

Charging Heavy Goods Vehicles

Annex D – Consultation questionnaire

The consultation period began on 25 January 2012 and will run until 18 April 2012. Please ensure that this completed questionnaire reaches us by that date.

Please send consultation responses to:

Peter Steele
Department for Transport
Zone 3/25
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PART 1 – Information about you

Title	Mr
Name	John Webster
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Are you completing this questionnaire as a representative of an organisation or as an individual?

Organisation representative:

Individual:

If you are an organisation representative, please complete the section below:

Organisation or Company name	Transform Scotland
Company size	Small (10 – 50 employees) – <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medium (51 – 100 employees) – <input type="checkbox"/> Large (101+ employees) - <input type="checkbox"/>
Business Description	Trade Union – <input type="checkbox"/> Interest Group – <input type="checkbox"/> Local Government – <input type="checkbox"/> Central Government – <input type="checkbox"/> Public Sector - <input type="checkbox"/> Other - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Transport Campaign Group
If you are an organisation representing members, please describe how the views of your members were assembled	

Consultation questions on minimising the additional burden for UK registered hauliers:

1. Do you agree that the effect of the charge on UK hauliers should be compensated as far as is possible within EU rules?

Yes No ✓

Please explain your reasons and add any additional comments:

No, because the taxes paid by the UK road haulage industry do not reflect the damage caused to motorways and urban road networks. It also does not reflect other damage to the environment from congestion, noise and air pollution. The fact that so much low value goods are moved throughout the UK by road on a daily basis indicates that freight charges are too low.

1. Do you agree with the option presented here of reductions in VED rates? If not, please offer alternative proposals.

Yes ✓ No

Please explain your reasons and add any additional comments:

Consultation questions on the impacts of charging

1. The Department is not aware of any specific evidence on the price sensitivity of transport by foreign-registered HGVs in the UK, or whether there are markets which are particularly price sensitive. Do you have any information on this issue?

No

1. If you are a road transport operator licensed elsewhere in the EU or a customer of such an operator, how might the HGV user charge affect your business (please justify by evidence where possible)?

N/A

Consultation questions on other options for HGV road charging

1. What do you consider to be the likely advantages and disadvantages of a charging system based on distance travelled (as in Germany) as opposed to a time-based charge?

Advantages are that it better reflects the road and environmental damage caused by HGVs on the roads. It raises more significant sums of money for re-investment and, in particular, could be used as a mechanism to encourage modal shift to more sustainable modes such as rail and water.

We see no great disadvantage in the German system apart from greater technical complexity. However, the Germans have solved the technical issues and so the equipment could be purchased from them without having to reinvent the wheel. Presumably most European HGVs are already fitted with the equipment anyway.

1. If a distance-based charging system were adopted, should it apply to all roads or only certain categories of roads?

It would be best applied to all roads otherwise there will be a temptation for hauliers to escape charges by by-passing motorways and using other roads, thus increasing congestion, danger and pollution.

1. Would you prefer a distance-based system even if this meant large cost increases for UK operators?

Yes

No

Please explain your reasons and add any additional comments:

The costs have already been borne by many European hauliers and are no doubt recouped in a relatively short period of time. Two benefits that have accrued in Germany are that it has reduced the trend towards longer journeys and has led to faster renewal of the fleet by more efficient vehicles.

Consultation questions on overall proposals

1. Do you consider that the principle objective of charging should be to ensure a fairer arrangement for UK hauliers?

Yes

No

1. If not, what should be the principal objective?

The principal objective should be to internalise the costs from HGVs, such as road damage, congestion delays, air pollution, GHG emissions etc. and to encourage modal shift to rail for longer journeys.

1. Do you consider that the charging proposals outlined above should be implemented?

Yes

No ✓

Add comments if you wish to:

Not in their present form. A distance based system should be introduced in line with the rest of Europe.

The time-based vignette does not address any of the environmental and other issues that could be addressed by a distance-based system. Although we agree with the need to ensure that foreign hauliers contribute to the maintenance of the UK road network, we also strongly believe that the opportunity should be taken to address the other issues mentioned earlier.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire, and providing your views regarding HGV Charging.