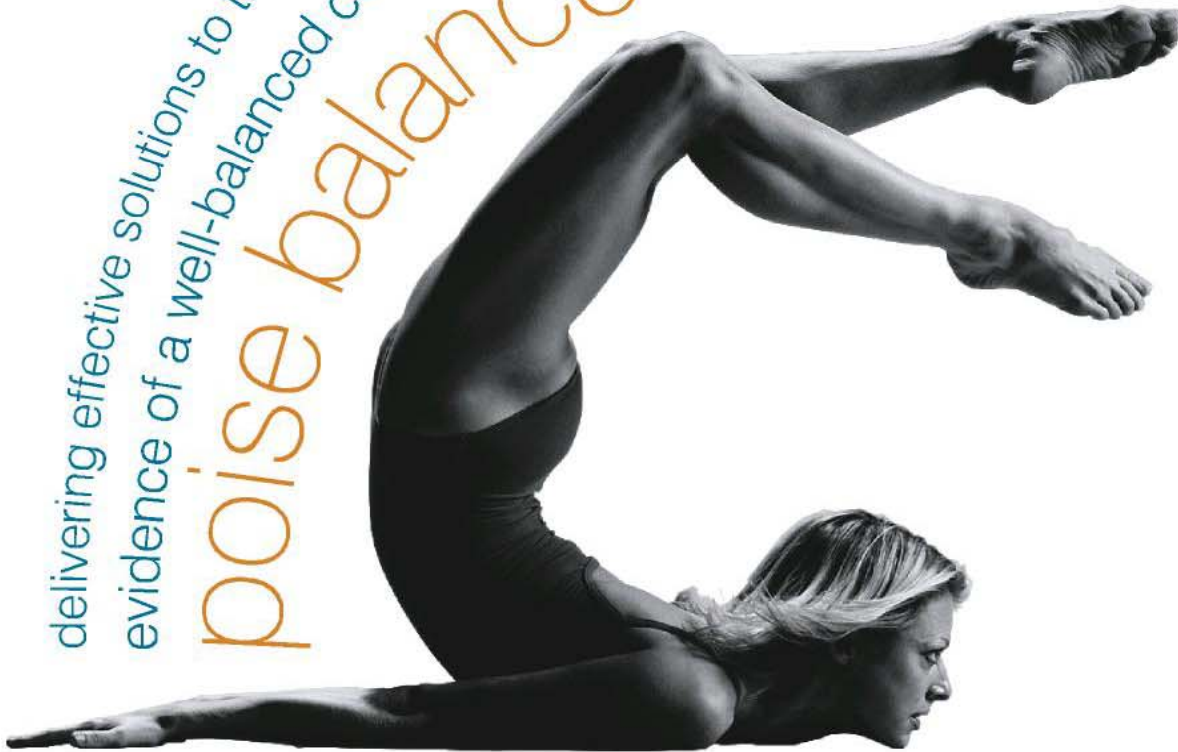




delivering effective solutions to the challenges we are presented with
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Travel Plans: *Realising the Potential*

Dr Colin Black

Dublin, June 2005



For the transport rich there is unlimited choice for jobs, schools and leisure – for the transport poor there is an increasingly narrow range of choices.

Viewpoint page 14

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INSIDE LTT

NEWS 3

Highways Agency tells regions to grasp car restraint agenda

NEWS EXTRA 9

Delivering the aviation White Paper on course?

FEATURE 12

Smartcards poised to transform public transport trips?



REGULARS

Pages 1-7, 36
 Passing 3
 Media monitor 10-11
 Appointment 14
 Letters 14-15
 Goodwin 17
 Editor 18
 Infrastructure update 19
 Courses & Events 20, 22-23
 Transport Planning Society 21
 Letters 23
 Services Directory 24-28
 ointments 29-35
 ple 36

making NEWS...

Asks whether effects of speed cameras are exaggerated

DfT is commissioning research to try and understand why traffic levels in London appear to have stabilised, contrary to its own national traffic forecasts.

DATA: see page 2

Truck bosses to petition against Crossrail Bill

Truck and freight train operators are preparing to petition against the Crossrail Bill. They claim plans to give Crossrail exclusive access to

Monitoring tool could end doubt about impact of travel plans

An independent standard methodology for measuring the effectiveness of travel plans is to be launched later this year. Advocates say it will overcome concerns about the quality of existing ad hoc monitoring regimes and the consequent reliability of results. It will also identify which travel plans are most effective at reducing car use.

The standard is being developed by the Association of Commuter Transport, the non-profit organisation that promotes commuter travel planning and travel plans, and TRICS, the nationwide database of trip rates for developments.

Colin Black, a divisional director of JMP Consulting, chairman of ACT and manager of TRICS, told *LTT* that the methodology, to be applied by independent survey teams, would help put an end to local authority doubts about the robustness of travel plan monitoring data produced by developers. It would also overcome problems whereby developers presented authorities with reams of monitoring data that was difficult to interpret.



Colin Black: leading the development of a standard monitoring tool for travel plans

Black said authorities would be far more confident in taking enforcement action against developers who did not achieve the mode split targets set out in their travel plans. "Unless you've got robust data the enforcement mechanisms [for travel plans] are immaterial."

The proposals rely heavily on the TRICS trip generation data collection methodology. For existing and expanding sites, surveys of travel patterns will be

undertaken 'before' and 'after' implementation of a travel plan. For new sites the baseline data will be based on the transport assessment for the development or data from TRICS. As use of the standard methodology grows, TRICS will provide an indication of how car use could be reduced at new developments by implementing a travel plan.

All data from the surveys will be shared with the local authority and developer. It will also be placed in the TRICS database for wider use to anyone with a TRICS licence or ad hoc users.

TRICS/ACT envisage offering a two-tier payment system. The complete service would be offered on a fixed fee basis of £3,000. TRICS will visit the site, specify the appropriate data collection technique, arrange for the survey to be undertaken by one of the approved survey companies, validate the data and report the results. It is envisaged that for new and expanding sites the costs would be met by the developer and would form part of the Section 106 agreement.

There will be no Government

requirement for local authorities to use the methodology but Black said he expected it to be popular. "Every local authority I've spoken to so far has given it their seal of approval," he said. It had been endorsed by the six TRICS consortium members – Kent, East Sussex, West Sussex, Surrey, Hampshire and Dorset county councils. The methodology has been discussed with the DfT, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, and the Highways Agency.

In a related piece of work, the ACT is preparing an accreditation system for travel plans. The system, developed by Napier University's Transport Research Institute, is based on three levels of achievement: bronze, silver and gold. Local authorities will act as the accreditation bodies for travel plans within their area.

Black said he was comfortable that the links between TRICS and ACT in developing the methodology did not amount to a conflict of interest given his own role in the two organisations. "I believe I'm in a unique position as chair of ACT and manager of TRICS," he said.

DfT reviews forecasts as London traffic growth halts

The DfT is to commission research to try and understand why traffic levels in London appear to have stabilised, contrary to its own national traffic forecasts.

Data published by Transport for London last week suggest that traffic levels (measured in annual vehicle kilometres) in the capital have been steady since 2000, something that it puts down to policies such as improved public transport and the central London congestion charge.

The reality is at odds with the forecasts produced by the DfT's national transport model. It was

The DfT will look at the London situation in more detail as part of a research project to improve the method of calibrating the National Transport Model's (NTM) travel demand model.

"We need to understand the reasons for this [stabilisation] and ensure that forecasts take account of it," explains the project brief.

The project will use National Travel Survey data which now records details of trip destinations. A new version of the NTM using the new calibration methodology should be available this autumn.

Darling hit by carrot cake at Heathrow lobby launch

Transport secretary Alistair Darling had a cake thrust in his face this week at the launch of a new lobby group backing the expansion of Heathrow Airport.

Darling was sitting on the platform at the launch of 'Future Heathrow' when an iced carrot cake was pushed into his face by a protester who shouted, "Alistair Darling's presence at the launch of this pressure group stinks!"

A spokesman for the DfT said that by attending the launch Darling wanted to reiterate Government support for Heathrow's expansion, while getting across

presence at the launch. "It's quite inappropriate that he should so publicly align himself with any pressure group," he said.

see also...

News Extra page 9





Topics Covered

- Review recommended process
- Identify problems
- Highlight the improvements required
- Examine why standardising monitoring is key
- Provide an update on progress to date
- Explain the new monitoring process
- Challenges for the future, including penalties
- Next steps



Current Situation

- Effective travel plans focus on outcomes - DfT Guidance “*Using the planning process to secure travel plans*”
- Most local authorities agree trip rate & mode-share targets as part of planning process
- Monitoring regimes are then set in place
- Increasingly many set penalties to safeguard against failure to meet targets & encourage a proactive response



Problems with the Process

- Lack of trained professionals (particularly at district level) means *minimalist approach* often applied
- Logic checks on trip-rate & mode-share targets are resource intensive
- Travel plan detail often overlooked and/or ambiguous
- Optimistic trip-rate & mode-share targets often agreed, but not supported by the travel plan detail
- Monitoring regimes weak & targets too flexible
- Very few travel plans fulfil their stated objectives



Improvements Required

- Focus on delivering *objectives* rather than jumping through planning hoops
- Max. value of resources available in local authority
- Eliminate ambiguity in monitoring regimes
- Minimise differences in approach between areas
- Reduce opportunity to manoeuvre around planning requirements
- Create database for logic-checks on proposed targets
- Establish incentives for innovative travel planning
- Ensure developer funding is used proactively





Realising the Potential

- Standardising travel plan monitoring is key to unlocking the potential of travel plans
- Monitoring should be undertaken by an approved, independent 3rd party following a robust methodology, that is standard across the whole UK, Ireland... & beyond?
- This will help eliminate debate about the statistics & focus attention on meeting the targets





Progress to Date

- Consulted widely
 - Papers at major UK conferences
 - Presentations at dev con groups
 - Meetings with LA, DfT, ODPM, HA, ACT, etc
- Review of literature - worldwide
- Secured budget for 2 research studies
 - Understanding effective travel plans - theory
 - Establishing monitoring & accreditation - process
- Prepared guidance note on UK standard for monitoring (available)
- Re-structuring TRICS system & data requirements (available summer 05)





The New Process

- 5 simple stages:
 - Before data is either calculated, or collected using approved methodology, **before** implementation
 - Travel plan measures implemented are recorded
 - At a defined point in the future, **after** data is collated using same method
 - The datasets then compared to identify changes
 - LA decides whether organisation /site has met targets & takes appropriate action



Guidance

- Supported by DfT, ODPM, ACT, HA
- Step-by-step advice available for undertaking travel plan monitoring
- Process differs between new & expanding sites (can also be applied to existing sites)
 - New site (no /b4 TP) based on assessment
 - Expanding sites survey existing trips
- Trip generation calculation establishes targets
- Independent survey then undertaken





Added Value

- Developer data not sat on shelves
- Independent survey data comparable nationally
- Greater data available - more accurate target setting
- Eliminates resource requirement for LA to check, review, agree data, etc
- Focus efforts of developer /consultant on results rather than greenwash





Proposed Costs – per survey

- Fixed £3k – site visit, detail survey requirements, appoint approved contractor, validate the data & report results
- Specification £500 (for more complicated sites)
- Payment for after monitoring can be secured through planning process
- UK Association of Commuter Transport Ltd can be appointed as an independent arbiter for £500





Challenges

- Will TRICS be able to cope with the influx of surveys?
- How can we ensure all local authorities adopt same method?
- Is it appropriate for voluntary travel plans?
- What happens if the developer fails to meet its targets?



Need for Penalties

- Modern world depends on system of fines & penalties to encourage compliance
- Unless penalties are written into planning agreements travel plans will not realise their potential
- Now have system for fair & transparent monitoring
- But need to establish appropriate penalties e.g. bonds
- Lack of legal precedents therefore 'grey area'
- Bonds already being used for travel plans
- ODPM, DfT, HA incorporating into new TA guidance





Next Steps

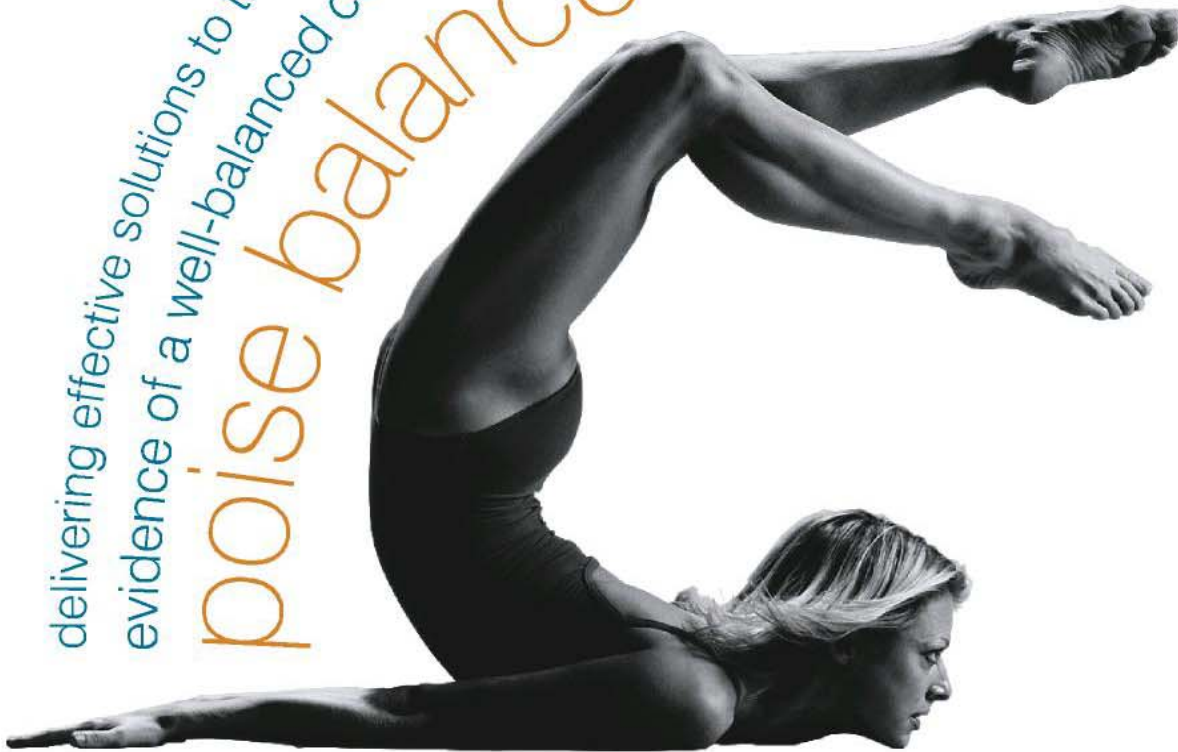
- Finalise TRICS Travel Plan Record Sheet©
- Undertake system programming
- Publish guidance on standardised monitoring
- Market approach nationally
- Start work on a national accreditation scheme endorsed by ACT & implemented locally





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**Request copy of guide
on Standard for
Monitoring Travel Plans**

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