

THE OFFICE OF RAIL AND ROAD
210th BOARD MEETING
Tuesday 12 December 2023, 09:30 – 11:00
At ORR, 25 Cabot Square, London, E14 4QZ

Non-executive members: Declan Collier (Chair), Xavier Brice, Madeleine Hallward, Anne Heal, Bob Holland, Justin McCracken, Daniel Ruiz, Catherine Waller.

Executive members: John Larkinson (Chief Executive, via MSTeams), Ian Prosser (Director of Railway Safety, via MSTeams).

In attendance: Feras Alshaker (Director of Planning and Performance), Fiona Bywaters (Board Secretary), Will Godfrey (Director of Economics, Finance and Markets), Russell Grossman (Director of Communications), Vinita Hill (Director, Corporate Operations), Graham Richards (Director, TfL Analysis), Elizabeth Thornhill (General Counsel), Stephanie Tobyn (Director, Strategy, Policy and Reform).

Item 1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. No apologies for absence were received.

Item 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2. No new interests were declared.

Item 3 SECOND ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL HIGHWAYS' SAFETY PERFORMANCE

3. Feras Alshaker (FA) introduced the item and executive summary (containing key messages), which had been considered in detail by the Highways Committee prior to its recommendation to the Board.
4. The Board sought confirmation that prior feedback had been integrated appropriately, namely regarding progress against Recommendation 6 of the Transport Select Committee (TSC) smart motorways inquiry. FA confirmed that comments had been addressed within paragraph 9 of the executive summary. The Board raised concerns however, that it was still considered too early to be able to draw definitive conclusions on the effectiveness of the relevant action plan. FA responded that delivery of the action plan was ongoing, with more extensive evaluation possible next year, and confirmed that the evaluation methodology was consistent with best practice.
5. Further consideration was given to data sample size and accuracy (Area of Focus 2); perception of safety (smart motorways); and messaging around the launch of the assessment (including that this was the second of three reports commissioned). A query was raised as to whether a graph relating to smart motorways should be included in the executive summary to enhance illustration of findings. FA referred to presentational considerations but would reflect on the feedback.

6. The Board welcomed the inclusion, as part of work to assess Stopped Vehicle Detection (SVD) performance, of the reference to a NH regional operational centre visit by ORR staff, which had enabled first-hand observation.
7. A final question was raised regarding emergency refuge areas (ERAs) on smart motorways. The Chair requested that further information be provided regarding existing and future commitments to ERAs by NH **[Action 12/01]**.
8. The Board approved the key messages of the second annual assessment of NHs' safety performance, as recommended by the Highways Committee.

Item 4 REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

9. Madeleine Hallward reported on the meeting of the Highways Committee on 11 December. The Committee had considered, among other items:
 - The timeline of the draft Road Investment Strategy and planning for the efficiency review;
 - External speaker: Dave Buttery, Director of Roads Strategy, DfT; and
 - The second annual assessment of NH's safety performance (discussed at Board item 3), analytical capability, and lessons learned.
10. Justin McCracken, reported on the meeting of the Health and Safety Committee on 11 December. The Committee had considered, among other items:
 - The Chief Inspectors' Quarterly Report, including timeliness of prosecutions;
 - Risk profiling and planning priorities in the year ahead (with further assurance sought via a paper in correspondence); and
 - External speaker: Steve Oates, Chief Executive, Heritage Railway Association.

Item 5 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

11. The Chair invited John Larkinson (JL) to provide an oral update of recent activities.

Paragraphs 12-15 have been redacted from the published version as time-sensitive and covering confidential issues.

12. [...]

16. At the meeting conclusion, the Chair referred to upcoming meetings in January 2024, and the Board noted the items below the line. A discussion between Non-Executive Directors would take place at the end of the meeting.

Meeting end: 10.52am
Approved: 23 January 2024