

Measuring Highways England's performance 2020-25: the road user view

February 2019

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1. INTRODUCTION

Project context

- Highways England is the government-owned company in charge of operating, maintaining and improving England's Strategic Road Network (SRN).
- The Department for Transport is working up a new Performance Specification which will set out its requirements of Highways England for the period of 2020-2025. This has been informed by a first phase of research into what users want this to contain, carried out by Define in 2017.
- The next stage of the development process required further research with road users to understand the extent to which the draft structure of this new Performance Specification meets their needs, their views on appropriate metrics and targets, and on overall priorities.
- In summary, the methodology for this stage mirrored the first stage of consumer research but on a slightly smaller scale:
 - 35 x pre-tasked Workshop Trios with road users
 - 7 x pre-tasked face to face Depth Interviews with road users
 - 8 x pre-tasked telephone Depth Interviews with stakeholders
 - Fieldwork split across two stages and across 7 SRN areas

Overall research objectives

Overall, the aims of this research project were to:

- Assess whether the proposed high-level structure for the performance specification is fit for purpose from the perspective of SRN users**
- Identify priority areas for road users in terms of performance targets**

Note: See Appendix for Specific research objectives

Method: Overview

- **Mixed methodology including 7 pre-tasked, face-to-face depth interviews and 35 workshop discussions, split across 6 respondent types in 7 SRN areas:**
 - 21 workshop discussions with private drivers, evenly split between commuters, business and leisure drivers
 - 7 workshop discussions with professional drivers
 - 7 workshop discussions with cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians
 - 7 depth interviews with novice, older and disabled drivers
- **Pre-task:**

Respondents were asked to:

 - Rank the six overarching themes in order of priority
 - To rank each of the metrics from each of the six themes
 - To note whether each metric should have a target or not

Fieldwork was completed between 6-21 August in the following areas: Bristol, Preston, Slough, Ashford (Kent), York, Northampton, Norwich.

Method: Overview

35 x workshop groups

Professional drivers

Business drivers

Commuters

Leisure drivers

Non-motorised road users

7 x depth interviews

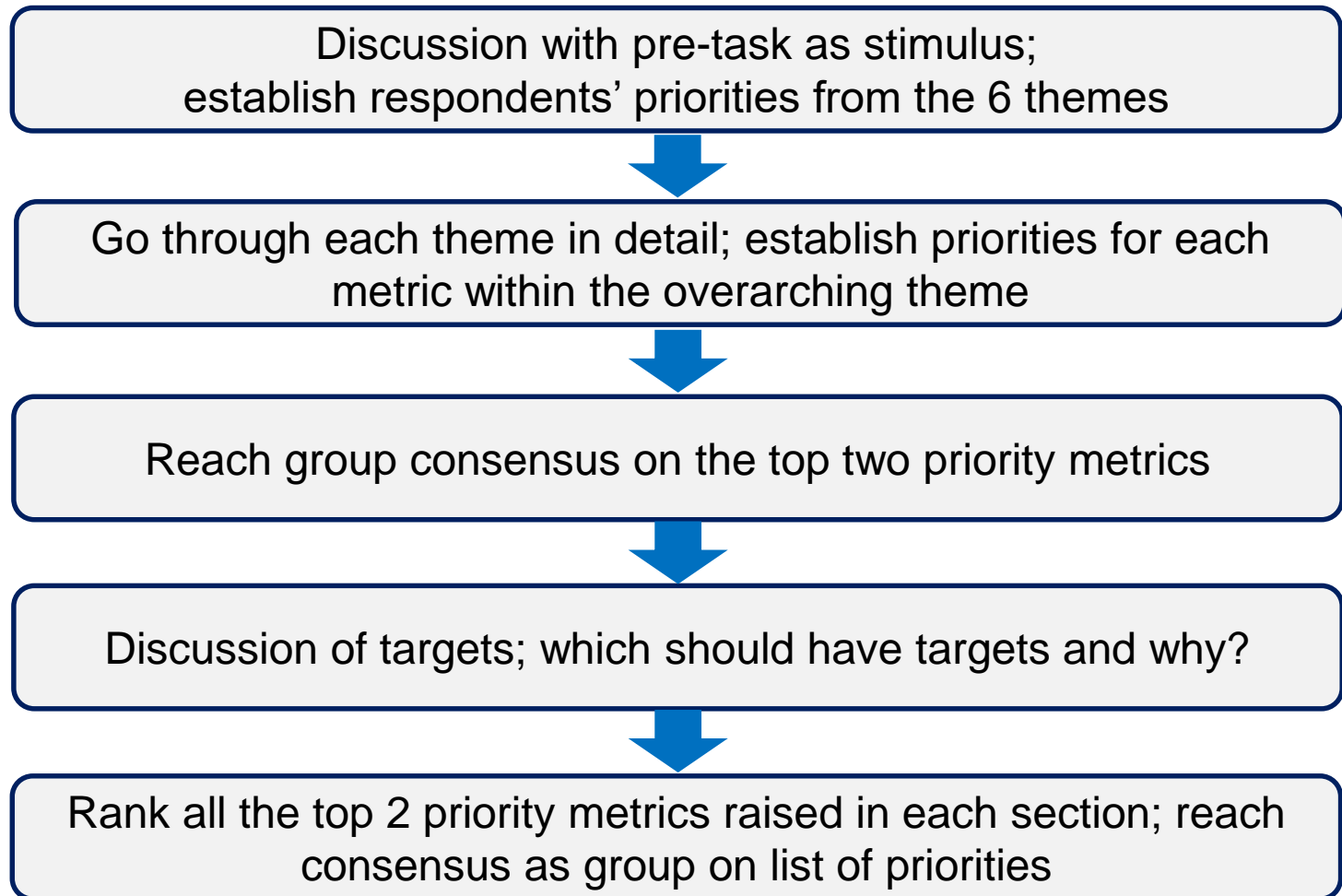
Novice, older, or disabled drivers

8 x telephone interviews

Stakeholders

Fieldwork evenly split across 7 SRN areas for non-stakeholder interviews.

Method: Interview process



Sample: Overview

Region	Professional groups	Business groups	Commuter groups	Leisure groups	Non-motorised user groups	Novice, older and disabled driver depths
South West	Large Vehicles	Age 21-40	Age 41+	Age 61+	1 group	1- Disabled
M25 area	Small Vehicles	Age 41+	Age 21-40	Age 18-30	1 group	1- Disabled
South East	Large Vehicles	Age 21-40	Age 41+	Age 31-60	1 group	1 - Disabled
Midlands	Small Vehicles	Age 41+	Age 21-40	Age 61+	1 group	1- Disabled
East	Large Vehicles	Age 21-40	Age 41+	Age 18-30	1 group	1- Novice
Yorkshire and N East	Small Vehicles	Age 41+	Age 21-40	Age 31-60	1 group	1- Novice
North West	Large Vehicles	Age 21-40	Age 41+	Age 61+	1 group	1- over 75
Total	7 x groups	7 x groups	7 x groups	7 x groups	7 x groups	7 x depths

Note: See Appendix for Sample detail

2. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FOR ROAD USERS / CONCLUSIONS

Summary of findings 1

- The idea that particular metrics are being considered to assess Highways England's overall performance is well-received, even if some metrics are not considered their sole responsibility (e.g. those where other driver behaviour plays a part, such as accidents)
- However, road users are relatively unengaged with the SRN – their main goal is to have uneventful, predictable journeys, rather than to think about how these are achieved
- Across the six themes, there is general agreement that all themes are important
- With that caveat, there is relatively high consistency across different **driver** types in how the themes are prioritised, while **cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians** focus on the subset of themes that apply to their journeys
 - Themes that are more highly prioritised are typically those that have a direct impact on individual journeys

Summary of findings for road users 2

- **Improving safety for all** is the primary priority for most (drivers and cyclists, pedestrians, equestrians)
 - This theme resonates on both a practical and emotional level, and feels personally relevant
 - Human life is paramount above other concerns
- A **well-maintained and resilient network** is also high priority across all, and the primary priority for many professional drivers
 - Seen as a proxy measure for safety, as well as affecting damage to vehicles and (for professional drivers) fuel costs
- **Fast and reliable journeys** are typically ranked third or fourth for driver audiences (higher for users who spend more time on the roads), but are seen by cyclists, pedestrian and equestrians as less relevant
 - For drivers, reliability is key - being able to predict journey times is prioritised over fast journeys

Summary of findings for road users 3

- Metrics within the section entitled '**Meeting the needs of all road users**' are generally lower priority, with exceptions
 - Metrics about **communicating information to drivers** are seen as high priority, because this allows them more control over journeys, and makes journey times easier to predict
 - Metrics about **user satisfaction** are seen as less important as satisfaction should be achieved by addressing concerns such as safety and road condition
- **Being environmentally responsible** is low priority for drivers, as few of the metrics directly impact on individual journeys
 - **Cyclists, pedestrian and equestrians** typically prioritise this theme more highly, as they feel more directly affected by environmental issues
- Although **Achieving efficient delivery** is of interest to some, it was also a low priority
 - Low emotional engagement with this theme generally, plus assumptions that Highways England are already thinking about how they spend money, make this less of a priority for most

Summary of findings for road users 4

- When thinking about targets, road users do not consider themselves experts
 - Most find it challenging to contribute meaningfully to detailed discussions about targets (such as which metrics should have more challenging targets)
- In terms of setting targets, road users do not consider it appropriate for targets to be set across all metrics
 - They do see potential for some targets, particularly for metrics that they view as being the sole responsibility of Highways England
 - There is relatively high consistency in terms of which metrics are considered most important to set targets for
- Although there are some exceptions, road users generally agree that targets should be set regionally
 - National targets are felt to lack meaning
 - Local targets are seen as too detailed

Summary of findings for road users 5

- When considering the different metrics within each theme, there is more variation between road user types
 - As might be expected, different audiences tend to prioritise the metrics that would most directly benefit them and their own journeys
 - Personal issues, such as high interest in specific environmental concerns, occasionally also come into play
- The following slides summarise road users' overall thoughts on the metrics within each theme in terms of relative importance
 - A narrow box indicates consistency in respondents' thoughts for the metric while a wide box indicates more variation in respondents' thoughts
 - Metrics that respondents consider the most important to set targets for are highlighted in yellow

Summary of thoughts on metrics

Less important

More important



Killed or seriously injured

Vulnerable user safety

Total casualties

Total collisions

Road safety assessment

Staff safety

Summary of thoughts on metrics

Less important

More important



Average delay

Journey time reliability

Effective operation of smart motorways

Delay in roadworks

Incident response

Info to local Highways
Authorities

Delays on
gateway routes

Average speed

Summary of thoughts on metrics

Less important

More important



Road condition

Drainage condition

Structures condition

Technology condition

Geotechnical condition - other audiences

Geotechnical condition - pro drivers & Cyclists, pedestrians, equestrians

Ride quality from user perspective

Summary of thoughts on metrics

Less important

More important



Biodiversity

Noise (non-affected)

Carbon impact of Highways England's activities

User emissions

Air quality on the SRN

Cultural heritage

Litter

Summary of thoughts on metrics

Less important

More important



User satisfaction

**Accuracy /
timeliness of
roadworks info**

Quality of information

**Logistics sector
satisfaction - others**

**Logistics sector
satisfaction - HGV**

**Vulnerable user
satisfaction - others**

**Vulnerable user
satisfaction –
vulnerable users**

Summary of thoughts on metrics

Less important

More important



**CAPEX and OPEX
savings**

**Construction
progress**

Value for money

Summary of findings: Stakeholders 1

- Eight stakeholders were interviewed by telephone. These represented the interests of the freight / haulage, bus / coach and postal / courier industries
- Although their focus was (understandably) typically on the themes and metrics that most directly impacted their own sector, they agreed with road user audiences that all themes were important
- In contrast to non-stakeholders (referred to, in this document, as 'road users'), **Fast and reliable journeys** were the primary priority across stakeholders, with reliability being key to logistics and planning
- **A well-maintained and resilient network** was also important across sectors, with damage to vehicles, fuel costs, safety and predictable journey times all cited as reasons
- **Improved safety for all** was acknowledged to be important, with some variability in stakeholders who prioritised it second (bus / coach) and the others, who placed it third behind the logistical concern that had greater impact on their business

Summary of findings: Stakeholders 2

- Stakeholder opinions about **Meeting the needs of all users** closely aligned with road user views – that satisfaction would be a natural consequence of improvements
 - Some bus / coach stakeholders would have liked to be included as a separate user group
- **Achieving efficient delivery** was seen as more important by stakeholders from the freight / haulage sector and questioned how savings would be made and spent
 - In contrast, other stakeholders acknowledged that this theme was less of a priority for their members, as Highways England was already seen to be performing well
- **Being environmentally responsible** was ranked as low priority across stakeholders, particularly when compared with the performance of the roads to ensure efficient logistics operations
 - Some stakeholders from the freight / logistics sector expressed concerns about targets on emissions, and would seek assistance for freight operators to meet the targets.

3. ROAD USERS' (NON-STAKEHOLDER) RESPONSES TO THE SIX THEMES

Users are relatively unengaged with the SRN

All road users

- Goal is to have an **uneventful, predictable** journey
- Thoughts about the SRN are at a basic level – ‘are the roads ok’
- Do not spend much time thinking about the roads, or Highways England, beyond this
- Consequently, ‘thinking about performance metrics for the roads’ isn’t on the radar for most
- On consideration, however, metrics and targets do seem like a sensible idea

In the past you could know how long something was going to take you – now you don’t [f, leisure drivers, 61+, Bristol]

In our game we want to be able to get there as quickly as we can. We’re all on times, so obviously we need to get there as quickly and safely as we can [m, professional drivers, large vehicles, Bristol]

Road users are happy to think about and discuss the topic, but all they really want is a good journey, rather than thinking about how it is achieved

Performance metrics all seen as important

All road users

- Despite lack of engagement, agreement that all target areas are important
- Although some were consistently ranked lower priority, this does not mean that they were seen as trivial / unimportant
- Some found it challenging to rank themes because there were too many overlaps between them, or improving one would have knock on effects to others

Most of them are really important – it was hard to pick one that was less important. [Business driver, 41+, Slough]

If the roads were better maintained then journeys would be faster and more reliable [f, commuters, 41+, Bristol]

In a way, you're in favour of everything, aren't you? [M, Non-Motorised Road Users, 49-56, Burnley]

Frequently argued that a well-maintained road network would ensure better safety, faster and reliable journeys, and therefore better meet the needs of all users.

Consistency across driver audiences in how themes are prioritised

Safety

Ranked number 1 priority for all audiences except professional drivers (who ranked it second)



Consistently higher priority than other themes

Well – maintained network

Ranked number 2 priority for all audiences except professional drivers (who ranked it first)

Fast and reliable journeys

Meeting all users' needs

'Second tier' priorities; more individual variation

Reliable journeys high priority for professional and business drivers

Efficient delivery

Environment

Lowest priority themes for most (although not unimportant)

Safety and well-maintained networks seen as fundamentals; others vary more according to individual driving needs

Cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians prioritise a subset of themes

Safety

Still number 1 priority with cyclists, pedestrian and equestrians – focus is on safety of cyclists, safety of horses etc

The roads should be suitable for everyone who uses them. Not just people in cars. [f, cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians, York]

Well – maintained network

Also key for cyclists and equestrians – potholes and poor signage etc can be dangerous

Environment

User satisfaction

Environment ranked more highly for those who are outside when using SRN

Satisfaction of cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians seen as important (and sense that this is not a priority for drivers)

Efficient delivery

Fast / reliable journeys

Less on the radar as do not impact cyclists, pedestrian and equestrians

Most cyclists, pedestrian and equestrians are also drivers, so able to articulate different priorities according to type of use → When thinking of themselves as drivers, have same priorities as other drivers

Safety is the number 1 priority for most

Safety

- Being safe on the roads is seen as a fundamental across audiences
 - Being in an accident is most drivers' and cyclists, pedestrian and equestrians' worst-case scenario for what might happen on the SRN
- Expected to be a high priority and continually improved across all proposed metrics (details later)
- 'Safe roads' was interpreted as roads that have good surfaces/tarmac (and no potholes), are well lit and have good signage
- Also acknowledged that other drivers play a part in overall safety, and that Highways England cannot be expected to control for this

If you can't get there safely, what's the point of getting there at all? [Non-motorised road user, 28-37, Norwich]

I'm using the roads every day for work and I want to be safe on the roads. [Business driver, 41+, Slough]

It's paramount, isn't it? It's your loved ones, isn't it? [F, Non-Motorised Road Users, 49-56, Burnley]

I think this one, which involves people, I feel is probably the most important thing. [F, Elderly Driver, 84, Burnley]

Safety resonates on both a practical and an emotional level – 'human life' is paramount above other concerns

A well-maintained and resilient network is also high priority...

Well-maintained roads

- Very consistently placed number 2 priority (no 1 for professional drivers)
 - Pro drivers use the SRN extensively, so poor maintenance leading to delays can severely impact their ability to do their job
- Driving this was the belief that improving road standards where roads were not up to standard would also improve safety for drivers
- It was also believed to reduce the potential damage to vehicles which would incur a cost

It's really annoying when you're driving over the same potholes for years and years, and it damages your car [f, commuters, 21-40, York]

This is the number one without question, if you fix the roads, everything else will fall out from that. Fix the roads, they become safer, so you get faster and more reliable journeys, and more satisfied users. So this one is at the top. [m, professional drivers, 37-58, Northampton]

A well-maintained network is seen as a proxy measure for safety, so is prioritised almost as highly

...And is the number 1 priority for professional drivers

Well-maintained roads

There are so many pot holes. It's dangerous for all road users. They need to make it safer for us. [m, professional drivers, 37-58, Norwich]

- Pro drivers use the SRN extensively, so poor maintenance leading to delays can severely impact their ability to do their job (particularly HGV drivers) as well as impact their safety
- Potholes on the SRN were highlighted by professional drivers as a particular safety hazard
- Driving HGVs is acknowledged to be higher risk than driving cars when road conditions are dangerous
- HGV drivers also note the higher costs of fuel as a result of uneven surfaces – not noted by other audiences

The smoother the road, the less you spend on fuel. [m, professional drivers, 37-58, Norwich]

They need more maintenance on them. [m, professional drivers, 37-58, Norwich]

Providing fast and reliable journeys 1

Fast and reliable journeys

I'm in this [wheelchair] but I still have to get to work. I don't mind it taking longer in rush hour but it's when you get added problems like a crash and obviously you feel for the people who get injured, that's more important, but ultimately also every single other person on the M1 is then late for work and that's not trivial either [F, Disabled driver, Northampton]

- Generally placed third or fourth in priorities list (lower for cyclists, pedestrian and equestrians whose journeys on foot, horseback or bicycle are not affected by this theme.
- Ranked as higher priority (e.g. third on list) by professionals, and the commuters and business drivers who use the SRN in rush hour
 - Spend more time on the roads and therefore more likely to experience traffic jams and other frustrations
- Also important for such drivers to keep appointments (e.g. making deliveries on time) or not arrive late to work

I'm thinking selfishly, but the amount of time I get stuck in traffic, it is frustrating. [Business drivers, 30-41, Ashford]

Providing fast and reliable journeys 2

Reliable journeys

As far as I'm concerned, because I don't have to be anywhere at any time, speed is not important to me. I can take my time. But not everybody's like that. [F, Elderly Driver, 84, Burnley]

In the past you could know how long something was going to take you – now you don't [f, leisure drivers, 61+, Bristol]

- **Reliability** is key, over and above speed
 - Being able to predict journey times is more important than getting somewhere at top speed (although some business drivers also prioritise speed of journey)
- Leisure drivers, novice, older and disabled drivers and others who do not have to travel at peak times typically rank this slightly lower priority
 - Journey times typically less time-critical
 - No need to travel in rush hour, so less experience of heavy traffic and knock-on effects, so less frustration

Reliable journeys are more important than fast, so you can know how long journeys take and plan ahead [m, commuters, 21-40, York]

They're all important. But the least important is getting there fast. [Non-motorised road user, 28-37, Norwich]

Anything that can improve the predictability of journeys is met with interest across audiences, particularly those who use the SRN at peak times

Meeting the needs of all road users

Meeting all users' needs

I thought it was impossible to please everyone and by meeting these other ones, you'll be pleasing lots of people anyway. [F, Leisure driver, 18-30, Slough]

You're never going to make everyone happy. That's how I see it. [Business drivers, 30-41, Ashford]

- User satisfaction is typically lower priority - seen as a natural consequence of improving other areas (improvements = more satisfied users)
 - Some respondents were not convinced that user satisfaction should be prioritised over and above the things needed to make it happen
- Some question whether Highways England could fully deliver on this theme
 - Too many other variables in play such as behaviour of other drivers, congestion in rush hour, etc
- Also some nervousness around how this could be measured – no real interest in taking surveys etc
- However, higher interest in delivering quality information to users in a timely manner

You're got two separate themes in here. There's the feedback stuff which is yeah whatever, and then there's the information. They are very different things and the information part is very important. [Business drivers, 40+, Northampton]

There is higher interest in the themes and metrics that will result in more satisfied users, than in monitoring and measuring satisfaction in and of itself

Being environmentally responsible

Environment

There's a lot more bad things happening to the environment than cars [m, commuters, 21-40, York]

I've got a diesel and we were told back then that it was the best thing since sliced bread. But now apparently that's not the case. You don't know what to think about it [m, leisure drivers, 61+, Bristol]

- **Generally** ranked as less important than most other themes for **driver** audiences, with some individual variation
 - Not something that impacts their personal driving experience
- Some mistrust of information – e.g. Government's changed stance on diesel engines (first promoting them, now discouraging them) used as an example
- Occasional comment about incongruity – seen as laudable that Highways England trying not to adversely affect environment but also difficult to achieve
- However, some individual metrics within environmental concerns more important (see later)

Overall, environmental concerns are seen as less fundamental (particularly in comparison with other themes), and the burden of responsibility is seen to lie more with vehicle manufacturers.

Being environmentally responsible – some variation in priorities

Environment

- Some cyclists, pedestrian and equestrians prioritise being environmentally responsible more highly
 - Concerns such as air quality and emissions affects them more directly as they use / cross the SRN
- Some individuals across other audiences also rank this theme more highly
 - On discussion, typically reflects their personal views - e.g. active in supporting environmental causes and charities
- Also generally prioritised more highly by new drivers (young people)
- Some sense that this theme is an issue for professional drivers, particularly HGVs – that stricter environmental standards could threaten their livelihood. Consequently, professional drivers typically rated this as a low priority theme

Whatever we can do to limit in certain areas, is worth doing. [Non-motorised road user, 28-37, Norwich]

It is really important and we need to do everything we can, and the roads are part of that [m, New driver, Bristol]

Reflects overview finding that the themes seen as highest priority are those that directly impact either the user experience, or to which they have an emotional attachment

Achieving efficient delivery

Efficient delivery

I like to think my taxes are being spent well. [Business drivers, 30-41, Ashford]

When I saw that I thought of doing it on the cheap, and that's not what I want. It's better to do it well and it last longer. [m, leisure drivers, 61+, Bristol]

- Although there was a general interest in vehicle excise duty being well spent, it was not a high priority for many
 - Generally harder for respondents to see the immediate benefits to their own driving experiences
 - Also felt to follow from improving other areas – e.g. a well-maintained network would indicate that money is being well spent
- Some concern that if making savings and VFM were the top priorities for Highways England, sub-standard contractors could be used for projects
 - Many associate VFM with cutting corners and disregarding quality
- However, completing construction works on time seen as high priority

Low emotional engagement with this theme generally, plus assumptions that Highways England are already thinking about how they spend money, make this less of a priority for most

Four metrics across themes emphasise the importance of communicating information to drivers

Communications

There's so much technology these days so there's no excuse for not giving timely information.
[m, cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians, Bristol]

if I'm going down a road that's closed I need to know in advance what's going to be happening... if I have a double decker I need to know where I can go [m, professional drivers, Bristol]

- Four of the metrics across three different themes were about communicating to road users → these were almost universally seen as key priorities, and linked to one another
 - 2.6 Accuracy and timeliness of information to Local Highway Authorities
 - 3.4 Technology condition
 - 5.2 Accuracy and timeliness of roadworks information
 - 5.3 Quality of information to road users
- The more people drive, the more important they think it is (particularly professional drivers and business drivers) but it was raised as important by all audiences including cyclists, pedestrian and equestrians
 - These metrics could form a new theme – ‘Communicating to drivers’
 - Alternatively, each could be made prominent within their existing themes.

Taken together, communicating information to drivers gives a sense of control over the journey, and the ability to choose about whether to find alternatives in the event of a forthcoming delay

4. OVERVIEW OF METRICS AND TARGETS FROM ROAD USERS' PERSPECTIVES (NON- STAKEHOLDER)

How road users (non-stakeholders) think about targets 1

Challenges / complications

- Targets are not an area of expertise for most audiences
 - Can find it challenging to even conceptualise what targets might look like
 - In general, overall numbers, fractions and percentages were easier for audiences to understand than calculations such as 'seconds per vehicle'

Impact on thoughts on targets

- Most road users did not expect to be engaged or interested by targets
 - Seen as important to set, and important for Highways England to achieve, but not important to be widely communicated
- Levels of engagement did not usually extend to feeling able to comment in any more detail about what specific targets should look like
 - Most would therefore be likely to accept whatever targets are thought appropriate by expert bodies

It seems like a lot of extra work to work it all out. [f, new driver, 19, Norwich]

Drivers' ultimate end goal is a good journey - they are not overly concerned with engaging with the mechanics of how this is achieved

How road users (non-stakeholders) think about targets 2

Challenges / complications

[Carbon emissions] *That's something the manufacturers should consider. [M, Commuters, 41-60, Burnley]*

- Some themes / metrics appear contingent on factors above and beyond the roads themselves
 - 'The roads' are seen as separate from 'behaviour of other drivers'
 - Vehicle manufacturers are seen as having specific responsibilities
 - Volume of traffic

You can't foresee an accident; how are you going to keep accidents low if people are going to do crazy things? [M, Business driver, 41+, Slough]

Impact on thoughts on targets

You can't hold them [Highways England] accountable for the pollution that comes out of cars and wagons and things like that. [F, new driver, 19, Norwich]

- Sensible for Highways England to **monitor or measure** these
- But challenging or even illogical to set **targets** for these themes
 - Highways England not seen as able to meet targets that are highly contingent on other factors (e.g. emissions, some safety measures)

In terms of targeting I said no to a lot of them because you can't account for the stupidity of some people's driving habits [M, Professional driver, driver, 41+, Northampton]

Although some metrics are defined as very important and essential for HE to consider, they were not necessarily seen as the best metrics to set targets on

How road users (non-stakeholders) think about targets 3

Regional targets seen as most appropriate

If they measure it by region, they could then have a comparison between regions, and say 'why is this region better than that region?' [M, Leisure Drivers, 61-66, Burnley]

I'd probably be more interested in regional. The problem with a national report is I don't care what's happening in Cumbria. [M, Business driver, 41+, Slough]

- General agreement that measures and targets should be set **regionally**
 - Measurements would be at a sufficiently detailed level to be relevant to local road users
 - Would allow comparisons across regions, in order to improve performance overall and potentially highlight areas that might need more attention/focus
 - In contrast, nationally was seen as too broad - it was felt that such results could lack meaning
- Locally / per road seen as getting mired in detail and not looking at the bigger picture (although this option preferred by cyclists, pedestrian and equestrians as it would reflect the roads they use)
- Some variation within specific metrics – e.g. metrics specifically referring to roads around airports/ports should obviously be measured according to that specific area

Overview of thoughts on key themes to target from perspective of road users (non-stakeholders) 1




Safety

- Aspects of safety were considered the most important to focus on
- However, idea of setting targets was controversial
 - There should be no 'acceptable' rate of people killed or injured – it should be continually driven down as low as possible



Well-maintained roads

- Road condition was important, so was suggested for targets, but some challenges around how targets should be set



Fast / reliable journeys

- Seen as challenging to set targets for some metrics, as Highways England not seen to have control over this area

Overview of thoughts on key themes to target from perspective of road users (non-stakeholders) 2

? Meeting all users' needs

- Not generally seen as key to target metrics on user satisfaction
- User needs should be met by placing (and achieving) targets on other areas such as safety and condition of the roads
- Seen as important to set targets on communicating to road users accurately in good time

? Environment

- Road users could see how targets could be set for aspects of environmental responsibility but were unsure how these would be applied
- Most assumed some environmental harm is inevitable with road use, so it would be difficult to improve environmental standards without restricting road use and lowering standards in other themes (e.g. fast/reliable journeys)

? Efficient delivery

- Value for money should not have targets if it means reducing the quality of projects
- Targets were felt to be more appropriate for completing roadworks and other projects on time, and on efficiency savings

Overview: Summary of the key metrics identified for targets across road users (non-stakeholders)

Safety

- Either 'Number of killed or seriously injured' or 'Total casualties'

Well-maintained road

- Road condition

Fast / reliable journey

- Effective operation of Smart Motorways
- Delay in roadworks
- (Technology condition – some audiences)

Meeting all users' needs

- Accuracy and timeliness of roadworks information
- Quality of information to road users

Environment

- Air quality on the SRN
- Litter

Efficient delivery

- CAPEX and OPEX savings
- Construction progress

The rest of it, really, it doesn't need a target and if it had a target, it wouldn't affect how we use the roads. [...] The drains and the bridges really doesn't affect our travel time and our usage of the road, and things like that. [M, Professional Drivers, 42-62, Burnley]

Overview: Some variability between and within road users when prioritising metrics 1

What drives differences?

- Amount of time spent driving
 - E.g. professional drivers and business drivers might prioritise reliability of journey times and comfort more highly than people who drive for fewer hours
- Whether journeys are typically time-critical
 - E.g. some professionals (e.g. making deliveries or driving abroad with ferries booked), business drivers attending client appointments, and commuters
- Individual differences
 - E.g. no real agreement on whether 'number of people killed or seriously injured' was a higher priority than 'total number of casualties / collisions' – good reasons for each
- Personal preferences can drive up the priority of some metrics
 - E.g. 'the environment' as a personal cause; frequent experience with roads in bad repair etc

Overview: Some variability between and within road users when prioritising metrics 2

What drives differences?

Realistically, as a cyclist, I'm going to have a completely different set of priorities to a lorry driver. Even when I'm driving my own car, I've got different priorities to when I'm on the bike. [M, non motorised user, 29, Northampton]

When you're in the passenger seat or you're not driving for work, you're more relaxed about everything really. [F, business driver, 41 Northampton]

- Whether they were a cyclist, pedestrian or equestrian
 - This audience's priorities were somewhat different as their use of the roads is very different.
 - Almost all of those are also drivers, so were able to articulate different priorities as both a driver and a cyclist, pedestrian or equestrian
- Whether they are more often a passenger (so priorities around comfort could be higher and speed/reliability lower)
- As a note, novice, older and disabled drivers also fell into another category such as leisure drivers or commuters. Their responses to metrics did not often differ from other responses within that audience. In the following analysis, where such drivers are not referred to specifically, their responses were in line with other drivers from their category.

Overview: Summary of gaps identified within the proposed structure

- Although most respondents agreed that the proposed structure felt comprehensive, a few additions were suggested
- These were from stakeholders, who understandably had greater knowledge and understanding of the performance specification than the typical road user

A well-maintained and resilient network

- Stakeholders from freight / haulage:
 - Planning alternative/diversion routes
 - Winter maintenance (e.g. gritting the roads)

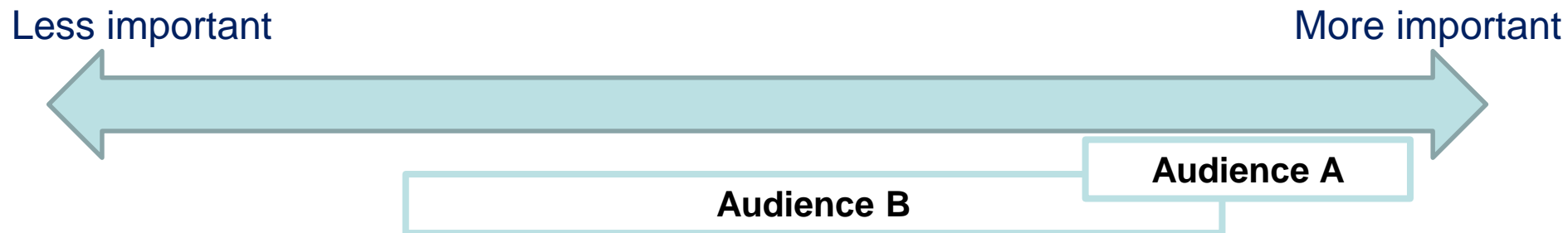
Meeting the needs of all users

- Stakeholders from bus / coach
 - If 'Logistics sector satisfaction' is to be included, 'Bus sector' satisfaction should also be included

5. DETAILED RESPONSES TO METRICS AND TARGETS – ROAD USERS (NON-STAKEHOLDER)

Overview: How responses to metrics are reported

- This section of the presentation shows **road user (non-stakeholder)** responses to each metric within each theme (35 metrics in total). The themes are presented in the order in which respondents prioritised them, rather than the order in which they appear on the performance specification
- The arrow diagram below is used across metrics to visually illustrate how the different road user audiences responded to each metric (score out of 10 in pre-task then discussion in research session)



- A narrow box indicates high consistency in responses (e.g. **Audience A** shows that most respondents from this audience thought the metric was important)
- A wide box indicates metrics where there was less consistency in responses (e.g. **Audience B**, where some respondents thought the metric was less important and others thought it was more important, and a few at the higher end overlapped with Audience A)

5.1. IMPROVING SAFETY FOR ALL

Thoughts on targets for the theme overall

Safety

It's difficult to set targets on those measures. They should set targets on things that they've got direct control over.

[M, Non-Motorised Road Users, 49-56, Burnley]

- High priority so some targets appropriate
- However, also controversial – care needs to be taken to avoid suggestion that there is an ‘acceptable’ rate of people killed or injured – it should be continually driven down as low as possible
 - This point was raised **spontaneously** across multiple sessions, across all road users
- Seen as challenging to set targets because some factors in accidents are beyond Highways England’s control (e.g. driver behaviour)

We all use the motorway network, and everyone on there should be in a safe environment.

That's why I feel we need to improve safety for everyone and set some targets. [M, Commuters, 41-60, Burnley]

This is about people's lives, you've got to make sure you don't end up sending the message that you think it's OK if 100 people a year die, but not 110. The target should be zero but that's not realistic or possible, but it's about how you phrase it....maybe a reduction in percentages? Like 10% less people died on the M1 this year?

[F, business driver, 41, Northampton]

Summary of thoughts on metrics

Less important

More important



Killed or seriously injured

Vulnerable user safety

Total casualties

Total collisions

Road safety assessment

Staff safety

5.2. A WELL-MAINTAINED AND RESILIENT NETWORK

Thoughts on targets for the theme overall

Well-maintained SRN

- High priority so some targets appropriate
- Seen as a proxy for safety – well-maintained roads are believed to be safer to drive on
- On consideration, setting specific targets seen as challenging - e.g. how to define ‘well-maintained’
 - Most assume Highways England have standards and definitions in place (a few sceptics question whether minimum standards would be good enough)

If the roads are falling apart and aren't fit for purpose then you can't do what you need to do. [...] We pay our road tax expecting that the roads will be usable. [Business driver, 41+, Slough]

It would be measured by measuring the actual condition of the road, wouldn't it. And I think you'd track repairs, wouldn't you? Major repairs, minor repairs, resurfacing repairs. [M, Commuters, 41-60, Burnley]

This is what the Highways Agency is directly responsible for. But how do you measure what is good enough? I assume they've got the technical expertise for that [M, Non-Motorised Road Users, 41+, Northampton]

Summary of thoughts on metrics

Less important

More important



Road condition

Drainage condition

Structures condition

Technology condition

Geotechnical condition - other road users

Geotechnical condition - pro drivers & cyclists, equestrians, pedestrians

Ride quality from user perspective

5.3. PROVIDING FAST AND RELIABLE JOURNEYS

Thoughts on targets for the theme overall

Fast /
reliable
journeys

if you're running a train, you can see how that would work. But on a road, not so much. [F, Leisure Drivers, 61-66, Bristol]

As a cyclist, that would be irrelevant, because it doesn't affect me. [M, Non-Motorised Road Users, 49-56, Burnley]

- Respondents struggled with the idea of targets for this theme overall, as many aspects were seen as outside of Highways England's control
- A few targets were suggested for specific metrics – these typically focused on areas that were seen as the sole responsibility of Highways England
- Cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians did not typically prioritise this area at all, as most of the metrics (and situations they address) do not apply to walking, cycling or riding on and across the SRN. Consequently, most cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians gave each metric very low scores.

You can't measure the traffic. The thing that stops the journey time, purely, is traffic...So, there's not a lot the Agency can do about that. [M, Professional Drivers, 42-62, Burnley]

Summary of thoughts on metrics

Less important

More important



Average delay

Journey time reliability

Effective operation of smart motorways

Delay in roadworks

Incident response

Info to local Highways
Authorities

Delays on
gateway routes

Average speed

5.4. MEETING THE NEEDS OF ALL USERS

Thoughts on targets for the theme overall

Meeting all users' needs

Road user satisfaction, again, was a really nebulous thing, and I put down no targets for that.

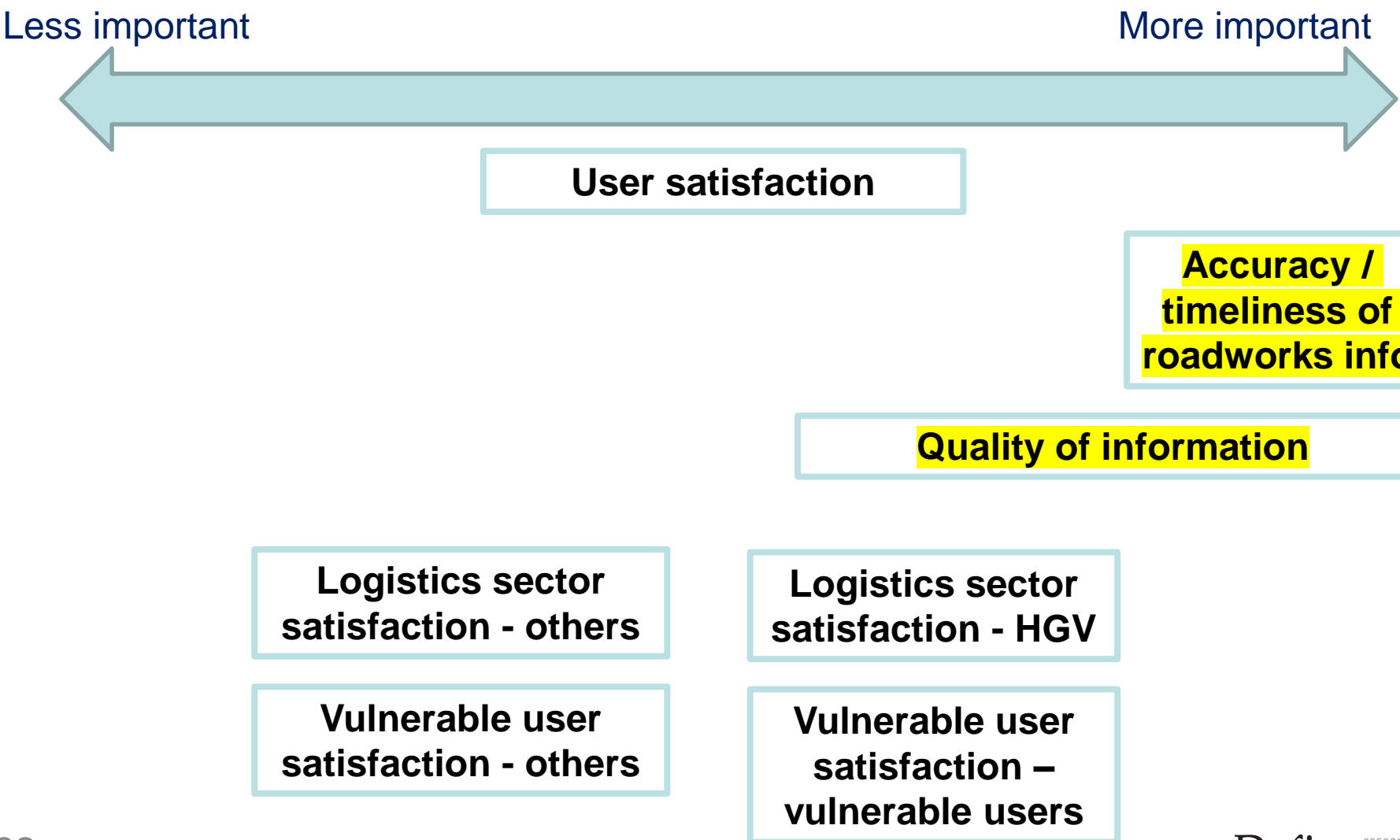
Because there'll be people complaining unless they can do 70 and get from A to B in nothing flat. [F, Leisure Drivers, 61-66, Burnley]

- User needs should be met by placing (and achieving) targets for safety and condition of roads rather than user satisfaction itself
- Also a potential issue (raised by respondents) that some users will never be satisfied with the SRN and will always want to complain (often about factors outside of Highways England's control), so setting targets for high satisfaction ratings may not be achievable
- However, two of the metrics within this theme, regarding disseminating information that helps people effectively plan their journeys, are seen as key to target

Just fix the roads. That's the way to satisfy all the different users. [F, business driver, 41, Northampton]

Overall, it [the theme] doesn't rate that high for me, but then when you break it down into the key subsections, the information ones, they're important for targets... [M, Commuters, 41-60, Burnley]

Summary of thoughts on metrics



5.5. BEING ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE

Thoughts on targets for the theme overall

Environment

I just don't see how this is under their (Highways England) control really. There's a limited amount they can do, and let's face it, we care much more about having a smooth journey than whether there's more carbon in the air because of it [F, business driver, 41, Northampton]

- Road users could see how targets could be set for aspects of environmental responsibility but were unsure how these would be applied
- Most assumed some environmental harm is inevitable with road use, so it would be difficult to improve environmental standards without restricting road use and lowering standards in other areas (e.g. fast/reliable journeys)
- Some metrics around emissions and air quality were seen as outside of Highways England's remit, so difficult to target

Targets are hard because we have to drive [m, professional drivers, York]

Although it is important to me, the nature of getting in a car and driving is not environmentally friendly. I would like it to be higher but for that reason I don't think it can be. [Business driver, 41+, Slough]

Summary of thoughts on metrics

Less important

More important



Biodiversity

Noise (non-affected)

Carbon impact of Highways England's activities

User emissions

Air quality on the SRN

Cultural heritage

Litter

5.6. ACHIEVING EFFICIENT DELIVERY

Thoughts on targets for the theme overall

Efficient delivery

We're always hearing how we can't afford social workers blah blah. So why shouldn't we be efficient in this – we can't just spend money willy nilly, and yes, they should be held to account [f, cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians, York]

- Although this theme did not generate a lot of interest, it was felt that two of the three metrics were important to target, as money saved could then be spent elsewhere on higher-priority areas such as safety (possible some respondents misunderstood some metrics)
- Additionally, the metrics were seen as solely Highways England's responsibility, making targets more meaningful
- Targets were felt to be more appropriate for completing roadworks and other projects on time, and for measuring efficiency savings

That's money that can be spent on more pressing things, like safety,, so yes, set some targets. [f, new driver, 19, Norwich]

If it's targeted, it will be properly managed. [F, commuters, 41-60, Norwich]

Efficiency will give you value for money, and the construction progress would give you that if you're efficient. So, really, all three go together. [M, Professional Drivers, 42-62, Burnley]

Summary of thoughts on metrics

Less important

More important



**CAPEX and OPEX
savings**

**Construction
progress**

Value for money

6. STAKEHOLDERS' PERSPECTIVES

Stakeholder audience details

Freight /
haulage
industry

- Three representatives

Bus /
coach
industry

- Four representatives
 - Two took part as a pair in the same interview

Post and
courier
industry

- Two representatives

Overview of findings

Similarities to driver audiences

- Unsurprisingly, a tendency to prioritise areas and metrics that most directly affect them
- Focus is on what affects their own industry business interests, rather than on what impacts individual journeys
- In general, views on individual metrics most closely align with those of professional drivers
- As with driver audiences, most areas are seen as important in their own right
- However, unlike some driver audiences, general consensus that the SRN usually works well
 - Highways England generally doing a good job
 - Problems are often attributable to factors outside of Highways England control

They're all there for a purpose, but we may all experience them in slightly different ways [Stakeholder]

I think they're all important; it's very difficult to put any at the bottom [Stakeholder]

Some differences from driver audiences in terms of key priorities, and some disagreement between stakeholders

Fast and reliable journeys

Ranked number 1 priority for all bar 1 bus stakeholder (who ranked it joint first with safety)

Well-maintained roads

No 3 for bus/coach – important but ‘second tier’ - sits below reliability and safety
No 2 for other stakeholders

Meeting needs

Medium priority for freight / haulage and post / courier
Low priority for bus / coach

Environment

Lowest priority for all but one (bus / coach) stakeholder

Improved safety

Ranked number 1 or 2 priority for bus/coach (passenger safety paramount)

Acknowledged as important by other stakeholders but ranked 3 as less business impact

Efficient delivery

Medium priority for freight / haulage
Low priority for bus / coach and post / courier

Safety and reliability, I would say, were probably the key areas...Reliability's obviously key, but it has to be done safely. They would probably come joint top [Stakeholder]

Some variation in priorities according to type of business and own targets

Providing fast and reliable journeys

**Reliability is
key to all
stakeholders**

Providing fast and reliable journeys. That really is the object of the exercise
[Stakeholder]

I would hesitate on 'fast'. What the freight industry looks for is reliability – it's not speed of journey...So, it's reliability, rather than speed.
[Stakeholder]

- **Reliability** of journey times is a key priority across sectors
- All stakeholders see it as crucial to each type of business operation – all have targets that rely on being able to predict journey times
 - Freight / haulage operators tend to run according to expected journey times (i.e. what they would expect that journey to take), rather than specific speeds – so reliability and consistency are key
 - Buses and coaches have to plan timetables – running to timetable is a key measure of consumer satisfaction
 - Post / courier have to plan logistics around collections and deliveries, with associated targets
- Roadworks and congestion, and the issues they cause in terms of journey reliability, are the key concerns across stakeholders

Reliability's obviously what we're about: getting people from A to B, and to be able to do it reliably...There's drivers' hours implications in with it, which is a key factor for the industry...At the end of the day, people have an expectation of being able to get from A to B in a given time [Stakeholder]

Providing fast and reliable journeys: Key metrics

Journey time reliability

- Number 1 metric for most stakeholders
- Keen for targets to be set

Effective operation of smart motorways

- How Smart Motorways work was better understood across stakeholders
- Their importance in minimising delays and helping increase reliability of journeys was generally recognised
- Agreement with other audiences that they are an appropriate metric for Highways England to set targets around

Delays on gateway routes

- Important for freight / haulage; unimportant for others

Incident response and delays in roadworks

- Important for bus/coach and post / courier

Other metrics

- Seen as lower priority, particularly those around speed

A well-maintained and resilient network

Second or third-highest priority across all stakeholders

I don't, unless I've missed it, see on that section planning on alternative routes, and how that affects general traffic, but more importantly bus users [Stakeholder]

- A high priority for freight / haulage and post / courier
 - A poorly-maintained network has knock-on impacts on fuel consumption and vehicle wear and tear
 - Also negatively impacts safety and likely journey reliability
- Bus / coach stakeholders describe this as a 'second tier' priority, sitting below reliable journeys and safety
- All metrics seen as important within the theme
- They suggest two additional metrics for consideration
 - Planning alternative/diversion routes
 - Winter maintenance (e.g. gritting the roads)

The other thing that's missing, actually, is winter maintenance. So, there's nothing here about salting the network, keeping the network open at winter...Winter's a particular challenge [Stakeholder]

A well-maintained and resilient network: Key metrics

Road condition

- Highest priority across stakeholders and should be targeted
- Highly conscious of the issue of damage to large vehicles resulting from poor condition of road surfaces, which can have serious knock-on effects in terms of congestion etc.

All other metrics except ride quality

- Agreement across stakeholders that **all** metrics could benefit from setting targets
- Structures, drainage and technology conditions important to all
 - Stakeholders more knowledgeable about dangers of flooding posed by drains in poor condition and risks presented when bridges are in poor repair (some reference the Genoa bridge collapse)

Ride quality

- High priority for bus / coach stakeholders, as passenger comfort is important
- Less important for other stakeholders – not raised as a concern by their operators / employees

Improved safety for all

**Sits below
fast/reliable for
all but
bus/coach**

I think everybody has safety at the forefront of their minds. Certainly, if there's ever a crisis in the [bus] industry, it's safety-related [Stakeholder]

- Safety is universally acknowledged as very important, but is not the primary business concern for freight/haulage or post / courier stakeholders, whose main focus is on being able to predict journey times
 - It is still a key area of concern, but typically sits third when prioritising themes
- In contrast, for stakeholders from the bus/coach sector, passenger safety is more of a priority than any other area – but is ranked second because safety issues are far less common than reliability issues with journey times
 - Respondents saw all metrics as equally important

Road user safety is important for the freight industry, for a number of reasons. Firstly, the issues around safety itself and reducing the number of people killed and seriously injured. But actually, in a real, practical operational sense, all of that creates a problem for the freight industry when incidents occur, in the form of cost and delay. So, a move towards less incidents, that will provide a benefit for freight and logistics, and it will reduce costs. So, there's a double side to it. We're conscious of both sides [Stakeholder]

Improved safety for all: Key metrics

Number killed / seriously injured

- Responses almost identical to road users
- A key metric that should be targeted – industries would welcome reductions in the number of people killed / injured
- Care should be taken when communicating targets – do not suggest an acceptable number of fatalities
- Suggest a year-on-year percentage reduction in numbers killed and seriously injured)

Road safety assessment

- In contrast to drivers, seen as high priority and useful to set targets
- Greater awareness and understanding of iRAP 3* rating system

Total collisions / casualties

- Important for freight / haulage for business reasons – if monitored, freight operators can accurately inform their customers as to why their delivery was delayed
- Other stakeholders think this is too general a measure – suggest using a graded system that distinguishes between minor and major collisions / casualties

Other metrics

- Seen as lower priority

Meeting the needs of all users

**Some variation
between
stakeholders
from different
sectors**

- Freight / haulage and post / courier stakeholders identified this theme as medium priority (ranked 3 or 4)
- Other stakeholders had it as lower priority, with similar reasons to road users (that user needs would be best met by setting and meeting targets for key metrics such as road condition and journey reliability)
- Bus /coach stakeholders sometimes questioned why their sector was not included as a user group of interest / importance

*There was nothing that really stuck out in that [theme].
Reliable journeys will lead to user satisfaction [Stakeholder]*

*If you look, 5.4 and 5.5 are the nods in the direction of particular users. So, the first, obvious comment is: 'bus' isn't mentioned...We wouldn't consider ourselves to be 'coach' – it's a very distinct business and market.
[Stakeholder]*

Meeting the needs of all users: Key metrics

Accuracy and timeliness of roadworks information

- Most important metric within the theme for freight / haulage and post / courier stakeholders
- Freight / haulage opinion that information is often inaccurate and not timely – this has created confusion, ultimately resulting in greater costs for the industry
- Feel this metric should be targeted (but bus / coach stakeholders do not)

Logistics sector satisfaction

- Seen as high priority by all who feel this covers their industry
 - Crucial that the freight operators and road haulage industry are satisfied with their experience on the SRN as they are its heaviest users
 - However, unsure about targeting – assuming surveys, depends on who is asked, and how
- Notable exception is buses (as distinct from coach), who note that they are not represented within the theme

Other metrics

- Seen as lower priority

Achieving efficient delivery

Medium-importance to freight / haulage stakeholders

This requirement to provide value for money...That's important, and we applaud that, but what concerns us slightly is, what is the purpose of all of that? Is it to say 'ok, you're more efficient financially and therefore you've got more money to spend on the road system', or is it just trying to save money for the government to be spent somewhere else? [Stakeholder]

- Freight/ haulage stakeholders felt that it is important to be efficient and provide value for money
- One expressed queries/concerns over the reasons behind aiming to achieve efficient delivery, focused on how savings would be spent
 - If reinvested into SRN – seen as positive
 - If savings used by government to spend in other areas – seen as negative
- Bus / coach and post / courier stakeholders report that their operators / employees typically have little interest in efficiency/value for money, provided the roads meet their needs (and Highways England generally seen to be performing well here)
 - Consequently, this was seen as a lower priority theme with low priority metrics, none of which required targeting
- One bus stakeholder additionally felt that an aspect missing from achieving efficient delivery was consultation with, and the involvement of, bus operators, where relevant Define

Achieving efficient delivery: Key metrics

CAPEX and OPEX savings and Value for money

- Important for freight / haulage stakeholders
- If these are used to generate more money to re-invest back into the road system, then that is a positive thing that should be encouraged and targets set
- Value for money seen as part and parcel of this – not a separate metric

Construction progress

- Seen as less important than savings but still important for the freight / haulage industry
- If a project overruns, it impacts the use of that stretch of road, which in turn can impact on a company's operations
 - Construction progress is therefore an important issue for freight operators, and should, therefore, be targeted

To me, I think the construction progress is not as important as 6.1 [CAPEX and OPEX savings], but it is important, simply because, when a road scheme overruns, that will have an effect on the use of that stretch of road...That could have a significant effect on a company's operation to offer it's services to its customers.

[Stakeholder]

Being environmentally responsible

**Lowest priority
for all but one
stakeholder**

They are there for good reasons, but they don't loom very large for us on a day to day basis. [Stakeholder]

We recognise it's [environmental issues] there, but if we're trying to deal with business issues, what we're trying to do is make the logistics operation as efficient as possible, and being environmentally responsible comes lower down. [Stakeholder]

- The theme and its metrics were generally seen as less important overall, and not requiring targets to be set
- One bus / coach operator placed the theme as higher importance, noting that aspects such as air quality and cultural heritage could have a direct impact on business, and of litter as a safety issue
- For other stakeholders, environmental responsibility issues are much less of a consideration/priority
 - The performance of the roads to ensure efficient logistics operations are far greater priorities and environmental issues are well below the radar
- Also some concerns, particularly from freight / haulage stakeholders, about setting any targets on emissions
 - Concerns centred on 1) what exactly mandatory targets might look like (i.e. whether they could affect the freight industry), and 2) how the authorities would arrive at a specific target figure
 - They would not be against a target per se, assuming some form of assistance was available for freight operators to reach those targets

Being environmentally responsible: Key metrics

Air quality on the SRN

- Ranked as higher importance by one bus/coach stakeholder
- No need for targets – these are already in place in the form of legal limits.

Litter

- Important as a safety aspect for same stakeholder

Other metrics

- Seen as lower priority

*[Air quality on the SRN]
I think the targets are already there, in the sense that there are legal limits.
[Stakeholder]*

*Cultural heritage is something that that industry has an interest in, purely and simply because it's a tourism industry, and that's basically what we do. That was something that is of interest, but I have to say, as a priority, it's probably not something that would figure too highly on most of our members' agendas
[Stakeholder]*

8. APPENDIX

Specific research objectives 1

1. Fit with overall aspirations and needs

- To understand whether the high-level structure of the proposed performance specification is aligned with road user aspirations
- To highlight whether there are any gaps in the proposed Performance Specification
- To explore which aspects of the high-level structure of the performance specification are most important to road users, and in which areas users regard it as most appropriate to have targets which Highways England is expected to meet

2. Insight on metrics

- If the proposed metrics themselves are available in sufficient time, to understand whether they are:
 - a. Aligned with road users' views and aspirations
 - b. Expressed in a way that is meaningful to road users

3. Insight on targets

- To establish what 'easy', 'good', and 'stretching' targets might look like, and the relative level of priority road users attach to each outcome theme

Sample: Detail 1

Additional criteria for SRN user types:

- **Professional drivers**

- Driving is their living for at least 2 years, e.g. either large vehicles [heavy goods vehicle (HGVs) light goods vehicle (LGVs) over 7.5 tonnes]; or small vehicles [good vehicles under 7.5 tonnes, motorbike couriers, taxis, coach/bus] etc. Additionally:
 - a. Spread of demographics and age across the groups

- **Business drivers**

- Driving NOT the job itself but significant part of their work time, e.g. tradespeople with vans, sales people, community health/care workers, etc. Additionally:
 - a. Spread of work/job roles and vehicle driven e.g. car, motorbike, van
 - b. Mostly frequent SRN users (weekly usage), some less frequent (but at least once a month)
 - c. Spread of time of day they mainly use SRN
 - d. Even split between men and women – mixed groups

Sample: Detail 2

- **Commuter drivers**

- Use SRN to go to/from work most days (car or motorbike)
 - a. Spread of road type used motorway, dual carriageway and single carriageway use
 - b. Spread in terms of socio-economic grade
 - c. Even split between men and women – mixed groups

- **Leisure drivers**

- Main use of SRN is for shopping, leisure, visiting friends/relatives, to/from holiday activities. Must have used SRN at least once in last three months.
 - a. A spread of reasons for travel.
 - b. A spread of frequency of SRN use: weekly, monthly and quarterly
 - c. A spread of time of day use SRN
 - d. A spread of driving confidence levels on the SRN – across category a minimum of 6 but a maximum of 8 with low confidence
 - e. A spread of road type used –motorway, dual carriageway and single carriageway use
 - f. Most make leisure trips using a car but some to drive other vehicles, e.g. motorbike
 - g. At least 1 per group driving on SRN with other passengers in the car
 - h. Even split between men and women – mixed groups
 - i. A spread in terms of socio-economic grade

Sample: Detail 3

- **Niche drivers**

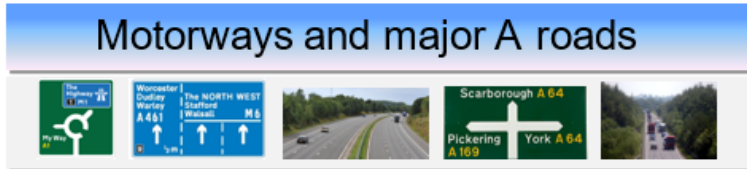
- New drivers (passed test less than 2 years ago)
- Older drivers (75+ years old)
- Disabled drivers

- **Cyclists, pedestrians and equestrians**

- Cycling on SRN roads
- Pedestrians walking along SRN or using crossings on SRN
- Equestrians using bridges to cross these roads (mix of types of user within each group)

Pre-task

The performance metric was broken down into a pre-task with simpler language to help road users understand the themes and aspects



Many thanks for taking part in this research about motorways and major A roads (trunk roads).

We would like you to complete a short task before we meet. Specifically, we'd like you to do the following things:

1. Read through this document carefully as it explains what we will be discussing in the research sessions, and why. Some of this information is quite complicated so it's really important that you have a good read.
2. Complete a short, written task and bring this to the research session with you. During the research sessions, we will be asking about your responses and the reasons for them.

Your input on this is really important as it can help decide what kind of things the Vehicle Excise Duty ("road tax") you pay is spent on, and what to prioritise spending on to ensure the best value for money for all road users.

If you have questions in advance of the research session, or if you don't understand anything in here, please feel free to get in touch with us. You can email Caroline Hewitt on caroline@defineinsight.co.uk or Dani Cervantes on dani@defineinsight.co.uk, or you can call either of us on 020 8346 7171 and leave a message – we will call you back as soon as we can.

What we are doing, and why – please read thoroughly

Throughout this task and the research session, we'll be talking only about those roads that make up England's 'Strategic Road Network'. These are the **motorways** and most of the **major A roads** (known as trunk roads) in England. We've included a map in a separate document to show you which of the roads in your area we mean.

These roads are managed, operated and maintained by **Highways England**, a government-owned company. As part of this, Highways England needs to measure how well its network works for its users. This involves taking account of the different things that drivers and other road users need from it. This particular piece of research is carried out on behalf of **Transport Focus** (the watchdog for users of the Highways England network).

We've already talked to many road users across the country to understand the main things that can affect their journeys and what matters most to them. Transport Focus is now using this work to advise the Government on what standards should be set for Highways England in future. There are **six key themes** in this specification that we would like to get your thoughts on, both here and in more depth when you come to the research session. These are not yet finalized so getting your input is **really important**.

Transport Focus is interested in:

- What **you think** about each theme and a number of aspects within each one
- Which are the **most important** themes and aspects, and why
- Which of these you think should have **targets** attached which Highways England would be required to meet
- What other aspects of how the network works for you ought also to be measured?

It's important to note that this is about the **roads** and how they are managed, rather than about **other drivers** – so, for example, Highways England cannot directly prevent accidents that then cause delays, but they can control how information about delays is communicated to the people using the roads.

Please see the next few pages for a summary of each theme and the aspects within each

For each of these, we'd like you to complete a short task – this is at the bottom of each page.

Pre-task 2

Each of the six themes had its own page with aspects rank and a targets box. The first theme is shown below as an example. The last page was a ranking of all the 6 themes – below right.

1. Improving safety for all

This would include aspects such as:

- Overall safety (number of people killed and seriously injured on the network, whether drivers, passengers or others; or total number of all casualties)
- Safety of more vulnerable users (number of casualties among cyclists, pedestrians and horse-riders on the network)
- Safety of staff (number of accidents whilst working on the network)
- Safety of road layout and signing (e.g. using a rating system to assess each stretch of road)
- Total number of collisions

Thinking about 'Improving safety' overall:

- Which of the above are more or less **important**? (Please give a score out of 10 for each, where 1 means 'not at all important' and 10 means 'extremely important'. (It is fine for some or all to have the same score.))
- Which of these should have **targets** attached?

Standard	Your score / 10	Should this be targeted? (Y / N)
Overall safety - killed and seriously injured		
Overall safety - total casualties		
Safety of more vulnerable users		
Safety of staff		
Safety of road layout and signing		
Total collisions		

Finally, thinking overall about all six themes, how would you rank them in order of importance? (1 = most important, 6 = least important)

Theme	Order of importance
Improving safety for all	
Providing fast and reliable journeys	
Maintaining the road network	
Being environmentally responsible	
Meeting the needs of all road users	
Being efficient and providing value for money	