

## Press Release

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### ROAD SAFETY SPENDING GUIDANCE ISSUED TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Ahead of the Treasury's Comprehensive Spending Review, leading road safety organisations have issued a joint briefing document to local authority chief executives to help them set spending priorities that will protect their communities.

The Making it Count guidance, issued today, addresses the difficult spending choices that will have to be made over the coming months. It outlines the role local authorities can play in protecting their residents' quality and length of life and offers guidance about where to look for additional financial and informative support.

Given the significance of the public spending decisions that lie ahead, the document has been produced by a variety of organisations working together - the Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety (PACTS), the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA), Road Safety Great Britain, the Institute of Road Safety Officers (IRSO), the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport (ADEPT), the GreenSafe Foundation, TRL and Chris Lines Consulting.

The guidance sets out a variety of issues that local authorities should consider when making decisions about scaling-back road safety funding.

Local authorities have legal responsibilities for road safety and they are, in fact, the lead delivery agent of road safety activity. This arrangement has been very successful and is one of the main reasons why Britain has seen such significant reductions in road death and injury. Deaths on the road have fallen from around 5,000 a year at the start of the 1990s to 2,222 in 2009.

However, road death and injury continue to plague communities, and there is the very real danger that spending cuts could result in the long-term and consistent trend of falling road deaths and injury being reversed, with more rather than fewer people dying on our roads.

Moreover, the argument to improve road safety is not simply ethically, socially and emotionally driven, but is an economically-sound policy that will deliver real cost savings. The total value of reported road accidents in 2009 has been estimated to be £15.8bn, with a broad illustrative figure taking the value to around £30bn when accidents not reported to the police are included.

The briefing document concludes that, with every public service calling for protection from budget cuts, it is clear that long-term and sustainable interventions that make a difference need to be prioritised.

Kevin Clinton, RoSPA's head of road safety, said: "We know that spending is being cut and that road safety cannot be completely protected from that; every area is fighting its corner.

"This guidance will help local authority decision-makers understand why road safety funding shouldn't just be slashed across the board. It recognises that chief executives are having to make some very difficult decisions and balance competing priorities with significantly less money. But it also sets out the reasons why

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wholesale cuts to road safety do not make economic, human, practical or environmental sense."