

Northern Powerhouse will create opportunities to make roads safer

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Road safety campaign SteerSafe says chance should not be missed

As their Economies grow cities in the Northern Powerhouse should seize the opportunity to make their roads safer, according to road safety group SteerSafe (<http://www.steersafe.co.uk>).

Manchester and Leeds should look to London to see what has been done to protect vulnerable road users in the capital – then do better, it advises.

“There is a plethora of initiatives in the capital to protect vulnerable road users which whilst commendable do not go far enough,” said founder of SteerSafe Christopher Hanson-Abbott OBE.

Described as a fiasco the much vaunted Safer Lorry Scheme ignores the latest 360 technology. Already widely available, a single monitor continuously provides all-round vision into all blind spots at once.

“The Northern Powerhouse cities will have a chance to outperform London when it comes to road safety and they should seize it. They shouldn’t be content with simply copying the capital, they should learn from its experience and build on it.

“And they should start soon – because as investment starts to pour into the North West there will be yet more construction vehicles on already hazardous roads.

Editors Notes:

The Safer Lorry Scheme was introduced by London Mayor Boris Johnson on 1 September last year. Working with the London boroughs, it bans lorries over 3.5 tonnes from entering the capital unless fitted with Class V (side close proximity) and Class VI (front projection) mirrors and sideguards.

The scheme is designed to protect vulnerable road users, especially cyclists who are particularly at risk from lorries turning left. Lorry drivers need to swing the vehicle out to the right to take the left turn and the cyclist who undertakes will enter the driver’s blind spot.

Offenders can be fined up to £1,000 at magistrates’ court and the Traffic Commissioner, who has the power to modify or suspend operator licences, will be notified of companies operating vehicles in breach of the scheme.

CLOCS is an industry-led project sponsored by Transport for London that is implemented by construction clients through contracts. Its five-point Code of Considerate Practice was drawn up following an investigation into why 55% of cyclist deaths in London involved HGVs, with a disproportionate number of these being construction vehicles.

FORS is a voluntary scheme which won the Prince Michael International Road Safety Award in 2014.

Initiated in London, it is to be rolled out across the country. FORS Bronze accreditation requires all lorries over 3.5 tonnes to have sideguards and Class V and VI mirrors. Only FORS Silver and Gold require all lorries over 3.5 tonnes to eliminate or minimise 'as far as is practical and possible' all front, side and rear blind spots.

Blind spots can be eliminated by the use of 360 degree technology which employs mini-cameras mounted at the top four corners of a vehicle's body and displays on a cab-mounted monitor a continuous bird's eye view of a wide footprint all-round the vehicle, thus eliminating the time-lapse switching from one mirror to another.

ENDS

Editor's Note:

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