

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 1 a.m. ON MONDAY 12 JULY 2004**

**INDEPENDENT TRANSPORT COMMISSION**

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON**

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- Congestion charging would alter where, when and how much people drive.
- Those paying, sharing rides or going by bus would get better journeys: those travelling outside the peak would cut their costs. All would gain.
- Cars, being ‘connected’, might broadcast SOS messages automatically: drivers might receive up-to-the-minute route guidance.
- Highway authorities might start selling travel. Like hotels or mobile phone operators they would become service industries.
- The roads might be taken over and managed by independent, self-financing companies or trusts.

These wider implications *and benefits* of road user charging are emphasised by Simon Linnett\* on the eve of an announcement by Alistair Darling, the Transport Secretary, about the prospects for nationwide congestion charging.

‘Road user charging must be seen as much more than a method of raising money, more even than a way of reducing congestion’ Mr Linnett says. ‘It is potentially the lynchpin of a new era in driver behaviour, traffic management and highways finance.’ Such aspects of pricing (and their benefits) should, he argues, influence the Transport Secretary thinking about road pricing.

He suggests too that, once cars are connected for charging purposes, speed limits and warnings might be displayed on vehicle dashboards thereby transforming road safety.

Simon Linnett's views are published in 'Beyond Congestion Charging' Occasional Paper No.1 of the Independent Transport Commission.\*\* The full paper is at [www.trg.soton.ac.uk.itc](http://www.trg.soton.ac.uk.itc)

## Notes for Editors

\* Simon Linnett is a Member of the Independent Transport Commission and Vice Chairman of N.M. Rothschild & Sons, investment bankers.

\*\* The Independent Transport Commission, set up under the aegis of the University of Southampton and financed by grant giving trusts, is composed of 11 leaders in business, transport, motoring, the environment and academic research. (See below)

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## MEMBERS OF THE INDEPENDENT TRANSPORT COMMISSION

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