

**TRANSPORT FOR LONDON**

**SURFACE TRANSPORT PANEL**

**SUBJECT: UPDATE ON THE FREIGHT OPERATOR RECOGNITION SCHEME**

**DATE: 12 JULY 2011**

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**1 PURPOSE AND DECISION REQUIRED**

- 1.1 Further to a request from the Panel, this paper provides an update on the Freight Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS), including a summary of the programme scope and the benefits for both TfL and the freight operators.
- 1.2 The Panel is asked to note the paper.

**2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 FORS is a voluntary membership scheme developed by TfL to encourage freight operators to provide safe, efficient, lawful and environmentally sound freight delivery in London. FORS membership has grown to 75,000 registered vehicles since launch in April 2008.
- 2.2 Members access workshops and information provided by TfL to stimulate the adoption of best practice by the industry.
- 2.3 FORS membership has three levels: Bronze, Silver and Gold:
  - (a) FORS Bronze currently accounts for 75 per cent of FORS members. Bronze is achieved by passing an independent assessment of the operator's policies and practices including driver recruitment, training and vehicle maintenance. The FORS Bronze standard combines all of the legislation affecting van and lorry operations into a single code and results in Bronze members saving time and money. A range of benefits including further workshops and tools as well as discounted safety products and training are available to Bronze members.
  - (b) FORS Silver currently accounts for 13 per cent of FORS members. To achieve Silver, operators must sign up to a personalized Excellence Plan, which requires them regularly to provide operational performance data for a minimum of 50 per cent of their fleet. This enables TfL to track their actual performance on collisions, fuel use, CO<sub>2</sub> and any fines/charges issued to them. They also agree to ensure at least 50 per cent of their contract/sub-contract fleets are FORS registered. Silver operators commit to fitting side guards and/or safety sensors to all vehicles over 18 tonnes. Failure not to action these changes within a year results in the operator losing Silver status. DVLA driver licence checks are also undertaken at a six-monthly interval and at least 50 per cent of their drivers must complete TfL's Safe London Driving Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (DCPC), or

other approved safety training.

- (c) FORS Gold recognises outstanding freight industry performers. FORS Gold was launched in April 2011 and currently has eight operators (including Hanson Cement, London Waste, Tradeteam and City of London) seeking accreditation at this level. To reach Gold, their Excellence Plan will provide performance data on a minimum of 75 per cent of their fleet and 75 per cent of their contract/sub-contract fleets will be FORS registered. 75 per cent of their drivers will have undergone TfL's Safe London Driving DCPC, or other approved safety training.

The remaining 12 per cent of FORS members are awaiting assessments or have failed assessments and are in the process of making changes to their businesses before they are reassessed.

- 2.4 FORS was designed to influence operators to improve their operational performance without using regulatory relaxations (for example, extended loading times in restricted locations and Congestion Charging exclusions) as an incentive. Such benefits were and still are seen by TfL to be inappropriate (for example, difficulty in coordination of loading bay restrictions across 34 highways authorities and lost Congestion Charge revenue) at present.
- 2.5 TfL has reduced the cost of delivering FORS considerably from £1.8m in 2008/09 to £385k this financial year. The budget will reduce further to £100k in 2012/13 and £50k in 2013/14.

### **3 BENEFITS TO TFL**

- 3.1 FORS delivers against five Mayor's Transport Strategy proposals and key elements of the Cycle Safety Action Plan (see Appendix 1 for details). FORS also acts as an important channel with the freight industry to communicate TfL's Road Freight Management plan for the Games and the freight impact of delivering Crossrail. FORS is also recognised in the Mayor's Responsible Procurement Code, which ensures public procurers are contracting safe and environmentally aware operators.
- 3.2 FORS was designed to bring together a diverse range of TfL freight activity (DCPC training and freight manager safety workshops) under one umbrella programme. This cohesive package of information helps TfL effectively engage and influence the freight industry and related stakeholders.
- 3.3 The University of Westminster recently assessed the benefits of FORS and calculated a Benefit-Cost Ratio (BCR) of 6:1 based on projected costs (see Appendix 1 for budget breakdown). This was measured principally on CO<sub>2</sub> reductions and excluded other FORS benefits including a reduction in collisions and smoother traffic flow brought about by a reduction in illegal kerbside activity.
- 3.4 FORS is supported by a number of key TfL stakeholders, including Road Peace and the London Cycle Campaign who recommend the use of companies that adhere to FORS standards and provide their drivers with the FORS driver training module 'Safer Driving in London'. The Freight Transport Association (FTA) also features FORS in their Cycling Code launched in June 2011.

- 3.5 FORS provides a communication channel for TfL effectively to reach 75,000 drivers and 650 companies operating lorries and vans in London. This channel is used by teams across Surface Transport to reach this vital road user group, including the Olympic Freight team within Better Routes and Places.

## **4 BENEFITS TO OPERATORS**

- 4.1 FORS Silver members will achieve on average (compared to a non FORS member):

- (a) 6 per cent less fuel usage;
- (b) 55 per cent fewer fines incurred; and
- (c) 13 per cent fewer collisions.

This data is collected electronically directly from all Silver members. Data fields include number of fines, fuel usage and collision information and is compared with pre-FORS membership levels.

- 4.2 Bronze members meet the standards set in the Mayor's Responsible Procurement Code, helping them to win new work.
- 4.3 Through leadership via workshops and seminars (many of which are delivered at no cost to TfL other than staff time), FORS provides dozens of opportunities each year for operators to meet and engage with TfL and their peers. At these events, they network, share insights and benefit from the experience of other FORS members that will help them keep up to date with industry best practice.
- 4.4 To increase the appeal of FORS to the freight operators, TfL has negotiated a wide range of discounted goods and services to help the operators improve their compliance levels. Linked to the Barclays Cycle Superhighways HGV Action Plan technology trial, these commercial partnership offers cover many aspects of fleet operations including: driver training, benchmarking, licence checking, technology offers and safety aids. These offers allow operators to implement best practice at low/no cost to TfL.
- 4.5 TfL communicates to FORS members on a regular basis via the FORSight Newsletter. The newsletter promotes best practice and highlights the benefits of FORS to those in the industry through case studies. TfL also communicates regularly with the FORS Advisory Forum members, which includes the FTA, Road Haulage Association, Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport, Health and Safety Executive and Vehicle and Operator Services Agency. This Advisory Forum was set up to help secure industry buy-in and support.

## **5 FORS DEVELOPMENT**

- 5.1 TfL is in the early stages of securing a national partner to help increase membership and potentially run the scheme as a commercial venture. The intention is for TfL to retain the key benefits of FORS (reduce trips/collisions/CO<sub>2</sub>; increase compliance; effective channel to the industry) while further reducing cost to TfL.

- 5.2 To broaden the appeal of the scheme to operators that may not identify with the label 'Freight' for example couriers, food service, plumbers, scaffolders etc, it is proposed to change the name of the scheme to Fleet Operators Recognition Scheme (FORS). The target operators will remain those who move goods, not people.
- 5.3 TfL is in the process of refreshing the FORS Bronze assessment standard and the FORS training materials. In tandem, TfL is planning to engage with the freight and logistics trade associations to discuss the option of forming an accreditation body for FORS. This would further cement FORS as a credible assessment among the freight and fleet industry and its client base.
- 5.4 TfL is working to ensure all GLA's own and contracted fleets (and in particular those of the boroughs) join FORS.

## **6 RECOMMENDATION**

- 6.1 The Panel is asked to NOTE the paper.

## **7 CONTACT**

- 7.1 Contact: Ben Plowden, Director, Better Routes and Places  
Number: 020 3054 2247  
Email: [benplowden@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:benplowden@tfl.gov.uk)

## APPENDIX 1

FORS Supporting the Mayor's Transport Strategy:

Proposal 69:

The Mayor, through TfL and working with the DfT, London boroughs, road freight operators and other stakeholders, will seek enhanced vehicle and driver safety from organisations operating corporate fleets by working with the freight sector and other stakeholders, promoting increased membership of the Freight Operator Recognition Scheme, and encouraging operators to uptake and demonstrate freight best practice.

Proposal 91:

The Mayor, through TfL and working with London boroughs, transport operators and stakeholders, will encourage behavioural changes to reduce vehicle emissions, by:

Promoting walking and cycling, the use of car clubs, car sharing, the use of fuel efficient vehicles and smarter driving techniques and raising awareness about air quality.

Implementing eco-driving training for all GLA/functional body, taxi and bus drivers.

The Mayor will also reduce emissions from the wider fleet by supporting eco-driving training for members of the public and freight drivers (through the existing FORS scheme) and tackling emissions caused by unnecessary idling.

Providing better information about emissions from private vehicles and the public transport fleet.

Proposal 99:

The Mayor, through TfL, and working with the London boroughs, road freight operators and other stakeholders, will:

Adopt planning conditions that specify Delivery Service Plans for major developments (by spring 2011).

Aim for 50 per cent of HGVs and vans serving London to be members of FORS by 2016.

Encourage, and where appropriate specify, improved freight movement efficiency through, for example, greater consolidation, more off-peak freight movement and greater use of water and rail-based transport.

Support freight industry land requirements for locally focused consolidation and/or break-bulk facilities and access to waterways and railways.

Proposal 108:

The Mayor, through TfL, and working with the London boroughs and other stakeholders, will promote CO2 standards for vehicles and infrastructure controlled,

procured or regulated by the Mayor, GLA Group and/or other public sector bodies (for example, public transport vehicles, taxis, street and station lighting and infrastructure embodied carbon) to reduce emissions from existing and new vehicles and infrastructure, including the following specific measures:

The Mayor, through his functional bodies, will increase the proportion of his vehicle fleet powered by electricity.

All new buses entering fleets operated on behalf of the Mayor from 2011/12 will be lower carbon.

Work with vehicle manufacturers and the taxi trade to develop a new low carbon taxi?.

Proposal 117:

The Mayor, through TfL, and working with the London boroughs, and other stakeholders in the public and private sectors, will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of freight operations through the promotion of 'delivery and servicing plans', 'construction logistics plans', the Freight Operator Recognition Scheme, Freight Quality Partnerships and other efficiency measures across London.

Supporting the Cycle Safety Action Plan

3.3.2:

Develop a marketing campaign directly targeted at improving safety between HGVs and cyclists. The key messages to be developed will:

Reflect outcomes of research (Action 3.8.1) and reach the socio-demographic groups identified as particularly vulnerable.

Resonate with cyclists and HGV drivers alike.

Work with the Freight/HGV target group to continue to reinforce messages around safety and looking out for cyclists.

Reduce the number of cyclists and HGV collisions occurring.

3.3.4:

Communicate with the freight industry to improve cyclists' safety and to give more recognition to its role in meeting London's targets to reduce fatalities and injury among vulnerable road users. Work with operators to alter their delivery times to avoid the peaks. To fit appropriate safety devices and to disseminate appropriate cyclist awareness information to their drivers. The Freight Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS) and training will also be promoted to this audience.

### 3.4.3:

The Commercial Vehicle Unit (CVU) will undertake roadside stops and company visits to ensure goods vehicles are compliant with safety legislation and to raise safety standards.

The CVU will refer operators to join FORS where appropriate and use powers delegated from the Health & Safety Executive to improve the management of occupational road risk when driving at work. They will also continue to undertake enforcement activity and work with partners on initiatives such as the “Exchanging Places” events to improve safety on London roads.

### 3.6.1:

Work with the freight industry as a matter of urgency to identify the most appropriate and cost effective safety device (standard specification as well as retro fitting) for large goods vehicles. Side guards and motion sensors to be considered.

3.6.3: Continue to distribute Fresnel lenses to all fleet operators through FORS on request and more generally.

3.7.1: Encourage responsible procurement practices throughout the GLA family and the public sector by ensuring fleet operators are FORS registered and receive driver training on cycle safety. Ensure contracts include vehicle specifications, such as the use of improved safety features.

3.7.2: Promote and encourage wider membership of FORS to deliver training and messages on cycle safety for all fleet operators in London.

### FORS costs

Budget will reduce over the Business Plan period as we partner with commercial organisations to take on the management of the membership and stop free assessments for large operators.

2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
£385,000	£100,000	£50,000	£50,000