# CLOCS champions

**Commercial vehicle fleets operating in London are coming under pressure from a burgeoning and mobile population. John Challen reports on TfL's plans, as explained by programme manager Glen Davies**

After peaking at 8.6 million in 1939, London's population is soon set to surpass that figure and is now forecast to rise to 10.3 million people by 2030. The challenge of accommodating their demands, in terms of transport, goods and services falls to, among others, Glen Davies, programme manager at TfL (Transport for London).

One of the toughest issues he faces concerns transport compliance, he told his IRTE Conference audience. Some 70% of HGV roadside stops carried out by enforcement authorities identify infringements. "There is a significant number of organisations that don't believe in best practice. So we employ £4 million worth of policing for HGVs," he said.

But it's not just about regulatory compliance: transport safety is also key. So, although welcoming ongoing reductions in numbers killed or seriously injured due to road accidents, Davies drew delegates' attention to vulnerable road users. "Groups such as cyclists, motorcyclists and pedestrians now account for 80% of casualties. While there have been 'savings', they have mostly been made for vehicle occupants through improved technology. Now it's time to focus on those outside vehicles."

Answers are already out there – including most notably those in TRL's 2012 study, which identified 11 recommendations, primarily for the construction industry, around cyclist safety. Why is this relevant to HGVs? Davies reported that in 2014 some 25% of pedestrian fatalities involved HGVs, while this year, seven of the eight (at time of conference) cyclist fatalities in London involved trucks. Yet HGVs represent less than 4% of vehicle miles travelled across the capital.

**FACT**
70% of HGV roadside stops carried out by enforcement authorities identify infringements

"On construction sites there are clear requirements covering health and safety, but when trucks leave those sites, yards or waste transfer stations, there is a general lack of regard," warned Davies. "So there we need nationally recognised standards to improve road safety," he continued, adding that codes of practice for work-related road risk should mimic those, for example, for working at height.

## CLOCS AND FORS

Hence TfL's enthusiasm for CLOCS (Construction Logistics and Cyclist Safety) and its accreditation arm FORS (Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme), which Davies believes demonstrate a serious commitment to road safety. "Prior to CLOCS, we were talking to operators such as Lafarge and Cemex, and encouraging them. There was a desire for safety standards, but not much movement," he explained. "CLOCS has since engaged industry and the regulatory bodies, and got OEMs on board. Most importantly, it has set out requirements for clients and contractors – those who employ logistics operators in their supply chains – of which TfL is one."

Davies made the point that TfL is a significant generator of freight, and one that is also directly responsible for road safety in London. Hence its introduction of work-related road risk requirements, as per the CLOCS standard, throughout TfL's contractual clauses.

**FACT**
In 2014 some 25% of pedestrian fatalities involved HGVs

And the CLOCS journey goes on, he said, explaining that there are now three CLOCS work streams – improving truck safety, addressing safety imbalances and encouraging best practice adoption – driving development. "For example," he challenged, "if we were designing trucks today, would we engineer them in the same way? They have three windows, which means so many blind spots that they need six mirrors. And then we still need additional sensors and screens. That's 10 elements for drivers to look at to get situational awareness, with just two eyes."

We need a better understanding of drivers' capabilities and innovative approaches to truck cab design, he asserted. And he confirmed that TfL is currently engaging with many of the vehicle manufacturers "who have stepped up to the plate and made this a priority".

In fact, TfL's research into blind spot monitoring dates back to 2011, when there were five major players offering retrofit devices. Today, revealed Davies, there are 45. "In the last five years, 40 more companies have come to market with retrofit equipment you can bolt on to your brand new trucks. Are these appropriate? You can't buy a new kettle and put your own plug on it, but we're allowing technicians to drill into vehicles and wire into looms. And they're not subject to any legislation," he stated.

Beyond blind spot mitigation, though, Davies explained that TfL has also been reviewing

**FACT**

CLOCS has engaged industry, the regulatory bodies and the OEMs – and set out requirements for clients and contractors

***"Too many off-road vehicles are being used on urban roads"***
Glen Davies

operational ground clearance requirements, declaring that "too many off-road vehicles are being used on urban roads". Through CLOCS, TfL aims to improve operators' appreciation of on-road vehicles, and to challenge any perception that construction chassis are really needed around building sites and transfer stations.

"Some vehicles [N3G] look like they're on stilts, but only a small fraction of their journeys are off-road," he said. "So why are they specified to cope with that tiny percentage?" TfL's safer trucks work stream aims to promote rethought truck specifications, said Davies, with the specific aim of improving safety for vulnerable road users.

That brought him on to CLOCS' second work stream, looking at differences in processes around safety across industry sectors. For him, getting reporting up to the standard required of workplaces is fundamental. "I knew last week that someone in a factory had chopped part of their finger off – because an HSE report told me so," he declared. "Yet every day people are killed on the road, and we have to look to the media for news. So at TfL we've created a common collision reporting system that generates consistent reports." Davies described the approach as harmonised collision reporting, explaining that it also allows TfL to better understand road issues and to design solutions.

What about the third CLOCS work stream? Davies explained that its working group has defined solutions to meet the CLOCS standard. The solution set includes guidance documents, toolkits and services.

"When we kicked off CLOCS, there were 11 emerging standards, including those from Crossrail, TfL, Mason and the cyclist campaigners," recalled Davies. "That meant lots of people with what they thought was best practice all trying to achieve the same result but by different means. So we sat them all around the table and suggested we just had one. That has been in practice now for two years."

Davies concluded by conceding that accidents will still happen despite the best efforts of the CLOCS champions and FORS accreditation procedures. Nevertheless, CLOCS and its deployment nationally across all transport operations will change minds and hence also processes and outcomes. Improving reporting is just one of the mechanisms, he said, but greater transparency is a key driver for change, both in terms of improving safety and the public's perception of an industry no longer in denial. ■