

TYNE AND WEAR FREIGHT ACTION PLAN

Newsletter

JANUARY 2008

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Port of Tyne – Signs Installed on the A19

In December, the Highways Agency installed freight signs to the Port of Tyne on the A19 northbound from Testos roundabout. The signs complement those installed on the A185 by South Tyneside Council in April last year. The scheme has been progressed through the Partnership and has involved successful joint working between the Highways Agency, Local Transport Plan Core Team, Port of Tyne and South Tyneside Council.

Trial Electronic Information Point (EIP)

The Partnership is to install a trial EIP for drivers in the reception area at the Durham Roadchef Services on the A1. The EIP will provide key information for drivers entering the conurbation, including traffic information, lorry parking, routes to freight destinations, best practice information and relevant contact details. The Partnership are also liaising with Durham County Council with a view to incorporating freight information in the County. The EIP will be based on the Partnership's website, but adapted to operate on a touchscreen basis. The use of the EIP will be monitored and feedback will be used to adapt the facility to make it more fit for purpose. The target date for installing the EIP is the end of January. If successful, further EIPs could be installed at other locations.



Consolidation Centre – Feasibility Study

Newcastle City Council have commissioned consultants WSP to carry out a feasibility study for a Consolidation Centre for the city centre, focussing on Eldon Square. A Consolidation Centre allows multiple part-loads to be combined into single shipments and can help maximise the efficiency of distribution vehicles. Experience from cities such as Bristol has shown that this can lead to a substantial reduction in overall vehicle numbers delivering to the city centre. The study is being funded jointly by Newcastle City Council and Capital Shopping Centres plc. The Partnership will provide updates on the study as it progresses.

Priority Lanes

Following the completion of the priority lanes study, the Tyne and Wear authorities have agreed that all priority lanes should operate on a 24-hour basis. There will continue to be two types of priority lane (bus lanes and no-car lanes) – bus lanes may permit use by cycles and/or taxis. No-car lanes will be inclusive of buses, taxis, cyclists HGVs and vans. The respective local authority will determine the type of lane to be implemented in view of individual circumstances. Where coloured surfacing of the lanes is implemented, the colour used is to be red. The five local authorities are currently calculating the cost of converting all existing lanes to 24-hour operation.

Severe Weather Warning Alert Status/Fresnel Lenses

At the Partnership meeting in December, a representative from the Highways Agency gave a presentation on their Severe Weather Warning Alert Status, which was launched in October. The system operates on the basis of a dual alert. An Amber alert provides an initial warning of severe weather which has potential to cause problems. A Red alert advises drivers to park up and wait until severe weather passes. The main communication channels are through the HA dab radio station, BBC website and the RHA and FTA. The RHA and FTA would alert their members who would then in turn alert their drivers. 100,000 leaflets have already been distributed through the RHA, the FTA and truck stops.

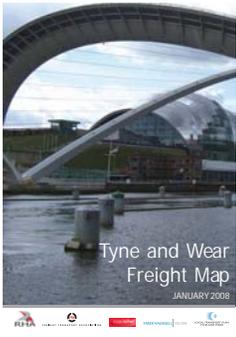
A Fresnel lens is a piece of plastic that refracts images on the blind side of the vehicle. The lens is placed on the passenger side of the cab and this reflects images of vehicles at the side of the vehicle that cannot be seen by the driver. This reduces the number of side swipes because of the blind spot. The Highways Agency have had 90,000 lenses made and distributed them to ports to hand out to foreign drivers coming into the UK. In Tyne and Wear the lenses are being handed out by DFDS at the Port of Tyne.

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Tyne and Wear Freight Map Update

The original map was launched in 2006 and identifies a suggested road freight network for the conurbation. It shows the key destinations for freight traffic and preferred routes to the destinations are depicted along with height and weight restrictions. The map also includes relevant contact details and best practice information. As part of the action plan for this year, a comprehensive review of the map has been carried out and 40 additional destinations have been added. The map has been reviewed by the respective local authorities and a final draft was circulated before Christmas. It is anticipated that the map will be printed and distributed by the end of January.

Destination Maps

These maps show a more detailed road network around individual freight destinations, highlight preferred routes, include directions from the strategic road network and depict individual buildings. Maps produced include Washington Industrial Estates, Rainton Bridge, Portobello Industrial Estate, Silverlink/Middle Engine Lane, Tyne Tunnel Trading Estate. Additional maps, which identify company locations, are under development for East Gateshead, Northumberland Street and Team Valley.

Highways Restrictions Map/Abnormal Loads

An electronic Highways Restrictions Map has been produced which aims to show all restrictions in place across Tyne and Wear. A draft version of the map has been circulated to the structures representatives at each of the local authorities for comments. A preferred route network for abnormal loads has been identified and presentational aspects of the map are currently being developed.

Website Hits

The website www.tyneandwearfreight.info was launched in December 2006. By December 2007, the website had received over 65,000 hits by 13,000 different users.

Operator Interviews

40 telephone interviews with operators have been carried out over recent months to review the work of the Partnership and inform future direction. 70% of the interviews have been carried out with operators outside Tyne and Wear. A written report of the results will be made available on the website shortly.

Get Involved

You are welcome to attend the next meeting, which is to be held on **13th March 2008** at **Newcastle Civic Centre (10am)**. For more information please contact **Michael Page** by email on michael.page@fabermaunsell.com. Alternatively call Mike on **0191 224 6512**.