

Urban freight for liveable cities

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Transport for London (TfL), is the integrated body responsible for the Capital's transport system. Its primary roles are to implement the Mayor's Transport Strategy for London and manage transport services for which the Mayor has responsibility.

In the summer of 2012 the Olympic and Paralympic Games were held in London. TfL was responsible for delivering Transport activity as part of the Host City contract, including guaranteed journey times for the athletes.

To deliver this contract TfL focused on providing three key items: an efficient public transport network, the Olympic Route Network, and a programme to suppress background public transport and road demand, including freight activity. It was crucial that London continued to function as normally, and that sport, not transport, made the headlines during the Games.

For the freight programme TfL built on previous work, including the 2007 London Freight Plan and previous engagement activity, TfL developed an Olympic Road Freight Management Programme. The delivery of this programme ensured that traffic management around venues and the Olympic Route Network did not disrupt the flow of food to supermarkets, blood to hospitals or beer to pubs and bars.

TfL took the lead in April 2011 by setting up a Freight Forum, with 50 key organisations and regulatory authorities. The Forum agreed the issues that would affect the industry, including those facing specific sectors, a range of solutions that could be promoted and the most effective ways to communicate the changes to freight operators and businesses.

The programme developed solutions around the themes of reducing, re-routing, revising the mode, and retiming deliveries, including a Code of Practice for quiet out-of-hours deliveries. A supporting communications programme comprising a website, 25 case studies, a Freight Journey Planner, marketing activity, workshops and tailored 1-to-1 advice was also delivered, alongside the programme providing travel advice to business. During the Games real-time information ensured the industry knew what was changing on a daily basis.

As the Games were such a success they represent a key turning point in TfL's relationship with the Freight industry. Therefore TfL will:

- Look to capitalise on the operator and business experience of behaviour change
- Continue to communicate with the industry, the next Freight Forum is on 30th October
- Seek to facilitate out of hours deliveries, including reviewing regulations and business cost/benefit,
- Consider enhancements to Freight Journey Planning

Wider, long-term, considerations include:

- Ongoing engagement with operators, businesses and policy makers,
- further work with regulators
- business as usual needs to ensure that local and strategic planning recognises freight

We need to take lessons from this success and apply them to London's future growth. The changes we need in the long-term will be the sum of small gains which may be delivered through changes to delivery times, formal and informal consolidation practices and better use of route planning and travel information.

Taken together, these solutions will assist in delivering the change we need to cope with growth and provide economic benefits to operators and their customers alike.