

Driving Forward Our National Network

*Tackling congestion and improving the UK's trunk road and motorway network:
what are the policy tools needed to achieve this?*

21st January 2009, Central London

08:45 Registration and coffee

09:30 Chairman's opening remarks

Brian Wadsworth Former Director of Strategic Roads **Department for Transport**

Section 1 – Improving performance now

09:40 The deal for road users – is it good enough?

- How big is the congestion problem?
- The impact of unreliability
- Is some congestion avoidable?
- Motoring and fuel taxation: green or groan?
- How much could modal shift help?

Professor Stephen Glaister Director **RAC Foundation**

10:00 Immediate remedial measures

- Improving the safety and environmental performance of the network
- What are the performance priorities for roads - do we measure the right things?
- Advanced signalling and queue management
- The role of technology – ITS
- The feasibility of opening up the hard shoulder
- How much extra capacity can such measures create?
- How could lane tolling work?
- Timescales for delivery

Derek Turner Director, Network Operations **Highways Agency**

10:20 Questions and discussion

10:40 Morning coffee

Section 2 – Towards a sustainable future for our regional and national networks

- 11:00** **Is regional and devolved roads policy working?**
- The impact on roads policy of increasing devolution
 - Is the RFA programme working? What happens when adjoining regions don't agree?
 - Should regional budgets be earmarked for programmes? If not, what happens to road investment?
 - How will managed motorways with rationed access affect regional and local road networks?
 - Do we need to move towards regional traffic management?

(Invited) **Speaker from Advantage West Midlands**

- 11:20** **Achieving sustainability**
- Is policy heading in the right direction?
 - How much further do we need to go?
 - What are the policy tools; how much will it cost?
 - Can we change user behaviour without pricing?

Stephen Joseph Executive Director **Campaign for Better Transport**

- 11:40** **The politics of road pricing**
- Is more extensive road pricing really needed, and by when?
 - What would road pricing aim to do, how would it work?
 - Is national road pricing a practical vision, or just a distraction?
 - How could we reduce the political hurdles?
 - What role should local or regional authorities play?
 - Are there simpler and better alternatives (like fuel duty)?

Speaker to be confirmed

- 12:00** **The spy who loves you?**
- Should the Government follow us around?
 - Data capture and protection issues – what safeguards do we need?
 - Driver or keeper liability for tolls?
 - Enforcing payment
 - Could vehicle tracking data be used for wider enforcement purposes? Should it be?

Ian McCulloch Partner **Bircham Dyson Bell**

12:20 **Questions and discussion**

12:45 **Lunch**

Section 3 – Looking to the future - a new model for roads?

- 14:00** **Enter the private sector?**
- Towards a new deal for road users
 - Is there scope to link price to service?
 - Do tolls have to be taxes?
 - Building trust – reducing cultural barriers to change
 - Who should manage our motorways – the pros and cons of the public and private sectors
- Brian Wadsworth** Former Director of Strategic Roads **Department for Transport** and **Mouchel**
- 14:20** **What does the private sector want?**
- Is there an appetite for private sector involvement in the current economic climate?
 - What conditions would facilitate private sector engagement?
 - What should the public sector be willing to offer?
 - Roads and competition: in the market or for the market?
 - Financial vs. economic optimisation – could a business model deliver?
- Speaker from KPMG**
- 14:40** **Are there lessons from the regulated industries?**
- The challenge of regulating a privatised industry
 - Do consumers get a fair deal?
 - Balancing shareholder interests against long term investment
 - Can privatised utilities be popular?
- Bill Emery** Chief Executive **Office of Rail Regulation (ORR)**
- 15:00** **Panel debate**
What action is needed to address the problems facing the UK's roads network?
- How much extra capacity can measures such as hard shoulder running and lane tolling create?
 - Is motorway widening no longer a feasible option?
 - Will road users ever accept tolling?
 - How could we measure delivery and hold the infrastructure provider to account?
 - Does modal shift need to be made more of a priority e.g. through real increases in rail capacity
 - What does the future hold for local roads and traffic management?
- Professor Stephen Glaister** Director **RAC Foundation**
Speaker from KPMG
Bill Emery Chief Executive **Office of Rail Regulation (ORR)**
Ian McCulloch Partner **Bircham Dyson Bell**
- 15:55** **Chairman's closing remarks**
- 16:00** **Afternoon tea followed by close of conference**