



Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency

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Louise Hunt
HM Senior Coroner
Birmingham & Solihull Areas
50 Newton Street
Birmingham
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our ref: 2002/00102

your ref: 121402 – SUZANNA JAYNE BULL (LH/RP)

13 February 2020

Dear Mrs Hunt

I am writing following your Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths, of 28 January. Your investigation into the death of Suzanna Jayne Bull on 9 October 2017 was adjourned on 17 October 2017 pending the outcome of a criminal trial. The trial concluded in October 2019. You have assessed there is insufficient reason to resume the inquest but have considered there to be a serious safety concern regarding the circumstances of the death. You consider this should be addressed.

I am aware that Baroness Vere of Norbiton, Transport Minister for Roads and Security, wrote to you about this on 24 January 2020. I enclose a copy of that letter for reference.

We do not have the authority to require warning messages to be put on aftermarket dashboard trays. We can, however, highlight the matters of concern to large goods vehicle (LGV) drivers.

I have set out below the action we have taken or intend to take to address your concerns.

On 24 January 2020 we published a [Moving On blog](#) on GOV.UK. We sent a link to this blog to our distribution list of 68,000 haulage operators. The blog set out the circumstances of Ms Bull's death and information about the criminal trial. The article reminded all operators and drivers of the importance of making sure the vehicle's windscreen is always clear. We published a link to this article on our twitter account, which was read around 7,000 times. We continue to highlight this issue across our social media platforms.

On the 6 May 2020 we propose to highlight the areas of concern in your report to attendees at our regular Heavy Vehicle Industry Forum. This is a meeting we host with attendees including industry trade bodies, such as the Society of Motor Manufacturers and

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Traders, the Road Haulage Association and the Freight Transport Association, along with a cross section of other operators. We will also ask them to pass this information on to their members.

We publish information on GOV.UK about [keeping commercial vehicles safe to drive](#). Our Guide to Maintaining Roadworthiness is also published on GOV.UK. The Guide includes information on a [driver's daily walkaround checks](#), including ensuring no objects get in the way of their front view. A short [video](#) shows some of the checks a driver should do during their daily check. This includes checking there is a clear view through the windscreen. We will be updating this guidance to warn drivers against putting objects in their lorry, which restrict their view.

We always check a lorry's windscreen is clear of obstruction when carrying out our roadside checks. If we find a lorry where the driver's view is obscured, we will give the driver a prohibition and penalty. The driver must remove the obstruction before we allow the lorry to move on.

Our vehicle standards assessors (VSA) check the view of the road from the driver's seat when carrying out a lorry's annual test (MOT). The view must not be obstructed by any changes to the original design. The lorry will fail the MOT if an obstruction is present, which affects materially the driver's view to the front or the sides through the windscreen. VSAs record these as either minor or major defects depending on where the obstruction is and how it affects the driver's view.

I am happy for you to send a copy of this response to all the interested parties as noted at section 8 of your report. You said you were under a duty to send a copy of our response to the Chief Coroner. I confirm I do not wish to make to you any representations about the release or publication of our response by the Chief Coroner.

Yours sincerely

Gareth Llewellyn
Chief Executive

