

Creating a Road Collision Investigation Branch

You

Q1. Supply (used for contact purposes only) your:

name? Rebecca Fuller
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Q2. Are you responding:

on behalf of an organisation?

Organisation details

Q3. What is your organisation name?

Urban Transport Group

Q4. What is the purpose of your organisation?

We represent the UK's largest urban transport authorities, covering Greater Manchester (Transport for Greater Manchester), Liverpool City Region (Merseytravel), London (Transport for London), Tyne and Wear (Nexus), South Yorkshire (South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority), West Midlands (Transport for West Midlands) and West Yorkshire (West Yorkshire Combined Authority). Our wider associate membership brings together the transport authorities serving Cambridgeshire and Peterborough; Nottingham; Strathclyde; Tees Valley; Wales; West of England; and Translink in Northern Ireland. We work to ensure that transport plays its full part in making our city regions greener, fairer, happier, healthier and more prosperous places.

Q5. What is the size of your organisation?

Up to 250 employees

Q6. If a RCIB was established, do you think it would need access to data held by your organisation to investigate causes of road collisions?

Yes

Why?

The RCIB would not need to access data from Urban Transport Group, but it may need to access data held by our members. Our members have varying powers and responsibilities in relation to the road network so the extent to which they may be called upon would differ between them and would depend on local governance structures and the circumstances under investigation. Our members could also be called upon where collisions intersect with other parts of the transport network, for example, light rail lines.

Organisation data time

Q7. How much time, in minutes, do you estimate it would take your organisation to provide data for an RCIB each year?

This would be for our individual members to estimate.

Organisation details

Q8. Do you think your organisation would need to spend time familiarising itself with working with an RCIB, should a branch be established?

Yes

Why?

Our members would need time to familiarise themselves with the RCIB and procedures for working with them. Guidance on roles, responsibilities and expectations would be appreciated.

Staff working with RCIB

Q9. What number of staff within your organisation would need to spend time familiarising themselves with an RCIB, should a branch be established?

This would be for our individual members to estimate.

Q10. How much time, in minutes, do you estimate it would take your organisation to familiarise itself with an RCIB?

This would be for our individual members to estimate.

Road Collision Investigation Branch (RCIB) proposals

Q11. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the creation of a new independent body, the Road Collision Investigation Branch (RCIB), to coordinate the investigation of road traffic collisions?

Strongly agree

Road Collision Investigation Branch (RCIB) proposals

Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the three suggested responsibilities?

Strongly agree

Why?

These responsibilities are appropriate. Given that road collisions kill and injure vastly more people in the UK than rail, maritime or aviation incidents, it is right that an investigation branch is established along the same lines as those operating in these other transport sectors.

The Government has endorsed the Safe System approach which, among other elements, underlines the importance of learning from collisions and sharing knowledge to prevent future incidents. Without the means for detailed investigations, it is impossible to know which counter measures are most likely to save lives.

Whilst we have a rich collection of data on collisions, there is currently no single organisation which pulls all the data together in one place to analyse and learn from common themes and patterns. Furthermore, as the consultation document points out, investigation is currently focused on assessing where blame lies rather than learning lessons and making recommendations around prevention.

A RCIB would fill these gaps and bring road transport in line with other transport sectors. It would support a Safe System approach and help ensure that safety measures continually evolve and improve in a culture of learning and sharing.

There is a question, however, as to how recommendations will be turned into action. A supporting system will need to be established for this purpose. In the case of rail, for example, bodies such as the Office of Rail Regulation and the Rail Safety and Standards Board are part of this. It is not clear what the equivalent body would be for roads.

Other responsibilities

Q17. Are there any other responsibilities that you believe an RCIB should have?

No

Road Collision Investigation Branch (RCIB) powers

Q20. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal that the RCIB should have the stated investigative powers?

Strongly agree

Agreement of powers

Q22. Why?

These powers seem appropriate and are in line with other investigative bodies in the rail, maritime and aviation sectors.

Other investigative powers

Q23. What other investigative powers, if any, do you think an RCIB should have and why?

The stated list is appropriate.

Investigative criteria

Q24. In your view how important is it that an RCIB base investigation criteria on the:

	Very important	Important	Neither important nor unimportant	Unimportant	Very unimportant
scale?	X				
risk of harm?	X				
emerging risks?		X			

Why?

All of these factors are important and it is difficult to prioritise one over the others. Emerging risks could be seen as less important than factors around scale or risk of harm, as it is perhaps likely that emerging risks affect fewer people or present a less immediate threat. That said, it is important to be proactive in understanding and preparing for these emerging risks.

Q25. Are there other criteria you think should be included?

No

Impact on people

Q27. What impact, if any, do you think an RCIB would have on victims of road collisions and their families? Respond with as much detail as possible.

An RCIB could offer reassurance to victims and their families that lessons are being drawn from collisions that have affected them and offer hope that other families can be prevented from experiencing similar trauma in the future. There is a risk, however, that families could also be left frustrated given that the RCIB is not proposed to have powers to enforce the recommendations it makes. Nonetheless, it would add considerable weight to campaigns that call for changes.

Other comments on the RCIB

Q28. Supply any other comments on the potential creation of an RCIB you wish to make.

The creation of an RCIB should form part of a new national road safety strategy which sets an ambitious vision for dramatically reducing injury and death on UK roads and significantly advancing progress towards a Safe System approach. Such a strategy should also include a commitment to world leading safety standards and quantitative targets for reducing road collisions. It should be backed by the resources and funding necessary to support achievement and excellence.