

PE1223/RRR

**Transport Accessibility and Road Safety Team
Transport Policy**

Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ
T: 0131 244 1482
brendan.rooney@transportscotland.gsi.gov.uk



Sigrid Robinson
Assistant Clerk to the Public Petitions Committee
Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Date: 23
February, 2016

Dear Sigrid,

In addition to my letter of 2 February on PE1223, I am writing to update Public Petitions Committee (PPC) members that a response to the Minister for Transport and Islands' letter of 12 November was received from UK Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport Andrew Jones late in the afternoon of 2 February.

This confirms that some of the suggestions made by Mr Mackay for the current statutory school bus sign to be given more prominence in the learner process and driver guidance literature are being taken forward. This is something we obviously welcome.

Specifically, Mr Jones has confirmed that while the school bus sign does feature in one of the official hazard perception videos within the UK driving test, the Department for Transport (DfT) will consider adding further clips featuring school buses in future. Additionally, in response to the concerns Mr Mackay raised about the prominence of the sign in The Highway Code, it has been confirmed that this will appear in a more conspicuous section in future – beside rule 209 which it relates to – rather than remaining alongside the more technical commercial vehicle danger signs which it has in the past. This is to happen shortly in the electronic versions of the Code and in the published version following the next print run.

Given one of the key issues emerging from Glasgow City Council's evaluation trials was a lack of awareness of the current statutory minimum sign, anything to help improve this can play an important role.

Transport Scotland is considering the implications of Glasgow's findings, alongside those of Aberdeenshire Council from 2010, which encompass a particularly mixed national evidence-base in relation to the effectiveness of enhanced signs.

DfT also offered further clarification on their previous suggestion to the Committee that there may be powers open to the Scottish Parliament in respect of vehicle markings and warning beacons due to the Scotland Act Order made last year concerning school bus seatbelts, these powers relate specifically to the description of such vehicles, rather than prescribing technical standards. This confirms that their earlier intimation relates to permanent features on buses – as

set out in Schedule 12 of the Road Vehicle Lighting Regulations 1989 as amended – rather than signage and lighting which can be attached and removed.

The feature of being detachable is obviously a crucial element of a sign used to indicate when children are being carried, on a vehicle which is not solely used for this purpose, therefore this appears quite distinct from the aims of the petition.

Yours sincerely,

Brendan Rooney
Road Safety Policy
Transport Scotland