



Mr. Stephen Hammond
Secretary of State for Transport
Great Minster House
76 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DR

to stephen.hammond@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Please reply to

roy@lightmare.org

cc alex.pell@times.co.uk

18 April 2013

Dear Mr. Hammond,

Pedestrian and Cycle Accidents - and the "Lightmare"

May we introduce ourselves, Lightmare are a voluntary group of experienced motorists including scientists, engineers, mathematicians, lawyers and ophthalmologists supported by the leading pedestrian, cycling and motorcycling organisations who are committed to improving road safety by reducing glare and other distractions in the driving environment.

We have no political agenda and no financial support; all costs are met from our personal resources.

We were very interested to see it reported in the Sunday Times that you are concerned about blinding Light Emitting Diode (LED) cycle lights (see appended article 31 March by Alex Pell).



Blinding cyclists

The advent of these powerful cycle lights is a defensive reaction to blinding car lights permitted by the DfT (and EU).

Cyclists seem to be trying to retaliate from increasing vehicle light intensities by fitting powerful flashing unfocussed LED cycle lights at handlebar height beamed directly into a driver's eye.

Our ophthalmological experts say that a flashing light destroys a driver's perception of depth of field putting them even more at risk.

The human eye was never designed to withstand the intense near UV glare from a LED (or bi Xenon headlamp).

It is a criminal disgrace that the DfT permits road users to blind each other in violation of the Highway Code and only a matter of time before lawsuits ensue.

I'm sure you and your colleagues at the DfT are concerned about the increase in road accidents particularly to vulnerable road users, may I append an article suggesting the cause are blinding lights and proposing solutions that the UK government could take to prevent this increasing carnage. We urge you to act.

Yours sincerely,

Roy Milnes

roy@lightmare.org

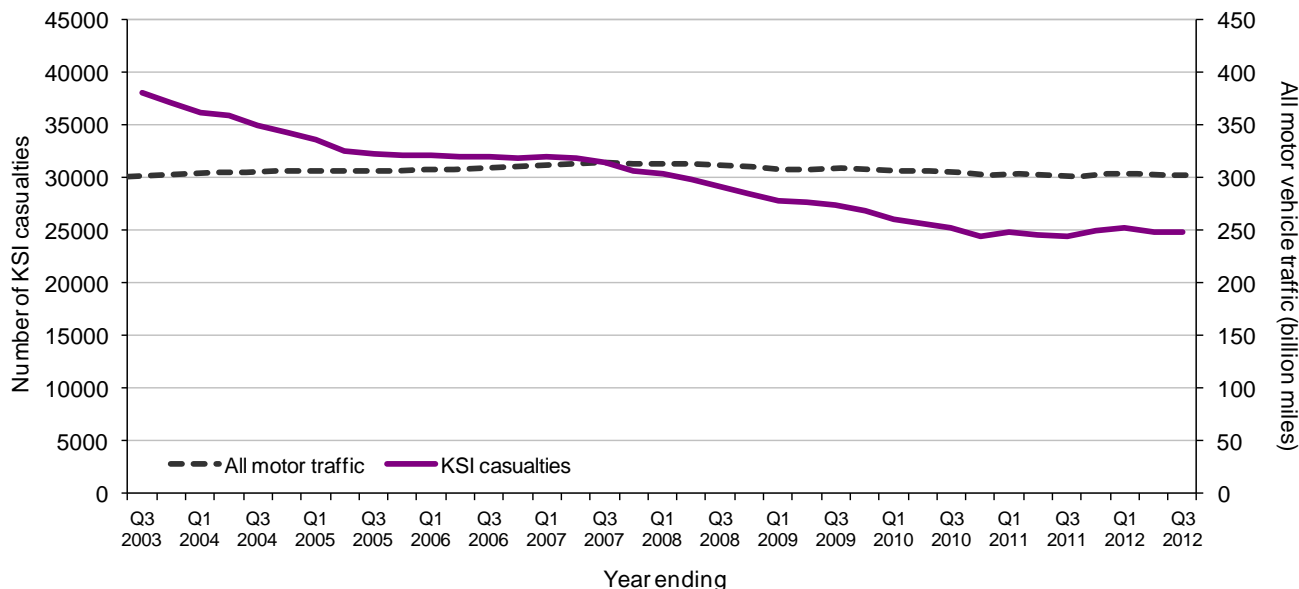
This open letter is published at www.lightmare.org

The Lightmare - Blinding Lights a Danger at Any Speed?

Up to 2010 road accidents in the UK had been steadily falling due to better road safety education and mandatory safety features however the latest DfT 2011 and 2012 statistics have shown a levelling off:

Department for Transport Statistics

Chart RAS45012 - Reported killed or seriously injured road casualties, rolling four quarter totals: GB Q2 2003 - Q2 2012



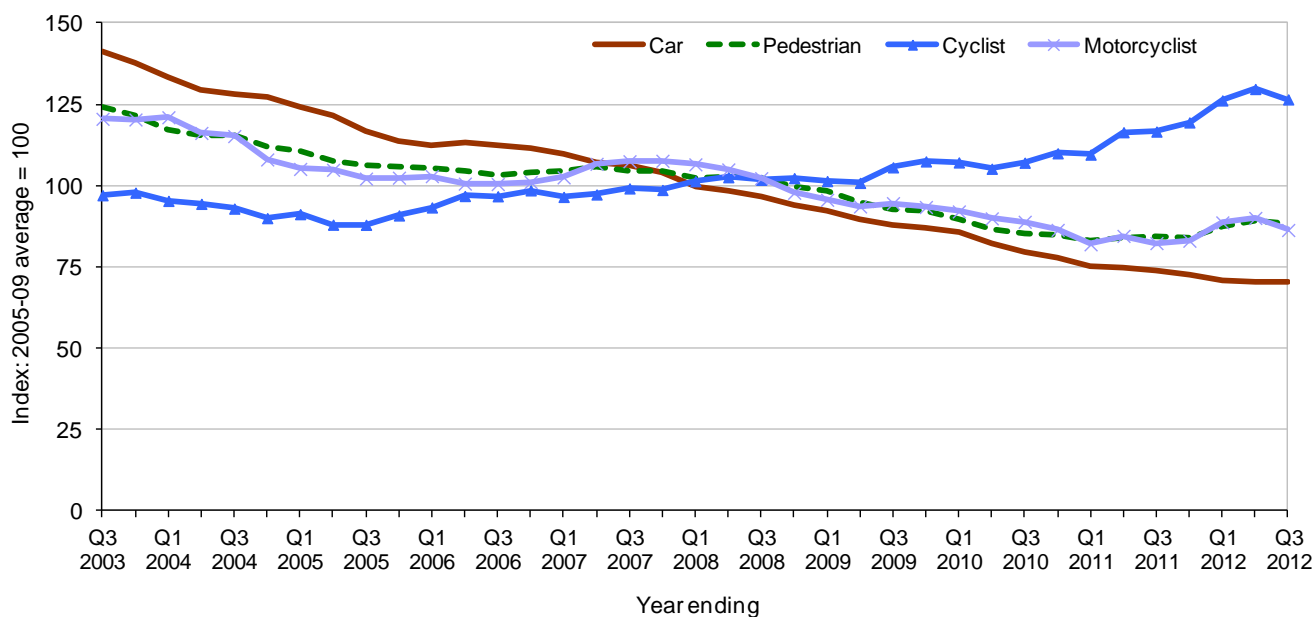
Telephone: 020 7944 6595
 Email: roadacc.stats@dft.gsi.gov.uk
 Source: STATS19, DfT National Road Traffic Survey

Last updated: 7 February 2013
 Next update: June 2013

More worryingly, whilst car killed or seriously injured have fallen (but started to level off) this is at the expense of vulnerable pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists:

Department for Transport Statistics

Chart RAS45014 - Reported killed or seriously injured (KSI) road casualties by road users, indexed rolling four quarter totals: GB Q2 2003 - Q2 2012



Telephone: 020 7944 6595
 Email: roadacc.stats@dft.gsi.gov.uk
 Source: STATS19, DfT National Road Traffic Survey

Last updated: 7 February 2013
 Next update: June 2013

So what has changed?

Could it be the EU legislation introduced in February 2011 that requires mandatory Daytime Running Lights (DRL) coupled the increasing trend of others to drive with headlights permanently on encouraged by EU policies plus manufacturers fitting blinding High Intensity Discharge Bi-Xenon (HID-Xenon) headlights as standard fitments?

The EU and DfT claim that DRL will save 6% of accidents including those with pedestrians and cyclists - where is the evidence this has saved lives?

Manufacturers and Transport officials seem to use simple logic thinking that making vehicles appear bigger and brighter is safer.

However they have neglected the consequential secondary effect upon the eyesight of other drivers.

Expert ophthalmologists say that the human eye should not be directly exposed to the beam from LEDs:

"Their findings are rather disturbing since the LED would present an actual danger to the eyes, particularly those of children. The blue light needed to obtain white LEDs (especially used for daytime running lights on new cars) leads to a "toxic stress" to the retina. Moreover, their highly directional lighting and the quality of light emitted (up to 1000 times higher than conventional bulbs) could lead to risk of glare"

If these lights were in an office, the employers would be prosecuted under HSE health and safety laws.

So why when life safety is at risk are LED and HID-Xenon lamps permitted on our vehicles?

It's about selling cars; it is not about road safety.

Dangerously blinding and distracting vehicle lights and the misuse of these, often deliberately, make cyclists and pedestrians much harder to detect.

As people age, ophthalmologists say that the eye takes longer to recover from being blinded by light - a greater proportion of older people are driving now.

Cyclists do not help themselves wearing black Lycra and drab clothing also puts pedestrians at risk.



Ex President Sarkozy clad in fashionable black Lycra on a black bike

Advanced driving instructors instil in their pupils that a driver's positive frame of mind is equally important to any safety device.

But how can a driver feel safe if deliberately aggravated by a plethora of punitive measures whilst having their vision impaired by the selfish negative attitude that "my car has brighter lights than yours so I'm safe"?

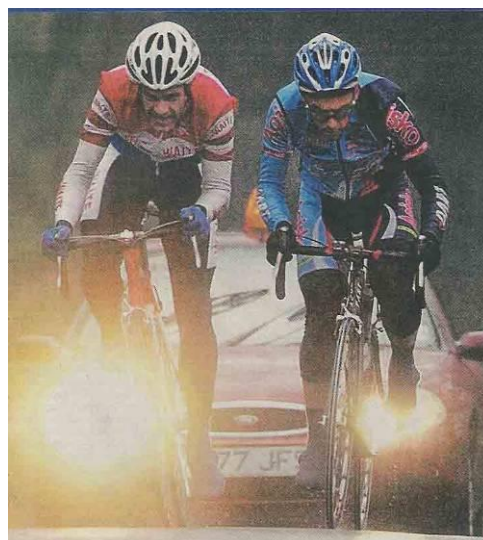
The psychology of driving to combat stress, anger and road rage is paramount to safe driving - ref. "Mind How you Go" by ex Police Grade 1 driver Adrian Shurmer - see addendum.

The DfT maintain that these new blinding BiXenon High Intensity Discharge Lights (HID-Xenon) and High Power Light Emitting Diodes (LED's) comply with EU and UNECE global technical regulations (these have superseded UK regulations) however the regulations are determined by committees influenced by motor manufacturers (e.g. Cars21 group) and not ophthalmological experts.

The research bodies used by the EU and UNECE to test and certify these lights (SWOV, TNO and TRRL) did not consult ophthalmologists about safe light intensities.

The result was flawed EU funded studies using meta-analysis (meta-analysis are studies of studies - see www.dadri.org.uk/DRLstudies) plus laboratory tests using photographic slides which cannot portray the intense glare to justify 1,200cd Daytime Running Lights (DRL). In contrast the equivalent Japanese organisation conducted real world tests and recommended 200cd - about the intensity of bright sidelights

With HID-Xenon headlamps, their tests were in darkened rooms with static lamp displays. In the real world, vehicles accelerate, react to uneven road surfaces and even illegally blind you over road humps. No matter how detailed the specification for beam pattern for dipped HID-Xenon headlamps (or LED daytime lights) it is clear to anyone that drives, that they will have been repeatedly dazzled and momentarily blinded by these lights.



Picture extracted from The Times

In the moments whilst your attention is diverted, and your eyes take time to recover, a driver could have hit a cyclist or a pedestrian on a crossing - in Vienna since these blinding lights were introduced; more cyclists and pedestrians on crossings have been killed and injured.

The Highway Code states: **Rule 114 You MUST NOT**

- use any lights in a way which would dazzle or cause discomfort to other road users, including pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders

So why are auto manufacturers permitted to break the Highway Code under the guise of safety?

Have you noticed how much easier it is to see in twilight when cars use sidelights until a vehicle with blinding headlights comes along?

The fad for driving with headlamps on in daytime started in 1967 when Sweden changed from driving on the left to the right; this was also taken up by Canada. When a country is covered in snow four months of the year and has low summer sun angles, headlights are probably necessary in these northern climes.

But why have lights become a marketing and fashion gimmick simply to sell cars on so called "safety" at the expense of the lives of vulnerable road users?

Like Hans Christian Anderson fable The Emperor's New Clothes people are being deceived.

For any machine it is good to have a light on when it is running, but why should the LED intensity be set to a blinding 1,200 candelas (cd) simply to combat the power of the sun on a bright sunny day thus at all other times motorists are blinded?



Daytime Running Lights are deliberately designed to beam blinding light directly into driver's eyes (extract from Hella data)

The UK intensity limit for dipped headlights used to be 800cd - now, at the behest of lamp manufacturers (presumably to enhance the market for HID-Xenon lamps) the EU limit is a blinding 2,500cd, and the frontal area of these lamps have mostly been reduced to less than half the area of the previous standard, thereby increasing the brightness of the aspect of these lights for other road users.

The DfT state that HID-Xenon headlights do not comply with UK [Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations 1989](#) and DRL are not mandatory in the UK but EU law takes precedence so our citizens are being killed.

This is not a political issue - we have cross party support: Lib-Dems - Norman Baker, Green Party - Caroline Lucas, Tories - John Redwood, Labour - John Prescott, Maria Eagle and Plaid Cymru - Elfyn Llwyd. Plus thousands of comments from drivers, motorcyclists, cyclists and pedestrians including doctors, scientists and driving instructors.

Critically on this issue, Lightmare have the support of CTC, FEPA and Living Streets.

As DRL became mandatory on new cars two years ago and many others now use headlights, as statistically proven in Austria, this 6% appears mythical:

In view of this supposed 6% claim why has there not been a measurable step reduction in car casualties? Why are killed and seriously injured casualties increasing?

DRL may save a few crumpled bumpers BUT this is gained at the expense of cyclists and pedestrians lives.

Why is the government permitting drivers cocooned in air bag cushioned crumple zone protected steel boxes (or "carcooned") are trying to gain an illusory safety advantage at the expense of vulnerable less conspicuous road users?

The UK Parliament has the power to stop this escalating madness please may we propose solutions:

a) Commission a report into the safe light levels for driving by Ophthalmologists

(Not self interested lamp and motor manufacturers or EU committees influenced by manufacturers or UNECE committees dominated by Canadians)

b) A police crackdown on illegal use of foglights and HID Xenon conversions

c) An immediate ban on HID Xenon and DRL lamps pending the report

The EU has ridden roughshod over the genuine concerns of pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and drivers using reports that have flawed methodology to justify their actions. Pending the outcome of the Ophthalmologists report, the UK government should require all vehicles to have DRL masked with absorbing filters to limit light to 200cd (as recommended by Japan) and HID-Xenon headlights not to be fitted to any more new vehicles

d) Drivers health check every 3 years

As cars require a 3 year MOT so drivers should have a mandatory 3 year health check including an eyesight test. Using bright lights to compensate for the poor eyesight of others is the wrong approach.

Not convinced? Shine an LED torch into your eyes - how long can you tolerate it?
Why these lethal lamps are permitted on the front of vehicles when life safety is at risk?

References

BBC documentary by Sangita Myska <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-13143206>

Video by Prof Peter Heilig and Dr. Gerhard Sander explaining how a driver's eye is affected by blinding distracting light http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DK_xAZjval

Supporting Organisations:-



[Driving Instructors Association](#)



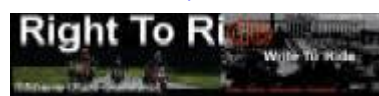
[Federation of European Pedestrians](#)



[Living Streets – UK Pedestrians](#)



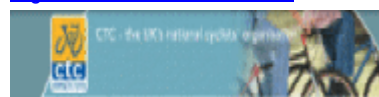
[British Motorcyclists Federation](#)



[Right to Ride Northern Ireland](#)



[Motorcycle Action Group](#)



[CTC the national cyclists' organisation](#)



[DADRL USA](#)
[DADRL Poland](#)
[DADRL Bulgaria](#)
[DaDRL Lithuania](#)

Expert Witness Statement

The Dangers of Blinding Vehicle Lights

Traffic Safety: No benefit. Evidence: NHTSA, GVD etc..

Distracters: A critical number has been exceeded

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_DK_xAZjval

Light Intensity: Critical thresholds have been exceeded

<http://ub.meduniwien.ac.at/blog/?p=14844>

Spectral Distribution: Short wavelength percentage of artificial lights: too high

Yellow improves Contrast Vision, reduces threat of phototoxicity

Glare and Dazzling Effects: are approaching pain thresholds (DRL and 'modern' headlights)

<http://www.lightmare.org/>

Legal Implications: DRL violates:

The Law in Respect of the Protection of Infants (1969)

The Declaration of Human Rights (1948) Article Three

The Convention Concerning the Power of Authority

The Principle of Equality

Public Ethics and Morals

The Bond of Protection

The Laws of Logic

Attorney-at-Law Dr G Sander MA Mag rer publ

Children - most at risk in road traffic: - at crosswalks ('Schutzweg' i.e.: 'Way of Protection')

<http://www.childrensrights.org/>

Inattentional Blindness: Trucks and trains and streetcars, even garishly bright street lights can be overlooked i.e.

not recognized, not perceived due to faults in cognitive processing, caused by distraction (DRL, glare etc)

Coming Generations: Avoidable unphysiologic increase of light - amount and light - intensity causes perpetuated undesired side-effects: Enhanced misuse of the drug light will be passed on via epigenetical imprinting - insidiously - ad infinitum.

* **Benefit of Daytime Running Lights (DRL):** No. Not even for unprincipled lobbyists

Résumé: DRL-Ban. Worldwide. Immediately - sine ira et studio – period.

Peter Heilig MD Univ Prof

Department of Ophthalmology and Optometry Univ. of Vienna/Austria

This'll dazzle you: bike lights outshine cars

The Sunday Times Alex Pell 31 March 2013



The brightness of 10 popular light-emitting diode (LED) bicycle lights was tested at a photometric laboratory

THE government has pledged to take action after a Sunday Times investigation found that 80% of popular bicycle lights are more powerful than the legal limit of brightness for dipped car headlights.

One of them exceeded the maximum for a dipped headlight by a factor of 13.

The brightness of 10 popular light-emitting diode (LED) bicycle lights was tested at a photometric laboratory. On their lowest setting and with angular adjustment to account for pointing down at the road, eight of the lights exceeded the legal maximum level for dipped car headlights. At their maximum brightness setting, nine of the lights were brighter than a car headlight.

The lights can also be set to flash, often at a brightness near maximum, giving an intrusive stroboscopic effect that could distract other road users and impair their ability to judge the cyclist's distance or speed. At least 100 cyclists are killed on Britain's roads each year.

Bicycle-light makers are engaged in an "arms race" to produce ever brighter lights. Stephen Young, managing director of Lumicycle, which makes the LED4Si light, said: "You have to offset the vulnerability of the cyclist and if that means causing dazzle to a driver, maybe that's worth it."

When pressed on whether the industry was out of control, Young conceded: "What you are saying is correct – I've heard it for years."

Ben Terry, a student paramedic, claims to have sold 230,000 examples of the Cree XM-L T6 lamp from C&B Seen – the brightest light tested. Roger Terry, his father, who helps to run the business, said: "I'm not sure if we should be delighted that ours is the most powerful, or dismayed. We advise people to angle them onto the road and not ride on full beam."

The Department for Transport (DfT) says current rules specify a maximum intensity of 70 candela – a measure of luminous intensity – but technology has overtaken that limit, which is now widely ignored.

When asked to clarify the maximum brightness allowed for a front-facing bicycle light, the DfT referred the inquiry to the Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations, which state that it is an offence for any light on a vehicle to “cause undue dazzle or discomfort to other persons using the road”.

When informed of the test results, Stephen Hammond, the road safety minister, said: “Cyclists are required to use lights to ensure that they are visible to others using the roads and to see the road ahead.

“However, we are aware that the law on vehicle lighting has not kept pace with developments in the market for bike lights, so we are reviewing the lighting regulations and hope to come forward with proposals to revise them later this year.”

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- Can be used as a head torch with supplied strap

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Comments

Tony is correct:

Vehicle lights are blinding motorists due to the advent of high power LED and Bi Xenon lamps which emit a more harsh light near the eye damaging blue end of the spectrum.

Accidents to cyclists, bikers and pedestrians continue to rise - see Lightmare.org

The UK and UNECE lighting regulations that permit motorists to blind each other need urgent overhaul to stop this crazy escalation caused by motor manufacturers selling blinding lights as a safety gimmick.

Would you believe they did not consult ophthalmological experts when setting the present regulations!

Roy Milnes

Tony Raven

Surely there are two separate issues here. Good lights are good for cyclists - they enable you to see and be seen against an increasingly bright background of car and motorbike lights. The other is cheap lights with poor beam control that dazzle other road users. Its perfectly possible to design a bright bicycle light like a good car headlight that is both bright and doesn't dazzle. Such lights are available its just that they cost more than the cheap bright lights that are available. What is needed is a general overhaul of all vehicle lighting, not just bicycle lighting. With modern car headlight brightness its becoming increasing difficult to see and be seen on a bicycle and either we continue the brightness escalation on both sides or we reach a reasonable compromise.

Incidentally legally there is only a requirement that a bicycle uses at night a set of lights that meet the regulations. It does not forbid the use of additional lights which can be as bright as you like within the don't dazzle legal requirement..

Mr Anthony Barraclough

How relevant is this? The majority who cycle on our roads, cycle ways and illegally on our pavements do not carry or use lights. This fact is totally ignored by our disinterested police forces but if any driver is involved in an incident with a cyclist, it is always the driver's fault.

Rise in vulnerable road users being killed and injured

The number of pedestrians and cyclists killed or seriously injured on Britain's roads has risen fears that motorists are becoming "carcooned" as their vehicles become safer.



By [David Millward](#), Transport Editor The Telegraph 16 Aug 2012



Road safety campaigners warned that motorists are becoming so reliant on technology that they are increasingly oblivious to pedestrians and cyclists.

According to the latest casualty figures released by the Department for Transport, the number of cyclists who were killed or badly hurt reached 6,020 the 12 months ending in March, a rise of 11 per cent.

For both pedestrians and motorcyclists there was a six per cent rise, while the number of car occupants dropped by the same amount.

"Perhaps we are seeing here is 'carcooning' effect – that car drivers sitting in increasingly safer cars have less concern for the vulnerable road users around them," said Robert Gifford, executive director of the Parliamentary Advisory Committee for Transport Safety.

His fears are shared by other road safety experts, such as Prof Frank McKenna, a psychologist at Reading University, who coined the term 'carcooning'.

In recent years cars are being fitted with an array of safety technology such as airbags, blind spot detection systems and sophisticated seat belts which tighten as soon as the vehicle brakes sharply.

"More must be done to get drivers to look out for vulnerable road users," said Simon Best, chief executive of the Institute of Advanced Motorists.

"We must have changes to the driving test, greater enforcement and incentives for driver training.

"It is unacceptable that road deaths and serious injuries have risen for children, pedestrians, motorcyclists and cyclists.

"Cutting road safety education, scrapping casualty targets and cuts in council spending all suggest this isn't a major priority. The Government needs to show much greater leadership on road safety."

The Department for Transport also reported a 12 per cent rise in the number of deaths from drink drive accidents last year, with the figure increasing from 250 to 280.

Injuries rose by three per cent from 8,210 to 8,430 during the same period with an 18 per cent increase in the number of fatal accidents involving drink driving.

This was the first rise since 2002, however road safety experts said the long term showed a decline in drink drive related casualties, with last year's jump being attributed to an abnormally low figure in 2010.

"Whilst some of the rise can be attributed to low traffic levels due to bad winter weather in 2010 this trend is very worrying," said Paul Watters of the AA.

Department for
Transport

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SW1 4DR

Mr Ken Perham

Direct line: 020 7944 2065

Fax: 020 7944 2196

Lightmare

GTN: 3533 2115

Email: fran.simpson@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Web site: www.dft.gov.uk

Our Ref: ID 30730

7 February 2012

Dear Mr Perham

ROAD SAFETY

Thank you for your email addressed to Theresa Villiers, regarding road safety. Your letter has been forwarded to the International Vehicles & Safety Division as we have policy responsibility for road safety.

As you know it became a requirement from February 2011 for all new types of vehicles to be fitted with Daytime running lights. These must meet European legislation intended to ensure that they are sufficiently bright to be visible during the daytime but not so bright so as to cause dazzle. At night they turn off when the driver switches on their headlamps to prevent dazzle and steps are underway to ensure that in future all cars have features to either turn the headlights on automatically at night or prompt the driver to do so to minimise the risk of driving at night on DRL alone. Evidence suggests DRL could reduce multi-vehicle daytime accidents by up to 6%, including those with cyclists and pedestrians.

Moving on to Xenon headlamps. These must also comply with European legislation intended to minimise dazzle while maximising driver vision. Due to the brightness it is important that they are correctly aimed cars are fitted with features to help ensure this. We are aware that some people convert halogen headlamps into Xenon. These conversions inevitably result in headlamps that produce a lot of glare and in our view they do not comply with the lighting regulations. We have produced guidance on this matter which I have attached for your information.

Yours sincerely



Fran Simpson (Mrs)



Mr Roy Milnes
Lightmare

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Dear Mr Milnes

I thank you for your email of the 28th February and fully support the campaign that you are running.

It's absolutely true that blinding lights are extremely dangerous, and is even worse when elderly people are confronted with blinding lights which can often lead to serious accidents.

I have no hesitation in supporting this very good

cause. Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background, reading "Eifyn Llwyd".

The Rt Hon Eifyn Llwyd
MP Dwyfor Meirionnydd

7/3/12

In February 2012 we wrote a similar letter in support of The Times Cyclesafe campaign and copied 80 MP's who attended the Cyclesafe meeting. We received 16 positive responses:

Alison Seabeck, Lab, Plymouth, Moor View;	alison.seabeck.mp@parliament.uk
Ben Bradshaw, Labour, Exeter, Patron of All-Party Parliamentary Cycling Group;	bradshawb@parliament.uk
Jeremy Corbyn, Lab, Islington North;	corbynj@parliament.uk
Jo Swinson, Lib Dem, East Dumbartonshire;	jo.swinson.mp@parliament.uk
Jonathan Lord, C, Woking;	jonathan.lord.mp@parliament.uk
Kerry McCarthy, Lab, Bristol East;	kerry.mccarthy.mp@parliament.uk
Ben Mosely	mosleyb@parliament.uk
Lilian Greenwood, Lab, Nottingham South;	lilian.greenwood.mp@parliament.uk
Maria Eagle, Lab, Garston & Halewood, Shadow Transport Minister;	eaglem@parliament.uk
Mike Penning, C, Hemel Hempstead, Minister for Road Safety;	penningm@parliament.uk
Richard Graham, C, Gloucester;	richard.graham.mp@parliament.uk
Simon Kirby, C, Brighton, Kemptown;	simon.kirby.mp@parliament.uk
Tom Brake, Lib Dem, Carshalton & Wallington, Vice-Chair of All-Party Parliamentary Cycling Group;	braket@parliament.uk
Elfyn Llwyd	elfyn.llwyd.mp@parliament.uk
Caroline Lucas	caroline.lucas.mp@parliament.uk
John Redwood	john.redwood.mp@parliament.uk

This was a typical response:

From: EAGLE, Maria [mailto:maria.eagle.mp@parliament.uk]

Sent: 03 April 2012 13:28

To: Roy

Subject: RE: Cycle Safety - the Lightmare

Dear Roy,

Thank you for contacting me regarding the safety of cyclists following the launch of The Times' *'Cities Fit for Cycling'* campaign, and with your concerns regarding the issue of lights dazzling road users.

Cycling is good for improving health, helping the environment by cutting vehicle journeys and emissions and reduces congestion for those that need to drive. It cannot be right that people have to fear their friends and relatives getting on a bike, particularly in our cities. We have got to do more to prevent cyclists being killed or seriously injured on our roads and The Times is absolutely right to raise awareness and launch a campaign for cycle safety.

Despite the importance of cycling proficiency and awareness, we must never give the impression that the responsibility to prevent collisions simply rests with cyclists. That is why The Times is right to highlight the importance of measures such as improving road junctions, creating alternative cycle routes and improving safety equipment on HGVs.

It is a real concern that the numbers of cyclists being killed or seriously injured is going up. It is not good enough for the Road Safety Minister to dismiss as 'rubbish' the concerns that his government's decisions have made our roads less safe for cyclists.

One of the very first thing that the current government did after the election was to axe £150million of funding to local authorities which the previous Labour government had allocated to support schemes including improving facilities for cycling. In addition, the government axed £37million in Road Safety grants. These cuts were before the spending review even took place. In the spending review that followed, it was reckless for the government to cut road safety budgets still further – especially to do so without carrying out any assessment of the impact on road collisions these cuts would have. These cuts included axing of funding for speed cameras, cutting the funding for the highly effective THINK! road safety campaign. It was also a huge mistake to abolish Cycling England, and to discontinue the Cycling City and Towns pilots which were demonstrating just what could be achieved with targeted support for cycling. These should have been rolled out to the rest of the country rather than discontinued by the present government.

The decision to end national targets to cut deaths and serious injuries on our roads risks reducing the focus across government to improving safety on our roads. To make matters even worse for cyclists, Ministers have allowed longer

HGVs onto our roads, which has real implications for safety as HGVs are three times as likely to be involved in fatal accidents compared to all other vehicles.

Labour is now looking seriously at each of the ideas that have been proposed in The Times 'Cycling for Cities' cycling safety campaign, including new rules on HGVs, improvements to dangerous junctions, the wider use of 20mph speed limits and how much of our spending on roads is designated to ensure they are safe for cyclists to use.

As a result of Labour's Policy Review, we have immediately backed three specific proposals that could make a major difference to the safety of cyclists, particularly in our towns and cities:

First, a proportion of existing government funding for roads should be sent aside to be spent on building new cycle ways, improving junction design and installing traffic light phasing to give cyclists a head start.

Second, the government's trial of longer HGVs should be axed and income from the proposed HGV road charging scheme used to support the road haulage industry in upgrading safety measures and training.

Third, the national targets to reduce deaths and serious injuries on Britain's roads, axed by the government, should be reinstated.

Alongside our opposition to the decisions that the government has taken which we believe have set back the progress on road safety that was made over the previous decade, these measures, are a start. However, we recognise that we need to go further to develop a detailed set of proposals to improve the safety of cyclists.

Labour held a Cycling Summit at Westminster on Thursday 1 March, which brought together cyclists and cycling organisations along with representative from motoring organisations, road hauliers and road designers. A very useful discussion on the Times manifesto and many other ideas took place. The consensus from all the groups present was that more needed to be done to improve the safety of cycling, and Labour will continue to work to see both the current Government do more on this, and to further develop our own policies.

Thank you once again for contacting me on this important issue.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maria Eagle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Maria Eagle MP
Shadow Transport Secretary

We have petitions with thousands of signatures and receive vehement complaints about these lights but we cannot persuade the authorities to act. The Press seem reluctant to take up our cause as they fear upsetting motor manufacturers and losing advertising revenue - notice how many adverts feature flashy lights.