

**TRANSPORT FOR LONDON**

**SURFACE TRANSPORT PANEL**

**SUBJECT: FREIGHT AND NIGHT DELIVERIES**

**DATE: 19 MAY 2009**

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**1 PURPOSE AND DECISION REQUIRED**

- 1.1 This paper provides an update to the Panel on TfL's work to encourage night deliveries. The Panel is requested to note this report and provide guidance in relation to future activity.

**2 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The majority of delivery activity in London takes place during the normal working day, mainly between 07:00 and 17:00. There is a combination of reasons for this including product availability (e.g. fresh food), customer requirement (e.g. mail deliveries pre-09:00) and customer availability to receive a delivery.
- 2.2 Major supply chains work 24/7. As a result, a substantial number of premises already receive overnight deliveries reducing fuel use, the resulting CO<sub>2</sub> and emissions and peak-hour congestion. This provides high levels of customer service and saves businesses money. Additionally, it may be possible for larger vehicles to access delivery points at night, reducing the need for more smaller vehicles during the day and so reducing fuel usage even further.

**3 NIGHT AND OUT OF HOURS DELIVERIES**

- 3.1 Increasing the number of night deliveries could be problematic unless residents feel protected from increased levels of noise and disturbance. The World Health Organisation has identified that sleep deprivation and exposure to noise is extremely stressful. In the long term, this may cause physiological changes that can be life-threatening, resulting in heart failure, strokes, high blood pressure and problems with the immune system.
- 3.2 Quieter vehicles and equipment exist, but there are no recognised 'quiet' levels of delivery activity easily enforced in the UK. Some planning conditions have been granted with a decibel limit for activity; however the majority of planning conditions simply restrict overnight activity. One supermarket chain with 170 stores in London has some form of delivery restriction in place at over 50 per cent of its stores.
- 3.3 Feedback from industry trade bodies suggests a desire to deliver out of peak daytime hours, however, some of this activity may just extend the period when deliveries happen rather than occurring overnight.

## **4 LONDON LORRY CONTROL SCHEME (LLCS)**

- 4.1 The current scheme to reduce the impact of overnight activity on London's roads is the London Lorry Control Scheme (LLCS). This is operated by London Councils on behalf of the boroughs and TfL. The scheme requires vehicles over 18 tonnes to hold a valid permit and to maximise the use of a network of exempt roads.
- 4.2 There are a number of permit conditions which encourage good practice and operator behaviour, such as minimising the noise of refrigeration equipment and having air brake silencers. However, smaller vehicles (under 18t) are free to use any roads they wish as the scheme uses weight as a proxy for noise. Also, the scheme does not cover noise at the delivery point.

## **5 CONTROL OF OVERNIGHT NOISE**

- 5.1 Enforcement activity for noise falls to local borough Environmental Health teams. In most cases, enforcement restricts deliveries to between 07:00 and 22:00, either as part of a planning condition, a noise abatement notice or through voluntary good neighbour schemes. Some deliveries on the TLRN previously undertaken at night have moved to the daytime following residents noise complaints.
- 5.2 Vehicle Type Approval regulates vehicle noise as measured by a standard pull-away test. However, it does not necessarily reflect the noise a vehicle will make while it is in use at night in an urban environment. The Department for Transport is currently investigating the feasibility of a 'Quiet HGV' standard that would set a benchmark level of 'acceptable noise', enabling local authorities to exempt qualifying vehicles from restrictions to reduce noise in urban areas.
- 5.3 In the Netherlands, an enforceable decibel limit of 60dB (A) between 23:00 – 07:00 was introduced in 1998. To facilitate night deliveries, the 'PIEK' scheme was developed which provides a range of low noise solutions for the point of delivery. This scheme has been subsidised by the Dutch Government and a number of municipalities across Europe are keen to develop similar approaches.

## **6 RELEVANT TfL FREIGHT PROJECTS**

- 6.1 The Freight Operator Recognition Scheme (FORS) provides a quality and performance benchmark for the industry. It encourages freight companies to prioritise safety and reduce their impact on the environment. As at 27 April 2009, there were 225 registered companies, with 125 at bronze level. This represents 418 depots and 16,953 vehicles delivering in London.
- 6.2 Delivery and Servicing Plans (DSPs) provide a framework to manage freight vehicle movements to and from individual buildings. This improves the safety and reliability of deliveries, help reduce congestion and minimise environmental impacts. The DSP in place at Palestra, Surface Transport's Head Office, has provided some notable achievements; a 40 per cent reduction in both stationery and catering deliveries and a move to out-of-hours deliveries. Forty pilots are now being trialled to identify the likely savings to businesses and the reductions of freight activities across a range of business premises.

## **7 STUDIES AND TRIALS**

- 7.1 The DfT and Freight Transport Association (FTA) produced 'Delivering the goods - A toolkit for improving night time deliveries' in 2007. This drew upon the results of TfL trials with the supermarket Safeway and provides best practice solutions to facilitate night deliveries.
- 7.2 In 2007, the Noise Abatement Society, the London Borough of Wandsworth and Sainsbury's successfully demonstrated a procedure called the Silent Approach. The scheme facilitates night deliveries without compromising the quality of life noise issue by giving Local Authorities a form of permanent 'policing' through a 24 hour helpline. Sainsbury's continue to pay for this helpline.

## **8 OPPORTUNITIES AND ISSUES**

- 8.1 TfL is investigating the potential for accrediting 'quiet' operators, as one of the criteria for the silver and gold levels of FORS. Issues include identifying the levels of acceptable noise and demonstrating satisfactorily to boroughs and residents that the operator is committed to best practice and quiet activities. The ideal outcome could be providing operators the benefit of a dispensation from the LLCS.
- 8.2 Opportunities may exist within the LLCS for London Councils to review the vehicles included, the methods of enforcement or the standards and conditions applied to increase the protection for residents from the noise of deliveries and vehicles on the move. As mentioned above, the opportunity exists to link this to FORS silver/gold levels as appropriate. A more holistic approach to night time activity could be made possible through the integration of the LLCS into existing TfL enforcement activity. This may also offer cost savings to London.
- 8.3 TfL is investigating, through the DSP project, ways to reduce daytime activity on the road network by encouraging out-of-hours deliveries. These include discussions on procurement contracts with pilot companies - to deliver comparable benefits to those demonstrated at Palestra - and discussions with a supermarket retailer on increasing night deliveries, which may provide a procedure to protect residents.

## **9 CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS**

- 9.1 There does not appear to be one simple all-encompassing answer to increase night deliveries. Rather, there is a number of stakeholders involved and a variety of activities are required to come together to 'unlock' the potential for increasing night deliveries.
- 9.2 TfL will continue to develop the FORS Quiet toolkit and the overnight element of the Delivery and Servicing Plan project.

## **10 RECOMMENDATION**

- 10.1 The Panel is asked to NOTE the report.

## **11 CONTACT**

11.1 Contact: David Brown, Managing Director, Surface Transport  
Phone: 020 3054 0178