

Speech: Transport investment in the north

Introduction

I'm really pleased to have been asked to deliver the closing address at today's (30 November 2017) conference.

And what a choice of venue.

I hope there is no deliberate symbolism in asking a Westminster politician to talk to a northern audience about investment in the north in a building devoted to medieval warfare, hunting and instruments of torture.

Before anyone gets any ideas, let me make absolutely that clear I am a northerner as well – both in terms of where I grew up and who I represent in parliament.

And very glad I am too that these days we decide which regions get what resources through sensible means, such as consultation exercises, elections and civil dialogue.

Investment debate

Even so, the truth is that anyone who follows the debate about transport investment in the north might have got the impression that, of late, things have become somewhat gladiatorial.

Well, my view is that that, in itself, is no bad thing.

In fact, one of the reasons that the government pushed hard for metro mayors, and for the creation of sub-national transport bodies like TfN, and why we're making good progress on giving statutory status to TfN, is because we want regions across the UK to speak with a more powerful voice.

So if we're hearing free and frank debate, including at conferences like this one, something's going right.

Our record

But no one should mistake that debate for a divergence from our shared goals – that of building a transport-fuelled Northern Powerhouse.

Or still more serious a mistake – that the government is somehow washing its hands of transport in the north.

Because speaking as a northern MP who now has a seat in government, it's incredibly exciting to have a hand in delivering the things I called for when I was a backbencher.

When I took up the rail brief 17 months ago, there was already good progress underway.

In 2014, 15 minutes had been knocked off the journey between Liverpool and Manchester by upgrading the track.

In 2015, electrification of the route between Liverpool and Wigan was completed, securing quicker, more reliable journeys.

We upgraded Manchester Victoria, and built new stations at Kirkstall Forge and Apperley Bridge.

In 2016, we awarded new Northern and TransPennine Express rail franchises, which will deliver new trains, 500 new carriages, over 2,000 extra services, and room for 40,000 more passengers per week.

These new franchises mean that, by 2020, rail travel in the north will have been transformed.

All the trains will be brand new or completely refurbished, and all the Pacer trains will be gone.

Also in 2016, we committed £60 million for TfN to develop plans for Northern Powerhouse Rail.

And this year, we opened the Ordsall Chord, connecting Manchester's three main railway stations for the first time; all part of the Great North Rail Project, on which we are spending over a billion pounds to deliver better services across the north, with more seats and faster journeys.

Still to come

And there are many more important rail projects underway right now.

The upgrade of Liverpool Lime Street station.

The extra services between Blackburn and Manchester, Bishop Auckland and Darlington – starting next month.

Next year, upgrades between Manchester and Blackpool via Bolton and Preston will be complete.

Followed by a new fleet of Azuma Class 800 trains on the East Coast Main Line.

And we're working with Network Rail and Rail North on options for upgrades between Manchester, Leeds and York to deliver more seats and faster journeys.

I could go on – but I think the point is clear.

That's the to-do list of a government taking very seriously its responsibilities towards northern transport.

And I haven't even mentioned the billions we are spending on northern roads.

Recent announcements

Now, I hope these projects will be familiar to most people in the room.

But I'd also like to touch on some recent announcements that might be less familiar.

Such as the [Rail Strategy we announced yesterday](#).

The [HS2 productivity report](#) also out today.

The [Transforming Cities Fund, announced in last week's budget](#).

And the new Nexus rolling stock announcement for Newcastle, Gateshead and Sunderland.

Rail strategy

Let me take the rail strategy first.

It's a story that begins with privatisation, over 20 years ago.

On all the measures that matter most, privatisation has succeeded.

We have one of the most improved railways in Europe, and the safest.

Passenger numbers have more than doubled.

In the north, too, whether one is looking at journeys within the different regions of the north, or to and from the north and elsewhere in the country, passenger numbers are all significantly up over the last 20 years.

Today, for instance, TransPennine Express is one of the country's fastest growing operators.

But just because something has worked, doesn't mean it can't be improved.

I understand why the railways were privatised in the way they were, with the trains and the tracks split into separate companies.

But the railway of the mid-1990s is very different from that of today.

And delivering the kind of improvements I've been talking about on a working railway is tough.

Doing so across different teams with complicated contracting arrangements is even tougher.

And when things go wrong, a lack of a joined up approach can make things much worse for passengers.

Solutions can take too long.

Communication with passengers is poor.

Train companies take the blame for the failings of Network Rail.

And Network Rail as an infrastructure company has not always been incentivised to focus on the best possible customer service.

So last year we announced that we would start bringing back together the operation of track and train on our railways.

And today I am very pleased to announce that, as part of our reforms, the first line on which track and train operations will be jointly run will be the East Coast Main Line, connecting London, Yorkshire, the north east and Scotland.

From 2020, we're going to introduce a new generation of long-term partnerships between the public sector and a private partner.

Both track and train will be operated by a single management, under a single brand and overseen by a single leader.

It will mean a better railway, better able to meet today's challenges.

Whether it's planning essential repairs, putting in place improvements that can squeeze in an extra service to meet demand, or responding quickly to a problem on the network – the line should be much better run by one team of people working together.

HS2

Let me move on to talk about HS2.

Today we're publishing a report written following discussions with 100 employers, local authorities and universities across the country.

It sets out how HS2 will improve northern productivity by raising regional growth, leading to a wider range of jobs and careers, which in turn will make it more attractive for graduates to stay in the north – among many other benefits.

But one thing that is very clear is that both central government and local public bodies of all kinds need to work together and plan ahead for HS2 if we are to maximise its benefits – whether to housing, education, local businesses or anything else.

HS2 is coming.

It's going to transform travel in our country and in the north.

And local areas need to get HS2-ready.

Nexus trains

That's some of what we've announced today and yesterday.

But there were also some big announcements for the north in the budget last week.

Foremost among which is our commitment to spend £337 million replacing the 40-year-old trains on the Tyne and Wear Metro.

The Metro was Britain's first light rapid transit system and first step-free railway.

Today it remains the second largest metro system in the country.

But its trains are showing their age.

So Tyne and Wear is going to have a new fleet, with the first deliveries coming in 2021 – creating a state of the art Metro once again.

Transforming Cities Fund

The other big announcement in the budget was the government's new [Transforming Cities Fund](#).

And it's an idea inspired by this city.

Leeds has long had ambitions to improve transport across the city – ambitions the government shares.

So when a proposed a trolleybus scheme didn't get the approval it needed last year, we pledged to put £173 million into an alternative.

First Group and local leaders since raised an extra £100 million on top.

Now Leeds is getting:

- new buses
- new park and ride sites
- real-time information for passengers
- and accessibility improvements

The aim is to double bus patronage in Leeds within 10 years.

And what's worked in Leeds can work elsewhere, so last week the Chancellor unveiled our new £1.7 billion Transforming Cities Fund.

Half to be shared by the 6 areas with elected metro mayors.

With other cities in England to bid for the remainder.

Liverpool City Region will get £134 million.

And Greater Manchester £243 million.

Just like in Leeds, we want the money to drive productivity and spread prosperity, by improving local transport links and making it easier for people to get around and access jobs.

And we want changes that benefit every citizen, especially those struggling at the margins.

It will be up to cities to tell us what improvements they want, but we want truly transformational changes.

Conclusion

So I hope those remarks are sufficient to suggest that the government hasn't quite given up on the north just yet.

In fact, we're only just getting going.

But suffice it to say, for now, that in coming months and years, we are going to be working with the north and for the north.

There'll be plenty of debate and discussion on the way.

But during my time in the job, I'll be focused on deeds.

On delivery.

That's how we'll all be judged in the future.

On what we, working together, do for the north.

Thank you for your time.

[News story: Education Secretary visits School of the Year](#)

Education Secretary Justine Greening heard first-hand how the transformation of a school in Romford from the bottom 10% to the top 1% in the country has changed its pupils' lives.

[Broadford Primary School](#) hosted the visit on Thursday 30 November after it was crowned 'School of the Year' at the 2017 TES Schools Awards.

Meeting with pupils and teachers, the Education Secretary saw how the school, which rose from Special Measures in 2011 to Outstanding in 2014, gained this prestigious accolade.

To help raise standards the school introduced a training programme for phonics to help improve literacy levels for pupils, and has started a coaching scheme for its teachers to support their career development. Since July last year it has been a National Teaching School, helping to share its example of best practice with schools across the country.

As a result of the hard work of teachers like those at Broadford Primary School and the government's reforms, there are now 1.9 million more children being taught in schools that are rated good or outstanding than in 2010.

Secretary of State for Education Justine Greening said:

We want all children to get a world-class education and help create a Britain that is fit for the future. We already have 1.9 million more children in good or outstanding schools than in 2010 – standards are continuing to rise and by sharing best practice and celebrating excellence in our schools we can continue to build on this success.

Broadford Primary is a deserving winner of the TES School of the Year 2017 award. It has been a pleasure to meet with pupils and teachers today and to see how their hard work has transformed this truly outstanding school. We want every child to reach their potential, wherever they are growing up having access to a highly quality education – like that offered at Broadford – is at the heart of our ambition.

The TES School Awards ensure great schools are recognised for their efforts, and Broadford Primary is a deserving winner of School of the Year 2017.

Malcolm Drakes, Executive Headteacher at Broadford & Mead Primary said:

At Broadford Primary our vision is to ensure that no child's future is limited by their background. To be able to show Justine Greening the different strategies that we have used to raise aspirations and outcomes for some of Havering's most vulnerable pupils was a real privilege. For the Secretary of State to take the time to talk to teachers, listen to pupils and demonstrate a very clear understanding of some practical ways we can improve our system for the benefit of the most vulnerable was so encouraging.

Our Learning Federation has promoted meaningful links with businesses like Bloomberg and PwC. To hear today about the Skills Summit and the Department for Education's efforts to make these links more structured is very positive. To provide a golden thread all the way through a child's education, linking their experiences and lessons to future employment will only aid mobility.

Now in its ninth year, the [TES awards](#), which are run by the TES, a news outlet for the profession, recognise the outstanding contributions made by schools and teachers. Broadford Primary School was celebrated for its achievements at a gala event at London's Grosvenor House earlier this year.

[Press release: UK-Taiwan trade talks boost agriculture, energy and pharmaceutical industries](#)

UK – Taiwan bilateral trade grew to £5.35 billion last year and Ministers want to continue strengthening trade links. In today's talks (1 December), held in London, Ministers agreed to set up new sector 'dialogues' on trade in agriculture and energy.

They also signed an agreement to make it easier for UK specialist medicines to be used in Taiwan, and agree to build on the UK's £176 million of financial services exports to Taiwan last year.

The talks come on the same day that Taiwan's China Airlines' new London to Taipei flight begins, re-establishing a direct route between the UK and Taiwan for the first time in 5 years.

International Trade Minister Greg Hands said:

With its vibrant economy and thriving consumer base, Taiwan presents huge opportunities for British companies to strengthen our trade links. Exports to Taiwan grew 21% in the last 5 years, and there's room for more growth as we satisfy Taiwan's demand for quality British goods like Scotch Whisky.

Our new trade dialogues in agriculture and energy will offer UK expertise in leading industries and I look forward to continuing to work together closely further deepen our trade and investment links.

During the talks, an agreement was signed which will make it easier for UK and Taiwanese businesses in biotechnology and pharmaceutical fields to protect their intellectual property. This will support leading UK industries like pharmaceuticals, helping companies export products like cutting-edge genetic medicines to Taiwan knowing their rights will be protected.

The new dialogues on agriculture and energy will also bring big opportunities to UK companies. Taiwan plans to increase its renewable energy production

from 4% to 20% of supply by 2025, much of it from offshore wind farms, and as the world's leading offshore wind producer, the UK is poised to be a key partner in this.

The new agricultural dialogue is also a boost for UK farmers as Taiwan is the largest per-capita pork consumer in Asia. Both Ministers used the talks to underline their commitment to resolving the remaining steps that would see Taiwan lift its ban on British pork as soon as possible.

The ministers also agreed to deepen links between the UK and Taiwan's leading financial sectors, building on the UK's £176 million of financial services exports to Taiwan last year. In particular, the UK will offer its expertise in financing renewable energy projects and fintech development in Taiwan.

Vice Minister of Economic Affairs Mei-Hua Wang said:

The UK and Taiwan have a very strong trade and investment relationship, and as the UK leaves the EU, Taiwan looks forward both to strengthening bilateral trade flows and to expanding mutual cooperation. We have confidence in the UK economy, the world's fifth largest, and we consider it one of the priority destinations for Taiwanese investment in Europe.

We also hope more UK investors make use of Taiwan's excellent investment environment in the Asia-Pacific region. I look forward to working further with Minister of State Greg Hands and I hope we can together unlock new business opportunities and resolve our trade issues, including the UK's outstanding applications on agricultural exports to Taiwan.

Notes to editors

1. The first UK Taiwan trade talks took place in 1991 and have happened almost annually since.
2. UK-Taiwan bilateral trade grew to £5.35 billion in 2016, supported by a 60% growth in UK services exports to Taiwan in the last 5 years.
3. Taiwan is the third largest market for single malt whisky exports and the fourth largest overall worth £175 million in 2016.

Further information

Contact the DIT Media and Digital Team on 020 7215 2000

Follow us: [@tradegovuk](https://twitter.com/tradegovuk), [gov.uk/dit](https://www.gov.uk/dit)

Press release: Green light for new Kent motorway junction

Junction 10a will serve communities and businesses around Ashford, improving journeys by relieving pressure on the existing junction 10 and helping boost growth and jobs in the area.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling announced the decision in a letter to the Planning Inspectorate, who reviewed the plans last winter. Today's news paves the way for construction work to begin early next year.

Chris Welby-Everard, Regional Delivery Director for Highways England in the South East said:

This major new motorway junction is the biggest boost for Ashford since the arrival of international rail services nearly 20 years ago. Junction 10a will unlock job-creating developments in the local area and will take pressure off the existing junction 10. It will bring jobs, better infrastructure for local services and help maintain the quality of life in and around Ashford.

Without Junction 10a in place, future economic growth would have been constrained. Today's news will bring real confidence that we will have the road capacity needed to enable a major programme of economic and commercial development and house building.

I am grateful to all the local authorities and stakeholders in the area who have worked with us to gain this planning consent, including the 900 local people who took part in our consultation last year. We will continue to work closely with our partners going forward, especially people with homes and businesses nearest to the proposed new junction.

The new junction is part of the Government's record £15 billion investment in major roads. Junction 10a will be constructed about half a mile south of the existing junction 10. It will use two bridges and connect to the existing A20 and a new dual carriageway link road built to the A2070 near Sevington.

Work on the improvements will begin early next year and the new junction is expected to open to traffic in 2019.

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.

Speech: The long and winding road – the humble number plate

Hello, it's great to be invited back to speak at this meeting.

This is my fourth year as Surveillance Camera Commissioner and third time back at this conference.

Many of you will recall that first conference when I challenged the police on three counts;

- what is your legislative mandate to conduct ANPR?
- what is your governance of 9000 cameras?
- why is your transparency so opaque?

In essence, where is your legitimacy? – a crucial ingredient for the public to have confidence in not just what you do, but why you do it, how you do it and how you protect the civil liberties of our citizens.

Last year I raised the issue of data quality and type approval cameras. This year I have decided to, yes – do it again. Let me first acknowledge that there has been progress made against those challenges under the leadership of Assistant Chief Constable Paul Kennedy and Chief Constable Hall.

For those not familiar with my role as Surveillance Camera Commissioner I will firstly provide a brief resume.

Secondly, I will explain where I see ANPR currently, with a brief reflection from where you have come and a look to the future;

Finally, I'd like to touch upon the National Surveillance Camera strategy which I launched in March 2017.

My role:

A little background about my role as Surveillance Camera Commissioner :

- it was created under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- I was appointed by the Home Secretary but am independent from government. My commission was extended for a further term of 3 years last March
- the role covers England and Wales

- I'm entrusted to ensure that surveillance camera systems are used to support and protect communities – not spy on them
- the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice was issued by the Secretary of State and contains 12 guiding principles which if followed will mean cameras are only ever used proportionately, transparently and effectively
- surveillance camera systems which fall within my remit are those operated overtly in public spaces in England and Wales by 'relevant authorities' and include CCTV, ANPR. Body worn cameras, helicopter/drone- borne cameras, dash cams, indeed more. The surveillance camera system definition goes beyond simply the camera itself and extends to the analytic systems, monitoring and storage media, reference systems, automatic facial recognition systems and indeed any technology which is integrated with those systems

My primary role is three fold, to:

- encourage compliance with the code
- review the operation of the code
- advise on any amendments to how the code should develop- Review of Impact of Code (recommendations made within that re ANPR)
- annual parliament report which was laid before parliament last week
- in addition chapter 5 of the SC code describes how I may regulate

How does it work

Well – 'relevant authorities'-police, local authorities, PCCs, NCA and non-designated police forces – must be able to demonstrate that they have addressed their statutory 'duty to have regard' to the code. It is a requirement of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

Organisations who are not 'relevant authorities' are encouraged to voluntarily adopt the code. The code also considers your obligations as data controller under the provisions of the Data Protection Act.

So ANPR

ANPR in the UK must surely be one of the largest data gatherers of its citizens in the world. Mining of meta-data – overlaying against other data bases can arguably be far more intrusive than communication intercept in some circumstances.

Drawing as my previous experience in the police, retiring as a Commander National Coordinator Pursue for the police service throughout the Olympics, I get operating in a benign environment and also consequence management – policing by consent or as the secretary of state's code refers to it, surveillance by consent. This is shorthand for 'get your system right, make it transparent, make it bullet proof in terms of integrity' and above all be transparent in terms of your legitimacy – your basis in law for doing what you do, your case of necessity, your balance of proportionality and a demonstrable assessment of both intended and collateral intrusion risk.

Yes what you do is profoundly important to protecting the public from some of the most serious risks facing communities today. But what you do is also profoundly intrusive and in a proud and civilised western democracy the public also need protection from disproportionate and unjustified intrusion by the state.

The secretary of state's code specifically states that I will be a source of advice as to the validation of such systems .

And so – lets start with the humble number plate!

The number plate is what this conference is all about.

In the language of the mnemonic – it puts the 'NP' in ANPR – without an accurate 'NP' (number plate), you have no accurate 'R' (recognition) – no matter how sophisticated your 'A' (automation) is!

When you distil it into its component parts – that's largely it, isn't it? If this bit isn't right it is your first point of failure, the consequences of which may be significant. Do you agree? As a former firearm commander and Counter Terrorism commander I can assure you ladies and gentlemen that if I am deploying officers with a lethal force option on the basis of an intelligence case which may include ANPR data....I certainly agree!

The stats

According to the NPCC fact sheet the national ANPR infrastructure grabs 25 to 40 million reads a day – 20 billion a year? 20 billion what – yes – you're getting it – number plates.

Now – I hear figures being quoted of ANPR accuracy of more than 97 percent, now that doesn't sound bad does it. But that is still, if the NPCC figures are to be believed, between 750,000 and 1.2 million misreads per day – so what actually is your tolerance for inaccuracy? What about the operational commanders in the room?.

Now some of the causational factors of misreads and missed reads of number plates are arguably beyond your control, particularly where the qualitative standards which govern number plate production and use are concerned. I know you are working hard on the issues which you can improve on....and I am determined to work hard on those you cannot.

I asked these questions last year!

1. If this database is to be acceptable how important is it that its accurate?
2. Has there ever been any adequate and deeply meaningful programme of sampling of information held in NADC or in local force servers?

3. And if there has, why is it that I have had to work so hard to unearth any form of meaningful empirical ANPR generated evidence that I can put under the noses of those who regulate the manufacture and testing of number plates and convince them that there is a problem here beyond the wherewithal of the police – which they DVLA/DVSA are not yet effectively contributing to a solution.

If this data is to be accurate what are the key determinants for that to happen – quality of camera (type approval), quality of installation? Quality of number plates being recorded?

A bit on cyber

Here is a challenge – how comprehensive and meaningful is your strategy to ensure that your national surveillance system is resilient to cyber attacks now, and in the future resilient to individual and state actors to access and manipulate or steal?

Under the umbrella of my strategy I am setting standards which will hopefully prevent the manufacture and sale of camera hardware and software with a proven past cyber vulnerability. I am advocating regular cyber intrusion testing of systems, to make sure cyber defences are up to speed and if not, are suitably patched, I am advocating appropriate cyber awareness and disciplines amongst camera operators to make sure a busy dedicated operative does not stick a pen drive in to a system and infect it, to make sure that operators know a cyber attack when they see one, and what to do about it. I could go on – you get the message.

So – is ANPR working properlylegitimately?

ANPR is hot wired across society – it was previously a traffic management device that had a parallel use to support criminal intelligence operations. Its utility was recognised.

Now HMG raises vehicle revenue from it, enforces MOT and insurance enforcement and supports the private parking industry. (still I might add – no democratic oversight from Parliament)

Turning to the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice and the guiding principles within it; principle 8 – Surveillance camera system operators should consider any approved operational, technical and competency standards relevant to a system and its purpose and work to meet and maintain standards.

Principle 12 – any information used to support a surveillance camera system which compares against a reference database for matching purposes should be accurate and kept up to date.

Now I know that all forces must comply with Standards 1 and 2 (data standards and infrastructure standards) respectively to connect to the NAI.

Last year I said, and I will reiterate here, that I understand currently NADC accept all data fed into their system when there must be some doubt that some

forces cameras are not set up correctly. Such cameras should be excluded but who polices this? Perhaps the NASP standard is more a site acceptance test and does not constitute a product standard. I know industry believes NASP should have gone further and be developed into a performance standard that ANPR equipment should be tested and certified to meet prior to purchase.

In the current economic climate, there is significant pressure on organisations like the police and LEAs to purchase economically, and there is a risk that they will be offered equipment at an attractive price with claims that it is fit for their purposes where in reality it may not be. Once equipment has been purchased however, it is in the interests of both the vendor and the purchaser to get the equipment through the NASP test in order to bring it into service.

It is industry's view that the lack of rigour in the NASP test (it might be described as a "quick look see" test) enables it to be passed by equipment that does not necessarily meet all of the purchaser's requirements. As a result, the quality of the data delivered may be lower than required, with the consequential detriment to the purchaser's operations and to the protection of the public.

I am delighted to hear at this conference that the new national standards are still being worked upon and will further strengthen the operation – I look forward to seeing the details.

So therefore the importance of compliance with those standards and in particular the need for regular performance monitoring / evaluation and annual testing is imperative but the question lurks – is this enough? And how is it policed?

The police must robustly rebut the contention from industry about a lack of 'rigour'. Equally they should be in a position to rebut similar concerns from the public. They must evidence policing of the system is robust.

What performance monitoring – qualitative and quantitative – is carried out during the day and at night as required under the standard?

How do forces check for poor performing ANPR systems?

A key concern for me – is do we / you, fully understand the volume of misreads or missed reads on the database and the key underlying causes – 'in my experience these are not quantified to the extent that the public or indeed regulators..would expect'.

In my opinion in the interests of legitimacy – in the interests of transparency – I said last year that this is a key and urgent piece of work for the police to undertake. Extract data from the NADC to help explain the picture relating to accuracy? But it's costly to do that!!

Well could somebody please tell me the totality of the cost of the ANPR system, cameras, officers to deploy, buildings to house back office, cost of NADC development, electricity, storage of data, installation, performance measurement of 8500 cameras – and then please tell me it isn't worth doing?

Help me out – how does the cost of success stack up against the cost of failure?

Quality of number plates

ANPR depends more or less absolutely on the quality of number plates it captures. The whole infrastructure, I would argue, is predicated against the fact that number plates does what it says on the plate – allows you to read the number! If they are frustrated by their design or people easily circumventing capture by screwing a deceptive screw between a 1 and a 1 making an H – then who should be concerned? Arguments have been advanced that the number of people manufacturing number plates should be limited. I think there is an argument to say that, production of number plates is so integral to the system – that even stricter controls need to be applied – akin to production of driving licences and passports – thereby providing the authorities with powers of examination and seizure.

So – we all know dodgy number plates can defeat the system, I understand there are 1000s of number plate suppliers in the UK. This, in an unregulated environment which seems tailor made to defeat the system. But the first imperative is understanding the position and the impact of manipulation of number plates. This is where an open and transparent review needs to be conducted-without which how can change be promoted. Intrinsically I am not naturally born to more and more regulation!

It was Winston Churchill who once said, “If you make ten thousand regulations you destroy all respect for the law” – House of Commons, 3 February 1949.

And who would argue with his wisdom?

However my concern around ANPR, its size and scale, its impact on the citizen, demands greater control to prevent inaccurate data reads – I don't think the police can do this, I don't think that the police should be expected to do this. I do think placing ANPR on a statutory footing can easily bring about this type of regulation. I will support any reasonable effort by the police to exert this pressure.

So what have I done?

I have convened a work group of Industry specialists, NMA representatives, DVSA, DVLA, Home Office Cast , Home office policy – ANPR.

Why – because it's important this system has integrity and they have key responsibilities which play in to the problem and the solution.

I have asked Home Office ANPR Policy team to research the misreads and missed reads issue to get an evidential, rather than anecdotal foundation on which to address the problem.

I have gleaned from Home Office research with police forces, there could be as much as a 3 percent error rate attributable to poor, delaminated, poorly constructed, difficult to read, ill-fitted plates. 3 percent of 20 to 25 million captures a day could equate to 75000 to 1.25 million misreads a day.

I am very bothered by this. Very bothered indeed, because I know that errors on the hot list could negatively impact on the citizen.

Next who is responsible for this error rate continuing police for on road enforcement? DVSA for MOT standards when considering the quality of a number plate? DVLA for non introduction of a 3rd party certification process to better regulate manufacturers of number plates? – Industry standards? Manufacturers? Procurers? Installers?

Consultants to ensure cyber resilient and cyber savvy infrastructure and disciplines? The answer of course is 'all of the above'. This isn't a silo issue – it's a system issue and has to be addressed as such.

I have my fifth meeting this year to achieve my first objective of this whole system approach – that is to deal with the MOT issue and seek support to amend the wording of the MOT test standard where number plates are concerned to strengthen the test.

Running alongside this I am keen to explore stronger standards re certification (BS 145 has been introduced but is not mandatory).

So baby steps. Next term I look at type approval and related issues.

But it is appropriate that I acknowledge what you the police are doing. You have very determined and talented people working this problem on your behalf (as well as those in the Home Office). In Chief Constable Hall, his predecessor Paul Kennedy, and John Dwyer, to name but a few there has been tangible and demonstrable commitment to rise to the challenges which I have set.

I know that a defining characteristic of policing is that you always make things happen for good despite sometimes monumental challenges, and of course I acknowledge the overwhelming sense of determination in you to get things right. You have other challenges down the line with new data protection laws and GDPR, but a recent development in resolving a fundamental question of data retention periods, something which has inexplicably rumbled on for years, I think is an encouraging symptom of progress and one which I hope will stand you in good stead for the challenges to come.

In conclusion therefore:

The National Surveillance Camera strategy is working with police to drive up standards. A survey of all police forces in England and Wales has delivered a 100 percent response – the compliance by police forces with their PoFA responsibilities to ANPR is 95 percent.

ANPR has greater capacity to move towards integrated platforms – indeed it was considered as such for the LEDS Home Office approach which I now understand is on hold.

Compliance with PoFA, DPA and new legislation coming in in 2018 is key and central to my regulatory approach.

Engagement with fellow regulators – ICO, IPCO and HMIC will continue to strengthen.

Thank you, and I look forward to seeing great progress over the course of the coming year in terms of transparency, compliance and engagement with the public on the use of ANPR.