

PE1098/KK

Road Safety Team
Transport Policy

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Alison Wilson
Assistant Clerk to the Public Petitions Committee
T3.30
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 ISP

Your ref:

Our ref:

Date:
26 April 2012

petitions@scottish.parliament.uk

Dear Alison

Thank you for your letter of 30 March to Carron Pollock at Transport Scotland seeking written responses for the Public Petitions Committee on PE1098 and PE1223. The Committee asked for written responses to a number of specific questions reproduced below in bold followed by the responses.

In January 2011 you indicated that early in 2012 you would ask the Transport Research Laboratory to undertake a full review of the guidance on improving school transport safety. The committee is interested to hear how this review is progressing.

I can confirm that we have asked Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) to undertake the review as was originally intended. Consequently, the review is now underway and we expect this to be concluded in the Autumn.

The Committee is also interested to hear, following the outcome of the review, how many local authorities have followed the advice that they can make it a requirement for operators to remove signs when vehicles are not being used to transport children.

As per the answer above, the review is now underway and this information will be forthcoming later this year.

The Committee is also interested to hear, again as part of the review, how many local authorities ensure that school bus signs are meeting the required minimum size standards?

As per the answer above this information will be available after the review has reported its findings.

For the benefit of clarity for the Committee and the petitioner can you confirm that the devolved powers will allow the Scottish Government to legislate for changes in relation to signage as well as seatbelts with regards to school transport safety?

The powers to change signage is reserved to the UK Government and at present there are no plans to devolve signage to the Scottish Government.

Is there likely to be any movement around the devolution of the powers prior to the proposed referendum in 2014?

We are currently gathering information from local authorities on potential costs of fitting seatbelts to buses transporting children. The information will, in turn, be dependent upon the collective agreement of Scottish Ministers, and mutual agreement on policy being reached with the UK Government.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

**Jill Mulholland
Road Safety Team Leader**