



Department for Transport

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Baroness Vere of Norbiton
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Dear Tony

I promised to write to you following the Regret Motion to the Transport Act 1985 (Amendment) Regulations 2019 debated in the House of Lords on 20 May.

I would like to re-iterate that the Department believes that community transport operators provide vital services that both encourage growth and reduce isolation by linking communities, and vulnerable people in particular, to existing transport networks, jobs, education, shops and services.

EU Regulation 1071/2009 has been part of UK law since 2011. Uncertainty about exemptions to the EU Regulation makes it harder for community transport operators to comply with the correct operating requirements. The Transport Select Committee acknowledged that this uncertainty has already impacted some community transport operators and as a result there have been concerns raised about this in Parliament.

In 2018 the Government ran a full 12-week public consultation on the use of section 19 and section 22 permits for road passenger transport in Great Britain. Nearly 500 consultation responses were received, and over 550 people attended workshops run by the Department during the consultation period. The number of responses to the consultation, their length and complexity were unusual for consultations of this nature and the consultation analysis was a more complex task than anticipated.

Respondents to the consultation included community transport operators, local authorities, commercial operators and their respective representative organisations, as well as passengers.

Over 60% of consultation respondents were from organisations who classified themselves as currently using permits under the Transport Act 1985, compared to around 5% from private commercial operators. In addition, a number of community transport operators fed into the responses provided by the Community Transport Association and Mobility Matters Campaign.

The consultation asked respondents about whether they were tendering for contracts in competition with holders of PSV licences. Many community transport operators were concerned about Freedom of Information Act 2000 requests that could potentially lead to the release of their responses and preferred to abstain from responding to this question. Over 25% of community transport operators who responded did not provide any information about competition. Data from the consultation does not provide a representative sample of the extent of competition between commercially-licensed operators and community transport operators.

I hope this reassures you that the community transport sector was given sufficient time and opportunity to respond to the consultation and their views were listened to in the Government response.

I have copied this letter to Baroness Randerson, and a copy will be placed in the libraries of both Houses.

Yours,

Charlotte .

BARONESS VERE OF NORBITON