



Department for Transport

Johanna Thompson
Area Coroner for Norfolk
County Hall,
Martineau Lane,
Norwich
NR1 2DH

From the Parliamentary
Under Secretary of State

Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Web site: www.gov.uk/dft

4 February 2026

Dear Ms Thompson,

Thank you for your report of 24 December 2025 made under the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and the Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013, following the inquest you conducted into the death of Alan Baker. I am responding as the Minister for Roads and Buses.

I was very saddened to learn of Mr Baker's death and offer my sincere condolences to his family and friends.

The Department is strongly committed to improving the safety of all road users, and this includes ensuring that new vehicles are approved, to demonstrate that they comply with a range of technical requirements before they can be sold. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) is the principal body for vehicle regulations, and the UK is an active member of its technical committees. The relevant regulation in this case is UNECE Regulation No. 158 (UN R158) on Approval of devices for reversing motion and motor vehicles with regard to the driver's awareness of vulnerable road users behind vehicles.

UN R158 requires all passenger and goods vehicles to be fitted with a device that warns the driver when it detects vulnerable road users to the rear of the vehicle. The regulation does not mandate a camera as UNECE regulations are generally drafted to be technology neutral, to allow for innovation as technical development progresses. UN R158 sets performance requirements and mandates that two of the following warnings are provided to the driver: audible, optical, and haptic.

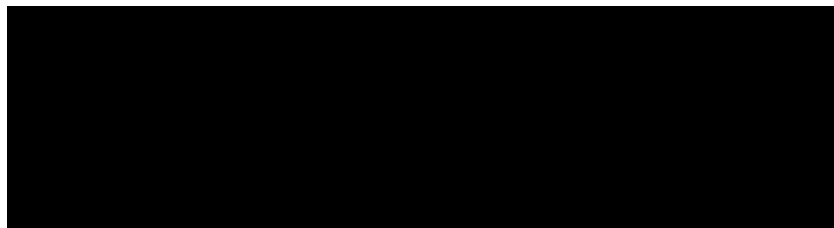
The Government launched its Road Safety Strategy on 7 January, and this included a consultation on proposals to mandate fitment of a range of vehicle safety technologies, including those covered by UN R158. Subject to the

outcome of the consultation, we expect that UN R158 will be mandated in the GB approval scheme for new vehicles.

Goods vehicle trailers such as the one involved in this collision are not currently in scope of UN R158. During 2025, a review of UN R158 was undertaken by the UNECE working group, and although the United Kingdom supported amending the scope to include goods vehicle trailers, there was insufficient support from other countries to do so. I believe this tragic case highlights the importance of reconsidering the scope of UN R158, and I have asked my officials to raise this in the April session of the UNECE working group.

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) provides advice to operators on vehicle roadworthiness and safe operation, and will look to promote opportunities for using these types of devices and ensuring they stay effective. Should these devices become mandatory in the future, DfT and DVSA will consider if they should form part of the annual roadworthiness test and other inspections.

Yours sincerely,



MINISTER FOR ROADS AND BUSES