



March 2016 Network

A networking tool for Activists and other interested parties

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Editorial.

First up this month is the inclusion of all the information you need to know about attending Annual Group Conference. If you intend on attending can you please let Yorkshire know for catering purposes - they want to make sure there's enough food for everyone.

I've also included MAG's new Position Statement on Covert Speed Cameras.

Brilliant news from MCIA telling us new registrations for motorcycles up 17% and scooters up 16.5% compared to the same time last year. Motorcycling needs good news like that.

It was great to receive updates on various items featured in February's edition from our old mate, Trevor Baird. He may be soaking up the rays in his new home in Aquitaine (not that I'm envious, of course ☺) and, I'm sure getting better riding weather than us (ditto), but he's still keeping us up to date and letting me have any info that comes his way.

As you'll see further on, it appears so called 'smart' motorways might not be so 'smart' after all but are proving to be problematic according to the police. Only time will tell how the problems are solved.

Ride free, Aine.

Please send any copy for the next edition to: aine@mag-uk.org by the 25th of March. The April edition may be a little later than usual due to the fact that in Western Region we are hosting our first MAG Hatters Rally over Easter. Hope to see some of you there.

Acknowledgments: Steve Wykes. Trevor Baird. George Legg. Leon & Lembit. Selina Lavendar. Dave Wigham. And anyone else I've forgotten.

Donations - Presentation cheques for AGC 2016 .

If you would like a presentation cheque to handover at AGC contact the office central-office@mag-uk.org or 01964 844 064. We will be happy to print it for you.

Should you have funds in your account and wish to transfer them electronically, then contact the office and we can give you the details of the MAG account. Do make sure you notify us of incoming funds so we can correctly record and acknowledge them.

AGC 2016 Saturday 9th of April

Hosted by Barnsley and Doncaster (BAD) MAG.

Venue: Shaw Lane Rugby Club, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S70 6HZ

“MAG’s Annual Group Conference is the ideal opportunity for members from all corners of the country to come together to discuss the Organisation’s successes, the way forward, and to vote on matters such as Motions (see March/April issue of The ROAD) that have been brought to the Conference, along with some of the posts that will be up for election. It is also an opportunity to acknowledge MAG groups and individuals for outstanding service. Although MAG is obliged, by law, to hold an annual conference and certain due processes must be observed, it is by no means a dry and dusty event; there is plenty of lively discussion and exchange of ideas and a chance, in the evening, for some downtime to catch up with friends old and new and to celebrate the country’s leading riders’ rights organisation.”

Food at Annual Group Conference

Can all members wishing to attend AGC give us notice so we can ensure everyone gets fed properly. This especially applies if you have any special dietary needs or allergies which need to be handled.

Event Notice and Updates: <https://www.facebook.com/events/574107736089218/>

Alternatively, send an e-mail (no membership numbers required) to yorkshire-region-rep@mag-uk.org

Positions still open

There are two TMAGL Director positions available due to resignations:

One term of 1 year (until AGC 2017) and one term of 2 years (until AGC 2018)

Interested parties can contact Central Office for more details or to register an interest.

LEON AND LEMBIT’S BITS

1 Since January 26th, Lembit has been recovering from his gigantic operation on his face, 'to make me look like George Clooney.' It failed - he still looks like Lembit, but with a straighter face. Though Lembit is now back at work, Leon has been holding the fort valiantly (despite falling ill himself). Lembit says 'a massive thanks for everyone's patience while I've been off. Leon's been a star and you've all been super-supportive, especially my Management. I hope I'm getting back to something like normal service.'

2 Leon's been very busy in the in the intervening time, especially with the policy work around the country. He's been developing the regional capacity to share MAG's position with local and regional authorities. A superb example of this is Dave Wigham and Doc Manning's letter to the Northern Combines Authority. Here's what he sent - which we reprint

in full because you can use this yourselves with minor modifications, should a similar issue arise in your area - and it will:-

Dear *****

I write on behalf of the Motorcycle Action Group (MAG) and to you as a member of the North East Combined Authority (NECA) and the Transport North East Committee (TNEC). As you will see, Peter Ollivere, Principle Spatial Policy Officer for Transport, has been copied in to this as he has already had some contact with us on the issue concerned.

The crux of the issue is this: The current draft of your 20 Year manifesto (20YM) has a significant amount to say about the positive role of walking and cycling and proposals to enhance the safety and interest of pedestrians and cyclists. However, it makes no mention of motorcyclists or the positive role of motorcycling or the interests and safety of Powered Two Wheeler (PTW) riders. This is unfortunate on two key levels.

First, motorcyclists account for one third of the most Vulnerable Roads Users (VRU's) in the region and nationally – with cyclists and pedestrians being the other two thirds. And although all three types of VRU facilitate a relatively small amount of transport, they account for a disproportionately high percentage of people who are Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI) on public roads at around 35% for pedestrians, 21% for PTW riders and around 20% for cyclists.

Secondly, PTW use has a positive role in tackling a wide range of urban and inter-urban transport problems generally – and especially when walking, cycling or public transport cannot meet legitimate demand for the movement of people and goods. PTWs have a vital role to play in reducing car dependency, congestion related problems and improving mobility to places of work and education.

To be clear, PTWs reduce real journey times. They cause less pollution. They ease congestion. They also reduce pressure on inner city parking places. They provide affordable transport for younger people such as students and those entering the world of work and on relatively low incomes and younger people living in more remote areas.

To be fair, the NECA draft Transport Strategy is not the first of such documents that MAG has seen emerging from major combined authorities in recent months.

The same was true of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, the West Midlands Combined Authority - and Transport for Greater Manchester. However, and following productive dialogues with MAG, all three major UK Authorities have significantly improved the deliverability of improvements from their long term strategies by recognising the positive role of motorcycling and a broader approach to casualty reduction than one that excludes due consideration of this vital, and ever greener mode of transport.

Reviewing the various Local Transport Policies in the NECA region makes it clear that there is a great disparity in relation to PTWs. Durham and Newcastle are enlightened enough to have lifted bans of PTWs in bus lanes – as have an ever rising number of UK conurbations. But other Authorities merely mention PTWs as a component of casualty statistics.

Up until recently in many parts of the UK, transport policy makers have ignored the positive role of motorcycling and the interests of riders of this type of two wheeler. This is especially true in some key areas of roads policy shaping, such as Traffic Calming Schemes, Secure Parking Provision and the like. Recent trends in schemes may help some minority groups who have had more powerful lobbyists (pedestrians and cyclists in particular) who have a rising number of schemes tailored to their specific needs, but many are have adverse impacts on the safety and efficiency of road use by others such as PTW riders.

However, our primary aim is not to highlight problems with the strategy as it currently stands. Our overarching aim and objective is to help you create a better balanced approach and optimise your delivery of casualty reduction for all three vulnerable road user groups - and the efficiency of the road networks...

We would appreciate a prompt reply to this offer by MAG to help you refine the strategy for our region.

We would also ask to be formally included in any future consultations around the development of the 20YM in order that you may take due account of our views, opinions and concerns.

We welcome any and all opportunities to become involved in a meaningful and productive dialogue that helps reduce congestion and PTW casualties and that then goes on to become a vision for the future transport considerations that optimises the prospects of progress and is equitable for all.

I look forward to your reply.

3 It seems that the Northern Ireland Assembly has finally passed into law the mandatory wearing of helmets on quad bikes. This was the result of no organised response by users or quad bikes or any organisation representing them to put the case against compulsion. By contrast, a time of writing, the threat to trike riders of similar legislation appears to be at bay. Lembit has tried to contact the authorities there a number of time to check, but they've gone quiet, which he takes as a good sign. If the situation remains so till May 2016, it is unlikely to return in the near future. If this remains the situation, it is entirely thanks to MAG activists' spirited intervention during the consultation period.

4 Lembit and Leon are going to meet the Conservative Party London Assembly Member in Mid March to promote MAG's agenda for riders in advance elf the London Assembly. They've already spoken to Labour and this leaves the Lib Dems and the Greens to meet. Lembit has spoken briefly with the Lib Dems but it will all be done more formally incoming weeks. feel free to write to you local politicians and ask them their views remembering they need your votes in May.

5 Plans are in hand for election debates, with Steve Wykes aiming for 12th March in Scotland and a Thursday or Friday being arranged in Cardiff by Ian Williamson. Lembit is working closely to help ensure these events are a success.

6 MAG is finding the best way to contact the mayoral candidates in London, to make sure they have to respond to MAG's questions about motorcycle policy. If you get the

chance to get to a debate, be sure to ask about their views on powered two wheelers - and that goes for any such events anywhere in the country in any election.

7 Leon met with representative of the Motorcycle Industry for a full and frank exchange. 'We know where we stand and I'm hoping we can work together on common issues. MAG has strengthened its voice, and we can conduct a respectful relationship with manufacturers on areas of common interest. Part of that includes contacting politicians.'

8 Lembit and Leon are working with the Chair to establish the views of the IN and OUT EU referendum campaigns on biking. We'll share our findings impartially - and in their own words - in the next edition of The Road.

9 If you need anything at all, L&L are just a phone call or email away.

MAG POSITION STATEMENT

Covert Speed Cameras.

MAG recognises that as part of an overall Road Safety strategy for improving safety, Speed Cameras may be beneficial in areas where numerous collisions related to excessive speed are recorded. To that end MAG broadly agrees with the guidance contained in DfT circular 01/2007¹. While MAG recognises that the guidance is not binding and does not preclude Police discretion to conduct covert enforcement operations, MAG cautions against the adoption of widespread covert enforcement and believes that any such operations must be confined solely to the Police in exceptional circumstances.

The fundamental objective underlying the National Safety Camera Programme was to reduce speeding, collisions and casualties at locations where excessive speed represents a road safety problem, and to achieve this result through camera locations being publicised, signed and visible to road users. Transfer of the responsibilities of camera operations to Local "Safety" Camera Partnerships was not intended to change that rationale. As part of the National Safety Camera Programme, signing, visibility and conspicuity rules were mandatory for cost management and to help highlight to motorists where and why enforcement was being undertaken.

Covert camera enforcement risks bringing camera enforcement into disrepute, confirming the widely held view amongst a significant proportion of motorists that Speed Cameras are principally a means of revenue generation and losing the educational value of highlighting accident black spots to motorists.

¹ DfT circular 01/2007 Use of Speed and Redlight Cameras for Traffic Enforcement: Guidance on Deployment, Visibility and Signing.

Remember - in last month's edition I published information on: The Northern Ireland Road Traffic (Amendment) Bill; Driving in France & PPE? Here's some of the latest information courtesy of our friend Trevor Baird – now living in France but still got his fingers in the necessary pies. Thanks Trev.:-

Northern Ireland Road Traffic (Amendment) Bill.

The report seems to have missed that Quad Bike Riders will have to wear a motorcycle helmet on public roads.

During the bill there was a consultation looking at the possibility of making helmets mandatory for trike riders/passengers, which as reported in Network, MAG responded to.

With no mention of this in the bill I checked with my still active contacts.

I was told that there was no inclusion in the bill regarding the mandatory wearing of helmet's on trikes. The responses to last years consultation are still being considered, if the decision is to proceed with making this a legal requirement the NI Government department responsible will have to go through their own processes of engage with the Minister and relevant NI Assembly committee - DOE - Department Of the Environment - with separate legislative change required.

In other words the possibility of introducing the mandatory helmet wearing for trike users is still there!

Links can be found on my Facebook page -

<https://www.facebook.com/t.haird/posts/10154475277364128>

Driving France

The piece on Driving France refers to requiring a fluorescent hi viz vest or jacket while riding in France.

“The new €11 fine applies if you get spot checked by police and you don't have one with you, though the fine is €135 if you are caught not wearing it at the roadside (or on the hard shoulder) in the event of an emergency due to an accident, flat tyre or breakdown. (pillion passengers need to have one as well).”

Checking with information supplied by the local FFMC – A pillion rider/passenger (two or three wheeled vehicle or a quadricycle without body work) is not required to have a high visibility vest certified with CE mark on it available (on them or stored on the vehicle) in the case of an emergency at the side of the road.

Also the fines are - Failure to comply with this obligation is punishable by a fine of up to € 38 for non-possession and up to 750 € if not wearing the vest as the result of an emergency stop.

The information for this is linked at

<https://translate.google.fr/translate?hl=fr&sl=fr&tl=en&u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.interieur.gouv.fr%2FA-votre-service%2FMes-demarches%2FTransports%2FInfractions-aux-regles-de->

[securite-routiere%2FRegles-generales-de-securite-routiere%2FEquipements-a-bord-d-un-vehicule-gilet-de-securite-ethylotest-casque%23sp-chapitre-gilet-de-haute-visibilite](https://www.facebook.com/t.hbaird/posts/10154480143194128)

"Also the new rules state that wearing gloves for motorcyclists will be a mandatory requirement,....." this is a little unclear, as this requirement is in proposals or rather an announcement from - Interdepartmental Committee road safety (IRB) that this will be a mandatory requirement at some stage. Also the new rules state that wearing gloves for motorcyclists will be a mandatory requirement, though I would guess that most serious riders would be wearing gloves these days without it being compulsory. Again text on this is on my Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/t.hbaird/posts/10154480143194128>

PPE

Finally for a debate on CEN – PPE Clothing see the FEMA Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/193674387342050/photos/a.276183109091177.64898.193674387342050/1033486036694210/?type=3> – scroll through some of the nonsense to this from a Paul Varnsberry, seen as the foremost expert on PPE:

For the benefit of anyone who might not see my response to a particular exchange in this thread, I would like to point out that European Standards for motorcyclists' protective clothing and equipment have existed since 1997:

EN 1621-1:1997 (revised 2012) - limb impact protectors
EN 1621-2:2002 (revised 2014) - back protectors
EN 1621-4:2013 - airbags
EN 13594:2002 (revised 2015) - gloves
EN 13595 Parts 1 - 4:2002 - clothing
EN 13634:2002 (revised 2010) - footwear

These were prepared to assist manufacturers to comply with the original PPE Directive and will continue their function under the new PPE Regulation.

Under the original Directive, it was left to manufacturers to decide whether or not to categorise their products as PPE. Riders could elect to buy CE marked protective clothing, tested and certified to the standard, or not, as they wished. What riders benefitted from was a means of distinguishing between competing products in the marketplace: "Conformite European" or "Caveat Emptor".

Under the new Regulation, motorcycle clothing manufacturers no longer have that choice! It appears that, in future, to be called "motorcyclists' clothing", products will have to be tested and certified to the relevant standard. I will leave it to readers to form their own views on how this might change their position as consumers.

As long as manufacturers do not attempt to tamper or interfere with the stringency of those standards, riders will be able to buy tested and certified clothing with confidence. Work on the revision to the clothing standards is under way, but initial comparisons suggest a reduction in test stringency, in the headline abrasion test, of between 40% and 70%."

Or even look at the debate on Survival Skills - <https://www.facebook.com/SurvivalSkills/posts/1123564564342795> there is some other rational debate going on out there, especially as regards PPE.

Smart motorways ‘causing serious problems’

Senior traffic police officers are saying that smart motorways are ‘causing serious problems for road users’, according to a RAC news report.

Formerly known as managed motorways, smart motorways use a range of technology to vary speed limits in response to driving conditions. They are divided into three different types: controlled motorway, all-lane running and hard shoulder running.

The RAC article says police officers are warning that ‘all-lane running’ stops emergency services from getting to the site of an accident and prevents police from pulling over drivers. It also suggests that HGV drivers from overseas, unaware of the changes, have ended up taking their breaks in the lay-bys installed for motorists to use in an emergency.

The Metropolitan Police is quoted as saying the decision to drop the hard shoulder has resulted in ‘significant risks’ for motorists.

The findings appear to contradict evaluation published recently by Highways England, which concluded that smart motorways are having ‘no adverse effect on safety’.

Just last month Highways England published two interim reports evaluating the all-lane running sections on the M25, J5 to 6 and J23 to 27, which also showed that average journey times had reduced in both directions.

Highways England says that smart motorways are ‘central to the modernisation of England’s motorways’ and have been designed to reduce congestion, improve journey time reliability and lead to shorter journey times, while at the same time maintaining safety.

In December 2015, the Transport Committee launched an inquiry into the impact of all-lane running to inform how future policy should evolve.

- See more at: <http://www.rac.co.uk/advice/motoring-news/smart-motorways-posing-significant-risks>

-: <http://www.roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/4862.html>

-: http://assets.highways.gov.uk/specialist-information/knowledge-compendium/2014-2015/M25+J5-7+SM+ALR+Monitoring+12+Month+Evaluation+Report_v2.0_Final.pdf

-: http://assets.highways.gov.uk/specialist-information/knowledge-compendium/2014-2015/M25+J23-27+SM+ALR+Monitoring+12+Month+Evaluation+Report_v2.0_Final.pdf

-: <http://www.roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/4740.html>

From Stevie Muir of MCIA – good [news:-](#)

2016 has got off to a flying start, with new registrations for motorcycles up 17% and scooters up 16.5% compared to the same time last year.

Mopeds are down compared to January 2015, but the overall total is 14.2% above 2015 sales, which in turn were 11.3% up on 2014.

For a full breakdown, see the press stats section of the MCIA website here.
<http://www.mcia.co.uk/About/News/Article/New-motorcycle-registrations-up-again.aspx>

You can help tweet the news too, via this link:
<https://twitter.com/MCIATweets/status/695597984671784960>

AROUND GB

Motorcycle Parking Worcestershire. Great news for bikers in Worcestershire:

Following meetings between Worcestershire County Council and MAG, the Council agreed to provide at least one “primary” secure parking location for PTW's in all Worcestershire towns with a minimum of 5 but preference for 10 secure PTW parking bays to MAG standards.

The Council have undertaken an audit of PTW parking in the county.

The results of the audit can be found [here](#):

Worcester, Bromsgrove and Kidderminster are deemed to be adequately covered with locations at St Martin's Gate, Parkside and Market Street respectively.

The proposed locations for the primary PTW parking in other towns is as follows:

Town	Proposed Location(s)
Malvern	Priory Road or Grange Road
Pershore	Broad Street or Leisure Centre
Evesham	Swan Street or new riverside location
Droitwich	Upgrade Covercroft and Ricketts Lane
Redditch Green	New facility (possibly in Kingfisher Centre or in vicinity of Church Green)
Bewdley	Legally formalise on street (Sevenside South)
Stourport	Severn Meadows
Upton-upon-Severn	Riverside – adjacent to bridge?

- ⤴ The primary PTW parking area in each town is to be signposted.
- ⤴ All PTW parking in the County will be published on a new website (TravelWorcs) which is under construction and due for launch later this year.

Additionally riverside parking for leisure riders is proposed for Bewdley, Stourport, Upton and Evesham.

The Council is keen to hear feedback and ideas on the suggested locations, so now is the time to make yourselves heard on what works for you. Please send any comments/suggestions to cbrown@mag-uk.org . All comments will be collated and fed back to the Council.

Please join us in thanking Worcestershire County Council for this initiative which will help to put PTW's clearly on the map in Worcestershire.

North East

“Hi folks,
below is the link to the North East Combined Authority document, Our Journey A 20 year Transport Manifesto for the North East “To provide affordable, attractive, reliable, safe, healthy transport choices for businesses, residents and visitors while enhancing the environment.”

<http://www.northeastca.gov.uk/.../Our%20Journey%20-%20NECA%20...>

Now it doesn't mention Motorcycles once, if you press 'Control F' that will bring up a search box, just type in 'motorcycle' and hit 'enter'

There is no mention of motorcycles as a method of transport or any changes to support motorcycling even though motorcycles are recognised as a 'Vulnerable Road User Group' YOU CAN HAVE YOUR SAY. Use the link below to make your comment on this document.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/neca_transport_manifesto_con...

Ride safe, Dave Wigham. North East Regional Rep. Motorcycle Action Group”

Final Reminder - East Anglia Regional AGM

Saturday 19th March 2016
Sign in from 13:30 for 14:00 start
Location - Premier Tyres, Unit 6 Reeds Lane, Haverhill CB9 0EL
All positions up for election on the day.
No card, no vote.

Powys unveils safety schemes for bikers

Motorcyclists in Powys are being given the opportunity to become safer riders through a series of road safety initiatives.

The schemes are being provided by Powys County Council's Road Safety Unit, with funding from the Welsh Government.

'Ride On' is a one-day scheme for full motorcycle licence holders, with instruction from approved tutors from the local RoSPA group, Shropshire and Powys Advanced Riders

(SAPAR). It consists of an informal theory session followed by an assessment ride, which is captured on the tutors' bike mounted camera.

Instructors assess the riding skills of participants, giving personalised tips and advice to help riders get more from their experience.

The course, which is open to people who live and work in Powys, takes place on 5 March in Llandrindod Wells and 19 March in Newtown.

'Biker Down' is delivered by the road safety unit in partnership with Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue. The three-hour course covers topics including collision scene management, emergency first aid and helmet removal, and the science of being seen.

The course will take place in Llandrindod Wells on 3 March and Newtown on 17 March. Additionally, the road safety unit can take 'Biker Down' to motorcycle clubs.

Finally, the unit is also making the 'Crash Card' scheme available to motorcyclists using the county's roads. The card contains the personal details of the motorcyclist and sits in the lining of their helmet and can be used by the emergency services in the event of a collision.

Cllr John Brunt, Powys County Council's cabinet member for road safety, said: "With 3,400 miles of road, Powys has the largest road network in Wales and motorcyclists come far and wide to enjoy our rural roads.

"Sadly though, four motorcyclists lost their lives in 2015 in the county and in excess of 27 received serious injuries.

"We hope these initiatives will help motorcyclists ride safer on our roads and minimise the risk of being involved in a collision."

See more at: <http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/communications/view-council-news/news-article/article/3539-road-safety-initiatives-for-motorcyclists-now-available/>

-: <http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/roads-transport-and-parking/ask-for-road-safety-training/>

-: <https://www.facebook.com/bikerdownuk/>

-: <http://www.crashcard.co.uk/>

-: <https://www.facebook.com/RoadSafetyPowys>

New film highlights potential of ISA

The European Transport Safety Council* (ETSC) has produced a new film calling for over-ridable Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA) to become a standard feature on all new vehicles in Europe.

The five-minute video has been launched as the European Commission continues work on the development of the next generation of vehicle safety standards, expected to be launched later this year.

ISA uses speed sign-recognition video camera or GPS-linked speed limit data to advise drivers of the current speed limit; the most advanced systems can automatically limit the speed of the vehicle as needed. Drivers are still able to override the system.

The first ISA system factory fitted vehicles started appearing on the market in 2015 and the ETSC says this was helped in part by Euro NCAP's decision to award extra points for vehicles that include ISA.

The ETSC also points to a study for the Commission published last year by consultants TRL which found that ISA is one of several new vehicle technologies that are now suitable for mandatory fitting on new cars as they are 'feasible in terms of the technology required', already available on the market and offer a positive benefit-cost ratio.

Ellen Townsend, policy director of ETSC said: "Getting ISA technology in all new cars will help Europe maintain at the cutting edge as the industry moves increasingly towards automated driving. This is an automated feature that is proven, effective and available now.

"Speed is one of the biggest killers on our roads. With the potential to cut deaths by 20%, ISA really is a no-brainer."

The film includes a demonstration of the system by Oliver Carsten of the University of Leeds in a production Ford Galaxy factory-fitted with ISA.

It also features expert contributions from Aled Williams of Euro NCAP, Dr Áine Carroll – a leading expert in post-crash rehabilitation, Koen Ricour of the European Traffic Police Network TISPOL and Ellen Townsend.

ETSC

ETSC is a Brussels-based independent non-profit making organisation dedicated to reducing the numbers of deaths and injuries in transport in Europe.

Founded in 1993, ETSC provides an impartial source of expert advice on transport safety matters to the European Commission, the European Parliament, and Member States. It maintains its independence through funding from a variety of sources including membership subscriptions, the European Commission, and public and private sector support for various activities.

- See more at: <http://www.roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/4881.html#sthash.TtSqjxox.dpuf>

ETSC Film: http://etsc.eu/intelligent-speed-assistance-new-film-calls-for-safetyasstandard/?utm_source=ETSC&utm_campaign=3b4d4f9aa4-Speed_Monitor_20_January2016&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_3a7b55edbf-3b4d4f9aa4-103272553

TRL Report: <http://www.trl.co.uk/reports-publications/trl-reports/report/?reportid=7017>

TRL launches 'Living Lab' to test autonomous vehicle technology

TRL (Transport Research Laboratory) has launched a real world 'Living Lab' environment where connected and automated vehicles (CAVs), services and processes can be safely developed, evaluated and integrated within the local community.

Based in the Royal Borough of Greenwich in London, the UK Smart Mobility Living Lab @ Greenwich is an open innovation environment where vehicles and technologies can be tested in real-world scenarios, alongside existing transport services.

Vehicle manufacturers and technology developers can use the Living Lab to assist with research and development, concept testing and understanding how new technology is perceived in a real world environment.

TRL says the diverse range of transport modes in Greenwich - including roads, buses, underground, rail, Docklands Light Railway, river bus and the Emirates Airline cable car - provides an 'ideal environment to test the interaction and interoperability of connected and autonomous vehicles in a variety of different environments'.

Rob Wallis, CEO of TRL, said: "The launch of the UK Smart Mobility Living Lab is an important step in the path towards vehicle automation.

"Many organisations are testing autonomous systems in dedicated off-street facilities, but the success of these vehicles largely depends on how they integrate into real world living environments, alongside existing transport services.

"By providing a welcoming and real-life regulatory environment for testing, TRL can help accelerate the adoption of new technology and enable the UK to play a pivotal role in the development of this global market over the next five years."

Andrew Jones, transport minister, added: "Driverless cars will improve road safety and bring huge benefits to the economy. I am excited to see the UK Smart Mobility Living Lab progress, helping to keep the UK at the forefront of the motoring of the future."

- See more at: <http://www.trl.co.uk/uklivinglab/>

-: <http://www.trl.co.uk/news-hub/trl-press-releases/2016/february/uk-smart-mobility-living-lab/>

Autonomous cars could 'prevent up to 95% of traffic accidents': IMechE

The Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMechE) says making all vehicles autonomous could prevent up to 95% of collisions, and has identified 2050 as the earliest date by which the UK vehicle fleet could be fully autonomous .

In its latest report into the technology, the IMechE says 'removing the drivers from our vehicles should ultimately mean there are less crashes on our roads'.

The report says the benefits of autonomous and driverless vehicles are 'huge' and advocates 'redoubling efforts to look at how we phase out human involvement in driving vehicles'.

However, in a cautionary note, the IMechE acknowledges there are questions to be addressed before highly and fully automated cars will be accepted by the public.

The report says that "currently it is estimated to take 10 years to get a new technology on to the production line, with a further 10 to 15 years to get the majority of the UK fleet changed.

"Therefore, the earliest we could predict a near 100% highly automated UK fleet is by 2040, and a fully autonomous UK fleet by 2050."

On the back of its report, the IMechE is calling for urgent Government and industry action to encourage the greater use of autonomous and driverless vehicles.

Philippa Oldham, head of transport at the IMechE and the report's lead author, said: "We need to urgently resolve legislative, technological and insurance issues to help encourage the rollout of autonomous or driverless vehicles.

"The benefits to this sort of technology are huge, with estimates that the overall UK economic benefit could be as much as £51bn a year due to fewer accidents, improved productivity and increased trade.

"Currently 95% of all crashes happen due to driver error, so it makes sense for Government, industry and academia to redouble efforts to look at how we phase out human involvement in driving vehicles."


"There needs to be much more action from Government to help integrate driverless vehicles into the current UK transport network. This will include updates and standardisation to road signage and road markings to enable these driverless vehicles to operate in the safest way possible.

"There is also a role for the car dealerships and vehicle manufacturers as they will need to clarify how they will provide the greater level of after-sales care, technical updates and upgrades that will be required to ensure the safe introduction of these vehicles on our roads.

"Much more work needs to be done to clarify regulation and insurance issues, such as where liability lies in case of an accident."

- See more at: IME News: <http://www.imeche.org/news/news-article/making-all-vehicles-autonomous-could-prevent-up-to-95-of-all-traffic-accidents>

IME Report: <http://www.imeche.org/docs/default-source/1-oscar/reports-policy-statements-and-documents/driverless-cars-case-study.pdf?sfvrsn=0>



MAG MEDIA

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MAG Media Limited is looking for new volunteer Directors. If you have a few hours a month, have knowledge of publishing, marketing, design and print or similar and have an interest in our bi-monthly magazine we need your help. These are non-elected posts. Please email excc@mag-uk.org or write to Julie Sperling, MAG, Unit C13 Holly Farm Business Park, Honiley CV8 1NP explaining your interest and what experience you have.

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