

[Press release: Update on the infected blood inquiry](#)

The Infected Blood Inquiry is a priority for this Government. The infected blood tragedy of the 1970s and 80s should never have happened. We are committed to making sure all those that have suffered so terribly can get the answers they have spent decades waiting for, and lessons can be learned so that a tragedy of this scale can never happen again.

We want to make sure that all those who need to contribute to the Inquiry can do so.

The Inquiry Chair will be able to make awards for legal representation once the Inquiry is formally established and he intends to make early provision for core participant designation and legal expenses awards.

Ministers have also decided that reasonable expenses for legal representation to respond to the consultation of the Terms of Reference of the Inquiry, will be met. Any claims will be handled by the solicitor to the Inquiry.

The Chair of the Inquiry has been actively consulting with those who have been affected about how to ensure the Inquiry delivers the answers they deserve, and the consultation on Terms of Reference has been designed to be as user-friendly as possible.

[News story: Statutory redundancy payments increase](#)

When a business goes insolvent, employees can submit a claim to the RPS for money they are owed, including:

- redundancy pay
- holiday pay
- arrears of pay
- statutory notice pay

At the moment, the RPS can pay up to £489 a week for each claim. For example, if someone claims for redundancy pay and statutory notice pay they can get up to £489 a week for each one.

As of 06 April 2018, the amount the RPS can pay is increasing to £508 a week for each claim.

This means that if an individual is given notice of their redundancy on or after 06 April 2018, their weekly pay will be capped at £508. If they were given notice before 06 April 2018, their weekly pay may be lower.

News story: New Joint GES Heads of Profession – Sam Beckett (BEIS) and Clare Lombardelli (HMT)

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News story: Funding boost to improve and expand school buildings

Over £500 million has been announced today (Thursday 29 March) to improve and expand school buildings across the country and create more good school places.

The announcement builds on the 825,000 new school places created since 2010, with 1.9 million more children now in good or outstanding schools thanks to the hard work of teachers and the government's reforms.

The £514 million is being allocated as part of the Condition Improvement Fund. It will support 1,556 projects across almost 1,300 academies and sixth-form colleges in England to help improve the condition or expand their facilities.

The announcement includes £38 million for projects supported by the Healthy Pupils Capital Fund, which is drawn from the Soft Drinks Industry Levy. This fund helps to improve children and young people's physical and mental health by enhancing the quality of, and access to, facilities such as changing

rooms, playgrounds, kitchens and sports halls.

Minister for the School System, Lord Agnew, said:

All children deserve the best possible education and state of the art facilities are a big part of that. This funding will transform the condition of school buildings and help our best schools to expand, creating more good school places for families and raising standards for pupils. This will build on the hard work of teachers and our reforms, which have resulted in 1.9 million more children being taught in good or outstanding schools than in 2010.

The Condition Improvement Fund is an annual funding allocation that academies and sixth-form colleges are invited to bid for. In addition to improving the quality of school facilities, the fund also enables Good or Outstanding schools to expand where there is a need for them to do so.

[Press release: HGV cab's final patrol after catching over 5,000 careless drivers](#)

The cab has travelled 99,000 miles on motorways and major A roads since the safety initiative began, spotting an average of one driving offence every 16 miles.

Highways England is now funding three new HGV 'supercabs' after the single cab, which has been used by police forces across the country, stopped a total of 5,408 drivers in relation to 6,257 offences.

Greater Manchester Police was one of the first police forces to use the cab when it was introduced in April 2015, and will be the final force to use it before a new dedicated cab for the North goes on patrol from next month.

New footage has also been released, filmed by Greater Manchester Police officers using the cab last week, which shows a lorry driver making notes on an A4 pad while travelling along the M6 near the junction with the M62.

[The footage is available at:](#)

John Walford, Incident Prevention Manager at Highways England, said:

We began the HGV cab initiative three years ago as part of the work we're doing to improve safety on motorways and major A roads, and

we've been impressed by the impact it's had.

Police officers have pulled over more than 5,000 drivers for offences which could have resulted in serious collisions, either because road users have got into bad habits or are simply ignoring the law.

We've found that the vast majority of drivers are sensible behind the wheel but some are putting themselves and others at risk, so we've therefore decided to fund three new HGV cabs to continue to improve road safety.

The three new 'supercabs' will patrol motorways and main trunk roads across England, and have been fitted with wide-angle cameras to capture unsafe driving behaviour.

They also have a derestricted speed limiter which means they can travel at speeds up to the national speed limit, and flashing lights have been installed for use by police forces in an emergency.

The cabs allow police officers to film evidence of unsafe driving behaviour by pulling up alongside vehicles. Drivers are then pulled over by police cars following behind.

Chief Inspector Tariq Butt, who leads Greater Manchester Police's Traffic Unit, said:

The use of the HGV cab as part of Operation Tramline has been a huge success across Greater Manchester over the last three years.

The 'supercabs' will be a welcome addition and are crucial in raising continued awareness of a driver's responsibilities, improving road safety and more importantly reducing road casualties.

In total, 28 police forces have taken part in the HGV cab safety initiative in its first three years. Over half of the drivers who were stopped were illegally using a mobile phone while driving, despite the latest statistics showing that mobile phone use is a factor in an average of two deaths on the roads every month.

Officers gave verbal advice to 537 drivers, issued 1,014 fixed or graduated penalty notices, and filed 4,180 traffic offence reports – usually requiring drivers to attend a driver education course. There were also 194 prosecutions for more serious offences.

The most common offences filmed using the unmarked HGV cab included:

- using mobile phones – 2,971
- not wearing seatbelts – 1,227

- speeding – 331
- not in proper control of vehicles – 310

One driver pulled over by Devon and Cornwall Police was found to have sent 10 replies to 10 texts within one hour; a driver in Surrey was seen trying to put toothpaste on a toothbrush; and a driver in the East Midlands was spotted steering with his knees while he ate his lunch and used his mobile phone.

Last year, the government doubled the penalty for drivers caught using their phones at the wheel. Motorists now receive 6 points on their licence and a £200 fine – up from the previous 3 points and £100 fine.

[Find out more details about the law on mobile phone use.](#)

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.