



The Alliance of British Drivers

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Press Release – ABD London Region

For immediate release

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Government to Raise £7bn from the Dartford Crossing

The Highways Agency is likely to raise a net £7 billion for Government coffers from road users over 25 years by the introduction of “free-flow” charging at the Dartford Crossing. Even after the reduction in journey times which is a potential benefit to road users, the net cost to them is at least £5.5 billion over the same period.

That ignores the inconvenience that will be caused to road users by having to pay the charge, the high risk of unknowingly incurring a £35 penalty charge by forgetting to pay and the general hassle involved in using such a system (the consultation document suggests over 15,000 such events per day of “non-compliance”, i.e. penalty charges needing to be issued). If the toll booths were simply removed, to reduce the congestion they cause, then the benefits to road users would be real instead of imaginary.

This proposal is backed up by a consultation document which is grossly misleading in the financial analysis and implications of the proposals. It also suggests that the tolls are required to pay for more river crossings when the net revenue being raised would pay for a new crossing in as little as two years.

The Alliance of British Drivers (ABD) suggests that this proposal is simply another tax raising measure from the Government and has nothing to do with improving the road system or reducing congestion as claimed.

We encourage all road users to oppose this measure which may set a precedent for other road charging schemes (which the Government clearly has in mind). Users should go to the web site below to register their objections as soon as possible.

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We have also launched an e-petition on this topic. Go to this web page to sign it:
<http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/43815>

More Information

The full response by the ABD to the Highways Agency public consultation is present in this document on our web site:

www.freedomfordrivers.org/ABD_Dartford_Crossing_Freeflow_Charging.pdf

Note that we have also recently opposed the introduction of charges for the Blackwall Tunnel in response to a consultation on new Thames River crossings from TfL. For our response to that consultation, see:

www.freedomfordrivers.org/ABD_River_Crossings_Consultation.pdf.

Contact

For more information contact Roger Lawson on 020-8295-0378.

About The Alliance of British Drivers (ABD)

The Alliance of British Drivers was formed from a merger between the Association of British Drivers and the Drivers Alliance. 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 Alliance 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.freedomfordrivers.org