

The research was carried out by MTRU on the same 4 strategic transport corridors in two tranches - in March/ April 2017 on congestion, sponsored by the DfT and then in December 2017 on CO2 & air pollution and collisions funded by Freight on Rail.

CBT commissioned research shows that upgrading the existing rail lines which run parallel to key congested motorway routes would allow large numbers of lorry loads to be transferred to rail, easing congestion, improving air quality and reducing road collisions. The research examined the socio-economic benefits of upgrading existing rail lines on four heavily congested routes: the A14 between Felixstowe and the Midlands, the A34 from Southampton to the Midlands, and the M6 and M62 motorways, which together carry around 37,500 of the large HGVs everyday. Transferring 2000 HGVs, equivalent to up to 8000 cars, from each of these corridors every day to rail would significantly improve road conditions without needing to add extra road capacity and would reduce nitrogen oxide emissions by 10 per cent and particulates by 7 per cent per corridor. Furthermore, national carbon dioxide emissions could be reduced by 2.5 per cent and killed and seriously injured figures reduced by 18, nationally if these four corridors were upgraded. The research also highlights that rail freight has a long-term role in reducing non-exhaust particulates. While the latest euro VI engine technology reduces exhaust particulates, non-exhaust particulates pollution from HGV tyres and brakes, which is hard to reduce for trucks, will remain a serious problem for which there is no current solution, especially for trucks which have large tyres. The DfT, which sponsored the congestion element of the research, said the following:

“We agree with the Campaign for Better Transport that rail freight offers real benefits for the environment and helps keep bulky loads off of the road network, helping to ease congestion for other motorists. We look forward to using these findings to help inform our coming road and rail strategies and are committed to working with the rail freight industry to support growth of the sector.”

March/April research on congestion, sponsored by the DfT

<http://www.bettertransport.org.uk/invest-rail-freight-cut-road-congestion-research-shows>

December 2017 research on pollution and collisions

<http://www.bettertransport.org.uk/new-research-shows-just-2000-less-hgvs-would-mean-ten-cent-reduction-air-pollution>