



PRESS RELEASE

23 March 2010

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT AND MSPS ASKED TO CONSIDER BENEFITS OF MORE YELLOW SCHOOL BUSES

A yellow school bus will be parked opposite the Parliament Building on Queens Drive with members of the Commission, including former UK Government Home Secretary Rt Hon David Blunkett MP, in attendance. Stewart Stevenson MSP, Minister for Transport Infrastructure and Climate Change will visit the bus and he and David Blunkett will be available for a media photocall at **3pm** with children from local schools.

MSPs will today hear that the introduction to Scotland of more dedicated school buses to transport children to and from school would:

- improve the safety and security of home to school transport
- take up to 10 million unnecessary car journeys off Scotland's roads
- provide around £50m of benefits to parents, road users and others
- create around 1,500 new jobs

The findings, in new analysis carried out by the University of Aberdeen's Centre for Transport Research, will be presented to politicians by members of the Yellow School Bus Commission (YSBC) at a special event at Holyrood on Tuesday 23 March. This analysis builds on the Yellow School Bus Commission's 2008 report on school transport.

Commenting on the new analysis, David Blunkett said:

"We argued in our 2008 report that the Government should introduce dedicated home-to-school transport, primarily because these buses provide the safest and most secure method of carrying our children to and from school.

"Two developments since we published our report make the case more compelling. The rise in unemployment due to the recession shows the need for Government to look for opportunities to create a range of new jobs; and the research we've published today shows that the Commission's recommendations would create up to an additional 1500 such jobs in a variety of roles in Scotland.

"The threat of climate change has led the Scottish Government to set the country tough targets to reduce our impact on the environment. This reinforces the need for us to find new ways of travelling and a phased introduction of school buses in Scotland would take up to 10 million unnecessary car journeys off the road."

A key recommendation of the 2002 Scottish Executive Review of Research on School Travel said that the Scottish Executive and local authorities should consider how a more consistent national approach to school transport could be achieved.

There are already more than 25 YSB programmes in Britain, including Aberdeen, and their success in tackling modal shift is evident. In general, between 60% and 75% of primary pupils who now use YSBs previously travelled to school by car and between 15% and 30% of secondary pupils who now use YSBs previously travelled to school by car.

At present around 33% of Scottish primary school pupils get to school by car with only 10% travelling to school by bus. In the United States, 55% of children travel to and from school by yellow school bus and every day in the US, 23.5 million students are transported by school bus.

The new research has also shown that introducing yellow school buses in Scotland would create around 1,500 new jobs across the country. More than 1,200 of these would be for drivers with the rest covering engineers, managers and manufacturing.

Copies of the full report are available on request or from the Commission website at www.ysbcommission.com. The new analysis by the University of Aberdeen is attached.

Ends)

- For media enquiries about the yellow school bus event on Tuesday 23 March, please contact Barbara Fraser on 0131 556 0770 / 07915 072638.

Notes to Editors:

1. **The Yellow School Bus Commission** includes representatives of the main political parties and experts in education and transport:

Rt. Hon. David Blunkett MP (Chair): Labour Member of Parliament for Sheffield Brightside. Former Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Former Home Secretary and former Secretary of State for Education and Employment.

Baroness Ros Scott: President of the Liberal Democrats and has been a front bench spokesperson for the Department of Communities and Local Government. She was Chair of the Local Government Association's Transport Committee and a former member of the Commission for Integrated Transport.

Councillor Lt Col Tex Pemberton OBE: Until very recently, Conservative Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport with West Sussex County Council.

Garth Goddard: recently retired Programme Director for the North West Centre for Excellence national transport efficiency project, for 8 years Head of Cheshire County Council's Transport Coordination Service and former advisor to the Shires' Public Transport Consortium.

John Burch: Deputy Director of Operations at the Confederation of Passenger Transport UK (CPT) representing the bus and coach industry. He sits on the CPT

School Transport Committee and the Department for Transport's School Transport Experts Panel.

2. Research & Analysis

The Commission has been supported throughout by the University of Aberdeen's Centre for Transport Research in evidence and data analysis, cost benefit modelling and review. The team was headed by Professor John Nelson, while evidence review and cost benefit analysis was conducted by Dr Steve Wright.

3. Copies of the report are available from:

Commission Secretary
Yellow School Bus Commission
c/o FirstGroup plc
B210
Macmillan House
Paddington Station
London W2 1TY
Tel: 020 7298 7379
Facsimile: 020 7706 2645
Web address: www.ysbcommission.com