in the road, such as drains, potholes and parked vehicles, so that you do not have to swerve suddenly to avoid them. Planning ahead helps you to be prepared for junctions, roundabouts and traffic lights.

6 Ride on the road, not the gutter!

Your road position should not be less than one metre from the kerb and should be further out if it is not safe for a vehicle to pass. If someone does pass you inconsiderately then you have more room to get out of harm's way. Keeping away from the gutter will enable drivers to see you and also help you miss the drain covers and debris on the side of the road too. Take extra care to hold your position near road humps and other traffic-calming features.

7 Don't be floored by car doors

Leave plenty of room when passing parked vehicles and watch out for doors being opened into your path.

8 Make your intentions clear

Make your signal and manoeuvre well in advance, and only when it is safe to do so. Keep your position in your lane so vehicles cannot undertake closely on your left.

9 Cover your brakes

Keep your hands on your brake levers, so that you are ready to use them. Always use both brakes at the same time. Take extra care when it is wet or icy.

10 Lights

By law, when it is dark or there is bad visibility you must have lights on the front and rear of your bike. Always carry spare small lights in case your main lights are not working.

11 Cycle training

If you are a beginner or even if you are an experienced cyclist, you can benefit from an adult cycle training session. Find out more about cycling safely in today's road conditions by contacting your local instructor at www.ctc.org.uk/instructors.

12 Be seen

Make sure you wear hi-visibility clothing, especially when the light is poor. Remember – bright, light clothes in daytime and reflective material at night.

13 Stay sober

Don't ride when you've had drink or drugs. Riding a bike under the influence of alcohol or drugs is just as serious and dangerous as if you were driving a car.

14 Listen

Make sure you can hear the traffic around you – don't listen to music. Many vehicles have warnings to tell you they're turning left – you won't hear them if you're plugged in.

15 Remember that large vehicles move to the right before turning left



Top tips for drivers

1 Respect other road users

Remember that cyclists are road users too and have the same rights as motorised vehicles. Make sure you know the speed limits and observe them – remember that the correct speed may be much lower than the legal limit.

2 Always check the field of view of your mirrors as part of the daily walk around check, or if the mirrors are dislodged during the shift

Vehicles now have many mirrors and it is easy for these to be dislodged. Consider using floor mats to map out the correct area that mirrors should be covering – paint them at the exit gate.

3 ‘Give a metre’ or hold back until there’s room

Many roads have too little space for cyclists and hgv’s at the same time. If an hgv cannot give a cyclist at least a metre’s clearance then they should hold back. Drivers should bear in mind that cyclists are trained not to ride too close to the kerb. The Highway Code advises that you should give at least as much room as when overtaking a car.

4 Plan journeys to avoid cycle superhighways at peak times

The cycle superhighways are intended to show cyclists – both regular and occasional – how best to get from the suburbs into central London and back. Drivers should be aware that where they see the blue cycle superhighway path there are likely to be more cyclists than normal – where possible drivers should avoid these routes at peak times, ie between 07:00 and 09:00 and between 16:00 and 18:00. Operators should work with their customers to develop delivery and serving plans or construction logistics plans to minimise peak-time journeys.

5 Look over the dash

There have been fatalities that arose because the cyclist wrongly assumed that the driver had seen them. Drivers should always take a moment to look to the front of the vehicle, even if they have a class VI mirror.

6 Concentrate

Drivers – focus on driving – do not use hand-held phones and minimise use of hands-free equipment.

7 Always indicate

Always use your indicators even if you don’t think there’s anyone there and indicate early, ie when cyclists are still behind you and most able to see your indicators.



Top tips for operators/transport managers

- 1 Consider using a Fresnel lens or class VI mirror to reduce the remaining blind spots**

Fresnel lenses are cheap and can help to reduce blind spots. When used by left-hand drive vehicles they dramatically reduced sideswiping incidents. Fresnel lenses are available from TfL through the FORS scheme. Consider retrofitting a class VI mirror to older (pre 2007 vehicles).
- 2 If you currently use an exemption for sideguards think about whether you need to**

Sideguard exemptions are not necessary for most construction vehicles in urban areas and operators should consider whether a lightweight modification would afford better protection to cyclists and pedestrians.
- 3 Make sure drivers regularly check the field of view of their mirrors as part of the daily walk around check**

Vehicles now have many mirrors and it is easy for these to be dislodged. Consider using floor mats to map out the correct area that mirrors should be covering – paint them at the exit gate.
- 4 Send drivers on Driver CPC for safer driving in London as part of TfL's FORS programme**

Training is available from TfL's FORS programme for drivers who are regularly driving in London – it's free.
- 5 Train drivers to look over the dash**

There have been several fatalities because the cyclist wrongly assumed that the driver had seen them. Drivers should take a moment to look to the front of the vehicle, even if they have a class VI mirror.
- 6 Establish 'near miss' reporting**

Near misses are often ignored but recording them and providing additional training will prevent a near miss becoming a fatality. Use 'How's my driving?' stickers to enable cyclists to report near misses that drivers may be unaware of.
- 7 Install cameras – forward facing/in-cab**

Consider using in-cab cameras – these have been used successfully to record both driver behaviour and the actions of other motorists. Some discounts are available through the FORS scheme.

8 Review use of 'Sidescan' or similar

A range of sensors are now available to alert the driver to the presence of pedestrians or cyclists alongside the vehicle. The system may also give an audible warning to those people alongside, eg 'this vehicle is turning left'. Some discounts are available through the FORS scheme.

9 Look at putting signs on the back of the vehicle or on the left-hand side

There are various warning signs available at low cost (or free from TfL) to warn cyclists about the dangers of undertaking.

10 Consider using driver profiling

Many providers now offer technology to monitor driver behaviour in terms of speed and smooth driving. This data can be used to focus training to the drivers in greatest need.

11 Concentrate

Remind drivers that they can lose their vocational licence for using a hand-held phone. Discourage and minimise the use of hands-free phones – evidence shows that the risk while using hands-free is the same as mild drink-driving!

Top tips for employers

1 Provide training for staff

For example using Bikeability – give time off or pay for a course. Encourage non-cyclists to get on a bike too – it's easier to understand the dangers that motorists pose if you've been there.

2 Provide bike servicing or a deal with local bike shop to ensure bikes are roadworthy

3 Investigate whether company insurance policy includes/ could include cycling

Otherwise encourage cyclists to get insurance and register their bike frames against theft.

4 Extend driving at work policy to cover cycling

5 Develop delivery and servicing plans and/or construction logistics plans to reduce peak-time journeys

6 Provide Personal Protective Equipment for staff

In the same way as you would for company car drivers – eg helmets, high visibility clothing and lights. (Consider providing car drivers with hi-visibility clothing too for breakdowns.)



Annex 2



London Cycling Concordat The FTA/TfL Memorandum of Understanding on Cycling

An agreement between the Freight Transport Association (FTA), on behalf of its members, and Transport for London (TfL).

FTA and TfL agree to work co-operatively to promote the uptake of cycling as a safe and sustainable mode of travel and to promote sustainable and efficient logistics. They will deploy their respective resources and influence to address the following challenges.

- To identify locations and times of day where loading and unloading activity or commercial vehicle routing might conflict with the objectives of a clear, safe and effective cycle route and establish mutually suitable, feasible and acceptable solutions for addressing these
- To identify key safety messages for all road users, particularly cyclists and large vehicle drivers, and deploy the most effective means and channels to convey them
- To identify training needs for all road users, particularly cyclists and large vehicle drivers and the best opportunities for funding and delivering them
- To identify more equitable approaches to road traffic enforcement and traffic engineering measures which strike the balance between enforceability and practicality
- To share details of forthcoming events and announcements with a view to adding value by broader engagement
- To promote the uptake and effective use of properly appraised vehicle engineering interventions
- To identify, develop and report on suitable metrics to measure the effectiveness of the agreement

Jim Valentine
Chairman, Greater London Freight Council
on behalf of Freight Transport Association

6 July 2010

Kulveer Ranger
Mayor's Director of Transport Policy
on behalf of the Mayor of London