

Truck Information Point (TIP)
Driver Survey

Tyne and Wear LTP Core Team
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1 Background

1.1

Truck Information Point (TIP)

The Partnership agreed that an electronic Truck Information point (TIP) be installed where drivers stop for their statutory rest breaks. Initially the NT Truckstop at Birtley was thought to be the most appropriate location. However, during the course of discussions, the truckstop announced its closure, with the doors closing for the last time in January 2007. A new location was sought, and it was decided to enter into discussions with the management of Washington Moto Services as the next most appropriate location and in the local vicinity. Unfortunately the marketing management thought that a TIP would not be appropriate for the location. After great deliberation it was decided to locate the TIP outside Tyne and Wear to intercept drivers entering the area. Discussions commenced with Roadchef to site the TIP in their reception area at Durham Services adjacent to the A1 off junction 61.

Agreement was reached with Roadchef at the end of 2007, culminating in the installation of the now rebranded Truck Information Point (TIP) in February 2008 (See Photo 1).

Photograph 1 - Truck Information Point



Regular visits are undertaken to the TIP to check that the unit is working correctly and that all the information provided is readily available. Hard copies of the tailored maps are constantly replenished to maintain a minimum level available to the driver.

A survey was carried out in December 2008 and completed in March 2009 to raise awareness, promote the Partnership and encourage the HGV driver to familiarise themselves with the TIP.

1.2

Signage

Appropriate signs were installed in the truck parking area to identify the location of the TIP. Two were positioned on lampposts at the entrance of the parking area and a third on a lamppost opposite and facing where the trucks park.

Photograph 2 - Supporting Signage



1.3

Monitoring the TIP

The usage of the TIP is monitored through an on-line matrix – results are reported at the quarterly Partnership meetings. This information shows that the TIP is reasonably well used, but the Partnership required tangible information on how the TIP benefits the HGV driver. To achieve this, a driver questionnaire was developed asking drivers appropriate questions about the TIP and whether it was suitable for their needs.

1.4

Survey Questionnaire

A questionnaire was developed (see Appendix 1) to gain information from drivers on their previous knowledge of the TIP, and if they use the TIP. The questionnaire asks drivers if the information given is satisfactory for their requirements,

It is designed to investigate if the quality of signage is satisfactory, easily seen from the lorry cab and how best it could be improved if viewed as unsatisfactory.

The main purpose of the survey was to ascertain if the information provided gave value and benefit to the driver. Was the TIP located in the most appropriate area and the value to the HGV driver of rolling it out to other locations? This was achieved through a series of questions specifically related to the interface of the TIP. A section on journey details section sought to understand the origin and destination of the vehicles, how many kilometres they had travelled and the type of goods they were carrying.

2 Findings of TIP Survey

2.1

Introduction

The interviews began in December 2008, but due to the inclement weather the interviews were deferred until such times the weather changed. The results of those interviews were analysed and announced at the December Partnership meeting. The interviews resumed in March, where 20 further interviews were completed, taking the total to 33.

Photograph 3 – Parking Day 1



Photograph 4 – Parking Day 2



The number of interviews completed largely depended on the utilisation of the parking area of the services. Over the 2 days in March a comparison can be seen in the utilisation of the truck park. Photo 3 is taken at 17:45 on the first day and Photo 4 is on the second day also at 17:45.

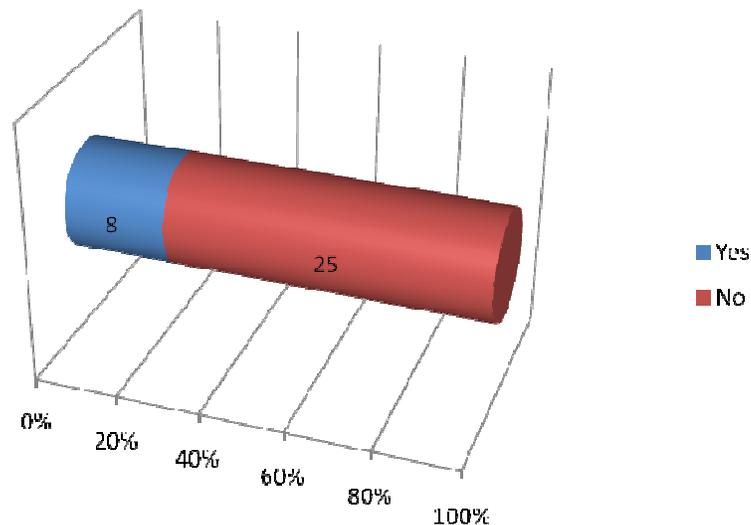
Analysis of the surveys is discussed in the following sections.

2.2

Awareness and Usage of TIP

The drivers were asked if they were aware of the TIP, 24% responded saying that they were.

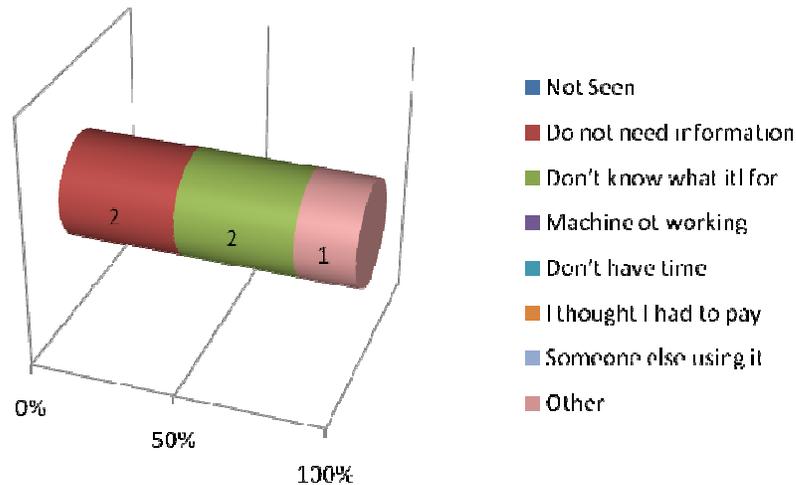
Figure 1 - Driver awareness of TIP



Of the 24% who said they were aware of the TIP (Fig 1) only 37% had actually successfully used the information point.

These people said the TIP could be better signed as it is not easy to find. It was also considered that a set of user instructions would assist those who are not sure how to use these information points. Drivers were satisfied with the information provided, but they were unsure whether the information was up to date and accurate. The remaining 53% said that they did not need the information. It is important to note that some drivers said they did not know what it was for, one saying that he thought he had to pay to use it. (See Fig 2)

Figure 2 - Why the TIP was not used



The remaining drivers who had not used the TIP were asked what would encourage them to use it. 50% said they would not use it regardless. The remaining drivers said the location of the services meant that a number of drivers will be stopping for a short break, and that they already knew the area. Some were on local deliveries or had Sat Nav in the cab and did not need the maps. When asked which type of unit they had purchased, the majority said that they also used them for the car.

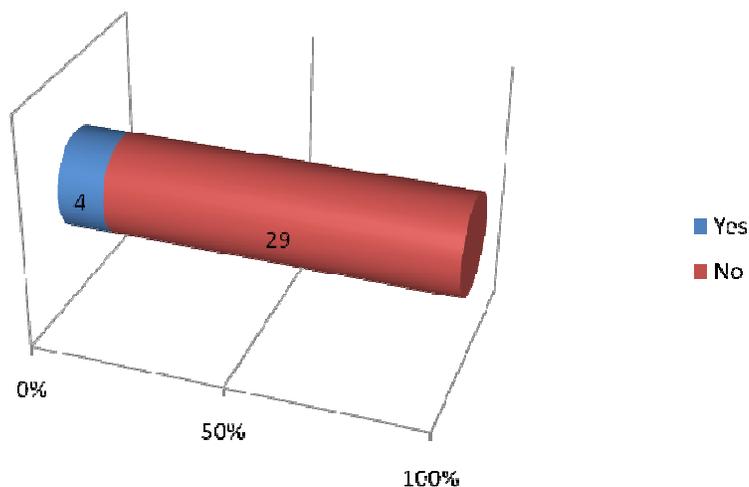
Some drivers said they would use the TIP again if it had weight and height limits for the local roads (which are provided). It was also suggested that the TIP should included information on roadworks around the area.

2.3

Signage

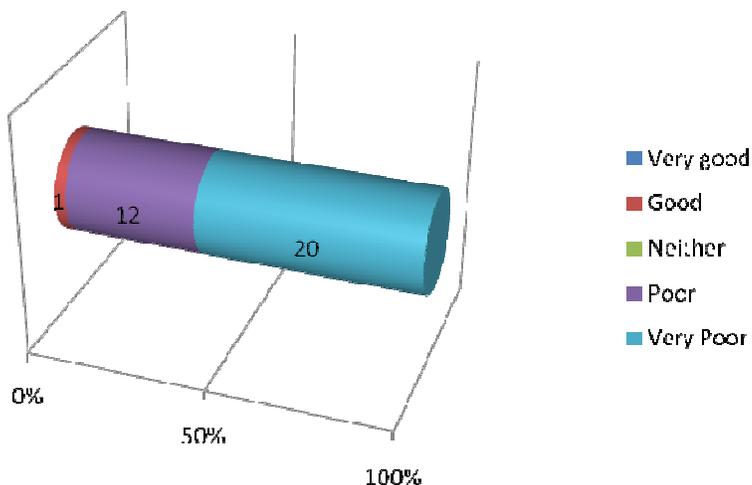
As described in the background chapter, three signs have been installed in the truck parking area. The drivers were asked to comment on the sign visibility and if they had actually seen them around the parking area (See Fig 3). 12% of the drivers interviewed had noticed the signs; however, this means that 88% did not know they were located in the parking area.

Figure 3 - Signage Visibility



This result made the next question self explanatory in that 99% of the drivers said that the signage was poor or very poor. To overcome this, some of the drivers suggested that the Partnership make the signs much bigger to make them stand out from the other signs in the parking area. They should identify that an information point is on site and where it is located. If the signs were colourful they would be more obvious to any driver parking up. This is particularly true for one driver who parks regularly at Durham Services but has never seen the signs.

Figure 4 - Rating of the Signage



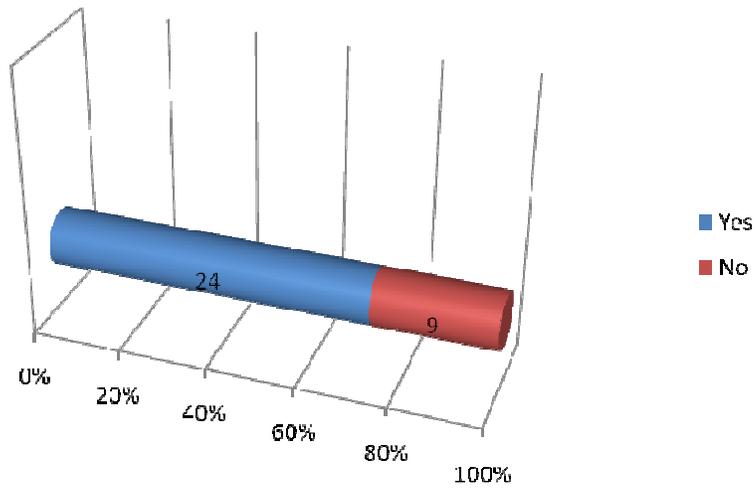
It was suggested by a number of drivers that a good location for a sign would be on the wall by the fuel station as most drivers will fuel up at some time of their stay. Some suggested putting a sign near the information point, which would show the drivers where it is located.

2.4

Appropriate Location and Value

As can be seen from the graph (Fig 5), 72% of the drivers viewed the TIP as being in the correct location, one saying that it should be located at MOTO Washington Services. It should be noted that not all drivers will use the services during the day as some will be on a statutory short break.

Figure 5 - Appropriate Location for TIP



It was suggested that although Durham Services was an ideal location for the TIP, it would make sense and benefit the drivers if it was relocated to the fuel station. The majority of drivers refuel when in the services so will see the TIP immediately, especially with the bigger, bolder signage. It would then be in a more accessible position even for the short stay drivers.

2.5

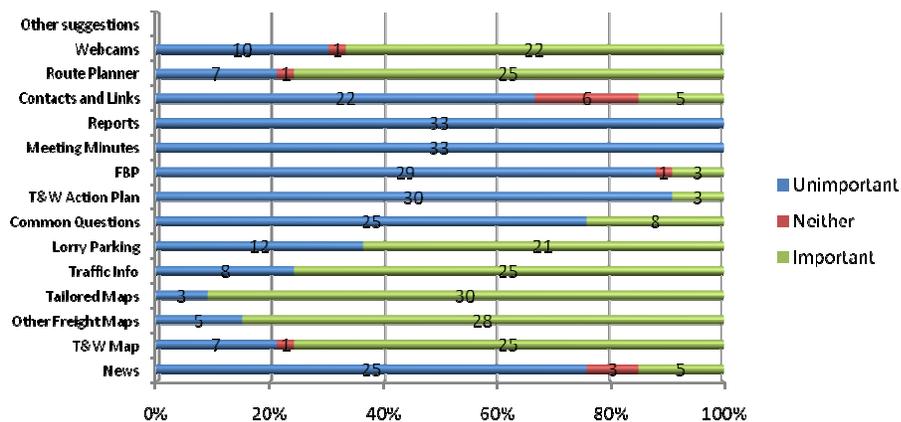
Information Provided

Analysis of the surveys shows that the information drivers requested from the TIP is a stark contrast to that for desk top pc applications. The popular sessions taken from an on line matrix shows that traffic info sessions are the most visited, followed by News, destination maps, lorry parking, common questions down to the least popular which was the regional map.

Figure 6 shows that the most important pages for the driver are tailored maps and other regional maps. It also shows that the route planner, traffic information and lorry parking is high on the requirements. The pages that are of least value or benefit to the driver are Common Questions, News, Contacts and links, T&W Action Plan, Freight Best Practice, Meeting Minutes and Reports. It is proposed that the TIP is adjusted in the future to take account of this feedback.

It is surprising to find that 85% of the drivers interviewed thought that the information point should be rolled out to other locations. There were no suggestions as to where, but it is encouraging that the driver might possibly use the TIP in the future.

Figure 6 - Value of the information

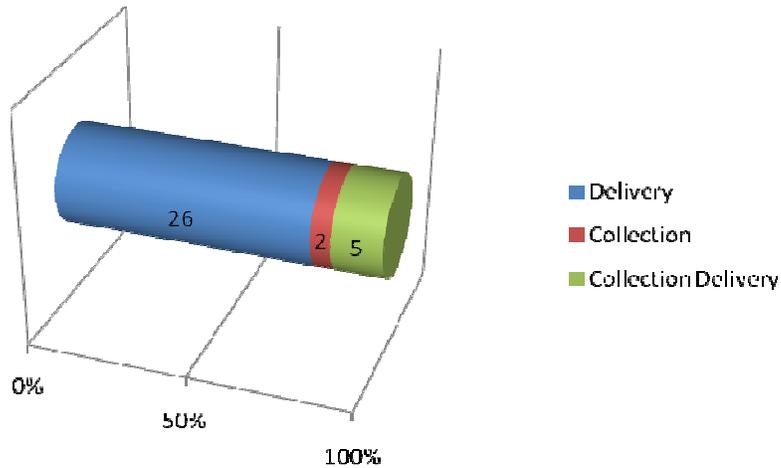


2.6

Journey Details

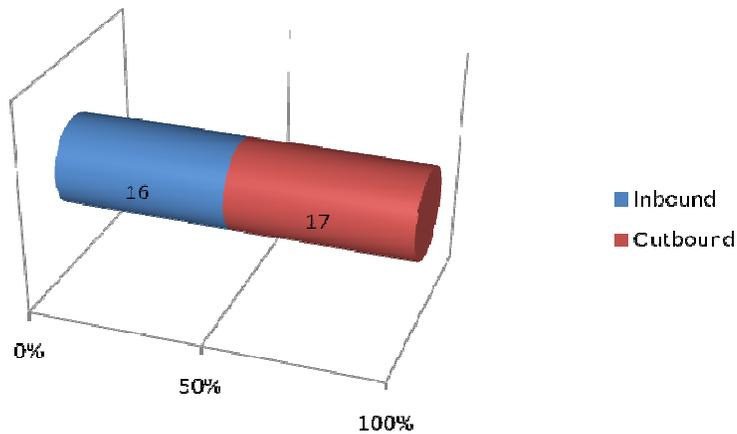
As part of any survey it is important to find the routes drivers are taking, and to capture the origins and destinations. With the services being adjacent to the busy A1 it is necessary to ascertain if the vehicle has a destination outside Tyne and Wear and the kilometres travelled. From the survey the average length of the journey was found to be 335km.

Figure 7 – Purpose of Journey



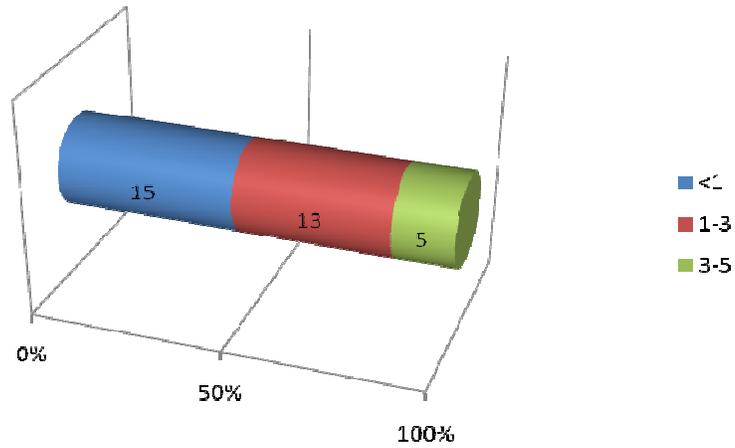
The survey found that 79% of the vehicles, were on their way to deliver goods to customers on a multi drop trip (See Fig 7)

Figure 8 – Vehicle Incoming or Outgoing on Journey



The direction of the vehicle shows that 50% were on the inward journey, travelling on to other destinations. The other 50% had completed their deliveries and were on their way back to the original starting point (see Fig 8).

Figure 9 – Number of Journeys per week in Tyne and Wear



It was found from the survey that 45% of drivers visited Tyne and Wear less than once per week. 39% were in Tyne and Wear more than once, but less than three. The remaining 16% were either, local or regional companies delivering and collecting goods in and around Tyne and Wear (see Fig 9).

3 Summary of TIP Survey

3.1

Conclusions

From the driver survey the analysis produced some interesting results. Only 21% of drivers using the Durham Services knew of the existence of the TIP. However the drivers who had used the TIP thought the information provided was satisfactory and catered for their requirements. They did say that it was not easy to use and navigate around initially, but got better with use. The addition of user instructions would be of great assistance to the driver who is not familiar with touch screen technology. Drivers who had not used the TIP said if it had the correct information they would probably start to use it. This includes information such as roadworks, Tyne Tunnel, height and weight restrictions. It is considered that information provided on the TIP should be reduced to match the requirements of the driver. These would include:

- Tailored Maps;
- Other regional freight maps;
- Traffic Info;
- Route Planner; and
- Lorry Parking.

The drivers agreed that there should be a roll out programme to install other TIP's at appropriate locations. It was also suggested that the unit in Durham services be transferred to the fuel station to give it maximum exposure.

Signage was described as being poor – it needs to be made bigger and more colourful to attract the attention of drivers parking in the area. The signage on display should be in a location where it is easily noticed. This could be on the wall by the fuel station, as the majority of drivers will fuel up while in the services.

3.2

Way Forward

The Partnership will begin discussions with Roadchef to find the best way to display the signs and for permission to make changes. However prior to those discussions, the Partnership should discuss future changes for the TIP to review the best option to move forward how to publicise the TIP.

From the survey, the TIP appears to be a good way to promote the work of the Partnership, but there needs to be additional work to make the TIP more accessible. One option is to enlarge the existing signs and to position a sign on the fuel station wall.

A review of the level of information currently provided on the TIP is needed to start reducing the amount of information to match that of the driver requirements. These are discussed in the conclusion section.

A more expensive option is to re-locate the TIP into the fuel station which:

- Will need to be surveyed for the necessary required floor space;
- Have the BT Broadband line transferred;
- Will require a technician to disconnect the current fixtures and relocate in the fuel station; and
- CyberD to disconnect and reconnect the TIP and ensure correct operation.

It is proposed that these options are discussed at the next Partnership meeting.

Appendix 1 - Driver Questionnaire

Tyne and Wear Freight Action Plan

Electronic Truck Information Point (TIP) - Driver Questionnaire

Good Morning/Afternoon my name is Michael Page. I am carrying out a survey on behalf of the Tyne and Wear Freight Partnership on the provision of information for truck drivers in the service area. Would you be able to spare a few minutes of your time to answer some questions?

Section A –Tyne and Wear Truck Information Point

An electronic Truck Information Point has recently been installed in this service area.

Q1	Were you aware of the Truck Information Point (TIP)			
	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	No	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂

IF YES GO TO Q2, IF NO GO TO Q4

Q2	Have you used the Truck Information Point (TIP)			
	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	No	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂

IF YES GO TO Q5, IF NO GO TO Q3

Q3	What are your reasons for not using the TIP?		
	Haven't see it		<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
	Don't need any information		<input type="checkbox"/> ₂
	Don't know what its for		<input type="checkbox"/> ₃
	Machine not working		<input type="checkbox"/> ₄
	Don't have time		<input type="checkbox"/> ₅
	I thought you would have to pay		<input type="checkbox"/> ₆
	Someone else was using it		<input type="checkbox"/> ₇
	Other (please state) _____		<input type="checkbox"/> ₈

GO TO Q8

Q4	Is there anything that would encourage you no use an electronic Truck Information Point?		
	Yes (state below)	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	No <input type="checkbox"/> ₂

GO TO Q10

Q5	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?	Agree	Neither	Disagree
	a) Provides useful information	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃
	b) Is Easy to Use	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃
	c) Is Easy to Find	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃
	d) Has all the information needed	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃
	e) Provides up-to-date information	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃
	f) Provides accurate information	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃

Q6	How satisfied were you with the information given?				
	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅

Q7	Benefits for the Driver	
	Would you use the TIP again	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ Maybe <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ No <input type="checkbox"/> ₃
	Would you stop at Durham Services because the TIP was located here	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ No <input type="checkbox"/> ₂

Q8	Have you noticed the signs for the Truck Information Point (TIP)?			
	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> _1	No	<input type="checkbox"/> _2

Q9	How do you rate the signage for the Truck Information Point (TIP)?				
	Very good	Good	Neither good or poor	Poor	Very Poor
	<input type="checkbox"/> _1	<input type="checkbox"/> _2	<input type="checkbox"/> _3	<input type="checkbox"/> _4	<input type="checkbox"/> _5

Q1	How could signage be improved? (please state)
	<p>-----</p> <p>-----</p> <p>-----</p>

Q1	Is the TIP located in the most appropriate location?			
	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> _1	No	<input type="checkbox"/> _2
	If not where would you suggest the TIP should be located?		<p>-----</p> <p>-----</p> <p>-----</p>	

IF THE DRIVER HAS NOT USED THE TIP ASK IF YOU CAN TAKE THE DRIVER TO THE TIP TO DEMONSTRATE THESE FEATURES. IF THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE EXPLANATION WILL BE REQUIRED.

Q	Value of the Information Provided by the TIP					
	How important do you think it is to have:	Very Unimportant	Unimportant	Neither	Important	Very Important
		News	<input type="checkbox"/> _1	<input type="checkbox"/> _2	<input type="checkbox"/> _3	<input type="checkbox"/> _4

	Tyne and Wear Freight Map	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅
	Other area freight maps	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅
	Tailored maps for key destinations showing preferred routes	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅
	Traffic information	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅
	Lorry parking	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅
	Common questions	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅
	Tyne and Wear Action Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅
	Freight Best Practice	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅
	Meeting minutes	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅
	Reports	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅
	Contacts and links	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅
	Route planner	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅
	Webcams	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅
	What other information do you think should be included?					

Q13	The Tyne and Wear Freight Partnership is considering a roll-out of electronic Truck Information Points at other locations in the area. Would you support this?	
	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
	No	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂

Section B – Journey Details

Q14	Type of Operation	
	Own account	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
	Hire and reward (Third Party)	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂

Q15	What is the geographical spread of your deliveries/collections?	
	Where did you start your journey today	
	What is your destination	
	How many kilometres will you have travelled today (approx)	

Q16	Purpose of Your Journey	
	Collection	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
	Delivery	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂
	Inbound	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃
	Outbound	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄
	How many journeys do you make to Tyne and Wear each week	Less than 1 <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ 1 – 3 <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ 3 – 5 <input type="checkbox"/> ₃

Q17	What goods do you transport	
	Food, drink, tobacco	<input type="checkbox"/> ₁
	Non-food products	<input type="checkbox"/> ₂
	Bulk products	<input type="checkbox"/> ₃
	Chemicals, petrol, fertiliser	<input type="checkbox"/> ₄
	Parcels	<input type="checkbox"/> ₅
	Miscellaneous	<input type="checkbox"/> ₆

Thank you very much for your giving up your valuable time. This concludes the questionnaire.