

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

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ALBA



Andrew Howlett
Assistant Clerk to the Public Petitions Committee
Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Date: 20 May,
2014

Dear Andrew,

Many thanks for your letter of 28 April outlining a request for information from members of the Public Petitions Committee.

On the issue raised regarding work Transport Scotland is undertaking with local authorities in relation to improved school transport signage, I believe the Committee is aware of Aberdeenshire Council's initiative to implement enhanced school transport signage. Scottish Ministers have been very supportive of the position taken in Aberdeenshire and when we published '*A Guide to School Transport Safety*' and its accompanying report in 2010 we highlighted the work that Aberdeenshire had done on enhanced signage. We have subsequently reviewed the guide and followed this up with workshops for local authorities, to allow expertise and knowledge to be disseminated, and to encourage them to adopt best practice. At the workshops a presentation was given to the attendees detailing initiatives undertaken to improve school bus safety in Aberdeenshire, with a focus on the enhanced signage.

As a follow up to this work, Transport Scotland is looking to pursue a pilot on improved signage which can be fully evaluated to build on the Aberdeenshire work and comprehensively assess the benefits of introducing enhanced signage. We are currently exploring whether another local authority is willing to undertake such a scheme. There was some evaluation of the work done in Aberdeenshire however research professionals have advised that, in order for the evaluation to be robust, a benchmark should be measured before the scheme is implemented so that its effects can be fully measured and assessed.

We have engaged with the Association of Transport Coordinating Officers (ATCO) Scotland to garner interest from local authorities, offering evaluation support, however no local authority was identified to take this on. We are therefore currently working with CoSLA to explore whether a suitable local authority for the pilot can be identified.

The Committee is also aware that the Minister for Transport and Veterans wrote to the UK Secretary of State for Transport on the issue of signage and lighting, requesting that either

legislation regarding construction and use regulations be strengthened or that such powers be devolved to Scottish Ministers. However, this request was refused.

The aforementioned '*Guide to School Transport Safety*' and accompanying report highlight the scope local authorities have within the current legislative parameters on school bus signage and lighting. Without legislative competence in this area there are limited levers at the disposal of Scottish Ministers. That is why we are working in partnership to look at a pilot scheme, with a view to promoting effective measures and disseminating good practice on the ground.

Yours sincerely,

Graham Thomson
Team Leader - Transport Accessibility and Road Safety
Transport Scotland