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Truck lens for spotting cyclists

Stick-on lenses which allow truck drivers to spot cyclists in their "blind spot" have been handed out.

Transport for London (TfL) has handed out 10,000 stickers, called Fresnel Lens, to HGV drivers.

The sticker, which needs to be put on the passenger side window of the truck cab, allows drivers to see cyclists coming up on their left.

TfL said every year collisions between cyclists and trucks accounted for half of all cycle fatalities.

Deaths by collision

Every day about 480,000 cycle journeys are made in London, TfL said.

Truck driver Geoff Sales said: "What tends to happen is that they come on the inside of you and they get lost in the blind spot...Your side mirrors don't pick them up and your rear view mirrors don't pick them up."

In 2007, nine out of 16 cyclists who died in the city's roads were involved in a collision with a HGV.

In 2006, the death toll stood at nine out of 19, TfL said.

David Brown, TfL's director of Surface Transport, said: "Our new cycle safety campaign is designed to give both cyclists and goods vehicles drivers the practical tools they need to be safe and be seen on London's roads."

Gordon Telling, from the Freight Transport Association, said: "Using similar lenses has been highly effective in reducing vehicle collisions on the motorway and we are confident that today's initiative will reduce injuries and fatalities for cyclists."



Drivers can spot cyclists who come up on their left

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How the device will work

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The Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) has launched a new campaign to help improve safety for cyclists in London by focusing on lorries travelling to and from the Olympic Park in Stratford.

ODA Chairman John Armit and cycle safety campaigner Cynthia Barlow will be helping distribute Fresnel lenses to lorry drivers, which are a simple and effective measure that can be used to increase safety for cyclists.

By putting a Fresnel lens on the passenger window, lorry drivers can see cyclists and vehicles on the passenger side of the lorry, where before they would have had a "blind spot". The ODA will distribute 1,600 Fresnel lenses in the first stage of the campaign.

Photos from the event are available for download here

The ODA has also established a forum with VOSA (Vehicle and Operator Services Agency) Metropolitan Police and the construction industry to examine a range of initiatives to ensure the safe operation of vehicles on the road network leading to the Olympic Park.

ODA Chairman John Armit said: 'Fresnel lenses are an effective way of increasing the view of the road, and may help reduce the numbers of injuries and deaths of cyclists in London.'

'We are committed to working in partnership with our contractors to ensure the highest standards of health and safety on the Olympic Park. In addition to this campaign, we are also aiming to transport 50 per cent of the construction materials needed on site by rail and water, which means that we will be taking thousands of unnecessary lorry journeys off London's roads.'

Cynthia Barlow, campaigner for RoadPeace, said: 'Every year about 20 cyclists are killed on London's roads and often it is the construction industry vehicles – concrete mixers, tipper lorries and skip lorries – making left turns that are involved.'

'It is vitally important that the owners and drivers of these vehicles take action to deal with the potential danger of their vehicles to vulnerable road users by ensuring they have a good view all around their vehicle, firstly with fresnel lenses, and other possible measures such as proximity sensors, mirrors, and cameras.'

Peter McBride, Head of Cycling, Walking and Accessibility at Transport for London (TfL) said: 'Although the number of cyclists killed on London's roads has fallen in recent years, the fact remains that more than half of all cycle deaths in the Capital involve a goods vehicle. By working directly with haulage companies to address this serious road safety issue, the ODA and TfL are taking practical steps, such as the distribution of Fresnel lenses, to help make cyclists safer and more visible on the Capital's roads.'

Charlie Lloyd from London Cycling Campaign said: 'Large lorries are a major threat to the safety of cyclists in London and it is essential that everything possible is done to make lorry drivers aware of the risks their vehicles pose to pedestrians and cyclists.'

'We welcome the action of the ODA to provide some Fresnel lenses to lorry drivers. Not only will the lenses make it easier to see cyclists near the lorry but they will also have a constant reminder to take extra care when driving in urban areas.'

John Fitch, Research and Development Manager said: 'From the research carried out by VOSA, the use of the Fresnel Lens has proved to help reduce the driver's blind spots in HGVs and in doing so reduce incidents.'

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.....Continuation

VOSA and the Highways Agency are issuing lenses throughout England in a campaign to reduce blind spot incidents and congestion. It is important that large construction projects like London 2012 are leading the way in the industry with this campaign.'

The ODA have also installed cycle improvement measures around the primary access junction on the A12 in consultation with TfL and the London Borough of Hackney, with more improvements being installed next month.

Notes to Editors

1. The Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) provides a range of licensing, testing and enforcement services with the aim of improving the roadworthiness standards of vehicles ensuring the compliance of operators and drivers, and supporting the independent Traffic Commissioners.
2. The number of cyclists killed or seriously injured on London's roads has fallen by 19 per cent since the mid to late 1990's, despite a 91 per cent increase in the number of cycle journeys made on London's major roads. The Mayor and TfL are committed to improving safety for all London's road users and are investing a record £49.6 million on road safety this year.
3. TfL provide free cyclist warning signage and Fresnel safety lenses, which improve lorry drivers' vision of cyclists who come within close proximity of their vehicles, to freight companies operating vehicles in London. In addition, TfL has run a number of hard hitting adverts designed to make drivers aware of the needs of cyclists on the roads and is funding a record 3m this year in free or subsidised cycle training for adults and children through London's borough councils.
4. For more information please contact Holly Wheeler in the ODA press office on 0203 2012 669.

The construction of the venues and infrastructure of the London 2012 Games is funded by the National Lottery through the Olympic Lottery Distributor, The Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the Mayor of London and the London Development Agency.

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The lorry lens to stop cyclists being killed

David Williams, Motoring Editor
01.10.08

More than 1,000 safety lenses that help lorries spot cyclists are being given to HGV drivers around the Olympic Park.

It comes after two riders died and another was seriously injured in collisions with trucks in the capital.

The Olympic site in Stratford will generate thousands of extra truck journeys to support the construction programme in the run-up to 2012.

Today John Armitt, chairman of the Olympic Delivery Authority, and campaigner Cynthia Barlow will start handing out 1,600 of the safety aids, called Fresnel lenses.

They are fitted to the cab window so lorry drivers can see cyclists on the passenger side of the vehicle, where they would otherwise have a blind spot.

"Fresnel lenses are an effective way of increasing the view of the road and reducing injuries and deaths of cyclists in London," said Mr Armitt.

"Fifty per cent of our construction materials will be transported by rail and water, which means we are taking thousands of unnecessary lorry journeys off London's roads.

"We are a responsible neighbour and expect the same high standards of health and safety of our contractors."

Last Wednesday 31-year-old cyclist Wan-Chen McGuiness, of Hackney, died when she was hit by a lorry at the junction of Southampton Row and Vernon Place in Holborn.

The week before, Nick Wright from Woking, a 40-year-old father of two young daughters, was killed by a lorry as he rode in Upper Thames Street.

A 30-year-old cyclist is recovering after his legs were crushed under a truck in Kensington High Street last week.

Mrs Barlow, whose daughter Alex, 26, was knocked off her bicycle and died in 2000, said: "Every year about 20 cyclists are killed on London's roads and often it is construction industry vehicles - concrete mixers, tipper lorries and skip lorries - making left turns that are involved."

Mrs Barlow, chairwoman of charity RoadPeace, added: "It is vitally important that owners and drivers ensure they have a good view all around, with Fresnel lenses and measures like proximity sensors, mirrors, and cameras."

The Evening Standard's Safer Cycling campaign has been demanding better conditions for riders.

The ODA is spending £11 million to improve paths for walking and create a network of safe cycling routes to the Olympic park and village. To ensure all ages and abilities can arrive in safety, there will be timetabled rides from points across London to "lead" cyclists in convoy to 2012 venues.

Mr Armitt and Mrs Barlow are fitting lenses to lorries with the help of the Vehicle and Operating Services Agency.

The agency is also taking part in a forum with the Olympic Delivery Authority, Metropolitan police and construction industry to devise initiatives to ensure better truck safety.



Breakthrough: a Fresnel lens fixed to the window of a lorry cab

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