Perceptions of compliance and enforcement on the Strategic Road Network: Focus groups and interviews

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1.0	31/01/2020	First draft report on focus groups and interviews delivered to client	RS	HW/SH
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Executive summary

Highways England is committed to understanding customer [1] perceptions and experiences of the Strategic Road Network (SRN) to improve customer experience, satisfaction and safety. As such, Highways England commissioned TRL to provide an in-depth understanding of customers' perceptions, attitudes and experiences of compliance with road regulations and enforcement of driving offences on the SRN.

During November and December 2019, TRL conducted five focus groups and four semi-structured telephone interviews with a total of 34 drivers for this study. Several types of driver were recruited to ensure a broad range of perceptions and experiences were captured: young drivers, experienced drivers, vocational drivers, those who had been convicted of driving offences and low confidence SRN drivers. During the focus groups and interviews, participants discussed three main topics:

- Their perceptions and experiences of driving behaviours that they found annoying or worrying and times at which they had displayed those behaviours themselves

- Their perceptions and experiences of measures designed to deter certain driving behaviours

- The roles of, and their experiences of, the police, Highways England traffic officers, Highways England as an organisation and cameras on the roads

Qualitative data from the focus groups and interviews were thematically analysed and various themes emerged, indicating the following key topics and constructs:

- When classifying 'annoying' or 'worrying' behaviours, participants' main focus was on behaviours that displayed a lack of **road etiquette** (such as failing to indicate or 'cutting in'), rather than focusing on the law. 'Etiquette' offences are largely subjective and therefore cannot be easily identified by technology (which requires binaries of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour), so addressing such offences could require the use of other enforcement methods.

- The findings on road etiquette highlight the need for future research to achieve a **holistic understanding of road user behaviour** through considering both illegal and unwanted behaviours, rather than focusing solely on prohibited behaviours; this is key to improving customer experience.

- Participants found some driving behaviours to be less **socially acceptable** than others (such as handheld mobile phone use, drink-driving or drug-driving), and therefore more dangerous and worthy of punishment. At times, participants explained these behaviours were less acceptable because they are perceived to be intentional; this '**intentional versus accidental**' nature of offences may be seen as a sub-component of social acceptability.

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[1] 'Customer' is a term typically used by Highways England to describe all users of the Strategic Road Network (SRN), such as drivers and passengers.

- Participants discussed what some sociologists have termed '**acceleration society**' and the pressures it brings to driving, in that some road users perceive journeys as an opportunity to make up lost time. Future research could explore how attitudes to these pressures can be changed.

- Participants frequently mentioned practical and social **consequences of penalties** as deterrents (such as embarrassment, shame or inconvenience), but rarely mentioned safety consequences as deterrents; further exploration of this could help us to understand whether compliance is normatively or instrumentally motivated.

- Key aspects of deterrence to participants included the **likelihood of being caught**, **celerity of punishment** (the speed at which punishment is received) and **visibility of the police**. The ways in which these attitudes differ by driving behaviour is important, as participants felt the '**wrong**' **behaviours** are often targeted by enforcement activities, instead of other behaviours that are more worthy of being targeted.

- Findings related to **punishment avoidance** suggest that automated enforcement methods can lead to a perception that other drivers' offending is ignored, as these methods give little external indication of having detected an offence. Participants also reported feelings of satisfaction upon seeing other drivers' offending being addressed. Future research could explore whether this sense of satisfaction can be compatible with automated enforcement methods, as well as human enforcement.

- Participants demonstrated mixed levels of acceptability, and awareness of the capabilities, of 'capable guardians' on the SRN (police officers, Highways England traffic officers and cameras). Further understanding of these levels of acceptability and awareness could help to inform future deployment decisions that may currently be based on **assumptions about roles and responsibilities**.

- Participants displayed a **passive and untrusting stance towards authority**; they exhibited a desire to be *shown* and *persuaded* that they should alter their behaviour, rather than trusting the authorities when they made such requests. This stance towards authority could be further explored (for example, attitudes towards education campaigns, signage, overhead messaging, patrols and cameras).

These topics and constructs will be reflected in a quantitative survey tool; this tool will allow Highways England to continue to measure customers' experiences, attitudes and perceptions of compliance and enforcement on the SRN.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background and objectives

The Strategic Road Network (SRN) comprises approximately 4,300 miles of motorways and major 'trunk' A-roads in England and is managed by Highways England. To improve customer experience and satisfaction while driving on the SRN, it is important to understand how they feel about and experience the network; this is linked closely to one of Highways England's three imperatives – customer service (the other two being safety and delivery). By understanding the factors that affect how people experience the network, we can identify measures that can be taken to further understand and improve customer experience, satisfaction and safety.

For this study, Highways England commissioned TRL to provide an in-depth understanding of drivers' perceptions, attitudes and experiences of **compliance** and **enforcement** on the network.

The "Three E's" of road safety are enforcement, education and engineering. Enforcement contributes to compliance and, in turn, to reductions in collisions, deaths and injuries. However, this is not a straightforward process as it relies on several assumptions:

- That the law being enforced appropriately reflects what is safe and what is dangerous

- That enforcement is an effective deterrent (that it is sufficiently swift, certain and severe to affect the choices people make)

- That it does not undermine the legitimacy of those doing the enforcement such that offending becomes more likely, rather than less likely

As such, understanding perceptions of compliance and enforcement are key to supporting successful behaviour change through enforcement. However, there is a lack of UK literature on the topic of perceptions of compliance and enforcement, particularly when considering drivers (Nunn & Snow, 2019).

The objectives of this study were therefore as follows:

- To understand how drivers perceive and experience compliance with and enforcement of driving offences while travelling on the SRN

- To understand what drivers expect regarding compliance and enforcement on the SRN and how this relates to their sense of fairness and justice, both for themselves and others

- Drawing on the outcomes of the above, to develop a quantitative survey tool that Highways England can use to consistently and accurately assess the experiences, attitudes and perceptions of compliance and enforcement by drivers on the SRN

This study focused solely on drivers on the SRN, rather than all SRN users. This is because drivers are responsible for operating the vehicle and engaging in driving behaviours, so recruiting drivers helped us understand the motivations and reasons for compliance, and how strategies to help increase compliance should be formulated.

However, participants' perceptions and experiences that were uncovered through this research may have been formed during their experience as both drivers and passengers on the SRN.

1.2 This document

This document is divided into three main sections:

- Method (Section 2): this section provides an overview of the research design and methods related to the delivery of the research objectives.

- Focus group and interview findings (Section 3): this section details themes that emerged from discussion with participants during the focus groups and interviews.

- Conclusions and recommendations for survey development (Section 4): this section provides a discussion of the results from the focus groups and interviews, and how these can be used in the development of the quantitative survey tool.

2   Method overview

This section provides an overview of the study research design. A more detailed account is provided in Appendix A, including information about design considerations, the data collection and analysis procedures, and demographics for participants of the focus groups and interviews. The recruitment survey used for this study is shown in Appendix B.

For this study, a combination of focus groups and interviews was used to obtain an in-depth understanding of how SRN users perceive and experience compliance and enforcement while driving on the network. A variety of methods was used to recruit and identify eligible participants, who were grouped based on key defining characteristics before considering other characteristics (see Table 1). Recruiting several types of drivers allowed us to obtain insight into a broad range of perceptions and experiences. In total, 34 drivers participated in the focus groups and interviews, in five distinct groups:

Table 1: Targeted participant characteristics

Participant group	Key defining characteristic(s)	Other considerations
Young drivers	17 to 24 years of age	
Experienced drivers	At least 10 years of active driving experience	Attendance at advanced driver training courses
Vocational drivers	LGV, HGV and bus drivers	Recruitment of employees from small, medium and large organisations
Those who had been convicted of driving offences	Convicted of at least one driving offence in the past three years Have not been disqualified from driving	
Low confidence SRN drivers	No or low confidence with driving on the SRN	

TRL conducted five focus groups (one for each participant group) and four semi-structured telephone interviews to bolster the numbers of some participant groups, namely young drivers, vocational drivers and those who had been convicted of driving offences. Although most participants were living in and around the Wokingham area (four focus groups were held in Wokingham and one in Birmingham), many of those participants had experience of driving across several SRN areas.

The topic guide, shown in Appendix C, was developed around the objectives of the study, while considering the existing evidence (Nunn & Snow, 2019). The following three overarching topics were discussed during the focus groups and interviews:

1. Driving behaviours: participants discussed their perceptions and experiences of driving behaviours they found annoying or worrying and discussed times at which they had displayed those behaviours themselves

2. Enforcement: participants discussed their perceptions and experiences of measures designed to deter certain driving behaviours, including automated enforcement methods such as cameras

3. Stakeholders: participants discussed the roles of, and their experiences of, the police, Highways England traffic officers, Highways England as an organisation and cameras on the roads

Audio-recordings of the focus groups and interviews were transcribed. Three researchers agreed on an approach to the thematic analysis; each transcript was thematically analysed by these researchers for quality assurance purposes, which allowed for identification and exploration of patterns and themes within the qualitative dataset.

3 Findings

The following sections describe themes that emerged from discussion with participants during the focus groups and interviews, along with quotes to illustrate each theme. These themes are grouped into three main sections, which align with the main discussion topics used during the focus groups and interviews:

- Experience and perceptions of driving behaviours; the behaviours discussed in this report are those that were raised by the focus group participants, rather than suggested for discussion by TRL or Highways England

- Experience and perceptions of enforcement

- The role of stakeholders

Discussion around any literature or theories that are relevant to each theme is also provided.

3.1 Experience and perceptions of driving behaviours

3.1.1 Road etiquette

When asked which behaviours they found most 'annoying' or 'worrying' on the roads, most participants discussed behaviours that showed an apparent lack of manners or etiquette, those that impact or challenge their own position or status on the road, or those that challenge a notion of what is right and wrong. Specific behaviours mentioned by participants included failing to indicate, 'cutting in' or failing to demonstrate gratitude or apology. This finding implies that breaking the law was not a necessary defining characteristic of 'annoying' or 'worrying' behaviour for participants, although some behaviours that were mentioned could attract charges (for example, middle-lane hogging or failing to indicate can attract charges of careless driving in certain circumstances).

> *"The one that's probably worst for myself is failure to indicate on roundabouts. You see someone coming towards you, you hold off for them and then they disappear that way without indicating the fact that they were going to continue left. It's discourtesy as much as anything else."* (Experienced driver)

> *"People thinking that they own the road. So, you're waiting in a bit of a queue and they try and cut in in front of you and push in and things like this. It's a bit like 'I own the road'."* (Low confidence SRN driver)

As depicted in Figure 1, there is an overlap between those behaviours that are perceived as 'illegal', 'unsafe', 'irritating' and 'actually enforced' in some cases. As each driver's perceptions are unique, different drivers will place different behaviours in each of the four circles. Where there is no overlap between some of these behaviours (for instance, a behaviour that is perceived as irritating or unsafe but not as actually enforced), this can cause tension for participants.
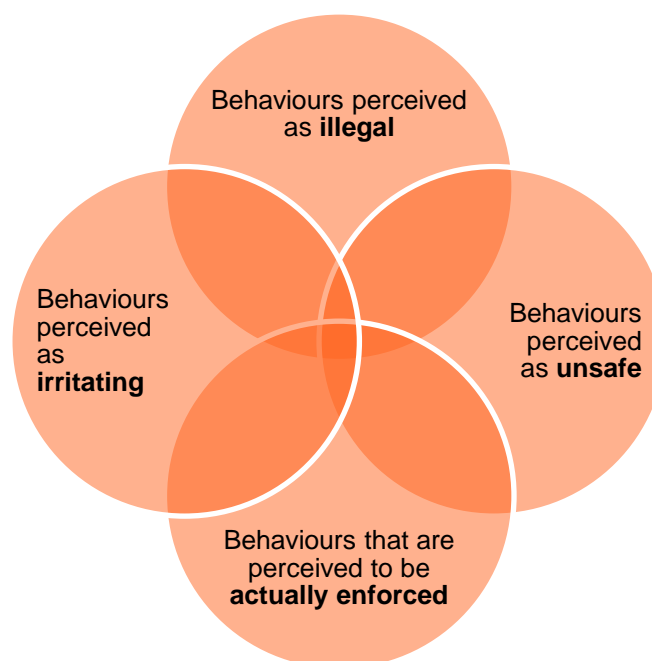
Figure 1: Diagram showing overlap (and lack of overlap) between several types of behaviours as perceived by focus group participants

3.1.2   *Normalising aspects of non-compliance*

Although not all participants talked about their own non-compliance, some participants identified times at which they had intentionally not complied with road regulations.

> *"Screw everyone else. No regards for anyone else. I haven't got time to be thinking about other people's viewpoint."* (Convicted of driving offences)

> *"Certainly to myself I can justify [speeding]."* (Experienced driver)

Participants expressed the view that speeding within certain parameters (such as driving a few miles over the posted speed limit) was acceptable for themselves and others, suggesting it was not an offence or minimising the offence. This finding is supported by those of other studies such as a survey conducted by IAM RoadSmart (2018), which found that 48% of 1,993 participants felt it was acceptable to exceed the posted speed limit on motorways by up to 10mph. Participants also suggested that some non-compliant behaviours (including speeding or undertaking) are more acceptable under certain circumstances, such as clear weather and times when there are few vehicles on the road.

> *"No [I would not slow down for a Highways England traffic officer] because I know if I'm driving really dangerously, I'm sure that they would radio it to the police. [But] If I'm doing 80mph?"* (Convicted of driving offences)

> *"You get obviously people speeding, like 5 or 10mph [over the posted speed limit] – that doesn't bother me."* (Low confidence SRN driver)

> *"In terms of speeding, yeah we think maybe 100mph on a motorway is excessive because they're going too fast but it's down to condition isn't it?"* (Convicted of driving offences)

> *"I mean it is a crime to do 34mph in a 30[mph zone], but there are some circumstances where you think, 'Do you know, it's the middle of the morning, it's a bright day, there's no visibility issues, there's no pedestrians around'."* (Experienced driver)

> *"I have to say sometimes if I am driving at night, I will sit in the middle lane if the motorway is quiet because it does feel safer, but only if it's really quiet."* (Convicted of driving offences)

Approximately 80% of drivers think they are better than the average driver (Delhomme, 1991; McCormick, Walkey & Green, 1986; Svenson, 1981) which may explain why encouraging compliance with posted speed limits in particular can be challenging; drivers who perceive themselves to be better than average may feel that they can handle faster speeds and are less likely to crash whilst speeding. In some cases, participants justified their behaviour as unintentional, accidental, a form of response to social pressures from other road users or 'noble cause corruption' (where dubious or illegitimate means are justified because of a noble end).

> *"Speeding, yes. And that's either because I perceive the risk of either staying behind someone who I think is potentially going to cause a crash, so I want to get out of their way."* (Experienced driver)

> *"When I'm doing 85 or 90mph, which I used to do, I used to think I was being more attentive because I'm looking out for the police and if I'm looking out for the police I'm looking out for any other kind of thing that might cause a problem. Therefore, I felt like I was safer, rather than sitting in the inside lane with everybody else going past me."* (Experienced driver)

These drivers perceived the actual laws of the road as a poor guide to what was safe or unsafe, so participants (particularly those who had more driving experience) tended to use their own judgements on the safety of driving behaviours to justify breaking the law. Drivers who 'know better' are a challenge for laws, such as those concerning compliance with posted speed limits and 'Red X' signs. In the following example, experience is used to explain why lane closures are ignored:

> *"Often, I've seen a 'Red X' [sign], so obviously you don't use that lane but it's there for no reason and then suddenly [the lane is] open again and then you're thinking, 'Why was it shut just then?'. If you don't see why [the lane is] closed and then you come across the next ['Red X' sign], you're more likely to ignore it even though it's illegal of course."* (Vocational driver)

Some participants, most notably experienced and vocational drivers, seemed to view the authorities, their representatives (such as police officers, Highways England traffic officers, posted speed limits, speed cameras and 'Red X' signs) and other drivers (see section 3.1.5) as further impediments to their journey to be overcome in the pursuit of the optimum driving experience. On many occasions, this manifested in intentional acts of non-compliance that were perceived as relatively minor, justified and routine.

Some participants also indicated that they felt 'gaming' to avoid being caught for non-compliance was 'the norm', particularly in terms of speeding (for instance, avoiding speed cameras). Forms of gaming mentioned by participants included knowing the

capabilities of each different type of speed camera, the locations of fixed speed cameras and the usual locations of mobile speed cameras.

> *"But in England, 95% I reckon of cameras are rear-facing. Where you've just got these pockets where they are front-facing and that is very confusing to people because you have to know that they're different. I mean they look different, but you have to know that they're around and that this area has a different sort of camera."* (Experienced driver)

> *"Annoying as well because they switch them [static speed cameras] off half the time. It's almost like you're playing a game and you want to beat them. Am I slowing down because it's not working, you know?"* (Convicted of driving offences)

This finding implies that participants lacked normative commitment to the law (for instance, adhering to posted speed limits because that is the right way to behave) and were instead thinking instrumentally (for instance, assessing what they could get caught for and how they could avoid being caught). This type of response is common among drivers who do not understand, or do not subscribe to, the reasoning behind the existence of a law and only see the law as an obstruction to be navigated (Wells, 2015). In terms of offending on the SRN, an instrumental approach to compliance amongst customers means that posted speed limits are unlikely to be complied with if they are not enforced (or at least if there is not a realistic threat of enforcement).

Speeding was by far the most likely offence to be 'gamed' according to the focus group and interview data, which could be due to the historical scepticism around the use of speed cameras (Wells, 2012) and the potential understanding that driving slightly above the limit is an action that appears to benefit other drivers (for instance, drivers may believe that if everyone drives a little faster, everybody will get to their destination sooner). We might therefore understand why slow drivers are often criticised for holding everyone up (see section 3.1.3) or why the participant who provided the following quote felt the need to justify why their acquaintance drives at the posted speed limit:

> *"He [an acquaintance of the participant] has actually even bought now a sticker that goes in his back windscreen to say, 'I'm as frustrated as you. I'm going this speed because I've got a black box in my car.' So, the people following, he's not being a knob-head, so 'actually there's a reason why I'm doing it'."* (Low confidence SRN driver)

Speeding is the only offence that falls into this apparently 'socially beneficial' category, which could explain its intransigence. Other offences such as mobile phone use or lane hogging may be seen as 'beneficial' or 'useful' only to the driver committing them and detrimental to everyone else on the road. Creating a social norm against such behaviours or securing consent for enforcement of them is therefore likely to be more achievable than it is for speeding.

3.1.3   The pressures of 'acceleration society'

Participants frequently mentioned the pace of life 'these days' and described their driving experiences in terms of 'rushing', 'hurrying', 'wasted time' and 'delay'. Rather

than having intrinsic value, many participants viewed journeys as opportunities to make up lost time, with things like road works and the behaviour of other drivers viewed as obstacles to personal efficiency. This finding is symptomatic of the sociological concept of 'acceleration society' (Rosa, 2013), where life is increasingly seen as a constant battle to balance work, family and friends, and where time is short and pressure to perform is constant; this tension carries over into our driving (Wells & Savigar, 2019). Getting from place-to-place quickly and being in constant contact with others become significant concerns; life is increasingly viewed as a competition with others (including other drivers, laws and the authorities) to the extent that participants often mentioned speeding and driving erratically as ways of gaining advantage and priority over other drivers.

> *"I've sped on the motorway; I know I have. I go over 70[mph] to go past a car if I'm in a rush."* (Low confidence SRN driver)

> *"The other ones are you need to get from 'here' to 'here' in 20 minutes and you're not going to do it for 25 [minutes], so you're dashing about."* (Convicted of driving offences)

Although some participants recognised that they displayed these types of behaviours themselves, many participants felt that these behaviours were most common among 'business drivers', including van drivers and commuters.

> *"Trying to get to work on time. There's a lot of stress for people trying to get to work on time. They're all rushing."* (Convicted of driving offences)

> *"Aggressive – 'My job is far more important than yours, so I've got to get there before you do'."* (Convicted of driving offences)

> *"Businessmen or business drivers, not men but women as well, and they're in a hurry. They've got to get to their meeting and they'll be on the phone as well while they're [driving] and then it's, and they're important and they have a priority on the road."* (Experienced driver)

This finding supports research that found that pressure from work such as deadlines or the need to be in constant contact was cited by drivers as a key reason for using a mobile phone while driving (Wells & Savigar, 2019). Additionally, this finding supports research into the way in which new business models (most notably the 'gig' economy) impact driving behaviours (Christie & Ward, 2019; Christie, Ward & Helman, 2017), as well as research with broader sociological claims about the fast-paced and increasingly insecure nature of post-modern society (Giddens, 1991; Savigar, 2019).

3.1.4 The significance of perceived intent

Many participants viewed intentional behaviours (or those more likely to be intentional rather than accidental) of other drivers as more annoying, dangerous and worthy of penalties than accidental or forgetful behaviours. Behaviours that participants thought were more likely to be intentional included drink-driving, drug-driving and mobile phone use.

> *"You can accidentally cut someone up and you can accidentally not indicate, like if you're new to the road or whatever, and I think that's annoying but I think*

drink-driving and using your mobile that's just dangerous because you know that you shouldn't have been doing that. That's not an accident, that's a decision you've made to do." (Young driver)

"I think you can tell when people are doing stuff on purpose versus when they're doing it by accident but for me, like if people do it by accident, I tend to know and it doesn't really bother me because I realise I've been in that position when I was a new driver before but I just don't understand people that do it on purpose to try and scare you or to try and dominate the road. I don't know, people just do it because they're angry with things." (Young driver)

Participants seemed more accepting of other drivers accidentally doing things that they had also done themselves, which could be because they do not view themselves as undertaking dangerous driving behaviours. The behaviours participants singled out as 'dangerous' tended to be those which are socially unacceptable (or possibly becoming so, in the case of mobile phones), whereas the 'accidental' behaviours tended to be those where there is a social norm that permits them. Conversely, some participants mentioned that speeding within a few mph of the posted speed limit was more likely to be accidental than intentional. This categorisation of behaviours allows drivers who tend to believe they are better at driving than the average person (Delhomme, 1991; McCormick et al., 1986; Svenson, 1981) to maintain a law-abiding self-identity (Wells & Wills, 2009) whilst occasionally breaking the law and remaining reassuringly different to dangerous, reckless or criminal 'others' in their own self-perception (Garland, 2001).

3.1.5   Influence of other drivers

Participants frequently mentioned that the behaviour of other drivers pressured them to drive differently to how they would like and that they were pressured into driving defensively for fear of what others might do. Terminology included 'have to', 'can't', 'need to' and 'got to', suggesting that the blame lay with others:

"I'm always looking for the driver when I'm overtaking to try and get some sort of measure of how attentive they are and might they have missed me overtaking them, for example, and not see me." (Experienced driver)

"But you want to leave that safety gap but as soon as people start cutting in in front of you, you've got to try and narrow that distance to stop other people from jumping in front." (Convicted of driving offences)

"If you're in the inside lane, you've got to go all the way around them [drivers in the middle lane] to get back in again if you do it properly and they'll just generally hog. They're obviously not paying attention that the road's clear and you're supposed to keep left." (Experienced driver)

This concern was felt by participants across groups, though it manifested in several ways. For example, vocational, experienced and convicted drivers were more likely to talk about anger as a response to external factors, or to describe stubborn or provocative responses. Low confidence SRN drivers were more likely to mention their fear or anxiety of being forced out of their comfort zone and described others as "being aggressive", who "push their way", are "intimidating", and may be "swearing and

gesturing" or "beeping at you and trying to intimidate you". Vocational and experienced drivers tended to describe other people who they felt drove poorly as foolish or idiotic, whilst young and low confidence SRN drivers viewed unexpected driving manoeuvres as intimidating and aggressive. In the latter case, lack of experience could explain why so many other people were seen to do things 'last-minute', 'suddenly' and 'unexpectedly'. However, most participants implied that they recognised they had not been driving as they should have been in these situations.

It is possible that the two separate groups of participants were talking about each other when referencing other drivers who impeded them or otherwise caused them to be dissatisfied with their journey. Some participants described the roads as frustrating places that are seen to be full of incompetent drivers who get in the way and make them feel frustrated, whereas some other participants felt the roads are threatening places that are perceived to be full of aggressive and impatient drivers who made them feel uncomfortable. These findings imply generalised feelings of tension brought on by navigating the behaviour of others. Although different in origin, the feeling of vulnerability is shared and the perceived absence of enforcement (see section 3.2.1) may only compound these feelings.

3.1.6   Behavioural contagion

Some participants mentioned that they often perceived other drivers to 'follow the crowd' in terms of non-compliance. For instance, the non-compliant behaviour of one driver can be copied by many other drivers in their vicinity (a psychological phenomenon known as behavioural contagion; Le Bon, 1895). These participants implied that drivers may copy the behaviour of others because they feel less likely to be 'singled out' for non-compliance when they are surrounded by others who are displaying the same behaviours.

> *"It's not dissimilar to the hard shoulder. Similarly, when you get the lanes closed, it only takes one [driver] normally to go down the hard shoulder and then you see a whole flurry [of drivers doing the same]."* (Experienced driver)

> *"No. What I mean by that is people clearly don't think that they're going to get caught using a phone, speeding or whatever because so many people do it."* (Experienced driver)

Whilst it cannot be determined from these quotes whether drivers were including themselves in these descriptions or whether they were likely to follow the crowd themselves, it was a popular view that if enough drivers broke a law, immunity from enforcement was likely. This finding may be related to perceptions of enforcement capacity (see section 3.2.1) or the idea that a social norm develops around such behaviours to which the authorities will sometimes turn a blind eye. This finding also relates to the notion of acceleration society (see section 3.1.3); when another driver is perceived to be securing an advantage (for example, through using a closed lane or hard shoulder, speeding or using their mobile phone) other drivers are likely to perceive that they are being disadvantaged by comparison. Staying put, whether that is in a queue or traveling at a lower speed, requires self-control when others seem to be ignoring a restriction without experiencing any negative consequences.

3.2 Experience and perceptions of enforcement

3.2.1 Low likelihood of being caught

Most participants agreed that being caught for non-compliance is very unlikely. Although most participants thought being caught for speeding was most likely of all offences, they still thought that the vast majority of speeding does not lead to punishment.

> *"It's very unlikely [to get caught]. There's nobody there to catch you. There's nobody to see you. You'd be very unlucky to get caught for all of those things."* (Experienced driver)

> *"With the amount of the very few police [officers] on the road, the likelihood of them [those who commit driving offences] getting caught is, well, almost zero, isn't it?"* (Convicted of driving offences)

Again, these quotes suggest that this was something that drivers recognised in their own driving as well as that of others. To be perceived as an effective deterrent, punishment needs to be viewed as both severe (tough enough to be worth avoiding) and certain (likely to occur). In the case of most driving offences, the lack of certainty meant that the current known penalties were largely considered to be irrelevant as they were not seen as likely outcomes of committing the offence. However, some participants (most notably young drivers) understood that they could lose their licence after receiving a single penalty, so certainty of punishment was less important to these participants. We also know that punishment *avoidance* (both direct for the individual concerned and vicariously for those that we observe) is significant in influencing the cost-benefit equation around offending (Bates & Anderson, 2019). When we see others escaping punishment or when we offend and suffer no consequences ourselves, deterrence is undermined.

> *"And you're doing exactly 50[mph] because you set your cruise control at 50[mph] and there's all these cars whooshing past and you think, 'Where are the cameras?'."* (Experienced driver)

> *"I think it can be quite erratic driving as well. It's just whether they get seen, isn't it? Because you can be sitting on a motorway or wherever and see someone weaving in and out and you think 'Oh my God' but unless the police are there and watching it at the time, I don't suppose anything is really going to happen."* (Low confidence SRN driver)

Drivers will not always see others being punished, especially when the enforcement is automated. The experience in these cases is a private matter between the offender and the Notice of Intended Prosecution that comes through their letterbox some weeks after the offence is captured. This may lead to the perception that other drivers 'get away with it' and the offending drivers may not even recall having offended in the first place.

> *"From the other side of it, you see people speeding and doing stupid things and you think they get away with it. However, you don't actually [know] what's*

arrived in the post. So, you think they've got away with it, but you don't actually know if they have got done by a camera or whatever." (Vocational driver)

However, drivers in the focus groups seemed to express satisfaction when offending drivers (presumably those who are deemed to be offending deliberately and dangerously and who are 'not like them') were swiftly identified and 'pulled over'. Some participants mentioned that these experiences of indirect punishment can feel like a 'reward' for obeying road regulations or provide reassurance that the enforcement system can be effective at punishing offending.

"When you've seen someone speeding down the motorway, so I've been just steadily going down the motorway and someone flew past me and I thought 'Bloody hell they're going a bit fast, aren't they?', gone, out of the distance and then all of a sudden not far behind them a police car and then further down that motorway they've been pulled to one side and I think 'good on you'. That's what I think." (Low confidence SRN driver)

"If someone has been going really fast past you and then you see them pulled over two miles up the road by somebody, it is quite satisfying." (Experienced driver)

"If it was the one that shot past me on his phone at 110mph down the M4 when everyone else is sticking to the 50mph on the averaging cameras and then you see them at the side of the road and you have seen him caught because for once something has happened, you go down and you go 'Yes!' and it's slightly joyful." (Convicted of driving offences)

The impact of this kind of swift and decisive intervention is likely to be felt by the individual 'pulled' driver as well as to be experienced as a form of general deterrence for other drivers. It also potentially gives off a sense that the road is being managed or overseen by an authority, which, in its absence, underpins several of the themes explored in this report. The provision of somewhere for the police to pull drivers over *to* (for instance, the hard shoulder) is, of course, a pre-requisite for this type of enforcement.

3.2.2   'Ineffective' enforcement

Whilst some drivers noted what they perceived to be a lack of enforcement capacity, others showed frustration at the methods that were prevalent. During the focus groups and interviews, many participants indicated that they felt static speed cameras only lead to less speeding in the area immediately surrounding the camera and capture only a 'snapshot' or 'freezeframe' (Snow, 2019) of one's driving behaviour.

"I don't think speed cameras are the way forward because, as we all know, people take note of the camera, or in my case not, and might slow down past the camera and then speed up again. It's just a very localised kind of measure that actually doesn't affect long-term behaviour." (Experienced driver)

This perception created a rationale vacuum and allowed drivers to contemplate other reasons for static speed cameras' existence. As is common in debates around their use, static speed cameras could be viewed as 'money-making machines' or 'revenue

generators' because they were felt not to do what the authorities claimed they should do or to be in the right places to match the declared logic of their use. Several previous studies support this finding; for example, findings from a survey of 1,001 drivers in the UK indicated that around half of the participants thought the motive for speed cameras was raising money (IAM Drive & Survive, 2015). This suggestion occurred across all types of driver and appeared to be a 'given' among the focus groups:

> *"You look at them [static speed cameras] as just money-making machines."* (Vocational driver)

> *"I don't particularly agree with them [static speed cameras] when they get to dual carriageways, apart from places where there are accident black spots. So, when they're clearly revenue-earning type things then perhaps not."* (Experienced driver)

> *"Where you see a mobile van on top of a motorway over bridge, I struggle to see that as anything other than a revenue generator. There is no other reason for it to be there, but that then, the thing is you don't know when you're going to get caught so you don't know whether a van is going to be there or not sort of thing so you can come round a nice big sweeping bend and there he is on top and you've just been pinged before you even know about it."* (Experienced driver)

It may be that this perceived policy failure is down to drivers 'gaming' the technology and exploiting its weaknesses because they do not subscribe to the logic of the law (Wells, 2015), but participants generally perceive the fault to lie with the police as the assumed owners of the cameras rather than with drivers. Again, the ability of drivers to dismiss any other reason for being required to slow down may link to driver perceptions of their own abilities (for example, that they 'can handle the speed' or 'should be allowed to choose an appropriate speed') and to the acceleration society (for example, the belief that 'cameras are an impediment to efficient progress').

3.2.3 Police presence as a deterrent

Many participants shared the view that visible police presence results in behaviour change amongst drivers, as drivers become more conscious of their own driving to avoid being caught by the police. Additionally, some participants mentioned that regular visible police presence leads to longer-term behaviour change because drivers learn to anticipate police presence on any given journey.

> *"As you were saying earlier, people adjust their behaviour when they see a police car in the road. They slow down or they drive like a saint."* (Experienced driver)

> *"There was a time where there was a police and a highway presence lawfully where you had, I suppose it's like a form of respect, that you knew that if you did something erratic or anything out of the ordinary than what you were supposed to do on the motorway or the A-roads, you always had that thought that someone is going to stop you. The police are going to stop you and you're going to get a ticket or you're going to get a fine."* (Vocational driver)

The concept of capable guardianship is of relevance here, drawn from the Routine Activities Theory (Cohen & Felson, 1979), and the assumption that offences occur when there is a coming-together in time and space of a motivated offender, a suitable target (a road, in this case) and the absence of a capable guardian. The drivers who participated in this research advocated the need for more capable guardianship and felt this guardianship would be most appropriately provided by the police (rather than a Highways England traffic officer, camera or other road users). In the latter case, the absence of a social norm that discourages offending means that many drivers know most other drivers will do nothing in response to their offending. Indeed, one driver disapproved of drivers trying to influence each other and saw that as an appropriate role for the police only:

> *"But you still see it on dual carriageways, where people will stay in the outside lane. They'll probably even think that because they're doing 70mph, nobody should be needing to get past them because they're doing the [posted] speed limit. Therefore, they can stay in that lane and maybe someone shouldn't be overtaking them at 70mph but it's not for them to tell them – it's for the speed cameras or the police."* (Experienced driver)

The advent of dash cameras is an interesting development for this kind of theoretical proposition. Road users with the ability to record the behaviour of others are adopting the role of capable guardian, though their deterrent power and ability to break up the three components of the Routine Activity Theory model comes from their subsequent use of the police as the capable authority with the power to punish. There was little discussion around dash cameras among focus group participants, although a few participants expressed desire to capture other drivers' offending and subsequently report it to the authorities.

3.2.4 Wrong behaviours being targeted

Participants thought that the focus of enforcement is inappropriate because the driving behaviours that participants viewed as less dangerous seem to be more frequently or harshly enforced (such as driving slightly over the posted speed limit) than behaviours that were viewed as more dangerous (such as mobile phone use) or because punishment is not viewed as proportionate to the offence. More specifically, some participants felt there should be a degree of flexibility with speeding, such as allowing driving just over the posted speed limit:

> *"If you take the one which I consider to be the most dangerous, which is being on the mobile phone when you're driving on the motorway at 70mph or 80mph, whatever it might be, because you're not concentrating. You can't concentrate while you've got the phone in your hand but the enforcement of that is really very, very minimal. I mean you should have the book thrown at you for that."* (Convicted of driving offences)

> *"Enforcement is not being focused on the things that are genuinely really dangerous in the roads. It's not balanced."* (Convicted of driving offences)

> *"Well, yeah, there should be a level of leniency where, if they [drivers] are causing an issue, they [police officers] should be there doing something but if they [drivers] are not [causing an issue], then there's no point taking their*

licence away and potentially them not being able to go to work if they're going 2mph over the [posted] speed limit." (Young driver)

Some participants also made a distinction between offences 'we all' do and those that 'other' or 'dangerous' drivers do. These participants were advocating that their own indiscretions were suitable to be overlooked, whilst other actions (where there is a social norm mitigating against the actions) should be targeted.

3.2.5   *Subjectivity of enforcement methods*

Many participants favoured more subjective methods of enforcement (such as being pulled over by a police officer) over more objective or automated methods (such as static speed cameras). Several explanations for this preference were identified, such as having the opportunity to discuss the non-compliant behaviour with a police officer before any decisions about punishment are finalised.

"I think I have been stopped by a policeman once many years ago in a similar situation and he just said, 'What speed do you think you were doing?' and I said 'Oh [X speed]'. 'Well, no, actually [it was Y speed]' and it's like 'Whoops, sorry', 'Off you go, please don't [do it again]' and off you go. But the camera, when there's a camera absolutely it's a hit every time and there's no discretion there at all and actually sometimes it's not a dangerous thing to be doing." (Experienced driver)

"I think the unmarked cars are more likely to be discretionary as to whether that person is being downright dangerous. If someone is just doing 80mph, for example, then they're just keeping up with the traffic or something but if they could see something particularly wrong with the way that person is driving then they can pull them over." (Experienced driver)

More subjective methods of enforcement would give the offender an opportunity to explain their behaviour and offer an apology, which is an essential element of a procedurally just and 'fair' experience (Lind & Tyler 1988). It would also mean the police officer could take situational factors into account and use their own judgement or discretion before issuing any penalties. This is entirely in line with previous research on speed cameras (Wells, 2008; 2012). Participants in this research also perceived having such opportunities as a 'fair' approach to enforcement (Tyler, 1990) and noted that these opportunities are not presented with automated enforcement methods, such as speed cameras. Whether drivers perceive that others having these opportunities (as well as themselves) is 'fair' is currently unexplored.

Additionally, participants thought that dangerous driving behaviours are more likely to be overlooked by automated methods than police officers or that automated methods are more susceptible than police officers to being 'cheated' by drivers to avoid punishment for driving dangerously.

Offences that are easy to convert into binaries of 'offence' and 'not offence' (such as speed and compliance with 'Red X' signs) are those that are most suitable for technological fixes such as automated enforcement. Since their introduction, drivers have objected that speed cameras cannot appreciate context (the characteristics of the offence or offender) and that this makes them unfair. As a strict liability offence,

speeding prosecutions need not consider any mitigation and this is a significant source of resistance (Wells, 2012). 'Red X' offences share many characteristics with speeding and are deemed techno-fixable by camera, so we may experience similar objections to their use as it becomes more widespread. The references to 'everyone doing it' and to circumstances where the closure was confusing or perceived to be unnecessary are reminiscent of objections to speed camera enforcement 'at 3am on an empty road' or against a driver with an unblemished driving history (Wells, 2008). Combined with the perception that other drivers are getting away with similar offending (there is no visual indicator that a speeder or 'Red X' offender has been caught) or are getting away with offences that are perceived as more dangerous (see section 3.2.1), this does not help to legitimise automated interventions.

3.2.6   Celerity of punishment

The speed with which punishment is received (or celerity of punishment) was mentioned frequently by participants during the focus groups. Participants perceived being made aware of offending 'in the moment' as a more effective deterrent to offending than receiving notification of the offending days or weeks afterwards. Participants noted that immediate notification of offending is more likely to be given by police officers than automated methods of enforcement, such as speed cameras.

> *"It's also very distant because if you get a ticket, you get it two weeks after the incident and so you've probably forgotten about it and what you need is something a bit more instant to say 'That was really not a good idea', whereas to be told that two weeks later you think 'Yeah, okay, maybe'."* (Experienced driver)

> *"You don't tell your children off for something they did last week. You tell them off for something they did just now. If you tell them off for something they did last week, they've forgotten about it, haven't they? And it doesn't mean as much, does it? Because there's no punishment or there's no comeback."* (Experienced driver)

3.2.7   Social consequences of being caught

Several participants expressed concern that being caught offending would cause other people to view them unfavourably, such as their family, friends or the police officer that caught them. In addition, participants were aware that losing their licence could cause inconvenience for other people (for example, having to ask for lifts from family and friends). Some of these participants mentioned that these concerns are a deterrent to non-compliance. These concerns were particularly prevalent among young drivers, as they revealed their awareness of the increased risk of losing their licence given the reduced points allowance in their first two years after passing their driving test.

> *"My husband got caught a couple of years ago doing 70 on a 50 slip [road] in North Wales and he got pulled over by an unmarked police car. That was a very silent journey home. He's never done it again and it was that instant like 'Come with me sir, sit in the back of the car' and, at forty-odd, he felt like he was in the Headmaster's office being told off."* (Experienced driver)

> *"I'd be embarrassed to tell my family, like from driving everywhere to then having to ask my mum for lifts again would be really embarrassing for me."* (Young driver)

> *"To get points is one thing but if you basically lost your licence everyone would know about it, like your family and your friends. You couldn't just hide the fact that you've lost your licence so I think that made me think 'I can't be doing bad things when I'm driving'."* (Young driver)

While this finding is positive in some ways because this shame deters some drivers from offending, it still indicates that drivers who are deterred in this way are some way from normative compliance – that is complying because they believe the law is right and that the behaviour is dangerous. Theoretically, even these drivers would offend if they thought they could get away with it. Participants did *not* routinely talk about the safety consequences of offending as being a deterrent, which is supported by other research where 'road risk' is understood as being the threat of enforcement and, for example, a 'safe road' is one where you can speed with impunity because there is no chance of being punished for doing so (Wells, 2007). This suggests that, without the threat of enforcement in the background, offending would increase (Wells, 2015).

The embarrassment that drivers claimed they would experience is at the idea of not being able to drive or having to ask for lifts (*not* at the idea that other people would know they had been convicted of something dangerous). It is embarrassment at the legal consequences that they have failed to avoid, not the safety consequences that they could have caused.

This finding suggests that responses to offending based around traditional notions of deterrence rooted in concepts of shame (Andenæs, 1952; 1974; Braithwaite, 1989) are unlikely to be effective for offences that are perceived to be minor, such as speeding. These approaches may be more effective for offences that are deemed socially unacceptable, such as drink-driving.

3.2.8 Fines are incorporated into routine driving expenses

Several participants thought incorporating monetary fines for driving or parking offences into overall driving expenses is commonplace for some individual drivers and businesses (such as delivery companies). This finding suggests that fines do not deter some drivers from offending. For businesses, it was suggested that business operations take priority over avoiding fines.

> *"I think the fine system… is almost, for many motorists, like an overhead that you've just got to calculate like the maintenance of your car. Occasionally you might get a speeding ticket that's cost you an 'X' amount of money and it is just something that is part of your motoring life."* (Experienced driver)

> *"If we have to go into town [to deliver something], they [the participant's employer] factor into the scale of the cost of doing it the fines. They basically turn round and say, 'Get as near as you can to the delivery point, do it. We've already factored in for a fine on the cost of the job'."* (Vocational driver)

Related to earlier discussions, these quotes illustrate that some drivers and businesses are focused on mitigating the practical consequences of offending, which

could be because these participants viewed a fine for speeding or 'Red X' noncompliance as confirmation that no harm was caused. If the driver had caused a collision through their offending, a fixed penalty is unlikely. In that sense, enforcement may undermine the rationale and logic of the law, for some. This is an issue for any enforcement based on the punishment of risk – on behaviours that may cause harm – rather than on actual harmful outcomes. Whilst punishment may achieve a net reduction in risky behaviours overall, each action that is punished demonstrably did not result in the harmful outcome it is supposedly correlated with (Wells, 2007).

3.3 The role of stakeholders in compliance and enforcement

3.3.1 Lack of police presence or action

Participants frequently mentioned they perceive police are often absent from the road network and explained their belief that this may be due to lack of police funding or resources. There was discussion amongst participants around how police presence has decreased on the roads over time, which some participants thought could be due to reduced police resources as reported in the media. In addition, participants mentioned a lack of police action on the roads even if police officers are present. Some participants suggested that a perceived lack of police presence or action can lead to higher levels of offending amongst drivers.

"I could run up and down the same motorway for a fortnight and see one police car." (Vocational driver)

"When do you see anyone? I mean we all know that there are a lot of unmarked police cars on the motorways [but] when do you ever actually see someone being pulled over for undertaking or driving too close to the car in front?" (Convicted of driving offences)

"I think the police attend a lot of accidents but, in terms of like on the roads, I don't think they do a lot because nowadays when there's such a stretch on police officers, a lot of them are single-crewed. They're just on their own and there's not really a lot they can do." (Young driver)

3.3.2 Lack of awareness of Highways England traffic officers' role

During the focus groups and interviews, participants demonstrated a general lack of understanding, or confusion around, the roles and responsibilities of Highways England traffic officers. For example, whilst some participants did not know anything about Highways England traffic officers, others believed that they had the same responsibilities as police officers.

"I don't really know about [Highways England] traffic officers. Like I said, I thought they put cones out and, if there are like sheep on the motorway, they move the animals off or something." (Young driver)

"I wouldn't know whether the two [Highways England traffic officers and police officers] have got the same power or authority. My assumption would be that the [Highways England] traffic officer possibly would have less power or authority, but I wouldn't know that for certain." (Low confidence SRN driver)

> *"I treat them [Highways England traffic officers] the same as a police driver. I think they're the same. I don't know any difference. They've got the same blue lights."* (Low confidence SRN driver)

In other examples, drivers (usually experienced and vocational drivers) had learned the difference between Highways England traffic officers and police officers and showed evidence of driving strategically depending on what powers they perceived the occupants of a marked car had. The following conversation between two experienced drivers in a focus group is instructive:

> Person 1: *"But that's the same as ambulance, cars or any other motorway maintenance that's got the chevrons on the back. You get that pre-sort of compliance with law until the person gets close enough…"*
>
> Person 2: *"Until you realise there's no blue on it, then you're fine."*

Again, drivers in the focus groups were understanding the presence of authority as a threat to themselves ("I could get caught"), rather than as a source of protection from danger ("I could crash"). Enforcement does seem to be how 'road risk' is understood for many drivers, whereas the risk of a collision seems less prominent in their thoughts. This is perhaps because, by definition, the drivers taking part in research on topics like this have not experienced the worst possible outcomes that they are routinely told will result from their behaviours.

3.3.3   Passive education

Many participants stated that they believed educating drivers on road regulations and offending would lead to a reduction in offending, and suggested methods such as billboard or gantry signage and advertisements, drink-driving educational campaigns and free educational workshops. In general, participants seemed to feel that stakeholders should be responsible for providing this education to drivers, rather than drivers having to self-educate.

> *"Yes, it's monetary. Yes, it's points. Yes, they [offenders] have got the impact on their insurance but there's no re-education for them and they're the people that should also be re-educated."* (Convicted of driving offences)
>
> *"I'd thought about, you know the next day when you're over the [drink-driving] limit, I'd put out an advert about that just to warn people about it because I don't think people realise that."* (Low confidence SRN driver)

Despite participants advocating education as a means of improving compliance, previous research has shown that almost all educational and training programmes are ineffective at reducing motor vehicle crashes; these programmes can increase knowledge, but this rarely results in appropriate behaviour change (O'Neill & Mohan, 2002).

This theme ties in with the 'positive view of driver retraining and retesting' theme (see section 3.3.5), whereby drivers expect to be *shown* why they should or should not act in a certain way, rather than self-educating or self-regulating. When offending as the result of 'confusing' or 'unclear' information, drivers blamed the authorities for allowing them to get into that situation. In response to the final question about what more can

and should be done to improve compliance, some of the experienced drivers chose a very passive form of education, at no point suggesting that they should consider it their responsibility to learn for themselves about any changes to road use that might affect them:

> *Person 1: "More education really, it was touched on earlier…"*
>
> *Person 2: "I think refresher courses, either continuous or having to renew your licence every 10 years."*
>
> *Person 3: "Public information films on TV like we used to get."*

The suggestion from another participant that drivers should download an app to get this information or complete a module of questions before they could tax their vehicle were met with cries of "boring" and "no-one will do it!".

3.3.4 Scepticism of safety measures implemented by stakeholders

Certain safety measures were perceived by participants as overly-cautious and participants also felt that safety measures are not always adequately justified (for instance, participants doubted whether 'Red X' signs on smart motorways genuinely mean that there is a good reason for the lane to be closed) or that reduced posted speed limits were warranted:

> *"And there's no reason for it, exactly, so the other thing I was going to say – the difference between 50 and 70mph on a dual carriageway of that length when there's other roads that are much shorter where you can do 70mph."* (Experienced driver)
>
> *"If there was something that they gave a reason why that speed limit was that speed limit, that might help people to adhere to it, if that makes sense. For example, school ahead, you get these signs [displaying] 'schools ahead', but something along the lines of 'there's been loads of accidents down this road, therefore we've reduced the speed limit', just something."* (Experienced driver)

This was particularly the case with reduced posted speed limits through road works, with drivers in different groups complaining that "it's not obvious", "nothing was going on" or "there was no reason for it" unless workers could actually be seen at the site. In terms of 'Red X' lane closures, several drivers referred to occasions where they had obediently left a lane because of a 'Red X' and then "there was nothing there", which damaged their trust in the signage (seemingly it did not occur to them that the obstruction or issue had been cleared). One driver described this as "the sheep [boy] who cried wolf". Some participants mentioned that they would like to see information displayed alongside 'Red X' signs, such as a reason for the lane closure.

Moreover, some participants were distrustful of stakeholders because (as above) they thought certain safety measures implemented by these stakeholders are aimed at generating revenue rather than improving road safety, such as static speed cameras.

> *"Cameras can actually catch everybody at a low speed and then offer them a speed awareness course, which I'm cynical. I think that's just a money revenue-raising scheme which was there at that time."* (Experienced driver)

> *"Where you see a mobile van on top of a motorway over bridge, I struggle to see that as anything other than a revenue generator, there is no other reason for it to be there."* (Experienced driver)

> *"You know why they're penalising the wrong people? Because the biggest money-maker for local authorities is fines for parking... I think the majority of it is the lesser offences. They target the lesser offences because they bring in more income."* (Convicted of driving offences)

These themes of passivity (an expectation that they should be told and persuaded about new restrictions) and scepticism about enforcement link to sociological themes such as the decline of deference for authority (Nevitte, 1996) associated particularly with the post-war period (coincidentally the same period as when driving became a mass activity). This concept focuses on reductions in levels of trust in various authorities (education, health, politics, policing) and a withdrawal of deference by default. Participants in this research often expressed a desire to be *shown why* they should do something such as obey a 'Red X' lane closure sign or posted speed limit, rather than a tendency to take that restriction on trust. This is a challenge for the effective management of the roads, particularly given that drivers seemingly want the persuasive effort to come from those who seek to restrict them, instead of trying to understand and learn for themselves. The legacy of mistrust associated with speed camera enforcement could be seen as one cause of this cynicism that relates specifically to the context of this study (Wells, 2012).

3.3.5   Positive view of driver retraining and retesting

Driver retraining and retesting (including speed awareness courses) were suggested by some participants to encourage safer driving behaviours. Several participants thought that these measures should occur every 10 years after licensure. Furthermore, a few participants proposed administration of online training modules on road regulations that drivers must complete before they can renew their annual vehicle insurance, tax or MOT test.

> *"Once you've got that tick in the box and you've got your licence at 17, you know, until you stop driving at 80 or whatever some people have never read or revised or refreshed and I think that would. There's an argument for every 10 years redoing a driving test or doing a refresher or something. I mean you have to do it for other walks of life. If you're licensed for things, you have to do a refresher to renew your licence but for driving it's just a one off, isn't it?"* (Experienced driver)

> *"Actually, if you're going to update your insurance or your tax or MOT or whatever it is on your car, they can force you to do some type of module that you've got to do that before you renew because actually that would capture every driver."* (Low confidence SRN driver)

> *"Maybe everybody needs to do a speed awareness course because that's a bit of an eye-opener."* (Experienced driver)

In the context of the debates about passivity and scepticism explored in sections 3.3.3 and 3.3.4, the idea that retraining must be compulsory is noteworthy. Drivers will not

voluntarily 'upskill' themselves (perhaps because most, as previously mentioned, think they are better than average anyway), so the feeling was that they must be compelled to learn if that is what is expected of them. This fits with the broader context of the neo-liberal state, whereby the state wishes to see its citizens as empowered, rational choosers, but it also has to confront the reality of individuals who do not make what it is has defined as 'good' choices, for whatever reason. Various degrees of persuasion and compulsion are therefore needed to balance an expressed commitment to free choice, with the need to ensure that risks are managed on an aggregate level. Mobility is a particularly challenging context in which these debates play out.

4 Conclusions and recommendations for survey development

In this study, we conducted focus groups and interviews with several types of driver to obtain understanding of a broad range of perceptions and experiences of compliance and enforcement on the SRN.

Findings from the focus groups and interviews uncovered several key themes and constructs to consider in the development of a quantitative survey tool that Highways England can use to reliably and accurately assess the experiences, attitudes and perceptions of SRN users regarding compliance and enforcement. These topics and constructs are discussed in section 4.1 below.

4.1 Topics and constructs for inclusion in the survey

Participants in this study shared a common method of classifying 'annoying' or 'worrying' driving behaviours on the SRN, in that the law was not a key defining consideration for this classification. Instead, participants' main focus was on those behaviours that displayed a lack of **road etiquette**, which represents an interesting challenge for those authorities with objectives relating to both safety *and* compliance, and warrants further investigation on a wider scale via the survey tool. This also relates to the issue of consent for, and support of, enforcement activity as it suggests further questions need to be explored around what kinds of restrictions SRN users will consider to be acceptable and legitimate. Furthermore, 'etiquette' offences are largely subjective and therefore not readily turned into offences that can be identified by technology (which requires complex situations to be turned into binaries of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour). Addressing such offences to the satisfaction of SRN users may therefore require the use of other enforcement methods, which should be explored with those customers.

This finding confirms that future survey-based research needs to consider both legal and illegal behaviour and that subtleties of road user experience and understanding will be missed if the focus is solely on prohibited behaviours. Performance against both safety and satisfaction indicators will depend on this **holistic understanding of road user behaviour** – considering both illegal and unwanted behaviours.

It was clear from participants' responses that some driving behaviours were less **socially acceptable** than others, such as handheld mobile phone use, drink-driving or drug-driving. At times, participants explained that these behaviours were less acceptable because of the conscious decisions that are likely to be made before engaging in such behaviours, whereas other behaviours could be made 'in-the-moment' with little or no premeditation. In other words, behaviours that were perceived as intentional were less socially acceptable and were perceived as more dangerous and worthy of punishment. The '**intentional versus accidental**' nature of offences is a topic that will be included in the survey tool, which might be expected to be a sub-component of social acceptability. Findings also suggested that certain driving behaviours are becoming less socially acceptable over time (particularly mobile phone use). Tracking these changes in social acceptability of behaviours will allow identification of changes in social norms and, as above, feed in useful insight for future compliance-related campaigns and interventions.

Discussion pertaining to public understanding of what some sociologists have termed '**acceleration society**' and the pressures that it brings related to driving was widespread among participants. Although findings revealed a perception that journeys can be viewed as an opportunity to make up lost time, survey items will be geared towards providing a more in-depth understanding of this issue so that efforts to combat it can be formulated; how can attitudes to the pressures it creates be changed? However, this is an example of how Highways England's goal of improving customer safety may sometimes conflict with their goal of improving customers' journey satisfaction; if an environment is created where the experience of driving on the SRN is predictable and relaxing, customers may increasingly believe that other non-driving tasks such as mobile phone use are compatible with driving.

Although the practical and social consequences of being caught for offending (such as the embarrassment of being caught or the shame and inconvenience of losing one's driving licence) were frequently-mentioned deterrents for participants, there was very little mention among participants of safety consequences as deterrents. Therefore, it will be beneficial for the survey to further uncover whether SRN users relate the **consequences of penalties** more closely to inconvenience, shame or embarrassment, or the notion of having jeopardised safety. This will help us to understand whether compliance is normatively or instrumentally motivated. Tracking any changes in responses to these types of question over time will allow identification of any changes in social norms, for sub-categories of consequences.

As expected, the issue of deterrence emerged as central to driver experiences and should be further explored. Some important parts of this are the **likelihood of being caught**, **celerity of punishment** and **visibility of the police**, all of which will be included in the survey tool. The ways in which these attitudes differ by behaviour or transgression will also be covered by the survey tool; participants spoke of their feelings that often the '**wrong**' **behaviours** are targeted by enforcement activities.

The concept of **punishment avoidance** by SRN users is a relatively unexplored challenge, with particularly interesting observations made about the contribution of automated forms of enforcement (which give no external indication of having detected an offence) to the sense that other drivers' offending is being ignored. In contrast, a sense of satisfaction and justice emerged when offending behaviour was seen to be addressed. Whether or not this requires human enforcement (or can be compatible with automated enforcement) is something that will be further explored using the survey tool.

Participants demonstrated mixed levels of awareness about the capabilities of different forms of 'capable guardian' on the SRN (police officers, Highways England traffic officers and cameras), which should be better understood to inform future deployment decisions that may currently be based on **assumptions about roles and responsibilities**. Knowledge, understanding, and emotional and behavioural responses under this theme will all be topics for exploration using the survey tool.

The theming around identified characteristics of offenders or offences revealed some useful insight into the significance of confidence levels amongst drivers. Though we recognise that experience does not always equate to confidence, experienced drivers were more likely to show impatience with other drivers who were not as 'road wise' as themselves and to excuse their own offending on the grounds of their experience and

ability. In contrast, those with lower confidence and less experience were more likely to feel threatened and apologetic when they breached either the formal legal or informal social code of the road. However, both groups displayed a desire to be *shown* and *persuaded* that they should moderate or alter their behaviour, rather than trusting the authorities when they made such requests (for example, whether or not a 'Red X' sign *really* indicated a problem with a lane, or whether or not a speed reduction was *really* necessary). This **passive and untrusting stance towards authority** must be understood before further attempts to change behaviour are attempted and can be explored through survey questions (for example, around reactions to, and feelings about, topics as diverse as education campaigns, signage, overhead messaging, patrols and cameras).

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Appendix A   Detailed method

A.1   Design considerations

A.1.1   Focus groups and interviews as data collection methods

For this study, the research question is focused on gaining an in-depth understanding of how SRN users perceive and experience compliance and enforcement while driving on the network. Focus groups were selected as the data collection method for this study, as they are optimal for providing researchers with the opportunity to explore different points of view on a range of topics and to explore differences and similarities between group members' points of view (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Additional benefits of using focus groups include:

- Focus groups are a strong investigatory tool when looking at unexplored or complex areas as participants discuss their thoughts and first-hand experiences on a given topic (Gibbs, 1997)

- Focus groups allow for a range of opinions and experiences to be covered; participants can also develop their reasoning, consequently allowing for a more in-depth analysis of their thoughts (Smith, 2008)

- As the conversation is directed by the participants themselves and not the researcher, this ensures a more in-depth exploration of their own thoughts, as they are able to elaborate on any topic they wish to discuss and choose the direction that the discussion should take (Gibbs, 1997)

- The group dynamic facilitates the exchange between people, which can help those who may be unaware of their position to think about it, most likely as a reaction to an opinion put forward by someone else. Topics may be discussed that an individual would not necessarily have thought of alone in the context of an interview (Smith, 2008)

To complement the focus groups, interviews were also conducted with additional individual participants. Although this was largely to bolster numbers in some groups, it is worth noting that qualitative method triangulation such as this is supported as a method of obtaining a more comprehensive understanding of phenomena (Lambert & Loiselle, 2008). Lambert and Loiselle (2008) found that combining focus groups and interviews:

- Encourages a productive, iterative process whereby an initial model of the phenomenon guides the exploration of individual accounts and successive individual data further enrich the conceptualisation of the phenomenon

- Allows for identification of the individual and contextual circumstances surrounding the phenomenon, which adds to the interpretation of the phenomenon's structure

- Allows for convergence of the central characteristics of the phenomenon across focus groups and individual interviews, which enhances the trustworthiness of findings

A.1.2   Sampling

When determining a sample for focus groups, there are two crucial factors to consider:

- Homogeneity or heterogeneity of each group
- Participants being acquainted or strangers

To achieve the aim of this study (to develop a quantitative survey instrument that can accurately capture the attitudes, perceptions and experiences of SRN customers), homogenous groups of drivers were recruited for the focus groups and interviews. By grouping people according to a shared primary characteristic (for example, young drivers), focus group members are likely to build rapport with one another, share experiences freely, and build on each other's thoughts and experiences by identifying common grounds; this allows the facilitators to delve deeper into participants' rationales and experiences rather than moderating between contrasting points of view and potentially disrupting the group dynamic. Additionally, Liamputtong (2011) suggests that homogenous groups are often favoured when discussing personal topics (which could include the topic of offending history in the context of this study).

For this study, we also aimed to recruit participants who were strangers to one another. Research has shown that discussing topics with friends can inhibit free discussion and disclosure, while discussing personal topics with strangers can lead to participants sharing a range of opinions and perspectives as they are unlikely to encounter the other participants in the future (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Liamputtong, 2011). Therefore, recruiting strangers is likely to minimise the potential impact of socially acceptable responses (a risk present in any type of research).

A.2   Procedure

A.2.1   Participant recruitment

An initial online recruitment survey (see Appendix B) allowed members of the public to register their interest in participating in the study. To maximise recruitment chances, we distributed the survey using various methods:

- Targeted advertising via Facebook, which was aimed at people nearby Wokingham or Birmingham and who were at least 17 years of age (the minimum age at which most people can hold a full driving licence)
- Emailed all drivers on the TRL participant database (a database of approximately 1,300 members of public as of November 2019 who have registered their interest in participating in research conducted by TRL)
- Contacted businesses and other contacts local to Wokingham and Birmingham
- Employed a recruitment agency to further extend the reach to potential participants

We also offered potential participants an incentive of £30 cash for attending a focus group or £15 in Amazon vouchers for taking part in a telephone interview to maximise recruitment chances.

Once eligible individuals were identified through the recruitment survey, participants were selected and grouped based on key defining characteristics before considering other characteristics (see Table 2). For each participant group, we also aimed to recruit participants with a range of demographic characteristics, such as age, gender and ethnicity. Although all participants were drivers, recruiting groups of participants with other differing characteristics sought to obtain insight into a broad range of perceptions and experiences.

Table 2: Targeted participant characteristics

Participant group	Key defining characteristic(s)	Other considerations
Young drivers	17 to 24 years of age	
Experienced drivers	At least 10 years of active driving experience	Attendance at advanced driver training courses
Vocational drivers	LGV, HGV and bus drivers	Recruitment of employees from small, medium and large organisations
Those who had been convicted of driving offences	Convicted of at least one driving offence in the past three years Have not been disqualified from driving	
Low confidence SRN drivers	No or low confidence with driving on the SRN	

Once participants were selected for each group, they were contacted via email to provide them with an information sheet and consent form, and to confirm details of their focus group or interview appointment.

A.2.2   *Conducting the focus groups and interviews*

During November and December 2019, TRL conducted five focus groups (one for each participant group) lasting two hours each and four semi-structured telephone interviews lasting one hour each. Although most participants were living in and around the Wokingham area (four focus groups were held in Wokingham and one in Birmingham), many of those participants had experience of driving across a number of SRN areas.

The topic guide for the focus groups and interviews (see Appendix C) was developed around the objectives of the study, while considering the existing evidence. Using this topic guide ensured a consistent facilitation approach across the focus groups and interviews. The general structure for the focus groups and interviews was as follows:

1. Introduction: participants were reminded of the purpose and context of the study, provided with some 'ground rules', asked to complete the consent form and participated in an icebreaker activity

2. Discussion around driving behaviours: participants discussed their perceptions and experiences of driving behaviours they found annoying or worrying and discussed times at which they had displayed those behaviours themselves

3. Discussion around enforcement: participants discussed their perceptions and experiences of measures designed to deter certain driving behaviours

4. Discussion around stakeholders: participants discussed the roles of, and their experiences of, the police, Highways England traffic officers, Highways England as an organisation and cameras on the roads

5. Conclusion: participants were asked what they think Highways England could do to help people to drive lawfully on the SRN, prompted for any final questions or comments and provided with their incentives

A.2.3   *Data analysis*

All focus groups and interviews were audio-recorded and recordings were transcribed. Subsequently, the transcriptions were analysed using inductive thematic analysis, which allowed identification and exploration of patterns within the qualitative dataset. An inductive approach ensured that findings were based entirely on the data provided by participants instead of previous theories (Smith, 2008).

Four researchers adopted an iterative process for the thematic analysis (as per Braun, Clarke and Terry, 2014), which involved familiarisation with the data, generation of initial codes relevant to the research questions, searches for themes and broader patterns of meaning, review and refinement of themes, detailed analysis of each theme, and reporting of findings and conclusions.

A.3   Participant demographics

A total of 34 participants took part in the study, with 30 attending the focus groups and four taking part in the telephone interviews. Table 3 provides a breakdown of the participant demographics.

Table 3: Focus group and interview participant demographics

Participant group	Focus group/ interview	Gender	Age group	Ethnic group	Employment status
Young drivers	Focus group (Wokingham)	Female	17-24	White – British	Full time student
		Male	17-24	White – British	Full time student
		Male	17-24	Mixed – White and black Caribbean	Full time student
		Female	17-24	White – British	Full time student
	Interview	Female	17-24	White – British	Employed, full time
Experienced drivers	Focus group (Wokingham)	Male	51-60	White – British	Not employed, not looking for work
		Female	41-50	White – British	Employed, part time
		Male	41-50	White – British	Employed, full time
		Female	51-60	White – Any other white background	Self-employed

Participant group	Focus group/ interview	Gender	Age group	Ethnic group	Employment status
		Male	51-60	White – British	Employed, full time
		Male	51-60	White – British	Employed, part time
		Female	51-60	White – British	Employed, part time
Vocational drivers	Focus group (Wokingham)	Male	51-60	White – British	Employed, part time
		Male	41-50	White – British	Employed, full time
		Male	51-60	White – British	Employed, full time
		Male	61-70	White – British	Employed, part time
		Male	61-70	White – British	Employed, full time
	Interview	Male	51-60	Black or black British – Caribbean	Self-employed and employed part time
Those who have been convicted of driving offences	Focus group (Wokingham)	Male	61-70	White – British	Retired
		Male	51-60	White – British	Employed, full time
		Male	41-50	White – British	Employed, part time
		Female	41-50	White – British	Employed, full time
	Interview	Male	61-70	White – British	Retired
		Female	41-50	Black or black British – Caribbean	Employed, part time
Low confidence SRN drivers	Focus group (Birmingham)	Female	61-70	White – British	Retired
		Female	36-40	White – British	Employed, part time
		Female	41-50	White – British	Employed, full time
		Male	25-35	Asian – Pakistani	Employed, full time
		Male	41-50	White – British	Employed, full time
		Female	25-35	Black or black British – Caribbean	Employed, part time
		Female	25-35	White – British	Employed, part time
		Female	51-60	White – British	Employed, full time
		Male	51-60	Black or black British - Any other black background	Employed, full time
		Male	41-50	Asian – Pakistani	Employed, full time

Appendix B   Focus group and interview recruitment survey

Page 1: Information sheet and consent form

What is the research about?

TRL is undertaking some research exploring road users' experiences of using motorways and major A-roads.

What will I be required to do?

In order to take part, we would like you to answer a few questions about yourself and your availability. We will then be in touch with a date and time for you to attend if you are chosen to take part. If you decide to help us, you will be asked to attend one of a number of focus groups that will take place either at TRL's main offices in Crowthorne (Berkshire) or in central Birmingham.

How long will it take?

This survey will take around 5 minutes to complete. If you are invited to take part in a focus group, we expect these to last up to two hours.

What do I receive for taking part?

You will not receive anything for this survey. If you are invited to take part in a focus group, you will receive £30 cash payment as thanks for your participation.

Who is it for?

The research is being undertaken by the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) on behalf of Highways England.

Will my data be kept confidential?

We will treat any information about you, obtained during the course of this research, in the strictest confidence and in line with GDPR. Hard copies of any personal identifying data will be kept in a locked file or transferred to an electronic database and then destroyed confidentially. The data will only be accessible to members of the research team who need access to it. Personal data collected during the study will be destroyed at the end of the project. When reporting the findings of the study, individuals will not be identified. Anonymous quotations collected during the research may be included.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at contact@trl.co.uk

1. **Please respond to the statements below to start the survey.**[*2]

	Yes	No
I understand that the information I provide in this survey will be used by TRL to decide whether to invite me to take part in a focus group	○	○

---

[2] * denotes questions for which responses are mandatory.

	Yes	No
I currently hold a full valid driving licence	○	○

Page 2: About you

2. Are you...*

- ○ Male
- ○ Female
- ○ Non-binary
- ○ Prefer not to say

3. How old are you?*

- ○ 17-24
- ○ 25-35
- ○ 36-40
- ○ 41-50
- ○ 51-60
- ○ 61-70
- ○ 71-80
- ○ 81-90
- ○ 91+

4. Which ethnic group do you most identify with?*

- ○ White – British
- ○ White – Irish
- ○ White – Any other white background
- ○ Mixed – White and black Caribbean
- ○ Mixed – White and black African
- ○ Mixed – White and Asian
- ○ Mixed – Any other mixed background
- ○ Asian – Indian
- ○ Asian – Pakistani
- ○ Asian – Bangladeshi
- ○ Asian – Any other Asian background
- ○ Black or black British – Caribbean
- ○ Black or black British – African
- ○ Black or black British – Any other black background
- ○ Chinese or other Asian – Chinese
- ○ Prefer not to say
- ○ Other (please specify):

5. What is your current employment status?*

○ Employed, full time
○ Employed, part time
○ Not employed, looking for work
○ Not employed, not looking for work
○ Retired
○ Unable to work due to your health condition
○ Unable to work for some other reason
○ Full time student
○ Other (please specify):

6. **Please indicate your TOTAL HOUSEHOLD income from all sources BEFORE tax and other deductions. Household refers to you, your partner and/or family. If you share a property with others (e.g. a house share) then do not include them in your answer.***

○ Up to £9,999 per year (£199 per week)
○ £10,000 to £19,999 per year (£200 - £389 per week)
○ £20,000 to £29,999 per year (£390 - £579 per week)
○ £30,000 to £39,999 per year (£580 - £769 per week)
○ £40,000 to £49,999 per year (£770 - £969 per week)
○ £50,000 to £74,999 per year (£970 - £1,449 per week)
○ £75,000 to £99,999 per year (£1,450 - £1,959 per week)
○ £100,000 to £149,999 per year (£1,960 - £2939 per week)
○ £150,000 or more per year (£2,940 or more per week)
○ Prefer not to say

7. **Please provide your postcode (We ask this because we need to include people from rural and urban areas).***

8. **For how many years have you held your driving licence?***

○ Less than a year
○ 1-3 years
○ 4-10 years
○ 11-20 years
○ 21 years or over

9. **What type of vehicle do you most often drive?***

○ Car
○ Motorbike/Scooter
○ HGV (over 7.5 tonnes)
○ Bus/coach
○ Van (Under 3.5 tonnes)

○ LGV (Between 3.5 and 7.5 tonnes)

10. **Do you drive for a living? For example, are you a coach, lorry, moped or taxi driver?***

○ Yes
○ No

11. **Have you ever attended additional (optional) driver training courses (e.g. advanced driver training, such as that offered by the IAM RoadSmart)? Note this DOES NOT include National Driver Offender Retraining Scheme courses (e.g. speed awareness) or any courses undertaken as part of the licencing process.**

○ Yes
○ No

12. **On average, how frequently do you travel on the following road types?***

	Everyday	3-4 times a week	About once a week	About once a fortnight	About once a month	Less than once a month	Less than once a year	Never
Motorway	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
A-road – dual carriageway	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
A-road – single carriageway	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
B-road	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Page 3: Mileage

13. **How many miles approximately have you driven on the Strategic Road Network (SRN) in the last year? The SRN in England is made up of motorways and trunk roads, the most significant 'A' roads. To see which roads are part of the SRN, please click here to see a detailed map. Please think about miles driven in both a professional capacity and personal capacity.***

○ <1000 miles
○ 1000 - 2500 miles
○ 2500 - 5000 miles
○ 5000 - 7500 miles
○ 7500 -10000 miles
○ 10000 - 15000 miles
○ 15000 - 20000 miles
○ 20000 - 30000 miles

- ○ 30000 - 40000 miles
- ○ 40000 - 50000 miles
- ○ >50000 miles

Page 4: Driving for work

14. Which of these vehicles have you driven in a professional capacity on the SRN?*

- ○ Car
- ○ Van (under 3.5 tonnes)
- ○ LGV (between 3.5 to 7.5 tonnes)
- ○ HGV (over 7.5 tonnes)
- ○ Motorcycle/moped
- ○ Bus, minibus or coach

15. What size fleet does your organisation have?*

- ○ Small (<10 vehicles)
- ○ Medium (10-100 vehicles)
- ○ Large (>100 vehicles)

Page 5: Type of roads used

16. What types of road do you drive on most whilst working?*

- ○ Motorways
- ○ A-roads
- ○ B-roads

Page 6: Motorbike (for motorcycle riders only)

17. What size motorbike do you ride most often?

- ○ <50cc
- ○ 50-125cc
- ○ >125cc

Page 7: Driving convictions

18. How many driving convictions have you had in the last 3 years?

- ○ None
- ○ 1
- ○ 2
- ○ 3
- ○ 4
- ○ 5+

Page 8: Perception of Highways England and driving confidence

19. **How confident do you feel about driving on the Strategic Road Network? If you don't drive on the SRN or only drive on it a few times a year, please think about your driving more generally.***

○ Very confident
○ Quite confident
○ Neither confident nor unconfident
○ Not very confident
○ Not confident at all

20. **To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements.***

	1 Completely agree	2 Somewhat agree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Somewhat disagree	5 Completely disagree
I trust Highways England	○	○	○	○	○
I admire and respect Highways England	○	○	○	○	○
I have a good feeling about Highways England	○	○	○	○	○
I think Highways England has an overall good reputation	○	○	○	○	○

Page 9: Contact information

So that we can contact you to invite you to a workshop if you are eligible, please provide your:*

First name:

Surname:

Email address:

Confirm email address:

21. **Which of the following locations would be most convenient for you if you were to attend a focus group?** *

○ Birmingham
○ Crowthorne

Page 10

22. In order for us to schedule these sessions at a time that is most convenient for you please could you select the dates and times that you are likely to be available to attend a focus group. Please select all that apply and CLICK NEXT PAGE TO ENSURE YOUR RESPONSES ARE RECORDED.

	9am-11am	12-2pm	3pm-5pm	6pm-8pm
Monday 25/11	○	○	○	○
Tuesday 26/11	○	○	○	○
Wednesday 27/11	○	○	○	○
Thursday 28/11	○	○	○	○
Friday 29/11	○	○	○	○
Monday 2/12	○	○	○	○

Page 11: Thank you (for ineligible participants only)

Thank you for your interest in our research. Unfortunately, you are not eligible to take part in this particular project.

If you are interested in being contacted about future research, you can register at https://simulatortrials.trl.co.uk/ or see our latest news at https://trl.co.uk/news.

Page 12: Thank you

You have completed this survey.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. All responses you have provided will be kept private.

Please contact TRL at contact@trl.co.uk with any queries about this research.

If you are interested in being contacted about future research, you can register at https://simulatortrials.trl.co.uk/ or see our latest news at https://trl.co.uk/news.

Appendix C   Focus group and interview topic guide

Key to using this guide

> Text in boxes – these contain information for facilitators. This text will not be said to participants.

Text in black – guide for facilitators (things to cover/ask about).

Text in red – specific text/wording to be said to participants.

Square brackets **[ ]** – will indicate prompts (i.e. things to mention if the participants have not already done so).

Introduction (10 minutes)

> The purpose of this topic guide is to enable participants to talk about their individual experiences, as drivers, of compliance and enforcement on the Strategic Road Network. The guide includes questions (and specific wording to be used, where this is important) relating to the topics of interest. However, the facilitator's job is to 'read the room' and ultimately be guided by the experiences of participants (and the details they are willing to share) and make sure that participants are given the opportunity to clarify, elaborate and provide more detail on the things they say.
>
> Additional probing questions to consider when required:
>
> Clarification: "What do you mean by that…", "Can I just check I understand what you mean…"
>
> Elaboration: "Can you say more about that…", "Can you give me some more examples…", "Why do you feel like that…"
>
> Detail: "What was it specifically that made you feel like that…", "Can you give me more detail on that…", "How often does that happen…"

Aims

> Participants to be welcomed into the session. Before starting, researchers will give a very brief introduction to remind everyone of the purpose of the day and provide some context – e.g. SRN.

In today's session, we'd like to know more about your thoughts and experiences of driving on motorways and major A-roads – which we'll refer to as the Strategic Road Network (or SRN). We're really interested in what you think about different driving behaviours and about the police and traffic officers.

The SRN is made up of approximately 4,300 miles of motorways and major 'trunk' A-roads in England and is managed by Highways England.

> Participants to be shown a map of SRN roads, to provide some understanding of the network and so they can recognise some roads they use frequently.

> The map of the SRN should always be visible so that participants can refer to it.

We, TRL, are carrying out this research for Highways England and findings will help them understand more about the people who use their roads.

Information for participants

Some things to mention to participants:

- Participation is voluntary

- The discussion should last about 2 hours, but there will be breaks during the discussion

- To ensure we cover all topics, we may occasionally need to move the conversation along

- We'd like to get your thoughts, even if you do not have strong opinions. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers and any information you give us will help Highways England to improve driver experiences on the SRN

- Please avoid speaking over others

- You don't have to discuss anything that makes you uncomfortable. If at any point you do feel uncomfortable, please let us know and remember that you can stop the discussion at any time

- We would like to record discussion

- The recording will be destroyed when the research has been completed and all transcripts (the text files created from the recordings) will be anonymised

- We just want to understand your experiences as a driver and we will not be sharing this information with third parties, other than Highways England. However, even the information that is shared with Highways England will be anonymised (e.g. they can see what was said, but not who said it)

- On the above point, note that we will be asking you to think about your own behaviours as well as those of other drivers you may encounter when on the road

Consent

Does anyone have any questions?

> Note that participants will have received the consent form (and information on the purpose of the group and what will be required of them) prior to the date of the focus group and may have already provided consent through electronic signature. The below details are provided just in case there are some people at the group who have not already done this.
>
> - Researcher to hand out consent form for participant(s) to complete if they have not done so already
>
> - Researcher to check consent forms when they are completed/ handed in

- If 'no' to any questions, researcher to discuss any concerns/ issues
- If no resolution, allow participant(s) to leave the group
- Researcher to start the recording and announce to group.

The discussion is now being recorded.

Ice breaker activity (10 minutes)

Researcher to split the main group into two groups of 3 or 4 people (max 8 attendees per group, but some may not turn up) and let them discover what they have in common, along with interesting characteristics that are unique to a person in the group (this does not need to relate to driving).

As this exercise is simply to get participants talking to each other and to help build rapport, on return to the full group, the researcher will simply ask a few general questions about how participants felt during exercise before moving on.

Behaviours, frequency and perceptions of on-road behaviours (30 minutes)

1. Which driving behaviours do you find most annoying or worrying while driving? [Facilitator to make note of behaviours that come up naturally during the discussion]

   Are there any particular situations or circumstances that you are thinking about when you mention these types of driving?

   Are there particularly types of road/ time of day/ weather conditions that you are thinking about?

   If they have not come up naturally, prompt:

   > How about people ignoring 'Red X' signs on motorways or perhaps 'hogging' the middle lane of a motorway?

   Is there anything else you'd like to mention?

   Activity: ask participants to divide these into behaviours that they think are against the law in this country. This exercise is to be undertaken on a board/ wall so that it can be referred to later.

2. Which of these behaviours do you think happen most often when you're driving on the SRN? (Present map of SRN network as prop as well as some pictures of road types)

   When do you think they are most likely to happen? [Specific conditions; times of day; other factors]

   Do some behaviours bother you more/ less?

   What sort of people do you think do these things?

3. We've already started to discuss our own behaviours a little [if that's true] but now we'd like to turn the focus of the discussion to that side of things and to think about those occasions when perhaps we have been tempted to do some of these things whilst driving or where we have found ourselves doing them...

Are there some actions here that you have found yourself doing? Which ones?

What sort of situations might make you more like to do these things? [Particular journeys, parts of journeys, etc.?]

> Researcher to focus on most commonly mentioned as behaviours that people have said that they do themselves; cover up to 3 behaviours, if time allows.
>
> Researcher to note the behaviours that are discussed.

Can you remember how you felt when you were doing this? [Did participants feel within their rights to do so? Did they not really think about it? Were they in any way concerned about getting caught?]

What, if anything, do you think doing these things makes other people think of you?

Break (5 minutes)

Experience and perceptions of enforcement (30 minutes)

We have spent a bit of time thinking about the behaviours that we might encounter or do ourselves when driving. In this section, we will be talking a bit about your experiences and thoughts about what is currently done to stop people from engaging in different types of driving behaviours.

4. What do you think about what is done to deter certain driving behaviours?

How have you formed these views? [Personal experience; other people's experiences, info online, other sources]

And what do you think about the consequences people experience when they are caught?

[Are they fair/ justifiable? Unfair/ unjustifiable?]

And what is it that makes you think that?

> Researcher to explore the components of 'fairness' – e.g. do the concepts of trust, consistency, trustworthiness, respectfulness emerge?

5. Why do you think we have consequences like the ones we have been talking about? What do you think are they designed to achieve?

6. Thinking about your own experience(s) of what is done to deter certain driving behaviours and the consequences for people when they are caught…

What were your own experiences of these types of activities?

Have you had any recent experiences that you would like to tell us about?

Can you remember how you felt when this happened?

How do you feel when you see other people being caught for breaking the law when driving?

How likely do you think it is to get caught when… (use examples of behaviours mentioned by participants)? [You personally? Other drivers?]

Police, traffic officers and the role of Highways England (30 minutes)

> Activity: researchers to facilitate participants in working through perceived differences between traffic officers and police officers. Facilitator to start the discussion by showing a neutral picture of a traffic officer, for reference. The facilitator will not provide any additional insight about the role of traffic officers.
>
> Questions for participants to consider:
>
> - What activities do you think police and traffic officers do that are the same?
> - What activities do you think they do that set them apart?
>
> Participants can be divided into two groups to change up the structure of the group.

7. Thinking about the role of the police on our roads…

   What is your experience of them while driving?

   How often do you see the police on the roads? Do you think that's too often/not often enough?

   What is your understanding of what they do on the roads?

   Do you think that this is something they should be doing? Should they be able to do more?

   > Researcher to explore acceptability of role vs particular activities they undertake. E.g. is the role viewed as credible, but lack of acceptance of particular enforcement activities?
   >
   > If it emerges, researcher to explore (to a limited extent) perceptions on how to deal with contesting fines/penalties and the courts process. Ensure that this does not take up a significant amount of discussion time as this could take discussion away from key areas.

8. Now, let's think about traffic officers…

   What's your experience of them while driving?

   How often do you see them on the roads?

   What are your thoughts on what they do on the roads?

   > Researcher to refer back to the behaviours that have been mentioned within the group discussion.
   >
   > Researcher to explore acceptability of role vs particular activities they undertake.

Do you think that this is something they should be doing? Should they be able to do more?

9. What do you think about the use of cameras to detect driving offences?

What's your experience of these while driving?

How often do you see these on the roads?

What are your thoughts on how they are used on the roads?

10. Previously we've discussed [facilitator to give a few examples of behaviours discussed]. If you were a police officer, what would you consider the most important thing to focus on in relation to driving behaviours?

Why is that?

And if you were a traffic officer? Why is that?

And if you could use cameras to focus on certain driving behaviours, what would those behaviours be? Why is that?

Closing (5 minutes)

11. As one final question for today we would like to go around the room and for each of you to say in a sentence what do you think Highways England can do to help people to comply with the law while driving on the network?

That is the end of the activities we had for you today. Thank you all for your time and we appreciate your honest answers.

Does anyone have any final questions or points to make in the final 5 minutes?

> After final wrap-up:
> - Researcher to stop the audio recording.
> - Participants to sign for and receive incentive.
> - Researchers to thank them again and see participants out.

Perceptions of compliance and enforcement on the Strategic Road Network: Focus groups and interviews

To improve customer experience, satisfaction and safety, Highways England commissioned TRL to provide an in-depth understanding of customers' perceptions, attitudes and experiences of compliance and enforcement on the Strategic Road Network (SRN). TRL conducted five focus groups and four semi-structured telephone interviews with a total of 34 drivers, each belonging to one of the following groups: young drivers, experienced drivers, vocational drivers, those who had been convicted of driving offences and low confidence SRN drivers. During the focus groups and interviews, participants discussed their perceptions and experiences of driving behaviours and enforcement methods, and the roles of, and their experiences of, 'capable guardians' (the police, Highways England traffic officers, Highways England as an organisation and cameras).

Various themes emerged from the focus groups and interviews data, which were used to suggest a set of key topics and constructs to be reflected in a quantitative survey tool; this tool will allow Highways England to continue to measure customers' experiences, attitudes and perceptions of compliance and enforcement on the SRN.