

Statement to Parliament: New measures to ensure lower emission lorries will pay less to use UK roads

The government is today (28 March 2018) [announcing new measures](#) to change the rates paid by hauliers of less polluting lorries, as part of our plans to improve air quality across the UK.

The newest lorries generate 80% less nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions than older ones. From February next year (2019), lorries that meet the latest Euro VI emissions standards will be eligible for a 10% reduction in the cost of the Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) levy. Euro V and older vehicles, which do not meet these emissions standards, will pay 20% more.

The [HGV Road User Levy](#), introduced in 2014, was brought in as a first step to ensure lorries pay a charge to cover the greater wear and tear they cause to road surfaces than other vehicles. This change to the levy will incentivise the industry to choose less polluting lorries.

The government will make the first changes to the levy to implement the reductions for Euro Class VI vehicles through a Statutory Instrument being laid today, with the remaining changes to increase the rates for Euro V and older vehicles expected to be included in the Finance Bill in the Autumn.

Levy rates will continue to comply with the relevant maximum levels set under European law, which for Euro 0-V rates will be determined at the time of the Finance Bill.

Note that the following shows the maximum levy rate. Levy rates depend on vehicle weight and number of axles.

Current rate	Euro VI rate from Feb 2019	Euro 0-V rate from Feb 2019
£1,000	£900	£1,200

News story: Government announces £48 million for cleaner, greener buses

Passengers across the country will benefit from a multi-million pound government investment which will help councils and bus companies put more environmentally-friendly buses on the roads.

Transport Minister Nusrat Ghani has today (28 March 2018) announced a new [Ultra-Low Emission Bus Scheme](#) aimed at cutting emissions and ensuring cleaner

and greener journeys.

The programme will see local authorities and operators in England and Wales bid for a share of a £48 million fund, which they can use to buy hundreds of new ultra-low emission buses as well as the infrastructure to support them.

This is part of the government's commitment through the [Industrial Strategy](#) to reducing greenhouse gas emissions across the transport sector.

Transport Minister Nusrat Ghani said:

We are doing more than ever before to reduce greenhouse gas pollution across all modes of transport and we are committed to ensuring nearly all cars and vans are emissions-free at their tailpipes by 2050.

In order to achieve this ambitious target, the transport sector is going to have to change dramatically over the next couple of decades – and buses are no exception.

We are confident this scheme will encourage councils and operators to invest in these ultra-low emission vehicles – speeding up the full transition to a low emission bus fleet in England and Wales.

The new scheme follows the success of the previous [Low Emission Bus Scheme](#). This led to 13 organisations receiving more than £30 million between them – enough to put more than 300 new low-emission buses on the road by 2019.

Claire Haigh, Chief Executive of Greener Journeys, said:

Today's announcement is a fantastic step in the UK's fight against air pollution and we're delighted that the government has recognised the important and vital role that buses play in helping reducing harmful emissions. The cleanest diesel buses emit fewer emissions overall than the cleanest diesel cars, despite being able to carry 20 times more passengers.

Buses are also the lifeblood of our communities, connecting families and getting people to work. Today's announcement sends a positive message that the government is serious about connecting the communities it serves and committed to putting the bus at the heart of the clean air solution.

The current funding comes as part of a wider £100 million scheme announced in November 2016 to support low-emission buses.

Through our ambitious Industrial Strategy we have committed to publishing a strategy on the pathway to zero emissions road transport which will discuss how the transport sector is going to have to change dramatically to cut down

on harmful emissions. The [Prime Minister announced](#) in December 2017 that the UK would host a zero emission vehicle Summit in Autumn 2018.

The Industrial Strategy sets out a long term plan to boost the productivity and earning power of people throughout the UK. It sets out how we are building a Britain fit for the future – how we will help businesses create better, higher-paying jobs in every part of the UK with investment in skills, industries and infrastructure.

Press release: Drug-addict who burgled homes and a school to feed his habit has sentence increased

A prolific Essex burglar has had his sentence increased after the Solicitor General, Robert Buckland QC MP, referred it for being too low.

In late 2017 James Zammutt-Cook, aged 27, burgled three homes, stealing a range of personal belongings from families, such as jewellery and a wallet. After his arrest, Zammutt-Cook also admitted to a further 24 offences, which totalled over £20,000 of loss to victims, and were motivated by a desire to fund his drug habit.

Zammutt-Cook was originally jailed for 2 years and 5 months at Chelmsford Crown Court. Today, after the Solicitor General's reference, the Court of Appeal increased his sentence to 3 years and 9 months in prison.

Commenting on the sentence increase, the Solicitor General said:

I am pleased that the Court of Appeal agreed that Zammutt-Cook's sentence should be higher. He showed no remorse for the impact that his crimes had on his victims, of which there were many.

I hope he will spend the extra time in prison reflecting on the choices he has made and turn over a new leaf on his release.

News story: Statement from the Justice

Secretary on judgment re: John Worboys

I welcome today's judgment and congratulate the victims who brought this unprecedented legal action.

I want to take this opportunity reiterate my heartfelt sympathy for all they, and the other victims, have suffered as a result of Worboys' hideous crimes.

I took expert legal advice from Leading Counsel on whether I should bring a challenge. The bar for judicial review is set high. I considered whether the decision was legally rational – in other words, a decision which no reasonable Parole Board could have made.

The advice I received was that such an argument was highly unlikely to succeed. And, indeed, this argument did not succeed.

However, the victims succeeded in a different argument.

They challenged that, while Ministry of Justice officials opposed release, they should have done more to put forward all the relevant material on other offending.

They also highlighted very significant failures on the part of the Parole Board to make all the necessary inquiries and so fully take into account wider evidence about Worboys' offending.

I also received advice on the failure of process argument and was advised that this was not one that I as Secretary of State would have been able to successfully advance.

The victims were better placed to make this argument and this was the argument on which they have won their case.

Indeed, the judgment suggests that, had I brought a case, the standing of the victims may have been compromised.

Given the very serious issues identified in this case, I can announce today that I intend to conduct further work to examine the Parole Board rules in their entirety.

As a result of the work that has been completed to date, I have already decided to abolish Rule 25 and will do so as soon as possible after the Easter recess. This will enable us to provide for the Parole Board to make available summaries of the decisions they make to victims.

In addition, I will bring forward proposals for Parole Board decisions to be challenged. I intend to consult on the detail of these proposals by the end of April alongside other proposals to improve the way that victims are kept informed about the parole process.

I will make a statement to Parliament this afternoon and set out our response

to the judgment – and our next steps – in more detail.

Press release: Traffic officer patrols to step up during South West holiday season

During the upcoming Easter holiday period and over the busy summer months, Highways England traffic officers will patrol and assist incidents on parts of the A30 in Cornwall.

Highways England already works in partnership with Devon and Cornwall Police and forms part of a multi-agency partnership in terms of safety and severe weather handling.

Patrolling of the A30 is a trial initiative to support Devon and Cornwall Police and help to address increased traffic volumes and related incidents on the A30 in Cornwall.

Traffic officers currently assist drivers in any difficulty, co-ordinate the resources of the emergency services, manage traffic to reduce incident-related congestion and clear debris from the carriageways.

Based at both Bodmin police station and Cornwall Council's Castle Canyke depot during the peak holiday months, they will now be closer at hand to provide assistance along the A30 and A38.

Traffic officers will patrol the A30 between Carland Cross and Lifton Down, and Rob Penney, South West Service Delivery Manager for Highways England, said:

We have assisted with incidents along the A30 before, but we've only previously patrolled routinely as far as Daisymount.

The aim is to provide further assistance to motorists on our South West network. We're delighted to extend our service further south into Cornwall and to continue our close working partnership with Devon and Cornwall Police and Cornwall Council.

At this stage, our traffic officers will only be patrolling the A30 during the holiday months, but there may be scope to increase the patrols in the future, dependent on a review of this trial period.

Chief Inspector Adrian Leisk, head of roads policing for the Devon & Cornwall Police and Dorset Police alliance, said:

Devon and Cornwall Police is delighted to expand its partnership working with Highways England into Cornwall.

This builds on the considerable success of the operational activity on the M5, A38 and A30 in Devon, where Highways England Traffic Officers have supported police resources in dealing with road traffic collisions and other incidents which have the potential to cause disruption on our strategic road network.

This 'one team' approach will undoubtedly help support communities and businesses who rely on a resilient and capable road network in Cornwall, during what will be the busiest periods of the year.

Highways England's Traffic Officer service patrols England's motorways and major A roads, helping to keep traffic flowing smoothly.

Traffic Officers are not an enforcement agency, but they do have the power to stop and direct traffic, close lanes and carriageways and manage traffic, and road users must obey their directions.

Traffic Officers help to keep roads running smoothly by attending incidents, ensuring the scene is safe, clearing the carriageway of debris, managing debris and supporting the emergency services.

They also deal with broken down and abandoned vehicles on the strategic road network, recovering vehicles that are causing a blockage or hazard, and ensure that the scene of an incident is safe, for road users and working partners.

For more information on the roles and responsibilities of a traffic officer go to our web page [Highways England's traffic officer service](#).

Over the Easter period, Highways England is removing some 300 miles of roadworks to make journeys better for drivers and their passengers. That means around 99 per cent of motorways and major A-roads will be roadworks-free in time for Easter.

And Highways England is also calling on drivers to do their bit and check their vehicle before setting off to avoid breakdowns, and keep the road network flowing freely.

Research shows almost half of all breakdowns are caused by simple mechanical problems which could be avoided with simple checks and nearly a quarter are caused by tyre problems.

Before setting off on journeys, motorists are advised to:

- check fuel: make sure you have enough to get to your destination.
- check tyres: check your tyre pressure and the condition of your tyres, including the spare. Look out for cuts or wear and make sure the tyres have a minimum tread depth of 1.6mm, which is the legal limit.
- check engine oil: use your dipstick to check oil before any long

journey, and top up if needed. Take your car back to the garage if you're topping up more than usual.

- check water: to ensure you have good visibility, always keep your screen wash topped up so you can clear debris or dirt off your windscreen.
- check your lights: if your indicators, hazard lights, headlights, fog lights, reverse lights or brake lights are not functioning properly, you are putting yourself at risk. In addition, light malfunctions can be a reason for your vehicle to fail its MOT.

Christian Morgan, South West operations manager for Highways England, said:

Traffic volumes increase in the South West during holiday periods and breakdowns and other incidents can cause issues on our network during these busy times.

Safety is our top priority and we advise all motorists to carry out a few simple vehicle checks before setting off over this period.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.