THE ECONOMIC EFFICIENCIES OF TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

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OVERVIEW

- The Command and Control Approach
- The Economic Importance of The Road Network
- The Growth of The Road
- The Economic Impact of Traffic Control Policies
- A Better Approach
- Advantages & Disadvantages
- Reforming Traffic Management Policies
- Removing Barriers to Change
- Conclusion
- Any Questions
THE COMMAND AND CONTROL APPROACH

- The shift in Road policies from a laissez faire / common law practice aren’t reflective of transport users
- ‘Top down’ process driven by bureaucratic elites/politicians
- What is the alternative?
- Allow social and economic activity to arise through voluntary co operation
- A ‘bottom up’ organisation achieves efficiency gains by drawing on disperse, subjective and constantly changing knowledge of individuals (Hayek 1945)
- Typical benefits of a dispersed spontaneous approach are largely ignored
- Cooperative systems are less prone to special influence
THE ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF THE ROAD NETWORK

- Command and control has an immense impact on road safety and the tax payer.
- An efficient road network has potential to reduce living costs and boost living standards directly.
- Agglomerations may stimulate innovation to benefit concentrations of people form a particular skill set.
- Prodigious levels of traffic in the UK mean that even small delays = significant costs.
- Ultimately traffic congestion in the UK effects economic productivity.
THE GROWTH OF THE ROAD

- There are several trends that demonstrate the rise of Command and Control:
  1. Traffic Light Systems
  2. Speed Cameras
  3. Traffic Calming Schemes
  4. Bus Priority Schemes
  5. Cycling Infrastructure
  6. 20 mph zone
  7. Parking restrictions

- Such measures are used to coerce road-users behaviours
1. Romford brewery Bus Station

2. A1 Western By Pass

3. South Benwell

4. Percy Street
THE ECONOMIC APPROACH

- In the UK there are Prima Facie grounds with regard to economic impacts of measures that delays can increase.
- Traffic management particularly small schemes are seldom subject to cost benefit analysis and often overlook negative effects.
- Several financial implications:
  - Direct costs
  - Environmental costs
  - Economic impact on road users
  - Accidents and Health & Safety
  - Wider Economic Impacts
A BETTER APPROACH

- Alternative approach – “Shared Space”
- Conventional traffic controls demands disproportionate attention
- Shared space schemes act as a catalyst for decluttering (From and architectural perspective)
- Promotes gaps for green time on the network
- Stimulates Co operation and Empathy
ADVANTAGES & DISADVANTAGES

- Priority vs Co operation
- Agreement of safety issues
- High specification
- Maintenance costs of Traffic Management Systems
- Are they good value?
- Cost to tax payer raises massive issues
- Removing priority removes the ‘need’ for traffic control allowing road users to do what is natural and intrinsically safe
REFORMING TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT POLICIES

- Traffic signals could be taken out where they cause unnecessary delays
- Bus and cycle lanes taken out where road or safety benefits are too insubstantial to justify their consumption of road space
- Speed cameras could be switched off or removed where time losses exceed safety gains
- Traffic calming could be removed through routes where it produces delay and damage to vehicles especially the emergency services, and air and noise pollution of residents
- Parking regulation could be related to locations where there is a genuine scarcity of spaces
REMOVING BARRIERS TO CHANGE

- LA’s rely to heavily on Traffic Enforcement
- Private Sector Industry and Special Interest Influence
- Certain road users would resist change
- Ideological opponents and radical environmentalists
CONCLUSIONS

• From command and control to voluntary contribution

• Deregulating traffic management undermines ‘Top Down’ control & restores responsibility to individuals, i.e voluntary co – operation

• Shared spaces could be corrupted to serve special interest groups

• Localism

• Decentralisation should go further than fiscal responsibility

• Decentralisation could make better use of time – better than the current financial systems

• Decentralised system less prone to special interests and influence
Thank You For Listening.
Any Questions?

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