



Putting people and the environment first

Road haulage industry wants bigger lorries... Not on my street!

A briefing for communities from Transport 2000 Campaigns

Introduction

The road haulage industry has called for even heavier – up to 60-tonne – and even longer lorries to be allowed in cities, towns and villages, just three years after the last increase in size. But 44-tonne lorries already do untold damage to communities; it's time to stop *all* big lorries destroying our streets.

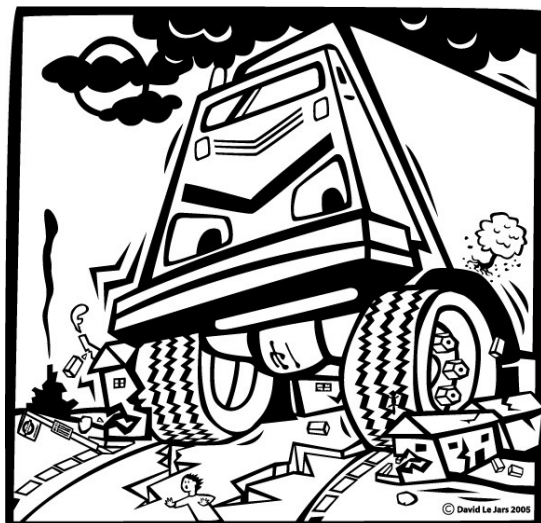
Industry calls for larger lorries

The new call by the road haulage industry is in response to a report published by the Logistics Research Centre at Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh, which claims, rather controversially, that since the introduction of 44-tonne vehicles three years ago, there have been 34 per cent fewer lorry journeys and 36 per cent less carbon dioxide emissions. These figures would seem, however, to be contradicted by the latest Department for Transport figures, which show a continued year-on-year rise in goods traffic on the roads.

Whatever the truth, work undertaken in November 2004 for the Strategic Rail Authority by AEA Technology Environment shows that on average rail-freight produces about one-tenth of the emissions per tonne kilometre of heavy goods vehicles. It is clear that road-freight is a high polluter compared with rail-freight.

Campaigners at Transport 2000 argue that we must look at the wider picture:

- Forty-four tonne lorries already do extensive damage to cities, towns and villages, causing vibration, noise



A 60-tonne lorry is hardly suitable for our road network.

- and intimidation. Bigger lorries would mean bigger problems.
- Existing sized lorries are involved in 22 per cent of fatal crashes but only account for 7 per cent of road traffic. Bigger lorries can only mean more deaths. *Source Department for Transport 2004.*
- The increase from 32 to 38-tonne lorries saw five rail-served stone depots in Manchester close almost overnight. *Source Railfuture.*

Road haulage industry wants bigger lorries

- As lorries get larger, the proportion of freight carried by rail is likely to decrease. Rail currently only accounts for 8 per cent of freight. Rail is the real low-emission choice, not ever larger road juggernauts.
- The Road Haulage Association wishes to see lorries being allowed to travel at 50mph on single carriageway roads instead of the existing 40mph limit. This would result in more road crashes and deaths. Campaigners want to see greater enforcement of existing lorry speeds. *Source RHA.*
- An average freight train can remove 50 HGVs from our roads. An aggregates freight train can remove 120 HGVs from our roads. *Source Network Rail 2004.*
- HGV road haulage increased by 2.9 per cent and LGV road haulage increased by 5 per cent in 2004. *Source Department for Transport 2005.*

Some experts believe that 60-tonne lorries should be allowed on motorways but once allowed on motorways it's only a small step before they are allowed to use other roads.

Existing lorries pose big problems too

Many residents would argue that 44-tonne lorries cause huge damage to their communities and that existing legislation and enforcement of lorry bans does not give enough protection to communities. Many communities find it difficult to get a lorry ban or loading/unloading-only restriction in place and others find that bans and restrictions are ignored and the police rarely, if ever, enforce them.

Take action

Stop the threat of heavier lorries and reduce the spread of existing lorries!

(1) Write to your MP asking him or her to oppose any move to introduce larger lorries and to ask the Government to make it easier for highway authorities to put in enforceable lorry bans, as recommended by the Commission for Integrated Transport, by giving police the powers to stop a lorry and by creating a duty on lorry drivers to show proof of their business in a street or road with a lorry ban.

You can find out who your MP is at www.parliament.uk Send your letter to House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. Please send a copy to Julia Thomas, Streets for People Campaigner, Transport 2000, The Impact Centre, 12-18 Hoxton Street, London N1 6NG (or at julia.thomas@transport2000.org.uk). You can write to your MP by e-mail, fax or letter direct from the Friends of the Earth Community website at http://community.foe.co.uk/resource/tools/contact_mp/index.html

(2) Write to your local authority asking for an access-only restriction or a loading/unloading-only restriction on roads near you. A loading/unloading-only restriction gives greater protection but still requires the police to enforce it. A full briefing on how to do this is available at www.transport2000.org.uk (go to Change your streets). Please send a copy of your letter to Julia Thomas (see above).

(3) Write to your local paper saying you are appalled to hear that the road haulage industry wants larger lorries. Please send a copy of your letter to Julia Thomas (see above). You can find out contact details of your local paper at www.wrx.zen.co.uk

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