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The Road Ahead in 2022



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# The Road Ahead in 2022

## Introduction

The last two years have without doubt been unprecedented and none more so in transport and road safety. Transport of essential goods increased, whilst business fleets in many cases temporarily hung up their keys. It has been a time for organisations to rapidly find alternative and smart ways to continue operating and reflect on whether there could be a permanent shift to fewer miles and online business meetings.

As a result, there have been significant changes across the Industry reflecting our need to be greener and find alternative safer ways to travel. Some of the changes are highlighted here.

## E-Scooters

With the world open again many will be thinking of safe ways to get to work, perhaps motivated by the current fuel price crisis. There is growing popularity for e-scooters but there is tight governance around how and when you can use them.

Privately owned scooters are outlawed but they can be officially rented and will include Insurance but are limited to a maximum speed of 15.5mph and only on the road. You will also need to hold a category Q on your driving licence but all full and provisional licence holders will have this. Those with an International driving licence however are not covered.

According to lawyers Slater and Gordon penalties for riding a private e scooter on a public road will land the rider with a £300 fine and 6 points<sup>1</sup>.

Riders could also be liable to prosecution for other offences as this is a 'mechanically propelled' vehicle and subject to Drink and Drug driving legislation for example.

## Tailgating

Highways England have trialled new cameras on the M1 throughout 2021, targeting tailgaters and known as 'close following'<sup>2</sup>.

When questioned 80% of drivers stated they understood the two second rule and 75% believed they had not driven too close in the preceding three months. Worryingly many thought that this was the same as 1-2 car lengths. In the 12 months of operation 60,343 incidents were identified, with 10,994 repeat offenders. The completion of the trial will see

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cambridge-news.co.uk/news/uk-world-news/riding-e-scooter-could-cost-18607198>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/national-highways-urges-drivers-to-use-the-two-second-rule-in-new-campaign>

National Highways consider future interventions which may include education and prosecution. A prosecution for 'driving without due care and attention' carries 3 penalty points on the driving licence and a £100 fine.

## Drink Driving

The Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety (PACTS) has suggested that vehicles should be fitted with Alcolocks to help reduce the number of people killed or injured through drink driving.

PACTS have stated that the figures have remained unchanged for the last 10 years with 240 people killed as a result of drink driving annually. One in five drink drive offences is committed by a reoffender<sup>3</sup>.

From 2022 all new cars sold in Europe will be sold with the device, but it will be up to the government to decide how it is used<sup>4</sup>.

## Direct Vision Standards

Drivers of vehicles over 12T now have to meet strict safety standards when heading into London. Part of the Mayors Vision Zero safety strategy it is designed to reduce the number of vulnerable road users killed or injured.

Vehicles must be fitted with a wide range of safety features including Class V and VI mirrors, side underrun protection, pictorial stickers and markings, nearside driver sensor, fully operational nearside camera and audible warning for turning left.

Compliant vehicles are issued with a permit but those failing to register face large daily fines and possible exclusion. Compliant vehicles automatically meet the FORS (Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme) Silver vehicle requirements. More information can be found at Transport for London: [www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk)

## UK Road Deaths

2020 saw an unprecedented change to our work and driving habits with many choosing or being required to work from home. This meant that there were far fewer cars on the roads, with a hope that the number of road deaths would significantly decrease.

Figures from the Department for Transport show that in 2020 there was a 17% decrease in road deaths to 1,460,

<sup>3</sup> [PACTS report: Drink driving – taking stock, moving forward | PACTS](https://www.pacts.gov.uk/reports/2020/2020-report-drink-driving-taking-stock-moving-forward)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.driving.co.uk/news/government-considering-alcolocks-curb-drink-driving-offences/>

compared to the previous year of 1,752 fatalities for the same period, which is perhaps disappointing given the traffic reduction of 21%<sup>5</sup>.

There was a larger percentage increase of those who were cycling, and this saw the introduction of many new cycle lanes in towns and cities, but it remains unclear if this trend will continue. 2021 figures will be released in September 2022.

## Operator Licence Changes

May 21<sup>st</sup> 2022 will see certain vans be required to be specified on an Operator licence as defined in the wider EU Mobility Package. Vehicles between 2.5t and 3.5t, previously out of scope will need to be added if conducting hire or reward and cross international borders such as to Southern Ireland, mainland EU and the 4 EFTA countries, There will be exceptions but Operators must check to see if they need to register or make amendments to avoid the risk of being called in front of the Traffic Commissioner<sup>6</sup>. The changes could require new operators to apply for a Standard International licence and employ the services of a Transport Manager.

## Speeding

The RAC Foundation have reported that speeding offences for 2019 / 2020 made up 85% of all motoring offences illustrating that despite obvious penalties it remains a big issue for road users including fleet operators<sup>7</sup>.

It has been suggested that drivers caught during the first lockdown believed they were unlikely to get caught due to perceived lower enforcement and fewer vehicles on the road.

This highlights that drivers do not lack skill but that tackling driver behaviours are key for fleets in addressing adverse decisions to protect business reputation, O'Licence compliance and reduce costs through fewer fines and lower collisions.

With the move towards removing human error the EU General Vehicle Safety Regulation 2019/2044 have announced that Intelligent Speed Assistance will be introduced in July 2022. The introduction will be phased so all new models or types fall into scope in 2022, whilst all cars sold from 2024 must have this fitted. There will be no

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2020/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2020>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/transport-goods-in-and-out-of-the-uk-using-vans-or-car-and-trailers-from-21-may-2022>

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.racfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/Speeding\\_offences\\_analysis\\_2019-20.pdf](https://www.racfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/Speeding_offences_analysis_2019-20.pdf)

requirement to retrofit. Drivers will currently be able to override the system, designed to limit a vehicle speed to the speed limit, by applying greater pressure on the accelerator<sup>8</sup>.

## Clean Air Zones

March 2021 saw Bath launch the first Clean Air Zone (CAZ) outside London where charges will be applied to non-compliant commercial vehicles including vans, taxis, and minibuses at £9 per day, whilst LGV's, and buses or coaches face charges of £100 per day<sup>9</sup>.

Many CAZ schemes were delayed in 2020 and a number of UK cities will launch their own schemes over the coming months.

Whilst this must be a welcome move to protect our environment and health from poor air quality (Nitrous Oxide - NOx and Particulate Matter – PM) it will undoubtedly lead to some fleets facing increased costs.

This will be due to non-compliance or the physical costs of retrofitting and even replacing vehicles.

## Driver CPC Training

2020 saw many organisations embrace digital working like never before. Whilst the logistics market continued to be in strong demand and essential for public sector service delivery; many transport and fleet managers were able to make the most of online platforms such as Zoom, Teams and WebEx for training of their drivers.

Professional drivers of vehicles over 3.5t were no exception and many were able to continue with their driver CPC (Certificate of Professional Competence) remotely from the comfort of their own home.

JAUPT the Joint Approvals Unit for Periodic Training have said that remote learning is to continue for the foreseeable future and may become part of a wider blended approach to training opportunities where both classroom and online options are acceptable.

## Automated Lane Keeping Systems (ALKS)

It has been suggested that ALKS could be on the UK roads shortly having found government approval in April 2021.

<sup>8</sup> [https://road-safety-charter.ec.europa.eu/resources-knowledge/media-and-press/intelligent-speed-assistance-isa-set-become-mandatory-across-en#:~:text=From%20July%202022%2C%20Intelligent%20speed,in%20circulation%20before%20that%20date\).](https://road-safety-charter.ec.europa.eu/resources-knowledge/media-and-press/intelligent-speed-assistance-isa-set-become-mandatory-across-en#:~:text=From%20July%202022%2C%20Intelligent%20speed,in%20circulation%20before%20that%20date).)

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.itv.com/news/westcountry/2020-10-08/baths-clean-air-zone-to-launch-in-march-2021>

Technology, once activated, keeps the vehicle within its own lane and controls its movements without the need for driver input<sup>10</sup>.

The Department for Transport has told the insurance industry that drivers would be free to dispose of their time including checking emails, using their phones, or even watching a film.

Whilst there is criticism of the scheme by road safety groups the government are pressing ahead and are currently considering if it would be allowed at 70mph. The Association of Fleet Professionals (AFP) is advising all fleet managers that their drivers should maintain full steering control of their vehicles despite any autonomous technology they may have fitted.

## Alternative Fuels

The UK Government announced £84 million to support three projects all designed to cut emissions and develop alternatives to fossil fuel vehicles<sup>11</sup>.

Whilst hydrogen buses are now commonplace for Transport for London (TfL) some of the funding will go towards developing low cost hydrogen fuel cells for buses, whilst the remainder will be allocated to developing electric propulsion systems for LGVs and energy saving technology within the motorsport sector.

The funds form part of the Governments wider commitment of net zero by 2050. It is estimated that the developed technology will help save over 260 million tonnes of CO2 which is the equivalent of 10.2 million cars on our roads.

## Highway Code

2022 has arguably seen some of the most widespread changes in the Highway Code for decades. Available in an updated hard copy there is now a Hierarchy of road users, following public consultation. It aims to give the most protection to the most vulnerable and the most responsibility to those who can cause the greatest harm. It lists pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders, motorcyclists, cars/taxis, vans/minibuses, HGV's / passenger vehicles. There are also changes around priority given at junctions or crossing, and passing pedestrians, horse riders and cyclists with a

minimum gap<sup>12</sup>. It is estimated that 7 million drivers are still unaware of the changes made.

## Autonomous Vehicles

In April 2022 the UK Government published a response to a consultation on the introduction of self-driving cars on to our roads. In preparation they have drafted a new section to be contained within the Highway Code which will state 'You may turn your attention away from the road and you may also view content through the vehicle's built-in infotainment apparatus, if available'. Drivers will however be expected to comply with current legislation including mobile phone use and drink drive laws<sup>13</sup>.

## Smart Motorways

The Government, in conjunction with Highways England, published an extensive 75 page document regarding safety of smart motorways and following public consultation will be refining the advice given to motorists in the Highway Code<sup>14</sup>.

They launched a TV campaign asking motorists to 'Keep Left' should they find themselves with a potential breakdown. It comes off the back of figures released by the BBC through a Freedom of Information request that show in five years since their introduction 38 people have lost their lives on a smart motorway. Near misses prior to their inception were 72, but since then has increased to 1,485<sup>15</sup>.

## Summary

These changes have highlighted that whilst we may be looking forward to alternative transport, and even autonomous vehicles in the not too distant future there is still a need to focus sharply on road safety.

Not only do collisions have an unquantifiable emotional cost, but also one of financial and reputational. 95% of all collision causations are considered to be human error and whilst this is bad news, it does mean we can all take responsibility and make changes to improve both own driver safety and that of all other road users<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> [Safe Use of Automated Lane Keeping System \(ALKS\) Centre for Connected and Autonomous Vehicles DfT April 2021](#)

<sup>11</sup> [£84 million boost for technology to power a green aviation revolution - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/the-highway-code-8-changes-you-need-to-know-from-29-january-2022>

<sup>13</sup> [Letter to Parliament about a new section to The Highway Code on self-driving vehicles, 25 April 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/smart-motorway-all-lane-running-overarching-safety-report-2019>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-51236375>

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.youthforroadsafety.org/news-blog/news-blog-item/t/95\\_of\\_all\\_crashes\\_are\\_human\\_errors\\_not\\_accidents\\_northern\\_ireland#:~:text=This%20challenges%20the%20notion%20that%20most%20crashes%20are,seriously%20injured%20are%20the%20result%20of%20human%20error.](http://www.youthforroadsafety.org/news-blog/news-blog-item/t/95_of_all_crashes_are_human_errors_not_accidents_northern_ireland#:~:text=This%20challenges%20the%20notion%20that%20most%20crashes%20are,seriously%20injured%20are%20the%20result%20of%20human%20error.)

## Further information

For access to further RMP Resources you may find helpful in reducing your organisation's cost of risk, please access the RMP Resources or RMP Articles pages on our website. To join the debate follow us on our LinkedIn page.

## Get in touch

For more information, please contact your RMP risk control consultant or account director.

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