House of Commons
Transport Committee

Strategic river crossings

Tenth Report of Session 2014–15

Report, together with formal minutes relating to the report

Ordered by the House of Commons
to be printed 9 March 2015
The Transport Committee

The Transport Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Department for Transport and its Associate Public Bodies.

Current membership
Mrs Louise Ellman (Labour/Co-operative, Liverpool Riverside) (Chair)
Sarah Champion (Labour, Rotherham)
Jim Fitzpatrick (Labour, Poplar and Limehouse)
Mr Tom Harris (Labour, Glasgow South)
Karen Lumley (Conservative, Redditch)
Jason McCartney (Conservative, Colne Valley)
Karl McCartney (Conservative, Lincoln)
Mr Adrian Sanders (Liberal Democrat, Torbay)
Chloe Smith (Conservative, Norwich North)
Graham Stringer (Labour, Blackley and Broughton)
Martin Vickers (Conservative, Cleethorpes)

Powers
The Committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No 152. These are available on the internet via www.parliament.uk.

Publication
The Reports of the Committee are published by The Stationery Office by Order of the House. All publications of the Committee (including press notices) are on the internet at http://www.parliament.uk/transcom. A list of Reports of the Committee in the present Parliament is at the back of this volume.

The Reports of the Committee and the formal minutes relating to that report are available in a printed volume. Written evidence is published on the internet only.

Committee staff
The current staff of the Committee are Gordon Clarke (Clerk), Nick Beech (Second Clerk), Alexandra Meakin (Committee Specialist), Adrian Hitchins (Senior Committee Assistant), Stewart McIlvenna (Committee Assistant), and Hannah Pearce (Media Officer)

Contacts
All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk of the Transport Committee, House of Commons, 14 Tothill Street, London SW1H 9NB, The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 6263; the Committee's email address is transcom@parliament.uk
## Contents

### Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Introduction</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Benefits and impacts</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regeneration</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental impacts</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congestion and future-proofing</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Delivering river crossings: East London and the Lower Thames</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East London Crossings</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Thames Crossing</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Finance and Tolls</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National infrastructure Plan</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolls and technology</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interoperable tolling technology</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Conclusion</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions and recommendations</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Formal Minutes** 26

**Witnesses** 27

**Published written evidence** 28

**List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament** 29
Summary

River crossings can provide financial benefits for businesses but it is less clear that benefits extend to people living nearby who may experience higher traffic flows and poorer air quality. We have called on the Government and planners to take those concerns seriously and identify intelligent transport systems to mitigate the negative impacts that may result from new crossings.

River crossings have all too often been planned with a design life that was too short. Current cost-benefit analysis methods have also underestimated the usage of new crossings during the planning stages. That short-term approach has resulted in the costly duplication of existing crossings. The Department must avoid that in the future by planning for longer-term capacity requirements and improving traffic-modelling forecasts.

We examined the proposals for new crossings in east London and the Lower Thames. A package of new river crossings in east London is long overdue and we have recommended the establishment of a special purpose company with direct responsibility for delivering new crossings in the area. With regards to the Lower Thames proposals, we are disappointed that the Department has made such little progress on delivering a new crossing during this Parliament. We believe the Minister must show more leadership in finding a consensus between the affected local authorities.

The Government’s UK Guarantees Scheme has provided assurance to the private sector and has encouraged it to invest in much needed infrastructure. We are concerned that that has only been achieved by the Government underwriting risk that is best borne by the private sector. We believe the Government should be more transparent on the level of risk that it has assumed on behalf of the taxpayer and how it expects private sector operators to mitigate risks. We have recommended that the Government publish a risk statement accounting for those concerns before authorising new projects for the UK Guarantee Scheme.

It is our view that that the National Infrastructure Plan and the accompanying Infrastructure Pipeline have provided an insight into the Government’s main priorities for investment in the medium term. However, we believe that more can be done to provide confidence to investors and private sector partners. We have recommended that in the next update to the Infrastructure Pipeline, the Government implement a system that clearly identifies the funding status of each project so that the private sector is better able to identify investment opportunities.

We welcome the introduction of free-flow tolling at Dartford, its future implementation on the Mersey Gateway and other river crossings around the UK. We believe that lessons can be learned from the introduction of the Dart Charge. The Department must continue to monitor non-payment rates at the Dartford Crossing and identify how compliance can be raised. That work will provide lessons for when the Mersey Gateway Bridge opens in the autumn of 2017. As the use of free-flow technology expands, the Department must aim for total interoperability between schemes. We have called upon the Department to commission research into how that can be best achieved.
Strategic river crossings
1. Introduction

1. We launched this inquiry in June 2014. We sought to answer the following questions:

- How well does local and national government work together to plan and deliver river crossing projects?

- What knowledge, resources and experience does the public sector need to deliver large, strategically significant river crossing projects?

- What other government priorities, such as new house building, urban regeneration and new business opportunities, can be delivered through additional strategic river crossings?

- Do existing cost-benefit analysis methods adequately capture any potential transformative effects of new river crossings?

- What are the best methods for financing additional river crossings?

- How can the public sector attract greater investment from the private sector for the delivery and maintenance of river crossings?

- Should strategic river crossings be tolled? How should tolling be implemented? How can technology be used to improve strategic river crossings for road users (e.g. better management of traffic flows)?

To answer those questions we held three evidence sessions during which we examined four river crossings as case studies, each at a different stage of development. We also received some 35 pieces of written evidence. To everyone who helped us with this inquiry, we express our thanks.

2. In our first evidence session we heard evidence on a package of new river crossings being considered in east London. At the same time we looked at a separate scheme to build a new bridge or tunnel to supplement the Dartford Crossing in the Lower Thames area. There was a broad consensus that new river crossings in those locations are needed. Despite that consensus, the precise location of new crossings has proved controversial. Regional and national transport priorities have clashed with local concerns over the impact that major new crossings will have on communities. Supporters of the crossings believe that they will increase economic development and population growth and that without new crossings, congestion will continue to rise. Critics of the proposals believe the increased road capacity will only serve to increase congestion and air pollution.

3. We then examined the Mersey Gateway Project, which has started its construction stage. The Project is a major scheme to build a six-lane toll bridge over the river Mersey. The bridge will supplement the existing Silver Jubilee Bridge located approximately 1.5 km (0.93 mi) to the east. Construction began on 7 May 2014, with the bridge due to be finished by 2017.

4. Finally, we examined the two vehicular Tyne Tunnels, the second of which was completed in 2011. The Tunnels connect the town of Jarrow on the south bank of the river
with Wallsend on the north side. The original tunnel suffered from congestion, especially in peak times. It was felt that this congestion was limiting economic development. The project itself was initiated in 1998 and became fully operational on 21 November 2011.
2 Benefits and impacts

Regeneration

5. Without sufficient crossings, rivers separate workers from jobs and consumers from retailers. According to the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), businesses have rejected opportunities to operate in such areas. New river crossings can provide immediate benefits to businesses. The LCCI said that by linking communities on either side of rivers, the catchment area for consumers and potential employees is enlarged, which enables firms to take advantage of economies of scale. Productivity rises as vehicle-maintenance costs, fuel costs and transport time for moving goods are lowered. Paul Woods, Chief Finance Officer, North East Combined Authority, said that the new Tyne Tunnel had attracted industry to the local area: “there is significant industry both north and south of the crossing; you have Nissan and a range of offshore employment opportunities. Having that free flow of access across is very important for economic regeneration.”

A study by the Centre for Urban and Regeneration Studies at Newcastle University on the economic impact of the new Tyne Tunnel reached similar conclusions to those of the LCCI on the benefits of new river crossings. Those included:

- financial benefits resulting from the opening of the new Tyne Crossing reported by just over half of businesses interviewed;
- positive impacts resulting from reduced travel to work times, including higher productivity;
- the potential for businesses to recruit from a wider catchment area. That increased the potential to raise the quality of staff;
- reductions in vehicle-operating costs for over two thirds of applicable businesses; and
- no unintended negative consequences from reduced Tyne Tunnel crossing times.

6. Supporters of new river crossings also believed that greater connectivity provided benefits beyond helping business, such as aiding the development of new housing and wider regeneration in local communities. The LCCI said that as demand for commercial space increases, land value rises, which leads to the economic conditions where developers invest in building homes. So far there is only anecdotal evidence to support that view. John Elliott, an independent transport consultant, stated “that there is very little hard quantitative evidence that Strategic Roads or indeed River Crossings help genuine regeneration or create long term jobs rather than just extra traffic.”

1 London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SRC0024) para 21-22
2 Q124
3 The Centre for Urban and Regeneration Studies The Tyne Tunnel Crossings: an economic impact assessment
4 London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SRC0024) para 22
5 John Elliott, (SRC0013) para 3.16
Executive, Campaign for Better Transport, told us that “Some of the claims for jobs and regeneration melt away when investigated closely and queried.” John Hayes MP, Minister of State, Department for Transport (DfT), told us that there was evidence that new river crossings spur regeneration and that the DfT would provide it to the Committee: “I will ask my Department to put together pieces of data which show the very connection you ask for. It seems to me that if I am right, and we need to contextualise these schemes against the wider economic background, we need to provide the data to support that.”

7. It is clear that new river crossings can have genuine financial benefits for local businesses in terms of lower vehicle costs, time efficiencies and greater access to labour and consumers. It is less clear that those benefits extend to local people who should benefit from the development of new housing and the regeneration of their communities. The Minister has promised to send the Committee research that demonstrates the link between enhanced cross-river connectivity and urban regeneration. That research should be provided with the Government’s response to this report. The Department must then use that research as a foundation for further guidance, aimed at transport planners, that demonstrates how river crossings should be exploited to deliver opportunities for new housing and local regeneration.

**Environmental impacts**

8. The increased connectivity provided by river crossings can lead to more local traffic. If the resulting vehicle emissions reduce air quality, the case for river crossings as a means of regenerating local areas is undermined. Reducing congestion and improving air quality are important objectives, and local concerns about those issues must be taken seriously. Nevertheless, freezing the construction of new crossings is not the answer to achieving those objectives, particularly in places that are already congested. In areas with growing populations, such as east London and the wider Thames Gateway, those problems will only get worse.

9. New river crossings, especially if they are planned with long-term capacity requirements in mind and are well integrated with the surrounding road network, speed up traffic flows. That means motor vehicles will spend less time sitting idly and producing harmful emissions. Adopting more intelligent transport methods to operate crossings can further mitigate the impacts of new river crossings. Sharon Kindleysides, Chairman, ITS-UK, told us that transport authorities can introduce restrictions on HGVs or high-emission vehicles at certain points in the day or manage their access to crossings so that they are not stationary for long periods of time with their engines running. Sharon Kindleysides provided the Committee with an example that could be applied to river crossings:

This is where intelligent transportation systems can come into their own. I live in Ely, where at the moment they are contemplating a bypass, which will cost £X million [sic]. The solution that I am proposing is that you could use ITS to hold lorries back and meter them through a controlled crossing. You could hold them...
somewhere where they were not sitting at a road junction with their engines
running. If you knew that you had time to get five lorries through, you would let
five lorries through on a red phase of the traffic lights and then hold them back, so
that the engines were not running.\textsuperscript{8}

10. Michele Dix, Managing Director, Planning, Transport for London (TfL), described
how plans for new river crossings can be integrated with environmental policy that might
provide lessons for other river-crossing schemes outside London.\textsuperscript{9} TfL has published a
Transport Emissions Roadmap. The Roadmap sets out a number of intelligent ways to
improve air quality in emission hotspots. Those include a more sophisticated use of
London’s traffic light system to reduce delays, restricting the use of HGVs at certain times
and using differential charging on river crossings to encourage the uptake of lower
emitting vehicles and to deter the use of higher polluting vehicles.\textsuperscript{10}

11. It is clear to us that new river crossings have both benefits and impacts on
communities located nearby. Local concerns on the environmental impact of new
crossings must be taken seriously. We welcome Transport for London’s Transport
Emissions Roadmap and hope measures are taken forward to mitigate the impacts of
any new river crossings in London. When consulting on new river crossings the
Department must use the process to identify how technology and design can be used as
effective tools for mitigating the impact of new road capacity on air quality.

\textbf{Congestion and future-proofing}

12. New river crossings add capacity to the road network. They make the transport
network more resilient against delays to journeys caused by congestion. Reducing delays
was the main reason for building the second Tyne Tunnel.\textsuperscript{11} The first Tyne Tunnel,
completed in 1967, was designed to provide a combined two-way capacity of 25,000
vehicles per day, but this has since risen to 34,000 vehicles per day. That congestion
hindered economic development as it reduced the attractiveness of the A19 corridor as a
new business location.\textsuperscript{12}

\begin{center}
\textbf{Table 1: Annual traffic flow on the Tyne Tunnels since 2007}\textsuperscript{13}
\end{center}

\begin{tabular}{|l|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Year} & \textbf{Total Traffic} \\
\hline
2007 & 12,144,861 \\
2008 & 11,899,016 \\
2009 & 11,714,713 \\
2010 & 11,617,448 \\
2011 & 11,996,079 \\
2012 & 14,315,069 \\
2013 & 15,056,791 \\
2014 & 16,419,059 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

8 Q150
9 Q12
10 Transport for London, \textit{Transport Emissions Roadmap}, September 2014, para 5.16-5.18
11 North East Combined Authority (SRC0036) para 3.4
12 North East Combined Authority (SRC0036) para 2.1
13 North East Combined Authority (SRC0036) para 2.3
13. The experience of the Tyne Tunnels demonstrated that increased capacity provided by a new river crossing can be short-lived. Table 1 shows that the new tunnel led to an immediate step change in traffic flow when it opened in 2011. Traffic rose in line with planners’ estimations; however, Paul Woods, Chief Finance Officer, North East Combined Authority (NECA), explained that an opportunity was missed to provide long-term resilience against congestion. The local transport authority was required to build a two-lane tunnel, whereas a four-lane tunnel would have been better value for money, more sustainable and more resilient in the long term. However, the toll income required to pay for a four-lane tunnel would have been too high. “We had to go for an option that was satisfactory for a 10 to 15-year period, but I do not think it was appropriate in the long term.”

It is much more expensive to increase the capacity of major bridges or tunnels than it is for conventional roads. Mike Llywelyn-Jones, Association of Consultancy and Engineering, said that difference justified a policy of planning river crossings for the capacity requirements of a much longer period of time, such as 30 years. That was “because the cost of being wrong, as it is sometimes described, is very large indeed.” Such short-term planning is far from unusual. Tim Healey, Association for Consultancy and Engineering, said:

It is a very common problem. It has been happening for years. If you look at the major river crossings in this country—the Mersey, the Severn, the Forth and the Dartford crossings—all of them have been duplicated. When they were first constructed, there was not future-proofing, or the means of catering for capacity 20 years or so into the future.

Short-term planning is exacerbated by current cost-benefit analysis methods. We were consistently told that cost-benefit analyses are poor at predicting the impact of a new river crossing. The Institute of Engineering and Technology told us that the predicted usage of a new river crossing is “likely to be underestimated.” The DfT said that the current approach to cost-benefit analysis was generally based on assuming that the introduction of a new river crossing “does not significantly change the system within which it is being assessed.” The DfT went on to say that it was undertaking a survey of the latest empirical evidence for the growth impacts of significant infrastructure schemes and the results are due to be published later this year.

14. Infrastructure planners must be mindful of the impact of new automotive technology when considering the requirements for new river crossings. In paragraph 9 we discussed the role such technologies could have in addressing environmental concerns. In our Motoring of the future report we found that such technologies can reduce congestion and

14 Q126
15 Q110
16 Q110
17 Q159
18 Q148
19 The Institution of Engineering and Technology (SRC0032) para 4.1
20 Department for Transport (SRC0009) para 4.3
“could free up millions of pounds from the cost of road expansion and river crossings”. 21 Driverless vehicles with technology that enables them to communicate with one another have the potential to significantly change driving behaviour. Vehicle platooning is just one possibility that could achieve that but it would require architects and infrastructure planners to transform how river crossings are designed. 22

15. River crossings have all too often been planned with a design life that was too short. That has resulted in the costly duplication of existing crossings, often decades after the original crossing has exceeded capacity. That provides a limitation on both the local and national economy and such short-termism brings an opportunity cost to the taxpayer. The Department must avoid that in the future by planning for longer-term capacity requirements. Such planning should also provide future-proofing for the requirements of 21st century infrastructure, including the potential for driverless vehicles that could revolutionise driving behaviour. Short-term planning has been exacerbated by cost-benefit analyses that underestimate the usage of new crossings. The Government’s current survey of cost-benefit analysis methods must include an examination of ways to improve traffic-modelling forecasts to ensure that the proposed design life of new crossings accurately reflect their usage by motorists.

---

22 Vehicle platooning is a method of increasing the capacity of roads by decreasing the distances between vehicles. Driverless vehicles with the capability to accelerate or brake simultaneously would enable that ability.
16. This chapter examines the current proposals to build new river crossings in east London and the Lower Thames. The need for new crossings in both locations has been known for many years but progress on bringing them to construction has been disappointing. We have identified three main reasons for that lack of progress:

i) an absence of consensus between the areas affected by new crossings;

ii) changes of policy between government administrations; and

iii) insufficient political leadership in finalising plans for new river crossings

**East London Crossings**

17. London is predicted to grow by two million people over the next two decades, becoming a city of ten million people by 2031. East London has the potential to absorb a large proportion of that population growth. However, according to Lord Adonis, who examined the case for more east London river crossings with the Centre for London, connectivity is sorely lacking and east London will only reach its potential if the GLA can deliver a number of new crossings. Within the M25, there are 23 fixed road crossings west of Tower Bridge (not including Tower Bridge itself) but just two to the east. The Blackwall Tunnel, between Greenwich and Tower Hamlets, is operating above capacity at peak periods. Such capacity constraints and frequent accidents have made the Blackwall Tunnel unreliable and as a result only one bus route uses it. New river crossings in the vicinity would increase the reliability of the road network and enable more bus routes to operate between north and south London. That would contribute to a less car-dependent city.

18. Currently there are large parts of east London that are economically isolated because of their proximity to the River Thames. Lord Adonis described the existence of “island communities”—areas like Barking Riverside. The LCCI highlighted 2001 census data which illustrated the lack of mobility between communities close to one another but separated by the Thames. Just 400m of river separate Bexley from Newham, but only 574 Bexley residents commuted to Newham for work and just 147 Newham residents travelled in the other direction. Tim Healey, Association of Consultancy and Engineering, said that

---

23 Greater London Authority (SRC0031)
24 The Centre for London is a politically independent think tank which examines challenges facing London
25 Q59
26 London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SRC0024) para 7
27 Q59
28 London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SRC0024) para 18
“the arguments for multiple crossings of the Thames downstream of Tower Bridge are proven beyond doubt.”

19. Transport for London (TfL) has proposed a package of river crossings to increase connectivity in East London:

   i) a new tunnel under the Thames linking Silvertown and Greenwich (known as the Silvertown Tunnel);

   ii) a crossing at Gallions Reach;

   iii) a crossing at Belvedere; and/or

   iv) a replacement Woolwich Ferry or a new ferry service at Gallions Reach and Silvertown;

The plans for the Silvertown Tunnel are well advanced. The tunnel was designated a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) by the Secretary of State for Transport in June 2012. TfL is conducting further work on the other options. TfL will then undertake a more detailed consultation in September 2015.

20. There has been local opposition to the proposals, particularly the Silvertown Tunnel. “No to Silvertown Tunnel”, a local campaign group, are concerned that the new tunnel will increase traffic in the area, exacerbate already poor air quality and will fail to bring the economic benefits promised. However, it is our view that a package of new river crossings in east London is long overdue. Without new crossings, the congestion on the Blackwall Tunnel will only get worse and the area’s development potential will never be realised. However, the Silvertown Tunnel must not be built in isolation. Instead it must be part of a package of river crossings. That will ensure that the benefits new crossings bring, such as increased connectivity, access to jobs and greater resilience on the road network, are spread across east London. At the same time, the negative impacts of larger traffic flows will be limited as they are shared across a greater area.

21. The need for new river crossings has been identified by successive GLA administrations, but plans were cancelled once they faced opposition from local campaign groups. Mayor Johnson cancelled the planned Thames Gateway Bridge upon taking office in 2008 for that reason, only to identify the same need for more cross-river capacity later in his tenure. John Hayes MP, Minister of State, DfT, said that the political cycle had had a detrimental impact on delivering infrastructure:

   Let me be blunt: the Committee knows well that in democratic politics there is always a problem with Government taking decisions, and that is for two reasons: first, because the payback for those decisions is not within a five-year span, and people are acutely aware of the electoral effects of the decisions they take; secondly, they are reluctant to bind the hands of their successors. That is a perfectly noble

---

29 Q159
30 No to Silvertown Tunnel (SRC0034)
31 The Thames Gateway Bridge would have connected the London boroughs of Greenwich and Newham
aspect of our politics. [...] For those two reasons, and perhaps a third, that people do not want to get these things wrong. Governments, perhaps understandably, have not always been as clear or decisive on infrastructure as they might be.\(^{32}\)

Stronger leadership is required to promote the benefits of new river crossings and limit the impact of the political cycle on planned infrastructure for which there is a clear need. In spring 2014, the Centre for London set up a Commission to explore how best to deliver river crossings in east London. In line with our findings, the Commission identified a lack of political leadership committed to bringing river crossings schemes to construction. To solve that problem, the Commission recommended the establishment of a special purpose company to manage the development of new crossings within the M25. The Commission stated that that company should be a subsidiary of TfL and staffed by people with experience of the current generation of proposals. The Mayor should seek to appoint a respected and influential individual to lead the project, to ensure that they would be personally associated with its success, as David Higgins is with HS2.\(^{33}\) We believe that proposal has merit.

22. We welcome the package of river crossings proposed by TfL, but successive GLA administrations have identified the need for new river crossings in east London only for progress to stall because of the timescale required which expands beyond the electoral cycle. We accept that major infrastructure projects require long periods of time to plan so that value for money and opportunities for connectivity and economic regeneration are maximised. However, it is not credible to expect that to be completed between elections. To prevent a repeat of the Thames Gateway experience, the Government should now work with the GLA to establish a special purpose company with direct responsibility for delivering new crossings in east London. A deadline should be set for the start of construction and the Mayor should have the power to appoint a chief executive with strong experience of delivering major infrastructure projects.

**Lower Thames Crossing**

23. The Dartford Crossing has been named the least reliable section of the Strategic Road Network.\(^{34}\) According to the DfT, the existing crossing carries an average of 140,000 vehicles each day. That compares with an original design capacity for 135,000 vehicles. The Dartford Crossing has the third highest level of delay across the Network, with delays of over nine minutes for around half of users. The annual cost of those delays to the economy, in the form of ‘lost time’ for users, has been estimated at £15 million.\(^{35}\) The proposed garden city at Ebbsfleet and Paramount theme park on the Swanscombe Peninsula will, if delivered, put significant additional strain on the crossing.

---

32 Q178
34 Department for Transport, *Options for a new Lower Thames Crossing: Consultation Document*, May 2013, para 4.4
35 Department for Transport, *Options for a new Lower Thames Crossing: Consultation Document*, May 2013, para 4.2-4.3
24. The Minister told us that the need for a new river crossing to alleviate the congestion at Dartford was identified as far back as 1994 in a Government review but successive Governments have failed to be powerful enough champions for a new crossing.\textsuperscript{36} In 2009 the DfT identified five location options that could help alleviate the congestion at the existing crossing.

- Option A: at the site of the existing A282 Dartford-Thurrock river crossing;
- Option B: connecting the A2 with the A1089;
- Option C: connecting the M2 with the A13 and the M25 between junctions 29 and 30;
- Option D, which would see a new crossing at Canvey Island, linking the A130 to the M2 in Kent; and
- Option E, an Isle of Grain link to east of Southend.

Those options have now been reduced to two, options A and C (plus one variant of Option C). It is disappointing that it has taken the Government nearly five years to do so. Furthermore, those options are to be consulted upon again in late 2015 or early 2016 once the Highways Agency has conducted further work on them.

25. The DfT has stated that it wishes to build consensus between local authorities before making a final decision.\textsuperscript{37} However, reaching that consensus has proven difficult as the positive and negative impacts of new crossings fall unequally on different areas. National transport objectives such as providing better connectivity between the Dover Docks, the M11 and the north of England clash with local concerns about increased congestion and pollution.\textsuperscript{38} Representatives from Kent and Essex County Council told us that they supported Option C. Councillor Rodney Bass, Essex County Council, stated that Option C would “produce over 25,000 extra jobs in Essex and Kent by 2031; you would probably create about 21,000 or so extra homes; and it would be a catalyst for major economic activity.”\textsuperscript{39} However the councils that would host Option C, Gravesham and Thurrock, disputed that Option C was the best scheme to deliver those aims and stated that other locations for a crossing were more suitable.\textsuperscript{40}

26. There are concerns from some local authorities that the Government is not consulting properly with local authorities during the decision making process for the location of the new Lower Thames crossing.\textsuperscript{41} The Government has delayed making a final decision until after the General Election which has led Kent County Council to doubt whether the next Government will retain the policy to build a new crossing.\textsuperscript{42} Thurrock recommended that

\textsuperscript{36} Q170
\textsuperscript{37} Q171
\textsuperscript{38} Q30
\textsuperscript{39} Q30
\textsuperscript{40} Thurrock Borough Council (SRC0018) & Gravesham Borough Council (SRC0040)
\textsuperscript{41} Kent Council (SRC0022) para 2.7
\textsuperscript{42} Kent Council (SRC0022) para 2.7
the DfT could provide more certainty to local authorities by working more closely with them. They suggested that that should be done by “twin tracking” their planning processes and to gather evidence together on the best location for the new crossing.43

27. The Association of Consultancy and Engineering told us that the abolition of the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) and their partial replacement with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) had made coordination between local and national government more difficult. The jurisdictions of individual LEPs do not adequately accommodate the regional impact of new river crossings. Contiguous LEPs need to enhance collaboration to communicate regional priorities:

A bottom-up approach, in which each of the LEPs, the local authorities or whatever would state their priorities and those would gradually be grouped into what was the regional priority and, ultimately, what were the national priorities, strikes me as a way in which local opinions could be given; but a strategic overview would have to be taken, because the nature of a strategic crossing is that its impact will be far wider than the area that is considering whether or not to put money into the venture.44

The Minister accepted that there was a case for facilitating better “joined-up thinking” between different partners in the decision-making process including LEPs and local authorities.45

28. We are disappointed that the Department for Transport has made such little progress on delivering a new river crossing in the Lower Thames during this Parliament. We do, however, welcome the Department’s attempts to build consensus on the location for the new crossings. It is unfortunate, however, that both Kent County Council and Thurrock Borough Council, supporters and opponents of Option C respectively, have criticised the Department for working in isolation and without proper consultation. The Minister must show more leadership in finding a consensus between the affected local authorities by investigating what mitigations can be provided to limit the environmental impact of the new crossing and any increased traffic that results from it. The Department should take an active role in facilitating “joined-up thinking” between Local Enterprise Partnerships.46 The Department for Transport must work with the Department for Communities and Local Government to identify how Local Enterprise Partnerships can increase their effectiveness by working together to identify regional priorities for development.

---

43 Thurrock Council (SRC0018) para 1.1
44 Q139
45 Q176
46 Q176
4 Finance and Tolls

National infrastructure Plan

29. The government published the first National Infrastructure Plan in 2010, bringing together key economic infrastructure sectors: transport, energy, flood defences, water, waste, communications and science. The National Infrastructure Plan identifies a ‘Top 40’ list of major projects, which receive greater support from the Government. For example, the Government operates a presumption in favour of prequalification for the UK Guarantees Scheme (UKGS) for any project that is part of the ‘Top 40’ priority investments. The UKGS was announced by the Government in July 2012. It provides financial support for planned infrastructure projects while private sector investors are sought. The Government intends that the projects will find other investors but the UKGS provide some confidence that any shortfall will be met. Government expenditure is only necessary if private sector investment cannot be found and the guarantees are called in.

30. The Mersey Gateway Project was included in the Top 40 and the Government confirmed that the Project qualified for funding under the UKGS in July 2013. Stephen Joseph, Chief Executive, Campaign for Better Transport, explained that prior to that, the Campaign for Better Transport and the North West Transport Roundtable had published an assessment of the Project that found “it would be very difficult to pass a revenue risk to the private sector, [that] is exactly what happened, as you heard from Mr Nicholson. Those consultants accurately predicted that the Government would end up standing behind the revenue, and ultimately end up guaranteeing the risk, otherwise it was not going to get built.” The UKGS meant that in the worst case scenario of no vehicle ever paying to use either the Mersey Gateway Bridge or the Silver Jubilee Bridge, central government would cover the costs over the concession period. That contrasts with the Tyne Tunnels’ risk allocation where the private sector operator assumed the revenue risk for the collection of tolls.

31. We accept that the introduction of the UK Guarantees Scheme has provided assurance to the private sector and has encouraged it to invest in much needed infrastructure, such as the Mersey Gateway Project. Through the Scheme, the Government underwrites risks, such as the non-payment of tolls, which should be borne by the private sector. The Government creates a situation in which there is no incentive for the private sector to mitigate such risks. Before authorising a project for the UK Guarantee Scheme the Government should publish a statement that indicates the level of risk that it has agreed to take on, on behalf of the taxpayer. This statement should make clear the mitigations the Government expects any private sector partner to take to address the risks.

32. The National Infrastructure Plan is published with an Infrastructure Pipeline which details the size and status of UK infrastructure projects. Mike Llywelyn-Jones, Association
of Consultancy and Engineering, said that the Pipeline could be more robust in how it informs investors about the projects that it contains. He suggested that there should be more distinction between which schemes are still available for private-sector involvement and which schemes were not. Furthermore he believed that a traffic-light system should indicate the security of funding:

You could look at that and say, “Okay, I can be reasonably certain that that one is going to happen in those years. Clearly, that one is only going to happen if money is available.” Then you could prioritise the ones you were really interested in by which were available and which were likely to receive definite funding.49

Infrastructure UK, a unit in HM Treasury that advises government on the long-term infrastructure needs of the UK, stated that the Pipeline provides “a strategic and more credible overview of the level of public and private infrastructure investment planned over the rest of this decade and beyond.”50

33. It is our view that that the National Infrastructure Plan and the accompanying Infrastructure Pipeline have provided an insight into the Government’s main priorities for investment in the medium term. While that is a good start, more must be done to provide confidence to investors and private sector partners. We recommend that in the next update to the Infrastructure Pipeline, the Government implements a system that clearly identifies the funding status of each project so that the private sector is better able to identify investment opportunities.

Tolls and technology

34. According to the DfT, it has been government policy since 1945 that river crossings should be paid for by the user through tolls rather than through general taxation. “Successive governments have taken the view that tolls are justified because users benefit from the savings in time and money.”51

35. A free-flow payment system called Dart Charge was introduced at the Dartford Crossing on 30 November 2014.52 Drivers must now pay online, by phone, or at selected retailers before or after they use the Crossing. The system removes the need for toll booths, which speeds up traffic flows and reduces congestion. The Mersey Gateway Bridge will use similar technology and the same contractor, Sanef. Sanef told us that Dart Charge uses Automatic Number Plate Reading (ANPR) cameras to identify vehicles using the Crossing. That vehicle data is then transferred on a secure network to be processed by toll staff. The system is most efficient when users open pre-pay accounts that can save users money by not requiring them to pay for individual trips over the Crossing.53
36. Free-flow technology has implications for future contracts with private sector toll operators. Rachel Turnbull, Chief Executive of TT2, said that TT2’s contract to operate the Tyne Tunnels is based on TT2 collecting 100% of the theoretical toll revenue. However, free-flow tolling is likely to lead to between 80% or 95% only of theoretical revenue being collected. Those figures are supported by evidence that 15% of drivers failed to pay the Dart Charge during its first month after implementation (although the issuing of penalty-charge notices have led to that figure improving). That makes it unlikely that free-flow technology can be implemented on existing river crossings that have contractual arrangements similar to those of the Tyne Tunnels.

37. Stephen Joseph, Chief Executive of the Campaign for Better Transport, said that the implementation of the Dart Charge was “not well-handled”:

That is partly because the level of information given to motorists appears to be poor. Hopefully, one of the things that Mersey people will learn from Dartford is that you have to tell people when you are going to change the tolling, or in this case introduce new tolling, otherwise you will get some serious problems. I do not think the Highways Agency has exactly covered itself in glory in the Dartford case.54

38. We welcome the introduction of free-flow tolling at Dartford, its future implementation on the Mersey Gateway and other river crossings around the UK. The Department must investigate what lessons can be learned from the introduction of the Dart Charge, following reports that 15% of users failed to pay during the first month after implementation. If free-flow technology commonly results in high rates of non-compliance from users, the private sector will wish to charge more to accept the risk of collecting its revenue from tolls. The Department must continue to monitor non-payment rates at the Dartford Crossing and identify how compliance on free-flow systems can be raised. Lessons should be made available by the end of 2015 so that plans can be arranged for the scheduled opening of the Mersey Gateway Bridge in the autumn of 2017.

Interoperable tolling technology

39. River crossings which use free-flow technology should be interoperable so that users need use only one account to pay on different schemes across the UK. That would be advantageous for drivers who frequently drive long-distances, such as those in the road freight industry who are likely to cross multiple river crossings–and other road charging schemes–daily. Interoperable technologies in the UK should also be compatible with those in continental Europe for that reason. The European Commission has sought to achieve that. In April 2004, Directive 2004/52/EC was adopted. The Directive placed constraints on the technologies that can be used for new road-charging systems. It also provided a framework to allow drivers to use one subscription contract with one service provider and one piece of on-board electronic equipment across Europe, collectively known as the
European Electronic Tolling Service (EETS). However, we were told that the project has struggled to attract toll operators to participate because of the complexity of the system.\textsuperscript{55}

40. Free-flow technology can use Dedicated Short-Range Communications (DSRC) tags which are interoperable with toll systems across Europe. DSRC tags are small plastic devices, placed in the windscreen, which free-flow river crossings use to register vehicles as they pass.\textsuperscript{56} EU rules set the standards for DSRC tags which ensures that they are technically interoperable across Europe.\textsuperscript{57} Sharon Kindleysides described them as like a mobile phone handset where “everything is designed in the same way, to work on the same frequency”.\textsuperscript{58} According to Sanef, the tags are common amongst European hauliers as they “reduce costs […] and also improve compliance—once the tag is fitted the operator or driver needs to do nothing else.”\textsuperscript{59}

41. While the tag technology is interoperable in the UK, there is no business interoperability between toll operators. Sanef described the situation as “like a mobile phone being able to get a signal in a foreign country but not actually make or receive calls.”\textsuperscript{60} Users of free-flow crossings are currently required to have separate tags for different crossings in the UK. That is disappointing as there is clearly the potential that one tag could provide for all UK and European services on a single pre-paid account per user.

42. Rachel Turnbull, Chief Executive of TT2, explained that while the potential for interoperability between toll operators had been identified, there did not appear to be a practical way for revenue to be assigned from a single type of tag to the right operator.\textsuperscript{61} That chimed with evidence from Sanef who agreed that such technology is not in place in the UK. However, according to Sanef that “has been overcome in other countries e.g. Ireland by the state providing an interoperability hub. This could be introduced by the private sector in the UK if there was a financial return for the operator of the technology.”\textsuperscript{62}

43. As free-flow technology is implemented on more river crossings we believe that the Department must aim for total interoperability. Now is the ideal time to act before a mix of different systems become ingrained on the road network. Interoperability means less administration costs and higher compliance for all road users; but the technology would benefit the road haulage industry most of all, helping to maintain the sector’s competitiveness with its European counterparts. The Department should commission research into how best to introduce the technology needed for toll operators to create an interoperable system of payments. That would be an ideal project for the Government’s Digital Service during the next Parliament.

\textsuperscript{55} Q160  
\textsuperscript{56} Q163  
\textsuperscript{57} Q161  
\textsuperscript{58} Q161  
\textsuperscript{59} Sanef (SRC0033) para 4.4  
\textsuperscript{60} Sanef (SRC0033) para 4.4  
\textsuperscript{61} Q115  
\textsuperscript{62} Sanef (SRC0033) para 4.4
5 Conclusion

44. Each of the case studies that we examined during this inquiry held lessons on how new river crossings should be designed, operated or financed. Over the next Parliament important decisions will be made on where to locate new river crossings in east London and the Lower Thames. This report makes recommendations that will help to ensure those crossings can transform local areas and the Strategic Road Network for the better. At the same time, we recognise new crossings can have environmental impacts on the areas where they are situated. We have called on the Government to investigate how technology, design or intelligent transport systems can mitigate those impacts. Free-flow technology is one way to increase traffic flows and we welcome its implementation at Dartford; however, the technology will never reach its potential if it is not made interoperable with similar toll systems. We are also concerned that the Government is not being sufficiently mindful of risk. Free-flow technology might have an impact on how river crossings are financed, as they increase the risk that some motorists will not pay tolls. The Government is also standing behind risk that we believe should rightly be allocated to the private sector. We have called upon the Government to conduct more work in assessing those risks and to be clearer on how they can be mitigated.
Conclusions and recommendations

Regeneration

1. It is clear that new river crossings can have genuine financial benefits for local businesses in terms of lower vehicle costs, time efficiencies and greater access to labour and consumers. It is less clear that those benefits extend to local people who should benefit from the development of new housing and the regeneration of their communities. The Minister has promised to send the Committee research that demonstrates the link between enhanced cross-river connectivity and urban regeneration. That research should be provided with the Government’s response to this report. The Department must then use that research as a foundation for further guidance, aimed at transport planners, that demonstrates how river crossings should be exploited to deliver opportunities for new housing and local regeneration. (Paragraph 7)

Environmental impacts

2. It is clear to us that new river crossings have both benefits and impacts on communities located nearby. Local concerns on the environmental impact of new crossings must be taken seriously. We welcome Transport for London’s Transport Emissions Roadmap and hope measures are taken forward to mitigate the impacts of any new river crossings in London. When consulting on new river crossings the Department must use the process to identify how technology and design can be used as effective tools for mitigating the impact of new road capacity on air quality. (Paragraph 11)

Congestion and future proofing

3. River crossings have all too often been planned with a design life that was too short. That has resulted in the costly duplication of existing crossings, often decades after the original crossing has exceeded capacity. That provides a limitation on both the local and national economy and such short-termism brings an opportunity cost to the taxpayer. The Department must avoid that in the future by planning for longer-term capacity requirements. Such planning should also provide future-proofing for the requirements of 21st century infrastructure, including the potential for driverless vehicles that could revolutionise driving behaviour. Short-term planning has been exacerbated by cost-benefit analyses that underestimate the usage of new crossings. The Government’s current survey of cost-benefit analysis methods must include an examination of ways to improve traffic-modelling forecasts to ensure that the proposed design life of new crossings accurately reflect their usage by motorists. (Paragraph 15)

East London crossings

4. It is our view that a package of new river crossings in east London is long overdue. Without new crossings, the congestion on the Blackwall Tunnel will only get worse and the area’s development potential will never be realised. However, the Silvertown Tunnel must not be built in isolation. Instead it must be part of a package of river
crossings. That will ensure that the benefits new crossings bring, such as increased connectivity, access to jobs and greater resilience on the road network, are spread across east London. At the same time, the negative impacts of larger traffic flows will be limited as they are shared across a greater area. (Paragraph 20)

5. We welcome the package of river crossings proposed by TfL, but successive GLA administrations have identified the need for new river crossings in east London only for progress to stall because of the timescale required which expands beyond the electoral cycle. We accept that major infrastructure projects require long periods of time to plan so that value for money and opportunities for connectivity and economic regeneration are maximised. However, it is not credible to expect that to be completed between elections. To prevent a repeat of the Thames Gateway experience, the Government should now work with the GLA to establish a special purpose company with direct responsibility for delivering new crossings in east London. A deadline should be set for the start of construction and the Mayor should have the power to appoint a chief executive with strong experience of delivering major infrastructure projects. (Paragraph 22)

Lower Thames Crossings

6. We are disappointed that the Department for Transport has made such little progress on delivering a new river crossing in the Lower Thames during this Parliament. We do, however, welcome the Department’s attempts to build consensus on the location for the new crossings. It is unfortunate, however, that both Kent County Council and Thurrock Borough Council, supporters and opponents of Option C (which connects the M2 with the A13 and the M25 between junctions 29 and 30) respectively, have criticised the Department for working in isolation and without proper consultation. The Minister must show more leadership in finding a consensus between the affected local authorities by investigating what mitigations can be provided to limit the environmental impact of the new crossing and any increased traffic that results from it. The Department should take an active role in facilitating “joined-up thinking” between Local Enterprise Partnerships. The Department for Transport must work with the Department for Communities and Local Government to identify how Local Enterprise Partnerships can increase their effectiveness by working together to identify regional priorities for development. (Paragraph 28)

National Infrastructure Plan

7. We accept that the introduction of the UK Guarantees Scheme has provided assurance to the private sector and has encouraged it to invest in much needed infrastructure, such as the Mersey Gateway Project. Through the Scheme, the Government underwrites risks, such as the non-payment of tolls, which should be borne by the private sector. The Government creates a situation in which there is no incentive for the private sector to mitigate such risks. Before authorising a project for the UK Guarantee Scheme the Government should publish a statement that indicates the level of risk that it has agreed to take on, on behalf of the taxpayer. This statement should make clear the mitigations the Government expects any private sector partner to take to address the risks. (Paragraph 31)
8. It is our view that that the National Infrastructure Plan and the accompanying Infrastructure Pipeline have provided an insight into the Government’s main priorities for investment in the medium term. While that is a good start, more must be done to provide confidence to investors and private sector partners. We recommend that in the next update to the Infrastructure Pipeline, the Government implements a system that clearly identifies the funding status of each project so that the private sector is better able to identify investment opportunities. (Paragraph 33)

Tolls and technology

9. We welcome the introduction of free-flow tolling at Dartford, its future implementation on the Mersey Gateway and other river crossings around the UK. The Department must investigate what lessons can be learned from the introduction of the Dart Charge, following reports that 15% of users failed to pay during the first month after implementation. If free-flow technology commonly results in high rates of non-compliance from users, the private sector will wish to charge more to accept the risk of collecting its revenue from tolls. The Department must continue to monitor non-payment rates at the Dartford Crossing and identify how compliance on free-flow systems can be raised. Lessons should be made available by the end of 2015 so that plans can be arranged for the scheduled opening of the Mersey Gateway Bridge in the autumn of 2017. (Paragraph 38)

Interoperable toll technology

10. As free-flow technology is implemented on more river crossings we believe that the Department must aim for total interoperability. Now is the ideal time to act before a mix of different systems become ingrained on the road network. Interoperability means less administration costs and higher compliance for all road users; but the technology would benefit the road haulage industry most of all, helping to maintain the sector’s competitiveness with its European counterparts. The Department should commission research into how best to introduce the technology needed for toll operators to create an interoperable system of payments. That would be an ideal project for the Government’s Digital Service during the next Parliament. (Paragraph 43)

Conclusion

11. Each of the case studies that we examined during this inquiry held lessons on how new river crossings should be designed, operated or financed. Over the next Parliament important decisions will be made on where to locate new river crossings in east London and the Lower Thames. This report makes recommendations that will help to ensure those crossings can transform local areas and the Strategic Road Network for the better. At the same time, we recognise new crossings can have environmental impacts on the areas where they are situated. We have called on the Government to investigate how technology, design or intelligent transport systems can mitigate those impacts. Free-flow technology is one way to increase traffic flows and we welcome its implementation at Dartford; however, the technology will never reach its potential if it is not made interoperable with similar toll systems. We are also concerned that the Government is not being sufficiently mindful of risk. Free-flow technology might have an impact on how river crossings are financed, as they
increase the risk that some motorists will not pay tolls. The Government is also standing behind risk that we believe should rightly be allocated to the private sector. We have called upon the Government to conduct more work in assessing those risks and to be clearer on how they can be mitigated. (Paragraph 44)
Formal Minutes

Monday 9 March 2015

Members present:

Mrs Louise Ellman, in the Chair

Jim Fitzpatrick  Mr Adrian Sanders
Karen Lumley  Chloe Smith
Jason McCartney  Martin Vickers

Draft Report (Strategic river crossings), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 44 read and agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Tenth Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

[Adjourned to a day and time to be fixed by the Chair]
Witnesses

The following witnesses gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the Committee’s inquiry page at www.parliament.uk/transcom.

Monday 12 January 2015


Councillor Rodney Bass, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation, Essex County Council, Councillor Denise Hyland, Leader, Royal Borough of Greenwich, Councillor Paul Carter, Leader, Kent County Council, Sir Robin Wales, Mayor of Newham, and Councillor John Kent, Leader, Thurrock Council  Q25-55

Lord Adonis  Q56-70

Monday 26 January 2015

Steve Nicholson, Special Adviser, Mersey Gateway Crossings Board, and Stephen Joseph, Chief Executive, Campaign for Better Transport  Q71-107

Rachel Turnbull, Chief Executive Officer, TT2 Limited, and Paul Woods, Chief Finance Officer, North East Combined Authority  Q108-134

Monday 9 February 2015

Eur Ing Sharon Kindleysides, Chairman, ITS United Kingdom, Mike Llywelyn-Jones, Chair, Roads Sector Interest Group, Association for Consultancy and Engineering, and Tim Healey, Deputy Chair, Road Sector Interest Group, Association for Consultancy and Engineering  Q135-167

Mr John Hayes MP, Minister of State, Department for Transport, Graham Dalton, Chief Executive, Highways Agency, Penny Mordaunt MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government, and James Hooson, Project Director for the Lower Thames Crossing, Department for Transport  Q168-187
Published written evidence

The following written evidence was received and can be viewed on the Committee’s inquiry web page at www.parliament.uk/transcom. INQ numbers are generated by the evidence processing system and so may not be complete.

1. Association for Consultancy and Engineering (SRC0017)
2. Automobile Association (SRC0027)
3. Brian Little (SRC0015)
4. City of London Corporation (SRC0001)
5. Department for Transport (SRC0009)
6. Francis Wilson (SRC0006)
7. Freight Transport Association (SRC0026)
8. Gravesend Borough Council (SRC0040)
9. Greater London Authority (SRC0031)
10. ITS United Kingdom (SRC0020)
11. Jackie Doyle-Price MP (SRC0004)
12. John Cox (SRC0023)
13. John Elliott (SRC0012)
14. John Elliott (SRC0039)
15. Kent County Council (SRC0022)
16. London Borough of Newham (SRC0019)
17. London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SRC0024)
18. Martin Blaiklock (SRC0002)
19. Mersey Gateway Crossings Board on Behalf of Halton Borough Council (SRC0035)
20. Merseytravel (SRC0021)
21. Mr and Mrs Alan and Daphne Revell (SRC0008)
22. National Alliance Against Tolls (SRC0029)
23. No to Silvertown Tunnel (SRC0034)
24. North East Combined Authority (SRC0036)
25. Peter Smethurst (SRC0037)
26. Port of London Authority (SRC0038)
27. Professor Harry T. Dimitriou (SRC0025)
28. Roger Pipe (SRC0010)
29. Sanef Operations Ltd (SRC0033)
30. Simon Norton (SRC0014)
31. Stephen Metcalfe MP (SRC0016)
32. Terry Brown (SRC0007)
33. The Institution of Engineering and Technology (SRC0032)
34. Thurrock Council (SRC0018)
35. Tom Benton (SRC0011)
List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

All publications from the Committee are available on the Committee’s website at [www.parliament.uk/transcom](http://www.parliament.uk/transcom).
The reference number of the Government’s response to each Report is printed in brackets after the HC printing number.

**Session 2014–15**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>HC Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ninth Report</td>
<td>Smaller Airports</td>
<td>HC 713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth Report</td>
<td>Motoring of the future</td>
<td>HC 429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh Report</td>
<td>Investing in the railway</td>
<td>HC 257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth Report</td>
<td>Government motoring agencies – the user perspective</td>
<td>HC 287 (HC 884)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Report</td>
<td>Security on the railway</td>
<td>HC 428 (HC 792)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Report</td>
<td>Cycling safety</td>
<td>HC 286 (Incorporating HC 852, Session 2013-14) (HC 718)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Report</td>
<td>Offshore helicopter safety</td>
<td>HC 289 (Incorporating HC 992, Session 2013-14) (HC 717)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Special Report</td>
<td>Forging ahead: UK shipping strategy: Government Response to the Committee’s Thirteenth Report of Session 2013-14</td>
<td>HC 254</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Session 2013–14**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>HC Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sixteenth Report</td>
<td>National Policy Statement on National Networks</td>
<td>HC 1135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report Number</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifteenth Report</td>
<td>Better roads: improving England’s strategic road network</td>
<td>HC 850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourteenth Report</td>
<td>Putting passengers first, disruption at Gatwick, Christmas Eve 2013</td>
<td>HC 956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventeenth Special Report</td>
<td>Land transport security—scope for further EU involvement?: Further Government Response to the Committee’s Eleventh Report of Session 2012–13</td>
<td>HC 1192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirteenth Report</td>
<td>Forging ahead?: UK shipping strategy</td>
<td>HC 630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twelfth Report</td>
<td>Future programme 2014</td>
<td>HC 1143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eleventh Report</td>
<td>Safety at level crossings</td>
<td>HC 680 (HC 1260)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenth Report</td>
<td>Ready and waiting? Transport preparations for winter weather</td>
<td>HC 681 (HC 1139)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninth Report</td>
<td>High speed rail: on track?</td>
<td>HC 851 (HC 1085)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifteenth Special Report</td>
<td>Cancellation of the InterCity West Coast competition: Government update on the Laidlaw and Brown reports</td>
<td>HC 1086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth Report</td>
<td>Access to ports</td>
<td>HC 266 (HC 1083)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh Report</td>
<td>Local authority parking enforcement</td>
<td>HC 118 (HC 970)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh Special Report</td>
<td>The new European motorcycle test: Government Response to the Committee’s Sixth Report of 2009–10</td>
<td>HC 656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth Report</td>
<td>Flight Time Limitation: Follow-up</td>
<td>HC 641 (HC 795)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Report</td>
<td>Access to transport for disabled people</td>
<td>HC 116 (HC 870)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Report</td>
<td>Cost of motor insurance: whiplash</td>
<td>HC 117 (CM 8738)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Report</td>
<td>The work of the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA)</td>
<td>HC 583 (HC 678)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Special Report</td>
<td>The European Commission’s 4th Railway Package: Government Response to the Committee’s Twelfth Report of Session 2012–13</td>
<td>HC 439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Special Report</td>
<td>Rail 2020: Rail Delivery Group and Passenger Focus responses to the Committee’s Seventh Report of Session 2012–13</td>
<td>HC 81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Special Report</td>
<td>Land transport security—scope for further EU involvement?: Government Response to the Committee’s Eleventh Report of Session 2012–13</td>
<td>HC 177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Report</td>
<td>Aviation strategy</td>
<td>HC 78 (HC 596)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Special Report</td>
<td>Cancellation of the InterCity West Coast franchise competition: Government Response to the Committee’s Eighth Report of Session 2012–13</td>
<td>HC 80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Session 2012–13**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report Number</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Session</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Twelfth Report</td>
<td>The European Commission’s 4th Railway Package</td>
<td>HC 1001 (HC 439)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eleventh Report</td>
<td>Land transport security—scope for further EU involvement?</td>
<td>HC 875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninth Special Report</td>
<td>Rail 2020: Government and Office of Rail Regulation Responses to the Committee’s Seventh Report of</td>
<td>HC 1059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenth Report</td>
<td>The Coastguard, Emergency Towing Vessels and the Maritime Incident Response Group: follow up</td>
<td>HC 1018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninth Report</td>
<td>Marine Pilotage</td>
<td>HC 840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth Report</td>
<td>Cancellation of the InterCity West Coast franchise competition</td>
<td>HC 537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh Report</td>
<td>Rail 2020</td>
<td>HC 329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth Report</td>
<td>The Coastguard, Emergency Towing Vessels and the Maritime Incident Response Group: follow up</td>
<td>HC 647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Report</td>
<td>Future programme: autumn and winter 2012–13</td>
<td>HC 591</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Report</td>
<td>Plug-in vehicles, plugged in policy?</td>
<td>HC 239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Report</td>
<td>Competition in the local bus market</td>
<td>HC 10 (HC 761)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Incorporating HC 1861–i–iii)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Special Report</td>
<td>Air Travel Organisers' Licensing (Atol) Reform: Government Response To The Committee's Seventeenth Report Of Session 2010–12</td>
<td>HC 557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Report</td>
<td>Road safety</td>
<td>HC 506 (HC 648)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Incorporating HC 1738)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Report</td>
<td>Flight time limitations</td>
<td>HC 164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Incorporating HC 1838)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Special Report</td>
<td>Sulphur emissions by ships: Government Response to the Committee's Sixteenth Report Of Session 2010–12</td>
<td>HC 87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Special Report</td>
<td>Draft Civil Aviation Bill: Pre-Legislative Scrutiny: Government Response to the Committee’s Thirteenth Report Of Session 2010–12</td>
<td>HC 11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Session 2010–12**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Report</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seventeenth Report</td>
<td>Air Travel Organisers' Licensing (ATOL) reform</td>
<td>HC 1798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixteenth Report</td>
<td>Sulphur emissions by ships</td>
<td>HC 1561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifteenth Report</td>
<td>Counting the cost: financial scrutiny of the Department for Transport 2011–12</td>
<td>HC 1560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourteenth Report</td>
<td>Cable theft on the Railway</td>
<td>HC 1609 (HC 1933)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirteenth Report</td>
<td>Draft Civil Aviation Bill: Pre-Legislative Scrutiny</td>
<td>HC 1694</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twelfth Report</td>
<td>Cost of motor insurance: follow up</td>
<td>HC 1451 (HC 1934)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report Type</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eleventh Report</td>
<td>Thameslink rolling stock procurement</td>
<td>HC 1453 (HC 1935)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenth Report</td>
<td>High Speed Rail</td>
<td>HC 1185–I (HC 1754)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninth Report</td>
<td>Out of the jam: reducing congestion on our roads</td>
<td>HC 872 (HC 1661)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth Report</td>
<td>Bus Services after the Spending Review</td>
<td>HC 750 (HC 1550)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh Report</td>
<td>Taxis and private hire vehicles: the road to reform</td>
<td>HC 720 (HC 1507)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sixth Report</td>
<td>The Coastguard, Emergency Towing Vessels and the Maritime Incident Response Group</td>
<td>HC 948, incorporating HC 752–I (HC 1482)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Report</td>
<td>Keeping the UK moving: The impact on transport of the winter weather in December 2010</td>
<td>HC 794 (HC 1467)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Report</td>
<td>The cost of motor insurance</td>
<td>HC 591 (HC 1466)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Report</td>
<td>Transport and the economy</td>
<td>HC 473 (HC 962)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Report</td>
<td>Financial Scrutiny of the Department for Transport</td>
<td>HC 683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Report</td>
<td>Drink and drug driving law</td>
<td>HC 460 (Cm 8050)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Special Report</td>
<td>The major road network: Government response to the Committee's Eighth Report of Session 2009–10</td>
<td>HC 421</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>