

Government launches consultation on Road Collision Investigation Branch

A new investigation branch dedicated to learning lessons from road traffic collisions, including those involving self-driving vehicles, could be established under plans being unveiled by the government today (28 October 2021).

The Department for Transport (DfT) has launched a [consultation on proposals to set up a Road Collision Investigation Branch \(RCIB\)](#), which would operate much like the similar independent bodies that already exist for air, maritime and rail accidents.

An RCIB would carry out thematic investigations and probe specific incidents of concern to establish the causes of collisions and make independent safety recommendations to help further improve road safety across the country.

The consultation is being launched now due to the huge developments which are taking place across the transport sector, such as the rollout of increasingly automated and electric vehicles.

Roads Minister Baroness Vere said:

The UK's roads are among the safest in the world, but we're always looking at ways to make them even safer.

A new investigation branch would play a huge role in this work by identifying the underlying causes of road traffic collisions, so we can take action to prevent them from happening again.

It would also provide us with vital insight as we continue to modernise our road network to ensure better, greener and safer journeys.

Director of the RAC Foundation Steve Gooding said:

After excellent progress across many years, sustained road safety improvement has been hard to achieve over the past decade, both in the UK and further afield.

We should be challenging ourselves on whether we are understanding all we can about the causes of road collisions and what could be done to prevent them – our research to date suggests that more could be learnt – which is why today's consultation is so important and so welcome.

The consultation, which has been published on GOV.UK, will run until 9 December 2021.

Independent bodies are longstanding features of accident investigation practice in the UK. The [Air Accidents Investigation Branch \(AAIB\)](#) has been operating since 1915, while the [Marine Accident Investigation Branch \(MAIB\)](#) and [Rail Accident Investigation Branch \(RAIB\)](#) have operated since 1989 and 2005 respectively.