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Association of British Drivers

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For immediate release

TfL Admits Livingstone Regime Deliberately Obstructed Traffic Flows

The latest report from Transport for London 1 states that despite 70,000 fewer cars a day entering the central zone and 30,000 fewer in the Western Extension, **congestion in both of these areas is every bit as bad as it was before the charge was introduced.** (*emphasis added*)

Although some of this is down to road works, the report admits that many traffic lights and other road schemes have reduced road and junction capacity, and publicly confirms what previously was only admitted behind closed doors — that obstructing traffic was a deliberate policy.

"This latest report on the London congestion charge demonstrates the fundamental dishonesty of all road pricing proposals," said the ABD's Nigel Humphries. "They claim that by paying even more money to use the roads, drivers will benefit from lower congestion. But London has proved that anti car authorities and pressure groups will simply not allow this to happen. They just increase the number of traffic lights and reduce the road space available until drivers are just paying through the nose to sit in the same jams as before."

The crazy transport schemes of Ken Livingstone and his friends have brought London to a halt — they put in bus lanes to give the bus priority, but then they louse up the junctions with "pedestrian priority" measures which negate all the advantages to buses as well as hitting car drivers with a double whammy of delays. These problems are not confined to London — with or without road pricing they are endemic in every city in the UK.

Boris Johnson has made a start by reviewing the flow implications of all proposed schemes, announcing the death of roadspace eating bendy buses and consulting on the Western Extension, but he needs to go much further.

The ABD would propose the following:

1. A major programme of investment in trunk roads and junctions to remove conflict between heavy traffic and vulnerable road users by means of underpasses and pedestrian/cyclist bridges/tunnels. All money from the congestion charge should be ringfenced to pay for such schemes which benefit all road users equally and reduce danger and stress for all. Once these schemes are complete the congestion charge should be phased out.

2. All bus lanes to be reviewed to ensure that they do not restrict overall road capacity. This means no bus lanes through junctions or across pelican crossings, which halve the amount of traffic that can pass when there are no buses or taxis on the road.

3. Removal of at least 20% of the traffic lights in central London by identifying those which do nothing but obstruct traffic flow.

4. Removal of constriction points which create danger for cyclists and pedestrians by restricting the maneuvering space for large vehicles

5. Redesign of all "forward stop line" schemes for cyclists. These are ill named as they really are "backward" stop lines for motorists and reduce the capacity of light controlled junctions irrespective of whether any cyclists are there. Forward stop lines for bikes should be just that - in front of the normal stop line - and should not place cyclists in front of the traffic.

6. Reversal of ruinous schemes like Trafalgar Square which reduce road capacity and create huge jams, mostly comprising buses and taxis.

7. Removal of all 20mph speed limits imposed on main roads.