



Road Traffic Act 1988

1988 CHAPTER 52

PART I

PRINCIPAL ROAD SAFETY PROVISIONS

Promotion of road safety

39 Powers of Secretary of State and local authorities as to giving road safety information and training.

(1) The Secretary of State may, with the approval of the Treasury, provide for promoting road safety by disseminating information or advice relating to the use of roads.

[^{F1}(2) Each relevant authority—

(a) if it is a local authority, must prepare and carry out a programme of measures designed to promote road safety, or

(b) if it is Transport for London, may prepare and carry out such a programme, and may contribute towards the cost of measures for promoting road safety taken by other authorities or bodies.]

(3) [^{F2}Each relevant authority—]

(a) must carry out studies into accidents arising out of the use of vehicles

[^{F3}(i) if it is a local authority,] on roads or parts of roads, other than [^{F4}GLA roads or][^{F5}roads for which the Secretary of state is highway authority (in Scotland, roads authority)] within their area [^{F6}or

(ii) if it is Transport for London, on GLA roads or parts of GLA roads,]

(b) must, in the light of those studies, take such measures as appear to the authority to be appropriate to prevent such accidents, including the dissemination of information and advice relating to the use of roads, the giving of practical training to road users or any class or description of road users, the construction, improvement, maintenance or repair of [^{F7}roads for the maintenance of which they are responsible] and other measures taken in the

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exercise of their powers for controlling, protecting or assisting the movement of traffic on roads, and

- (c) in constructing new roads, must take such measures as appear to the authority to be appropriate to reduce the possibilities of such accidents when the roads come into use.

[(3A) The duties imposed by subsection (3) above are without prejudice to the generality of subsection (2) above and—

- (a) in the case of a local authority, are to be discharged in pursuance of their duty under subsection (2)(a) above; and
(b) in the case of Transport for London, are to be discharged by exercising their powers under subsection (2)(b) above.]

(4) In this section

[^{F8}“GLA road” has the same meaning as in the ^{M1}Highways Act 1980 (see sections 329(1) and 14D(1) of that Act);]

“local authority” means—

- (a) in relation to England and Wales, the council of a county, metropolitan district or London borough or the Common Council of the City of London,
(b) in relation to Scotland, a [^{F9}council constituted under section 2 of the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994].

[^{F10}“relevant authority” means a local authority or Transport for London;].

Textual Amendments

- F1** S. 39(2) substituted (3.7.2000) 1999 c. 29, s. 279(2), (with Sch. 12 para. 9(1)); S.I. 2000/801, art. 2(2)(c), **Sch. Pt. III**
- F2** Words in s. 39(3) substituted (3.7.2000) by 1999 c. 29, s. 279(3) (with Sch. 12 para. 9(1)); S.I. 2000/801, art. 2(2)(c), **Sch. Pt. III**
- F3** Words in s. 39(3)(a) renumbered as s. 39(3)(a)(i) (3.7.2000) by 1999 c. 29, s. 279(4)(a) (with Sch. 12 para. 9(1)); S.I. 2000/801, art. 2(2)(c), **Sch. Pt. III**
- F4** Words in s. 39(3)(a) inserted (3.7.2000) by 1999 c. 29, s. 279(4)(b) (with Sch. 12 para. 9(1)); S.I. 2000/801, art. 2(2)(c), **Sch. Pt. III**
- F5** Words in s. 39(3)(a) substituted (1.11.1991) by New Roads and Streets Works Act 1991 (c. 22, SIF 59, 108), s. 168(1), **Sch. 8 Pt. IV para. 121(3)(a)** (with s. 25(2)); S.I. 1991/2286, art. 2(2), **Sch. 2** (for Scotland); S.I. 1991/2288, art. 3, **Sch.** (for E.W.)
- F6** S. 39(3)(ii) and word added (3.7.2000) by 1999 c. 29, s. 279(4)(c) (with Sch. 12 para. 9(1)); S.I. 2000/801, art. 2(2)(c), **Sch. Pt. III**
- F7** Words in s. 39(3)(b) substituted (1.11.1991) by New Roads and Streets Works Act 1991 (c. 22, SIF 107:1), s. 168(1), **Sch. 8 para. 121** (3)(b) (with s. 25(2)); S.I. 1991/2286, art. 2(2), **Sch. 2** (for Scotland); S.I. 1991/2288, art. 3, **Sch.** (for E.W.)
- F8** Definition of “GLA roads” in s. 39(4) inserted (3.7.2000) by 1999 c. 29, s. 279(6), (with Sch. 12 para. 9(1)); S.I. 2000/801, art. 2(2)(c), **Sch. Pt. III**
- F9** Words in s. 39(4)(b) substituted (S.) (1.4.1996) by 1994 C. 39, s. 180(1), Sch. 13 para. 159(4); S.I. 1996/323, **art. 4(1)(b)(c)**
- F10** Definition of “relevant authority” in s. 39(4) inserted (3.7.2000) by 1999 c. 29, s. 279(6), (with Sch. 12 para. 9(1)); S.I. 2000/801, art. 2(2)(c), **Sch. Pt. III**

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1** S. 39: transfer of functions (1.7.1999) by 1998 c. 46, **ss. 53, 56(1)(i)** (with s. 126(3)-(11)); S.I. 1998/3178, **art. 2(1)**

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- C2** S. 39 modified (E.W.) (1.4.2018) by [The Sub-national Transport Body \(Transport for the North\) Regulations 2018 \(S.I. 2018/103\)](#), regs. 1(2), **17**
- C3** S. 39(1): functions exercisable by the Assembly are to run concurrently with the Secretary of state (1.7.1999) by [S.I. 1999/672](#), art. 2, **Sch. 1**; [S.I. 1998/3178](#), **art. 2(1)**
- C4** S. 39(1): functions made exercisable concurrently or jointly with the Welsh Ministers by 2006 c. 32, Sch. 3A para. 1 (as inserted (1.4.2018) by [Wales Act 2017 \(c. 4\)](#), s. 71(4), **Sch. 4 para. 1** (with Sch. 7 paras. 1, 6); [S.I. 2017/1179](#), reg. 3(p))
- C5** S. 39(2)(3): functions made exercisable concurrently (23.12.2016) by [The Greater Manchester Combined Authority \(Functions and Amendment\) Order 2016 \(S.I. 2016/1267\)](#), arts. 1(2), **10**
- C6** S. 39(2)(3): functions made exercisable concurrently (8.5.2017) by [The West Midlands Combined Authority \(Functions and Amendment\) Order 2017 \(S.I. 2017/510\)](#), arts. 1(2), **5**
- C7** S. 39(2)(3): functions made exercisable concurrently (8.5.2017) by [The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority \(Functions and Amendment\) Order 2017 \(S.I. 2017/430\)](#), arts. 1(3), **16**

Marginal Citations

- M1** 1980 c. 66.

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Changes and effects yet to be applied to :

- s. 39(2)(3) functions made exercisable concurrently by [S.I. 2024/402 art. 23](#)

Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- s. 34A inserted by [2000 c. 37 Sch. 7 para. 6](#) (This amendment not applied to [legislation.gov.uk](#). The amending provision has been repealed)
- s. 41(2)(m) inserted by [2006 c. 49 s. 18\(1\)\(a\)](#)
- s. 41(2)(ba) inserted by [2006 c. 49 s. 56\(3\)](#)
- s. 49(3A) inserted by [2006 c. 49 s. 48\(1\)](#)
- s. 66(7A) inserted by [2006 c. 49 s. 56\(5\)](#)
- s. 85(1) words omitted (temp.) by [S.I. 2019/648 reg. 2\(5\)\(a\)](#) (This amendment not applied to [legislation.gov.uk](#). Reg. 2(5)(a) substituted (1.9.2020) by S.I. 2020/818, regs. 1(b), Sch. 6 para. 39(2)(c)(i))
- s. 85(1) words omitted (temp.) by [S.I. 2019/648 reg. 2\(5\)\(d\)](#) (This amendment not applied to [legislation.gov.uk](#). Reg. 2(5)(a) substituted (1.9.2020) by S.I. 2020/818, regs. 1(b), Sch. 6 para. 39(2)(c)(ii))
- s. 85(2) added by [1988 c. 54 Sch. 2 para. 17\(c\)](#)
- s. 97(1)(c)(ia) words repealed by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 3 para. 6\(2\)\(b\)Sch. 7\(4\)](#)
- s. 97(1)(d)(ii) words omitted by [S.I. 2018/1251 reg. 2\(4\)](#)
- s. 97(1ZA) inserted by [2006 c. 49 s. 38\(2\)](#)
- s. 108(1BA) inserted by [S.I. 2018/1251 reg. 2\(5\)\(c\)](#)
- s. 123(123A) substituted for s. 123 by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 2](#)
- s. 123A(3) words inserted by [2009 c. 17 s. 1\(3\)](#)
- s. 124(3)-(5) inserted by [2009 c. 17 s. 3](#)
- s. 124(6) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 2\(b\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 125(3A)-(3D) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 3\(2\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 125(5A) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 3\(3\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 125A(5)-(7E) substituted for s. 125A(5)-(7) by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 6\(3\)](#)
- s. 125ZA inserted by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 5](#)
- s. 125ZA(2)(b) word omitted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 4\(2\)\(a\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 125ZA(2)(d) and word inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 4\(2\)\(b\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 125ZA(4)(c) word omitted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 4\(3\)\(c\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 125ZA(4)(c) words substituted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 4\(3\)\(b\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)

- s. 125ZA(4)(ba)(bb) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 4\(3\)\(a\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 125ZA(4)(ca) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 4\(3\)\(d\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 126(5) omitted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 6](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 126A inserted by [2016 c. 16 s. 1\(3\)](#)
- s. 126A omitted (cond.) by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 8A](#) (as inserted) by [2016 c. 16 s. 3\(3\)](#)
- s. 126A heading words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 3\(2\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Regs. 3, 4 omitted (1.12.2023) without ever being in force by virtue of S.I. 2023/1286, regs. 1, 7(3))
- s. 126A(1) words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 3\(3\)\(a\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Regs. 3, 4 omitted (1.12.2023) without ever being in force by virtue of S.I. 2023/1286, regs. 1, 7(3))
- s. 126A(1) words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 3\(3\)\(b\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Regs. 3, 4 omitted (1.12.2023) without ever being in force by virtue of S.I. 2023/1286, regs. 1, 7(3))
- s. 128A inserted by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 11](#)
- s. 128A(4) inserted by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 11](#) (as inserted) by [2016 c. 16 s. 4\(4\)](#)
- s. 128B inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 9](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 128ZA inserted by [2009 c. 17 s. 1\(1\)](#)
- s. 128ZB inserted by [2009 c. 17 s. 2](#)
- s. 128AZA128AZB inserted by [2016 c. 16 s. 2\(2\)](#)
- s. 128AZA128AZB inserted (cond.) by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 10A](#) (as inserted) by [2016 c. 16 s. 4\(2\)](#)
- s. 128AZA128AZB substituted (cond.) by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 10A](#) (as inserted) by [2016 c. 16 s. 4\(2\)](#)
- s. 128AZA heading words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 4\(2\)\(a\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Regs. 3, 4 omitted (1.12.2023) without ever being in force by virtue of S.I. 2023/1286, regs. 1, 7(3))
- s. 128AZA(1) words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 4\(2\)\(b\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Regs. 3, 4 omitted (1.12.2023) without ever being in force by virtue of S.I. 2023/1286, regs. 1, 7(3))
- s. 128AZA(4) words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 4\(2\)\(c\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Regs. 3, 4 omitted (1.12.2023) without ever being in force by virtue of S.I. 2023/1286, regs. 1, 7(3))
- s. 128AZB heading words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 4\(3\)\(a\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Regs. 3, 4 omitted (1.12.2023) without ever being in force by virtue of S.I. 2023/1286, regs. 1, 7(3))
- s. 128AZB(1) words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 4\(3\)\(b\)\(i\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Regs. 3, 4 omitted (1.12.2023) without ever being in force by virtue of S.I. 2023/1286, regs. 1, 7(3))
- s. 128AZB(1) words inserted by [S.I. 2016/1089 reg. 4\(3\)\(b\)\(ii\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Regs. 3, 4 omitted (1.12.2023) without ever being in force by virtue of S.I. 2023/1286, regs. 1, 7(3))
- s. 131(A1)-(C1) inserted by [2006 c. 49, Sch. 6 para. 13\(1A\)](#) (as inserted) by [S.I. 2023/1286 Sch. 3 para. 92\(2\)\(a\)\(i\)](#)
- s. 131(3)(b)(c) substituted for s. 131(3)(b) and word by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 13\(4\)](#)
- s. 131(6) inserted by [2016 c. 16 s. 2\(4\)](#)
- s. 131(6) inserted by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 13\(9\)](#) (as inserted) by [2016 c. 16 s. 4\(5\)](#)
- s. 131(6) substituted by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 13\(9\)](#) (as inserted) by [2016 c. 16 s. 4\(5\)](#)

- s. 132-133ZA and cross-heading substituted for ss. 132, 133 and cross-heading by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 14](#)
- s. 133(2)(a) words omitted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 10\(a\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 133(2)(b) words omitted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 10\(b\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 133D(1A) inserted by [2015 c. 20 Sch. 2 para. 14\(2\)](#) (This amendment is to Part 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 as amended by Schedule 6 to the Road Safety Act 2006. Those amendments have not yet come into force)
- s. 140(1)(2) inserted by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 23\(2\)](#)
- s. 140(1A) inserted in earlier affecting provision 2006 c. 49, Sch. 6 para. 23(2) by [S.I. 2023/1286 Sch. 3 para. 92\(2\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 140(3) s. 140 renumbered as s. 140(3) by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 23\(1\)](#)
- s. 141A(5) words repealed by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 3 para. 24 Sch. 7\(4\)](#)
- s. 143(1A) repealed (cond.) by [S.I. 2019/1047 Sch. 2 para. 2](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. The insertion of s. 143(1A) by 2018 c. 18, Sch. para. 17 was repealed (1.11.2019) by The Motor Vehicles (Compulsory Insurance) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2019 (S.I. 2019/1047), reg. 1, Sch. 2 para. 1 (with reg. 5) without ever being brought into force.)
- s. 173(2)(g)-(gb) substituted for s. 173(2)(g) by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 27](#)
- s. 173(2)(n) and word inserted by [2006 c. 49 s. 37\(8\)](#)
- s. 174(1)(da) inserted by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 28](#)
- s. 183(6A) inserted by [2006 c. 49 Sch. 6 para. 29](#)