

TramForward

Campaigning for Light Rail

PRESS RELEASE FROM *TramForward*

22 October 2012

MP calls for revised safety standards to reduce costs of light rail projects

TramForward endorses a call made by a Yorkshire MP for appropriate standards for light rail projects. Member of Parliament for Leeds North West, Greg Mulholland, who is a member of the All Party Parliamentary Light Rail Group, has, in the House of Commons during transport questions last Thursday, called on Norman Baker, Parliamentary Under Secretary

for the Department of Transport to look again at current safety standards for light rail projects. Greg highlighted the need to revise the safety standards to ensure that light rail projects are not held back by costs associated with ensuring that projects meet the same appropriate safety standards as heavy rail projects.

As it stands there are currently a number of European standards in place for both tramway applications, but also many heavy rail standards that on first sight would appear suitable but which in fact have the tendency to import risk to the tramway applications.

As a result of projects being forced to meet these unnecessarily high safety standards many UK tram networks find themselves over-engineered and over-expensive.

Greg has, in line with the Government's 2011 report 'Green Light for Light Rail' called on the Government to revise safety standards to improve cost efficiencies for light rail schemes by making more use of common design approaches and more tailored safety standards for light rail projects.

Greg commented: "High safety standards are an important part of any project. However, the European standards in that are currently in place for all rail projects must be revised for light rail projects.

"While I recognise that these standards have been successful in ensuring a high level of safety on the UK railway system, the standards are inappropriate for on-street tram. Having unnecessarily high safety standards has led to UK tram networks being unnecessarily over-engineered and over-expensive.

"I hope the Government will follow up on the findings of their 'Green Light for Light Rail' report and look again at the current European safety standards and look towards tailoring specific standards for light rail projects to ensure those who put forward applications are not forced to spend vast sums of money meeting the requirements of these unnecessary safety standards."

NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. *TramForward* is the campaigning arm of the Light Rail Transit Association.
2. The Light Rail Transit Association is the world's leading organisation campaigning for better public transport through light rail, tramway and metro systems in our towns and cities for 70 years. It also supports the revitalisation of suburban and rural transport through the application of light rail.
3. The LRTA acts through its network of local branches, which campaign for better transport in their localities.
4. Membership of the LRTA costs under 12p a day. To join, visit www.lрта.org or write to the Membership Secretary, LRTA, 38 Wolseley Road, Sale, Greater Manchester, M33 7AU. Members of the LRTA receive the monthly magazine *Tramways & Urban Transit* - written and read by experts in the field - and gain other benefits including discounts on videos and books, tours of transport systems and cut-price admission to selected transport sites.

5. Press enquiries - please contact:

Jim Harkins, Chairman External Relations Group, LRTA,

Auchenshuggle Junction, 8 Beechmoore, Moore, Warrington WA4 6EU

Telephone: 01925 740675; 07721 378223

Email: lightrailuk@aol.com