

---

## Information item

Author : Transport for London

Agenda item 10 d  
LTW 31  
Drafted 25.4.07

---

### **Blackwall Tunnel morning rush hour priority scheme to end**

#### **1 Purpose of report**

- 1.1 To record for information a press release issued by Transport for London on the discontinuance of the morning rush hour priority scheme in the Blackwall Tunnel.

#### **2 Information**

- 2.1 Annexed to this report is a Transport for London press release issued on 18 April 2007.
- 2.2 No responsibility for the content and format of this item rests with London TravelWatch.

#### **3 Equalities, inclusion and financial implications**

- 3.1 Not applicable – report is for information only.

#### **4 Legal powers**

- 4.1 Section 248 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 places upon London TravelWatch (as the London Transport Users Committee) a duty to consider - and where it appears to it to be desirable, to make recommendations with respect to - any matter affecting the functions of the Greater London Authority or Transport for London which relate to transport (other than of freight).

#### **5 Recommendation**

- 5.1 That the report is received for information.

## Transport for London



PN-089  
18 April 2007

### **Blackwall Tunnel Morning Rush Hour Priority Scheme To End – Measure Taken On Safety Grounds**

Transport for London and the Metropolitan Police today announced an end to the practice of 'Tidal Flow' traffic in the Blackwall Tunnel to improve safety for motorists.

Tidal Flow is the term used to describe traffic operating in opposite directions in the southbound tunnel in morning rush hours. The system has been used since 1978 to cope with the demand of northbound traffic across the Thames.

But an increase in dangerous driving behaviour, including overtaking in the tunnel, has led the Metropolitan Police and Transport for London to bring an end to this system, from Friday 20 April 2007. The Metropolitan Police will review its operation each morning for the remainder of this week.

TfL is committed to increasing safety in the tunnel and has recently carried out maintenance work improving fireproofing and radio communications. TfL anticipates there will be some increase in congestion on the south approach to the tunnel as a result of this decision. Changes in traffic flows will be monitored and congestion mitigated wherever possible.

David Brown, Managing Director of Surface Transport at Transport for London, said, "The safe and efficient operation of traffic through the Blackwall Tunnel is our primary concern. The increasing number of 'near misses' in this enclosed environment poses a significant safety risk and endangers lives. This decision has been taken jointly with the Metropolitan Police and is aimed at delivering the highest possible safety standards to London's motorists."

Detective Superintendent Glyn Jones from the Metropolitan Police Service's Traffic Command Unit said, "The Metropolitan Police Service is committed to working together with partners to make London the safest city in the world. This applies not only to issues connected with the fear of crime but equally to the safety of roads users. We have a continuing commitment to reducing injuries and fatalities due to road traffic collisions. Our monitoring of the behaviour of tunnel traffic has led us to the conclusion, agreed with TfL, that the Tidal Flow should cease."

Essential routine maintenance work will continue to be carried out on the northbound tunnel. This will require some contra flow arrangements, where traffic operates in two directions, in the southbound tunnel overnight on Tuesdays during low traffic volume periods. This forms part of the maintenance programme that has also

included refurbishment of the southbound tunnel which was completed in December 2005.

**Notes to editors:**

- CCTV footage of dangerous driving behaviour in the Blackwall Tunnel is available from the TfL press office, contact 0845 604 4141.
- Transport for London is responsible for maintaining and managing the 580km Transport for London Road Network (TLRN), which, although comprising only 5 per cent of the Capital's roads, carries approximately 33 per cent of its traffic.
- Transport for London is responsible for implementing the Mayor's Transport Strategy on improving the movement of people and goods on London's streets by helping pedestrians, cyclists, bus passengers and people with disabilities.

Kirsten Harvey  
**Press Officer**