

Trailer safety report

Colleagues across the House will be aware that towing safety is an issue of widespread interest and concern, particularly ahead of the key summer caravanning season. In that context, I am pleased to announce to the House the publication of a [report into trailer safety](#). This sets out the government's position as required by the [Haulage Permits and Trailer Registration Act 2018](#).

This country has one of the best road safety records in the world, but every death and injury is a tragedy for the families involved. Ministerial colleagues and department officials have heard directly from families of those affected by fatal trailer incidents. I pay tribute to all those, including the parents of Freddie Hussey, and of Harry Christian-Allan, who have sought to improve trailer safety following such terrible bereavements. I also pay tribute to Members across the House, such as the Hon. Member for Bristol South, who have taken action in this area, such as the recently-convened All-Party Parliamentary Group on Trailer and Towing Safety.

This report has helped consolidate and develop the evidence base related to trailers. It is clear, including from roadside checks by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) undertaken for this report, that many light trailers are used on public roads in a defective state. A focus must be maintained on driving up the safety of these trailers. However, only in a relatively few cases do vehicle defects contribute to serious incidents. Trailer-related incidents share some characteristics with the wider light vehicle fleet, including that human error is a far more prevalent reason for incidents. On the basis of the information set out in this report, the government is therefore not extending current vehicle testing or registration requirements in relation to trailers.

However, as the report highlights, there is further work in this area which the government will take forward. There is more information to consider and this report proposes some future steps, including additional trailer checks to be carried out by DVSA. This will build the evidence base further. A number of non-regulatory and other regulatory levers, including previous changes in driving licence entitlements now spreading through the motoring public, will also have an effect.

This report is an important milestone and is not itself an endpoint. I look forward to working together with all parties to ensure that momentum is maintained in this area, and that trailer safety continues to improve.