

## **ELECTRIC PERSONAL VEHICLE CONSULTATION 2010**

A summary of responses to the Electric Personal Vehicle (EPV) consultation is provided in the following document.

The Department for Transport has considered the responses to this consultation but has no plans, at present, to change the requirements relating to EPVs.

We are currently in discussions with the European Commission about new EU-wide rules on powered two wheel vehicles and the outcome of these discussions may affect the future treatment of EPVs. In the mean time, with the exception of certain types of mobility scooter and electrically assisted pedal cycle, powered vehicles used on public roads in the UK are required to be registered, taxed and insured and driver must have an appropriate licence.

EPVs not approved for use on public roads may be used on private land with the land owner's permission. This could include, for example, use on show grounds, in warehouses, on golf courses or in shopping centres.

## ELECTRIC PERSONAL VEHICLE (EPV) CONSULTATION 2010 SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

### Overview

1. 224 consultation replies were received,
2. Responses were broken down as follows:

Individual	<b>159</b>
Central/local government & Agencies	<b>7</b>
Business/manufacturer interests	<b>24</b>
Enforcement interests	<b>5</b>
Cycle interest groups	<b>4</b>
Other road user/safety groups	<b>8</b>
Other	<b>6</b>
Foreign	<b>8</b>
“No comment”	<b>3</b>

3. Looking at ‘raw’ data (and excluding data from the 8 non-UK replies):
  - 166 respondents (76%) favoured permitting EPVs on roads and 162 (75%) permitting them on cycle tracks.
  - Whilst cycle interest groups (potentially representing the views of many members) supported use on roads, they opposed use on dedicated cycle tracks.
  - Some 137 (63%) said they would change from car to EPV use for short trips. There were comments that this would have emissions benefits.
  - About 48% mentioned they would change from walking or cycling to EPV use. There were comments that this would reduce walking/cycling health and negate emissions benefits.
4. Other aspects commented upon included types of road suitable for EPV use, registration, insurance, licensing, minimum age, type approval etc.
5. Two other public consultations, on electrically assisted pedal cycles (EAPCs) and mobility vehicles for disabled people (“invalid carriages”), were also undertaken in 2010. All three share issues in some fields (e.g. insurance, registration or driving licence requirements).

## DETAILED SUMMARY

### Introduction

#### EPV Public Consultation: 5 January – 30 March 2010

1. The Department for Transport (DfT) undertook public consultation on “whether the law should be changed to permit small one-person Electric Personal Vehicles to use public roads and cycle tracks”.

2. This summary outlines responses received to the questions asked in the consultation document. It does not attempt to include all the comments received but all have been noted and will be considered, whether or not they appear in the report. Note that “for” and “against” percentages quoted below may not always add up to 100% as not all respondents answered all the questions posed.

#### Responses received

3. 224 replies were received, which were broken down as follows:

Individual	<b>159</b>
Central/local government & Agencies	<b>7</b>
Business/manufacturer interests	<b>24</b>
Enforcement interests	<b>5</b>
Cycle interest groups	<b>4</b>
Other road user/safety groups	<b>8</b>
Other	<b>6</b>
Foreign*	<b>8</b>
“No comment”	<b>3</b>

\*The 8 foreign responses have been omitted from the calculations below.

4. Respondents included individuals, representative groups, local authorities, manufacturers, police, 3 MPs, 2 Lords, 8 foreign individuals/interests and others. Some respondents are organisations with expertise in road/vehicle use, technology and safety and/or which represent thousands of members, while others are individuals.

#### Specific EPVs

5. Some 60 responses were specifically Segway-oriented (a Segway being a specific type of EPV, illustrated in an annex to the consultation). In addition a Segway petition of 1671 signatures from the UK and 79 from elsewhere was also handed in to DfT during the consultation. The signatures were collected on the “legalise Segways” website between 2006-2010.

6. Two other specific EPVs, which did not feature in the consultation’s (non-comprehensive) list of EPVs were mentioned: GoPet and Velocity 21. Some replies also stressed links with other recent consultations on electrically-assisted pedal cycles (EAPCs) and mobility scooters for disabled people, and the desirability of considering some aspects of all three together.

## Results

7. **Questions 1 & 2; use of EPVs on roads and cycle tracks.** Looking at 'raw' tick-box data, around 166 respondents (76%) favoured permitting EPVs on roads and 162 (75%) favoured permitting them on cycle tracks. Views expressed included that they would:

- offer an alternative to the car,
- be environmentally friendly,
- take up less space than cars,
- help people with disabilities,
- take account of new technology, and
- were already used in other countries.

8. Comments in opposition included:

- a range of safety issues,
- possible increased congestion e.g. if traffic flow were hindered by EPVs through overtaking difficulties,
- modal shift away from walking/cycling (reducing health benefits and possibly negating emissions benefits),
- a range of enforcement issues, and
- costs issues arising from the above.

9. A wide range of observations and suggestions from both individuals and organisations included:

- mobility scooters may not use cycle facilities, so nor should EPVs,
- permit EPVs use of cycle lanes on roads but not on dedicated cycle tracks,
- EPV use could sensibly be considered, but this should not be a priority for DfT or Parliamentary time,
- promoting modes of individual transport which could encourage shift away from single occupancy cars is important,
- there is a need to encourage development of safe EPVs while discouraging irresponsible developments,
- a trial or series of trials could be undertaken,
- make no change at present but keep the subject under review, and
- there are practical points about EPV use of cycle facilities, e.g. vehicle width, with implications for cycle track construction & maintenance standards.

### Q1 (Support for road use)

	YES	NO
Individual	<b>140</b>	<b>10</b>
Central/local government	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>
Business/manufacturer interests	<b>15</b>	<b>6</b>
Enforcement interests	-	<b>2</b>
Cycle interest groups	<b>3</b>	-
Other road user/safety groups	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Other	<b>4</b>	-

## Q2 (Support for cycle track use)

	YES	NO
Individual	135	12
Central/local government	3	5
Business/manufacture interests	16	5
Enforcement interests	1	1
Cycle interest groups	-	3
Other road user/safety groups	2	3
Other	4	-

10. **Question 3; modal change** . Some 137 (63%) of respondents expressed willingness to change from car to EPV use for short journeys. Many felt that this could help reduce emissions. However, 104 (48%) mentioned changing from walking or cycling to EPV use. Others commented that this would reduce walking/cycling health and emissions benefits.

11. **Questions 4, 5 & 6; registration, insurance, driving licences**. On obligatory registration, 61 (28%) were in favour, 120 (54%) against. 64 (29%) favoured compulsory insurance; 122 (56%) did not. 48 (22%) felt that users should have driving licences; 137 (63%) disagreed. Comments in favour included:

- EPVs should, as at present, be treated like other mechanically-propelled vehicles, so that registration, insurance and licensing all apply,
- registration is essential for enforcement purposes and would benefit owners in case of theft or accident,
- like any other powered (as distinct from power-assisted) vehicles, EPVs should be required to be insured,
- safety: there is a need for some sort of proficiency to be demonstrated,
- enforcement: some form of licensing is needed to enable enforcement, and
- there are issues about disqualified drivers and other offences and penalties.

12. Conversely, comments against included:

- EPVs should be treated like pedal cycles and EAPCs, which are not required to be registered or insured, and whose users do not need a licence,
- registration would be too expensive, too bureaucratic or too impractical owing to the size of EPVs,
- pedal cycles, EAPCs and mobility scooters are not required to be insured,
- pedal cyclists, EAPC and mobility scooter users do not need driving licences,
- the low speed and weight of EPVs would not warrant a driving licence, and
- it would be too expensive/bureaucratic to introduce a licensing system.

13. Further suggestions regarding insurance remarked that:

- insurance should be compulsory and should extend to cycles etc. as well,
- insurance should be optional, but strongly encouraged,
- insurance might be for each person, rather than each vehicle, and
- insurance might be included within household or motor insurance.

14. Many suggestions were received from VOSA and others as to possible ways forward regarding training/licensing, such as:

- holders of full or provisional car or motorcycle licences should be eligible to use EPVs under their existing licences,
- Unregulated interest groups will form to offer further guidance to those who want or need it,
- develop voluntary training, and
- develop competency training/testing similar to the motorcycle CBT.

#### **Q4 (Should EPVs be registered and fitted with a registration plate?)**

	YES	NO
Individual	<b>46</b>	<b>97</b>
Central/local government	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>
Business/manufacture interests	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>
Enforcement interests	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Cycle interest groups	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>
Other road user/safety groups	<b>-</b>	<b>3</b>
Other	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>

#### **Q5 (Should EPVs be insured?)**

	YES	NO
Individual	<b>42</b>	<b>106</b>
Central/local government	<b>6</b>	<b>-</b>
Business/manufacture interests	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>
Enforcement interests	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>
Cycle interest groups	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>
Other road user/safety groups	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>
Other	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>

## Q6 (Should EPV riders hold a driving licence?)

	YES	NO
Individual	<b>32</b>	<b>115</b>
Central/local government	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>
Business/manufacturer interests	<b>6</b>	<b>14</b>
Enforcement interests	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Cycle interest groups	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>
Other road user/safety groups	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>
Other		<b>3</b>

15. **Question 7; minimum age.** 124 (57%) of respondents considered a minimum age for EPV use was necessary, but around 58 (26%) did not. Some pointed out that:

- there is an age restriction of 14 for EAPC and class 3 mobility scooter users,
- younger teenagers “tend to ride anything dangerously”, so there should be a minimum age, and
- very young children would be a hazard to themselves and others.

16. Many went on to suggest a specific minimum age. This varied largely, ranging from 5 to 65! Several felt that 14 (as for EAPCs and mobility scooters) would be appropriate. Others proposed variously 15-18 though 21 and 25 were also mentioned.

17. Respondents who disagreed suggested that:

- physical size and weight, rather than age, was important,
- manufacturers’ guidelines on age should be all that was needed, and
- cycles are not age-restricted.

18. **Question 8; shared space.** On sharing space allocated to cycles and EAPCs, 152 (about 70%) were in favour and 30 (14%) against. Supportive written comments from individuals, business interests and others such as Segway enthusiasts included:

- EPVs should be treated like pedal cycles and EAPCs, and
- EPVs are permitted to use such areas in some other countries.

19. Written comments opposing the idea from individuals, DPTAC, Guide Dogs for the Blind and others included:

- safety and infrastructure issues, and
- exacerbation of existing conflicts, leading to displacement of vulnerable users, such as pedestrians, in particular visually impaired pedestrians.

20. Suggestions from TAG, the RAC Foundation and others included:

- local authorities should consider each case individually and grant access only where appropriate.

21. **Question 9; risk.** 151 (around 70%) of respondents thought EPVs would be at no greater risk than pedal cycles on the road. Written comments included:

- EPVs whose users have a standing position (e.g. Segways) are more readily visible than pedal cyclists, especially recumbent cyclists,
- use of lights, reflectors and helmets would be important,
- training and qualifications would be important, and
- segregated infrastructure would ideally be needed for safety.

22. **Question 10; types of public road.** It was almost unanimously indicated that motorways were unsuitable for EPV use. For dual carriageways, 78 (36%) were in favour and 98 (45%) against. For roads over 30mph 123 (nearly 57%) were in favour and 56 (nearly 26%) against. Most respondents – 172 (over 79%) - agreed that roads up to 30mph would be acceptable. Written opinions, from individuals and bodies such as IAM, about dual carriageways and roads with speed limits over 30mph included:

- some dual carriageways are high speed roads; others have 30mph limits: some might be suitable for EPV use while others might not,
- local highway authorities should be able to permit or deny EPV road use on their roads, and
- use should be permitted only on roads up to 30 mph.

23. **Question 11; journey types.** Short commutes (174 respondents - over 80%), leisure use (173 - 80%), and shopping trips (159 - over 73%) were thought the most likely EPV uses.

24. **Question 12; EPV specifications.** 157 respondents (72%) favoured considerable control of EPV specifications, in particular regarding maximum speed. Some were also keen to include maximum length & width (130 - 60%), stability (128 - 59%), power source (126 - 58%) and braking/acceleration (127 - over 58%). Height was also mentioned by many (104 - 48%), but fewer were concerned about maximum power (60 - 27%) or number of wheels (26 -12%). There were some diametrically opposed written comments, for example:

- the Bicycle Association of Great Britain (BAGB) sought assurances that 'twist and go' EAPCs would not be covered by any 'EPV' specification, while
- the national cyclists' organisation CTC was in favour of such an outcome.

25. **Question 13; approval and testing.** 98 respondents (around 45%) wished for some form of initial approval for EPVs. Rather fewer preferred some other way to ensure minimum standards (89 - 41%). Most Segway-related responses ticked 'other' and some respondents explained in written comments that by 'other' they meant EU general product safety requirements/Machinery Directive requirements. VOSA advised conformity of production checks by the approving authority. Few respondents were in favour of MOT-style periodic checks (36 - under 17%) though some groups did suggest this. TAG for example felt that, because the vehicles are powered, periodic checks should be required.

26. **Question 14: type approval.** Mechanically-propelled vehicles able to travel at 4 mph or more generally need European Whole Vehicle Type Approval, or a national equivalent, before being permitted on public roads. Specific exemptions include electrically-assisted pedal cycles (EAPCs) and also mobility vehicles for disabled people. 53 respondents (just under 25%) favoured a requirement to achieve ECWVTA. Some of those (such as trading standards interests) were in favour of an ECWVTA requirement so as:

- to ensure minimum safety and environmental standards and avoid cheap, unreliable models entering the market, and
- to enable such vehicles to be used in any EU country.

27. Comments in opposition included:

- EPVs are not as complex, fast or difficult to control as a car, and
- ECWVTA is too complex and time-consuming to be undertaken by small manufacturers.

### **Other comments**

28. Additional written comments and suggestions offered by several respondents included:

- Government should encouragement/subsidise EPVs.
- The possibility that permitting wider EPV use would 'open the floodgates' for undesirable vehicles such as mini-motos, powered skateboards etc.
- The need to keep any new legislation as simple and clear as possible (and to take into account legal treatment of EAPCs and mobility scooters).

29. Written issues raised by a few, or single, respondents included:

- possible boost for new business/employment.
- potential negative implications for other rights of way such as bridleways;
- the possibility of permitting EPVs to tow small trailers or to be designed to carry more than one person;
- the fact that Segway is now a British-owned company.

30. The results of the consultation will be carefully considered. Ministers will decide whether (and if so, what) further action is required, in the light of the information received.