



The Association of British Drivers

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Press Release – ABD London Region

For immediate release
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Transport for London Obstructs Disclosure of Information on the Blackwall Tunnel and Greenwich Road Tolls

Conservatives on the London Assembly have discovered that Transport for London (TfL) received a report from consultants Mott MacDonald last year which advised that suspending tidal flow in the tunnel was not the answer and that TfL should focus instead on other measures to improve safety in the tunnel.

The Association of British Drivers (ABD) has been trying to obtain the facts behind the reason for the cessation of the tidal flow system since the 22nd April when we submitted a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act. Although we received the accident data (which showed that accidents were minimal within the tunnel and probably better than most ordinary roads), we have only received a report of a meeting of the TfL Surface Transport Strategy Board. No mention was made of the Mott MacDonald report and our request for other data was rejected on the grounds of cost. Although we challenged this, we have still not received all the information we requested.

In addition an ABD member has also requested information on the opinion polls undertaken by TfL in relation to the proposed Greenwich Congestion Charge. TfL have revealed that a number were undertaken starting in early 2006, but they have suggested that the results cannot be released. We have also challenged this, but again we have been kept waiting for no good reason.

The ABD suggests that this is symptomatic of a deep malaise within TfL where routine requests for information seem to be obstructed when it is clear that the requestor may be wanting to challenge TfL policy or their public announcements.

They seem to specialize in giving you a bureaucratic run around, when the law requires them to provide information promptly, and within 20 working days in most circumstances.

For example, in the press release issued by the Conservatives on the above discovery, London Assembly Member and M.P. Bob Neill said:

"Their own advice told them that suspending tidal flow was not the answer, and that the accident rates were no higher than on similar roads. This proves that TfL's decision was a gross over-reaction, and they were well aware that the tunnel could have been made safer using other measures. Their willful rejection of expert advice has condemned motorists using the tunnel to even more misery and travel chaos."

Clearly TfL needs to be made more publicly accountable and pay more attention to the principles embodied in recent legislation concerning open Government.

For further information, please contact:

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About The Association of British Drivers (ABD)

The ABD is the leading independent organisation which represents the interests of private motorists in the United Kingdom. We campaign to protect the rights of individual road users and believe that road transport is a beneficial and essential element in the UK transport infrastructure. We oppose excessive taxation of motorists and are against tolls and road usage charging. We also campaign for more enlightened road safety policies. The Association is a "not for profit" voluntary organisation which is financially supported primarily by its individual members. More information on the ABD is available from our web site at www.abd.org.uk

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